



1243 Islington Avenue, Suite 704
Toronto, Ontario M8X 1Y9

Tel 416.979.2010
Toll Free 1.800.668.2022
Fax 416.979.1144

RMTAO.com
RMTFind.com

April 25, 2023

Hon. Chrystia Freeland
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Canada
90 Elgin Street, Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0G5

Dear Minister Freeland:

RE: Request for CEBA loan repayment extension

The Registered Massage Therapists' Association of Ontario (RMTAO) appreciates the many initiatives taken by the Government of Canada to mitigate the devastating economic impact the COVID-19 crisis has had on small businesses and self-employed individuals in our sector. However, with the Pandemic all but declared over, some significant challenges remain for regulated health professionals, particularly those in the Registered Massage Therapy (RMT) sector.

The Registered Massage Therapists Association of Ontario (RMTAO) advocates for over 7,000 members and 14,000 Registered Massage Therapists (RMTs) across Ontario, many of whom are small business owners who qualified for and received Canadian Emergency Business Account (CEBA) loans.

The current challenge for many of those who took the loans is the pandemic-caused shortage of Registered Massage Therapists (RMTs) that drastically reduced operations for many small businesses (clinics). Fewer RMTs resulted in clinics generating much lower levels of revenue than anticipated and many are struggling to repay their loans by the December 31, 2023, deadline. As such, the RMTAO is asking for a one-year extension to December 31, 2024, for repayment.

RMTs play a vital role in providing health services to Canadians. They assist with rehabilitation, improve quality of life for the elderly, and alleviate the physical symptoms of depression, stress and anxiety. By relieving musculoskeletal pain, RMTs help people remain in the workforce longer and improves the quality of life for thousands. Massage therapy is also widely recognized as a non-pharmaceutical alternative to opioids in the treatment of chronic pain.

Favourable consideration of our recommendation will ensure that RMT services will continue to be restored quickly and effectively and shortages of skilled practitioners will not be exacerbated.

The RMTAO would be pleased to provide further input or otherwise assist the Government's efforts in responding to the Pandemic and related ongoing crisis, especially measures that affect RMTs and their patients.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Feraday
Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer
Registered Massage Therapists' Association of Ontario

Cc: The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, Leader of the Liberal Party
The Honourable Pierre Poilievre, Leader of the Conservative Party, Leader of the Official
Opposition
Jagmeet Singh, Leader of the New Democratic Party
Elizabeth May, Leader of the Green Party of Canada
The Honourable Mary Ng, Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small
Business and Economic Development