

# The Liberal Party of Canada's 2019 federal election commitments <sup>[1]</sup>

**Author:** Liberal Party of Canada

**Source:** Liberal Party of Canada

**Format:** Report

**Publication Date:** 15 Sep 2019

## AVAILABILITY

[Access online child care commitment](#) <sup>[2]</sup>

[Access online other family policy commitments](#) <sup>[3]</sup>

Excerpted from the 2019 Liberal Party platform

### More accessible child care for families

Creating more spaces for kids

Parents across the country work hard to give their kids the best possible start in life. But it's difficult to juggle the responsibilities of work and child care, and parents need more support before and after school so they don't have to choose between making ends meet and caring for their kids.

A re-elected Liberal government will help parents with elementary school kids by doing the following:

- We will create up to 250,000 more before and after school spaces for kids under the age of ten;
- We will lower parents' fees by ten per cent across the country:
  - More than one million families will benefit from having their child care fees reduced.
  - Average fees vary across the country, from about \$10 a day in Quebec to nearly \$30 a day in Alberta. Assuming the national average of \$21 a day, a family of four with two kids aged 7 and 9 will save about \$800 a year;
- We will dedicate a target of ten per cent of the new spaces to provide more child care options for parents who work overtime, late shifts, or multiple jobs so they can count on help when they need it most; and
- We will do this by nearly doubling the federal support we provide to the provinces and territories through the Early Learning and Child Care Framework, investing at least \$535 million more each year.

Ensuring quality and accountability in child care across the country

Child care systems differ from region to region and many families don't have access to enough affordable, high quality options. Early childhood educators are often overworked, underpaid, and without enough support. All orders of government need to work together to deliver a long-term vision for early learning and child-care – so that parents have the support they need to raise their kids without having to break the bank.

A re-elected Liberal government will work to improve the capacity, quality, and accountability of child care across Canada. We will:

- Give more support to our early childhood educators, to ensure they are better paid and trained to take care of our kids. We will do this by investing at least \$25 million per year to help cover the costs for early childhood educators seeking further training, and lower tuition costs for people getting their early childhood educator degree;
- Establish a national secretariat to work with the provinces and territories to lay the groundwork for a pan-Canadian child care system. The secretariat will help establish national standards for future agreements under the ELCC Framework, promote best practices, and advance gender equality. The secretariat will work closely with the recently established Expert Panel on Early Learning and Child Care.

Costing

- This initiative would cost \$535 million per year, starting in fiscal year 2020-21. Further details regarding costing will be announced over the course of the campaign.

### Moving towards a vision for guaranteed paid family leave for everyone

Today, Canada has two main programs that help families with the cost and time of raising a child in the first year of life:

- **Canada Child Benefit:** Introduced by our Liberal government in 2016, the CCB provides thousands of dollars of assistance, tax-free, to more than nine out of ten families in Canada. Thanks to the CCB, 300,000 children have been lifted out of poverty and parents

have more money to help pay for things like healthy food, sports programs, and music lessons for their kids.

- Maternity and Parental Benefits through Employment Insurance : This program provides up to 55 weeks of job-protected leave and benefits, so that families who are working can afford to take time off to be with their infant. Unlike the CCB, maternity and parental benefits are taxable and only cover those who have worked a sufficient number of hours in order to qualify.

These two programs provide essential help to families when they need it, but we know more needs to be done. Today, for example, the server at the local diner who works hard but doesn't get enough shifts to qualify for paid leave, isn't left with much to fall back on. Those who are self-employed or in precarious employment receive little help at all.

As a result, one in six mothers in Canada's workforce does not receive paid family leave despite having worked before their child was born. As jobs change, all parents need to be able to count on a basic amount of support, whether they are self-employed, work part-time, or multiple jobs. We can also do more to help those who need it most, particularly low- and middle-income new parents, who find it hardest to make ends meet.

A re-elected Liberal government will work to establish Guaranteed Paid Family Leave – an ambitious program that will make sure that parents who don't qualify for paid leave through E.I. or who don't get enough, because they're between jobs, earn little, or haven't worked enough hours, will receive a guaranteed income during the first year of their child's life. This means every single Canadian parent will be able to afford to spend the first year at home with their kid, when it matters most.

Launching in 2021, this new program will provide a simpler, more generous, and accessible way for Canadians to get the time and money they need to help raise their kids in the first year. We will integrate E.I. maternity and parental benefits with the CCB, expand them, and ensure the legal protections for leave are not affected by this change.

Over the course of the next year, we will work closely with provinces and territories, stakeholders, employers, labour groups, and experts to design a system that works for families. We will make sure Guaranteed Family Leave:

- provides better, more effective coverage;
- addresses the realities of work in the 21st century;
- reflects the diverse needs of modern families; and
- makes Canada a world leader in supporting parents.

As part of this process we will ensure that Guaranteed Paid Family Leave is integrated effectively with Quebec's provincial parental benefits system, which the province will continue to run itself.

#### Costing

These measures are projected to cost approximately \$800 million in 2020-21 rising to \$1.2 billion in 2023-24. Further details related to costing will be released over the course of the campaign.

#### Related link:

**Region:** [Canada](#) <sup>[4]</sup>

**Tags:** [election](#) <sup>[5]</sup>

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#### Links

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<https://2019.liberal.ca/our-plan/more-accessible-child-care-for-families/> [3] <https://2019.liberal.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/292/2019/09/Background-More-time-and-money-to-help-families-raise-their-kids.pdf> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7864> [5]

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