



## Continued emergency funding for municipalities to protect and maintain vital fire and emergency medical services

- The COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect our daily lives and governments at all levels have been working hard to protect the health and safety of Canadians.
- Municipalities across Canada may have lost between \$10 - \$15 billion in revenue over the first three quarters of 2020 and unanticipated costs including public safety measures and support for vulnerable populations ([Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2020](#)).
- Many municipal fire departments were already under stress before the pandemic. Without adequate operating funding for municipalities, Canadians will experience reduced response capabilities to all types of emergencies including fires, accidents and medical emergencies.
- Last year, St. John's Regional Fire Department was required to remove a fire truck from their service after budget cuts. Given this stark reality, other municipalities may be forced to brownout fire trucks, causing delays in response times.
- As accelerated vaccination rates lead us towards a path to economic recovery, it is prudent to consider a balance of investments between community growth and public safety.
- The IAFF recognizes and appreciates the many measures the federal government implemented in response to the pandemic, such as the Safe Restart Agreement and the recent proposal of a one-time investment of \$2.2 billion to help address infrastructure priorities in municipalities and First Nations communities through the Federal Gas Tax Fund.
- Fostering sustainable infrastructure requires a balanced investment in emergency services. As such, the IAFF recommends that the federal government include guidance within the evaluation of pandemic-resilient infrastructure projects to ensure that proper public safety measures, including proper staffing and skills training to meet the unique needs of each community project.
- Governments must consider the short and long-term implications of the strain on financial resources our communities are dealing with.
- The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) recommends a multi-year approach in Covid-19 assistance to support subnational government services beyond 2020. ([The territorial impact of COVID-19: Managing the crisis across levels of government, OECD, 2020](#))
- The IAFF supports continued collaborations across all levels of government to ensure sustainable national efforts to mitigate the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, including ensuring the maintenance of adequate levels of fire and emergency medical services in communities across Canada.

### What we're asking:

That the federal government continue to invest in our municipalities by supporting future consideration of financial relief as a top-up to the Safe Restart Agreement, providing emergency operating funding to mitigate the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and earmarking a portion of those funds toward the maintenance of vital services, including fire and emergency medical services.

**For more information about this issue or any other issue affecting Canada's professional fire fighters, visit [www.iaff.org](http://www.iaff.org) or contact the IAFF Canadian Office at (613) 567-8988. The International Association of Fire Fighters represents 320,000 professional fire fighters in North America, including over 26,000 in Canada. The IAFF is affiliated with the AFL-CIO and the Canadian Labour Congress.**