Alzheimer Society

Guide to income tax and benefits: 2020 tax year

Introduction

This guide is intended to provide some basic tax tips that may be particularly useful for people living with dementia and their caregivers. This document is a summary only and is not a complete list. It is meant to alert you to options you may want to discuss with the person preparing your taxes.

For complete information about any personal tax matters, individuals can contact the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) by calling 1-800-959-8281 or by visiting their website at <u>alzbc.org/cra</u>. Income tax rules are complicated and subject to change every year, so we encourage you to get professional help with your income taxes.



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Income tax and benefits

Getting started

To begin, you will need to gather all the necessary documents to complete your tax return. This includes:

- Tax slips (for example: T4).
- All supporting documents for any deductions you make or credits you plan to claim (for example: medical receipts, statements from a care facility or charitable donation receipts).
- Your most recent notice of assessment, or reassessment for carry-forward amounts or other amounts you may need to complete your return.



Spouse or common-law partner amount

Qualifications	• You can claim this amount if at any time during the year you supported your spouse or common-law partner, and his or her net income was less than \$13,229 (federal) or \$10,314 (B.C.).
Details	 Both of you cannot claim this amount for each other for the same year. Should be claimed by the higher-income spouse.
	 The net income cut-off may be affected if you claim the Canada caregiver credit (see page 4).
Required forms	None
How to claim	Line 30300 on the Federal Schedule 5 Form: <u>alzbc.org/2T8GaW1</u>
	• Line 58120 on the BC428 British Columbia Tax Form: <u>alzbc.org/2T5AXhl</u>

Amount for an eligible dependant

Qualifications	 You may be able to claim this amount if at any time in the year you met all the following conditions at once: You did not have a spouse or common-law partner or, if you did, you were not living with, supporting or being supported by that person. You supported a dependant in 2020. You lived with the dependant you supported (in most cases in Canada) in a home you maintained. You may qualify if the dependant is your parent or grandparent by blood, marriage, common-law partnership, or adoption. You may also qualify if the dependant is a child, grandchild, brother or sister (over 18) and depends on you due to mental or physical impairment. The net income of the dependant must be less than \$13,229 (federal) or \$10,314 (B.C.).
Details	 You cannot claim this amount if: The person was only visiting you. You or someone else is claiming a spouse or common-law partner amount for this dependant. Someone else in your household is making this claim for the same dependant. The net income cut-off may be affected if you claim the Canada caregiver credit (see page 4).
Required forms	• None
How to claim	Line 30400 on the Federal Schedule 5 Form: <u>alzbc.org/2T8GaW1</u>
	• Line 58160 on the BC428 British Columbia Tax Form: <u>alzbc.org/2T5AXhI</u>

Canada caregiver credit

Qualification	 You may qualify for this credit if you have a spouse or common-law partner, minor child or eligible relative who is dependent on you because of a mental or physical infirmity at any time in the year. This tax credit is an additional amount that can be claimed in addition to both the spousal and eligible dependant tax credits. People living with dementia, in most circumstances, will qualify for the benefit.
Details	• A maximum amount of \$7,276 can be claimed by a caregiver in respect of each infirm dependant. This amount will be reduced dollar-for-dollar by the amount of the dependant's net income above \$7,295 and is fully reduced at \$24,361.
	• The dependant is not required to live with the caregiver in order for the caregiver to claim the credit. Note, a credit is not available in respect of a non-infirm individual over 65 years of age who resides with their adult child (caregiver).
Required forms	 CRA may ask for a signed statement from a health-care provider indicating when the impairment began, and expected duration of the impairment.
	 This statement is not required if the individual already is approved for the Disability Tax Credit.
How to claim	 Line 30425, 30450 and 30500 (Line 30500 if the dependant is under 18 years of age) on the Income Tax and Benefit Return: <u>alzbc.org/32yR62i</u> Line 58175 (Caregiver amount) on the BC428 British Columbia Tax Form: <u>alzbc.org/2T5AXhI</u>

Qualification	 To claim this amount: You have a severe and prolonged impairment in your physical or mental functions in the tax year. Impairment is prolonged if it has lasted, or is expected to last, for a continuous period of at least 12 months. At least 90 per cent of the time you are unable to, or take an inordinate amount of time to, perform one or more of the basic activities of daily living. People living with dementia, in most circumstances, will qualify for the benefit.
Details	 In certain circumstances, some or all of this credit can be transferred from the person living with dementia, to a spouse, common-law partner or other supporting person. The transferred amount can be split between several people, if they support the same dependant. This amount may be affected by claims for Attendant care (see page 7).
Required forms	 Your doctor (or other qualified health-care provider) must certify that you meet certain conditions by completing the Disability Tax Credit Certificate Form T2201: <u>alzbc.org/2PAkhg6</u> If claiming this amount for the first time, the Disability Tax Credit Certificate must be submitted. Once approved, there is no need to submit this form each year unless asked. Ensure that the health-care provider dates the Disability Tax Credit Certificate to the year that the impairment began. CRA can adjust your previous returns if you would have qualified for the credit in those years. (Use the Adjustment Request Form: <u>alzbc.org/2uAwFWa</u>). If the practitioner charges a fee for completing this form, you may be able to claim the amount as a Medical expense.
How to claim	 Line 31600 (Line 31800 if transferred to you) on the Income Tax and Benefit Return: <u>alzbc.org/32yR62i</u> Line 58440 (Line 58480 if transferred to you) on the BC428 British Columbia Tax Form: <u>alzbc.org/2T5AXhI</u>

Medical expenses



Qualification	 You may be able to claim a non-refundable tax credit for medical expenses incurred on behalf of yourself, your spouse or common-law partner or your children (under age 18). You may also make a claim for medical expenses incurred by you for your children, parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, nieces or nephews who were residents of Canada and dependent on you for support during the year.
Details	 You can only claim the part of an expense for which you have not been or will not be reimbursed. Some examples of eligible expenses are: Payments to certain qualified practitioners. Walking aids and wheelchairs. Prescription medications, eyeglasses or contact lenses. Hearing aids. Personalized therapy plan for a mental or physical impairment. The tax credit is calculated based on the medical expenses incurred, minus the lesser of \$2,397 or three per cent of net income. Visit the CRA's list of eligible medical expenses for more information: alzbc.org/3ahqKVs
Required forms	Receipts may be requested.
How to claim	 Lines 33099 to 33200 on the Income Tax and Benefit Return: <u>alzbc.org/32yR62i</u> Lines 58689 to 58729 on the BC428 British Columbia Tax Form: <u>alzbc.org/2T5AXhI</u>

Qualification	 You can claim transportation and travel expenses, provided: Substantially equivalent medical services were not available near your home. You took a reasonably direct travelling route. It is reasonable for you to have travelled to get the medical services.
Details	 If you had to travel at least 40 kilometres (one way) to get medical services, you may be able to claim the public transportation expenses you paid. If you had to travel at least 80 kilometres (one way) from your home to get medical services, you may also be able to claim accommodation, meal and parking expenses, in addition to your transportation expenses, as medical expenses. If a health-care provider certifies in writing that you were unable to travel by yourself, you can also claim the transportation and travel expenses of an attendant.
Required forms	Receipts may be requested.
How to claim	• See Medical expenses (page 6).

Attendant care (at home or in long-term care)

Qualification	 You can claim amounts you or your spouse or common-law partner paid for attendant care or care in a facility. If you are receiving attendant care services in your home, you must: Be eligible for the disability tax credit. Have a written certification from a health-care provider that states the services are necessary.
Details	 You can claim the salaries and wages paid to all employees who perform certain specified duties or services as medical expenses. For a full list of services you can claim, see the CRA Guide RC 4065 - Medical Expenses - 2020: <u>alzbc.org/3877kkr</u> An attendant who is hired privately will probably be considered an employee. For more information, refer to the CRA Guide's "Employee or Self-Employed?" section: <u>alzbc.org/3cfylFD</u> The paid attendant cannot be your spouse or common-law partner. If you are claiming expenses greater than \$10,000 (full-time care), the disability tax credit cannot also be claimed.
Required forms	• To claim attendant care expenses paid to a care home, you must send the CRA a detailed breakdown from the care home that clearly shows the amounts paid for staff salaries that apply to the specified attendant

	 care services listed in CRA Guide RC 4065 - Medical Expenses - 2020: <u>alzbc.org/3877kkr</u> The Disability Tax Credit Certificate (Form T2201: <u>alzbc.org/2PAkhg6</u>) or medical certification, depending on the expense type. See the CRA Guide RC 4065 - Medical Expenses - 2020: <u>alzbc.org/3877kkr</u>
How to claim	• Line 33099 on the Income Tax and Benefit Return: <u>alzbc.org/32yR62i</u>
	• Line 58689 on the BC428 British Columbia Tax Form: <u>alzbc.org/2T5AXhI</u>

Refundable medical expense supplement

Qualification	 This refundable tax credit is available to working individuals with low- income (including the income of your spouse or common-law partner) and high medical expenses. Your employment income must be \$3,714 or more.
Details	 The amount of this supplement is the lesser of: \$1,272; or 25 per cent of the medical expenses that qualify for the Medical expenses tax credit (see Page 6).
	 The amount is reduced by five per cent of a combined family income greater than \$28,164.
Required forms	Receipts may be requested.
How to claim	• Line 45200 on the Income Tax and Benefit Return: <u>alzbc.org/32yR62i</u>

Home accessibility tax credit

Qualifications	 You may be able to claim this amount if:
	\circ You own a home in Canada and paid for eligible renovations to
	improve the safety or accessibility of your home.
	\circ You are 65 years of age or older, or eligible for the Disability Tax
	Credit, and the home is your main residence, or:
	$\circ~$ You are the spouse/common law partner of the qualifying individual.
	\circ The renovations are permanent and allow the individual to access the
	home or be more mobile/functional within the home.
	\circ The renovations reduce the risk of harm within the home or in
	accessing the home.
Details	• You can claim up to \$10,000 in expenses.
	 You may claim this for an eligible dependant under certain
	circumstances.
Required forms	• Eligible expenses must be supported by acceptable documentation, such
	as agreements, invoices and receipts. They must clearly identify the type
	and quantity of goods bought or services provided.
How to claim	See Line 31285 in the Federal Income Tax and Benefit Guide:
	alzbc.org/32z4ELa

B.C. home renovation tax credit for seniors and persons with disabilities

Qualifications	 You may be able to claim eligible expenses for certain permanent home renovations that improve access and/or mobility, or reduce the risk of harm within the home.
	• You're eligible to claim the credit for the year if on the last day of the tax year you are:
	 A B.C. resident, and:
	 A senior (65 years of age or older) or a family member living with a senior, or:
	 A person with a disability or a family member living with a person with a disability (for 2016 and later tax years).
Details	• The maximum credit is \$1,000 per tax year, calculated as 10 per cent of the qualifying renovation expense (maximum \$10,000 in expenses).
	• Some examples of eligible expenses are:
	 Grab bars and handrails
	 Wheelchair ramps, lifts and elevators
	 Walk-in bathtubs
	• This credit can be split between eligible residents of the home to a maximum amount of the credit.

	• For seniors and family members living with seniors, your renovation expenses must have happened on or after April 1, 2012. Expenses made or incurred under an agreement entered into before this date don't qualify.
	 For persons with disabilities and family members living with them, renovation expenses must happen on or after February 17, 2016. Expenses made or incurred under an agreement entered into before this date don't qualify.
Required forms	• You must retain documentation to support your claim, including receipts from suppliers and contractors. If work has been performed by a family member, receipts for labour and materials must have a GST/HST number.
	 If you are claiming this amount as a person with a disability, you are required to provide a Disability Tax Credit Certificate (Form T2201: <u>alzbc.org/2PAkhg6</u>).
How to claim	Schedule BC(S12) Form: <u>alzbc.org/2VzIEyn</u>

GST/HST-exempt goods and services

Qualifications	 Some goods and services used by people living with dementia are exempt from GST/HST. If you paid GST/HST in error, you can ask the supplier for a refund or a credit. If you can't get a refund or a credit from the supplier (for example, if the supplier refuses or goes out of business), you can apply to CRA for a rebate by completing the GST 189 Federal Application for Rebate of GST/HST form: alzbc.org/2wRiZqA
Details	 Some services are only exempt if they are publicly subsidized or funded. Some examples of exempt expenses are: Certain health-care services. Home care services (such as cleaning and meal preparation). Personal care services (such as assistance with bathing, feeding, dressing and taking medication) provided to you in your place of residence. Care and supervision services. Home-delivered meals through certain programs. Certain medical devices and supplies.
Required forms	 CRA requires copies of proof of purchases, receipts or documents for purchases listed on your rebate application, along with your rebate claim.
How to claim	GST189 General Application for Rebate of GST/HST: <u>alzbc.org/2wRiZqA</u>

• Refer to the CRA guide's "Disability-Related Information":
alzbc.org/2TmBVoY

COVID-19 provincial and federal benefits

The benefits we include here are those we feel may be relevant to our community, and do not include all government benefits. For more information on COVID-19 benefits, please see the information on federal programs here: alzbc.org/3qsEmot and provincial programs here: alzbc.org/3qsEmot and provincial programs here: alzbc.org/3qsEmot

If you received federal COVID-19 emergency or recovery benefits in 2020, you must report these amounts on your income tax and benefit return on **Line 13000**. You will be sent a T4A slip if you received one of these benefits. Read more at <u>alzbc.org/3t5SlfY</u>.

Provincial benefits such as the BC Recovery Benefit are non-taxable, meaning they need not be claimed on your tax return.

Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit (CRCB)

Qualifications	• You are employed or self-employed and unable to work at least 50% of your scheduled work week because you must care for a child under age 12 or a family member who needs supervised care and is at home.
Details	 This applies if their school, regular program or facility is closed or unavailable to them due to COVID-19, or because they are sick, self- isolating, or at risk of serious health complications due to COVID-19. Provides \$500 per week per household, for up to 26 weeks. This benefit is applicable between September 27, 2020 and September 25, 2021. Separate applications must be made after each one-week period for which an individual is seeking support and must be made within 60 days after the period has ended. This federal benefit is taxable, meaning it will need to be claimed on your tax return.
Required forms	 Additional documents may be requested by the CRA to validate your application.
How to apply	 Applications may be made online through <u>CRA's My Account:</u> <u>alzbc.org/3rxB6tl</u> Phone applications can be made by dialing 1-800-959-2019 or 1-800- 959-2041. Refer to the CRA guide "Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit (CRCB)": <u>alzbc.org/3t4d4pV</u>

BC Recovery Benefit

Qualifications	 Eligible families and single parents with a net income of up to \$125,000. The benefit amount is reduced for eligible families and single parents with a net income of up to \$175,000. Eligible individuals with a net income of up to \$62,500. The benefit amount is reduced for eligible individuals with a net income of up to \$87,500.
Details	 Must be a resident of B.C. on December 18, 2020 Filed a 2019 Canadian personal income tax return Has a valid social insurance number, individual tax number, or temporary tax number. Specific eligibility criteria can be found on the Government of BC's website at BC Recovery Benefit at <u>alzbc.org/3sNp8wA</u> Applications are open until June 30, 2021. This provincial benefit is non-taxable, meaning it need not be claimed on your tax return.
Required forms	 Net income from your 2019 Notice of Assessment Social insurance number Driver's license number Mailing address Direct deposit information
How to apply	 Applications may be made online, over the phone or at a Service BC computer terminal. Online applications can be made at <u>alzbc.org/3taZbqh</u>. Phone applications can be made by dialing 1-833-882-0020.

COVID-19 benefits not included in income

These are a selection of other benefits that may apply to you. These are **non-taxable**, meaning they do not need to be included on your tax return.

These payments are applied automatically if you qualify – no application is needed.



Special Payment through GST Credit Program	 A one-time special payment made through the GST credit program on April 9, 2020, doubling the maximum annual GST credit amounts paid for the 2019 to 2020 benefit year. This was introduced to assist low to modest-income individuals and families. More info can be found on the GST credit at <u>alzbc.org/38pwttv</u>.
Canada Child Benefit Payment	 There is a one-time increase in the maximum annual Canada child benefit payment amount by \$300 per child for the 2019-2020 benefit year. This amount was included as part of the May 2020 payment. More info can be found on the Canada Child Benefit Payment at <u>alzbc.org/3v3qJiS</u>.
One-time Payment for Old Age Security (OAS) and Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) recipients	 A one-time payment of \$300 to seniors eligible for the Old Age Security (OAS) pension, with an additional \$200 paid to seniors eligible for the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS). More info can be found on the OAS payment at <u>alzbc.org/3ce5jHq</u>.
BC Recovery Supplement	 Individuals who receive income or disability assistance, as well as low- income seniors receiving the senior's supplement, will automatically receive an additional \$150 recovery supplement each month, from January to March 2021.

How tax benefits and credits might affect you

The following scenarios are only intended to illustrate how some of the more commonly used tax benefits and credits might apply to a specific situation.



Scenario 1 - Parent lives with caregiver child

Mary is separated from her partner and her children have left home and are no longer dependent on her. Her mother Janet is living with Alzheimer's disease and recently moved into a suite in Mary's house.

Janet qualifies for the Disability Tax Credit. To make the home safer and more accessible for her mother, Mary has incurred costs for home renovations, spending \$4,000 for the necessary upgrades. Janet also has significant medical expenses, which Mary has paid for, including prescriptions, a wheelchair and eyeglasses totaling \$3,500. Mary has also paid for a nurse to come to the home to care for Janet several days a week, costing \$8,000 in total.

Mary's eligible credits include:

- Canada caregiver credit
- Amount for eligible dependent
- Disability amount (transferred)
- Medical expenses: \$4,000 + \$3,500 + \$8,000 = \$15,500
- Refundable medical expenses supplement (depends on Mary's income)
- Home accessibility tax credit
- B.C. home renovation tax credit for seniors and persons with disabilities

Scenario 2 - Child assists with parent's care costs

Jim is married with two children who still live at home and are dependent on him for support. Jim and his sister, Joan, learned last year that their father's dementia has advanced to the stage that he needs full-time care in a long-term care home.

Their father has very little income, so Joan and Jim have agreed to split the costs evenly. The cost of the care home is \$28,000 per year, \$15,000 of which is deemed care costs. Their father also spent \$1,800 of his own money on other medical expenses during the year (prescription glasses, supplies and medication).

Jim's eligible credits include:

• Canada caregiver credit (either Jim or Joan, or it can be split)

Depending upon father's income:



- Medical expenses: \$15,000 + \$1,800 = \$16,800 (split between Jim and Joan)
- Refundable medical expenses supplement (depends on Jim's income)

Note: Jim or Joan are not eligible to transfer their father's Disability Tax Credit because the deemed care costs were greater than \$10,000.

Useful resources

Resources related to getting authority to handle financial affairs

It is important for individuals in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease or another dementia to plan ahead for legal, financial and health-care matters by preparing an Enduring Power of Attorney and a Representation Agreement. It is strongly encouraged that families consult a lawyer or notary public for assistance with preparing legal documents.

Nidus Personal Planning Resource Centre and Registry

Nidus is currently the only community-based resource in Canada devoted to personal planning. Nidus is also the expert on Representation Agreements, which are a legal model for supported decision-making. The Personal Planning Registry is a secure online service for storing your important information and documents and making them available to others who need to know. Visit <u>www.nidus.ca</u> or call **604-408-7414** for more information.

Authorizing or cancelling a representative

Taxpayer information is considered confidential according to the CRA. Consent can be given for another person to act as a representative for income tax matters online at <u>alzbc.org/39QTiof</u>. If you have a legal representative (for example, Power of Attorney or Guardian), you do not need to fill this out.

Agreement to administer federal pension benefits

You can apply to Employment and Social Development Canada to act as the trustee of Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Old Age Security (OAS) benefits for a relative or friend who is incapable of managing their own affairs due to a mental or physical illness or impairment. For details, call **1-800-277-9914** or visit <u>alzbc.org/2werXxQ</u> to access the **Certificate of Incapability** form and the **Agreement to administer benefits under the Old Age Security Act and/or the Canada Pension Plan by a Private Trustee** form.

Additional resources and information

Community volunteer income tax program

The objective of this program is to help individuals who are not able to prepare their income tax and benefit returns by themselves. In partnership with the CRA, community organizations host tax preparation clinics and arrange for volunteers to prepare tax returns for eligible individuals. For more information, call **1-800-959-8281** or visit <u>alzbc.org/32zBnQJ</u>. Due to COVID, appointments may take place by video conference or by phone.

Employment Insurance (EI) compassionate care benefits

El compassionate care benefits are paid to people who must be away from work temporarily to provide care or support to a family member who is gravely ill and who has a significant risk of death within 26 weeks (six months). A maximum of 26 weeks of compassionate care benefits may be paid to eligible people and can be shared with other family members. Unemployed persons on El can also apply. You may also be eligible if you are a close friend or neighbour and the gravely ill person considers you a family member. For more information, call **1-800-206-7218** or <u>alzbc.org/3abtW4L</u>.

Family caregiver benefit

In addition to the existing EI Compassionate Care Benefit, eligible caregivers may take up to 15 weeks off work to care for or support an adult family member who is critically ill or injured. For more information call **1-800-206-7218** or visit <u>alzbc.org/39b45d3</u>.

Veterans Affairs Canada: Veterans Independence Program (VIP)

Eligible veterans may receive financial assistance for personal care, housekeeping, grounds maintenance and/or other services under the VIP. Primary caregivers and low-income or disabled survivors of veterans who were receiving services under the VIP before they passed away or were admitted to a long-term care home may be eligible to continue to receive these services. For more information call **1-866-522-2122** or visit <u>alzbc.org/2TsDZLW</u>.

Disability benefits help sheets

Disability Alliance B.C. provides a series of help sheets that describe key disability programs and benefits in B.C. Call **1-800-663-1278** or visit <u>disabilityalliancebc.org</u> for more information.

RRIF withdrawal minimum

The required minimum withdrawal from Registered Retirement Income Funds (RRIFs) has been reduced by 25% for 2020. Visit the CRA's website for more information at <u>alzbc.org/3tbM341</u>

Alzheimer Society BRITISH COLUMBIA

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