Questions and Answers

Question 1: Can the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) related to COVID-19 be garnished to satisfy family support obligations?

Answer 1: No, the CERB is not garnishable to satisfy family support obligations. The CERB is unique and time-limited.
The CERB would cover Canadians who have lost their job, are sick, quarantined, or taking care of someone who is sick with COVID-19, as well as working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children who are sick or are home because of school and daycare closures. As such, it is not garnishable.

Question 2: In the context of COVID-19, will the federal government continue to garnish income tax refunds and Goods and Services Tax Credits (GSTC) to satisfy family support obligations?

Answer 2: Yes, there is no change to federal garnishment of these amounts. Income tax refunds and Goods and Services Tax Credits (GSTC) are still garnishable.
Under federal legislation (the *Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act*), GSTC and income tax refunds may be garnished to satisfy family support obligations when a formal request for garnishment is made to Justice Canada. Garnishment of the GSTC includes the one-time special payment, which is part of the federal government's Economic Response Plan to COVID-19

Question 3: In the context of COVID-19, will the federal government continue to garnish Employment Insurance benefits?

Answer 3: Yes, there is no change to federal garnishment of these amounts. Employment Insurance benefits may still be garnished when a formal request under the *Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act* is made to the Department of Justice for federal garnishment.

Children should get the support to which they are entitled. This is even more important during this unprecedented time. The Department of Justice will continue to assist families by carrying out its mandate, which includes supporting the provinces and territories in enforcing family support payments