



BANK OF CANADA
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CONTACT: Media Relations
613-782-8782

New \$10 bank note featuring Viola Desmond unveiled on International Women's Day

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA — Finance Minister Bill Morneau and Bank of Canada Governor Stephen S. Poloz today unveiled the new \$10 bank note featuring Viola Desmond during a ceremony at the Halifax Central Library. Once issued into circulation in late 2018, it will mark the first time that an iconic Canadian woman is portrayed on a regularly circulating Bank of Canada note.

Viola Desmond was selected for the new \$10 bank note by Minister Morneau following an open call to Canadians to nominate an iconic Canadian woman for the next redesigned bank note. A successful Black Nova Scotian businesswoman, Viola Desmond defiantly refused to leave a whites-only area of a movie theatre in 1946 and was subsequently jailed, convicted and fined. Her court case is one of the first known legal challenges against racial segregation brought forth by a Black woman in Canada.

This new \$10 note is the first vertically oriented bank note issued in Canada. This will allow for a more prominent image of Viola Desmond and differentiates this new \$10 note from the current polymer notes.

“Two years ago today—on International Women’s Day—Prime Minister Trudeau and I announced that the time had come for a Canadian woman to be represented on Canada’s bank notes. Since then, thanks in large part through her sister Wanda, more and more Canadians have come to know Viola Desmond’s remarkable personal story of courage and dignity. Her story serves as inspiration to all Canadians and acts as a powerful reminder of how one person’s actions can help trigger change across generations,” said Minister Morneau. “As we strive for equality across our economy and in every facet of our country, we hope this constant reminder of Viola’s story will help inspire a new generation of women, men, girls and boys to fight for what they believe, take their place and create a better future for themselves and all Canadians.”

The back of the \$10 bank note features images and symbols that represent Canada’s ongoing pursuit of rights and freedoms. It features the Canadian Museum for Human Rights—the first museum in the world solely dedicated to the evolution, celebration and future of human rights. Also depicted on the note are an eagle feather—representing the ongoing journey toward recognizing rights and freedoms for Indigenous Peoples in Canada—and an excerpt from the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

This new \$10 note continues a strong tradition of innovation by the Bank of Canada to



ensure that Canadians maintain trust and confidence in their money. In addition to the innovative public consultation process used to design the note, enhanced security features have been added to help keep these bank notes safe from counterfeiting, yet easy to use. The new \$10 will be printed on polymer, which was introduced to Canadian bank notes in 2011. Polymer bank notes last longer than paper bank notes. This vertical bank note is the same size, has the same functionality as existing Canadian bank notes and should not change how people handle cash.

“Our bank notes are designed not only to be a secure and durable means of payment, but also to be works of art that tell the stories of Canada. This new \$10 fits that bill,” said Governor Poloz. “I’m immensely proud of all the innovation that went into this note—from the public consultation process that encouraged a national conversation on the important contributions of women in Canadian history, to the note’s beautiful vertical design, to its cutting-edge security features. Canadians can use this note with both confidence and pride.”

Quick facts

- With the issuance of this new \$10 note, the Bank of Canada’s approach to issuing bank notes is changing. Rather than issuing all five denominations within a short time frame, a new note will be issued every few years. This will allow the Bank to integrate the latest security features each time a new bank note is issued, ensuring that Canadians can continue to use their bank notes with confidence.
- To continue to celebrate more iconic Canadians, the next \$5 note will also feature a new portrait subject and supporting imagery. In due course, the Bank will launch another consultation process to seek input from Canadians on the design of the next \$5 note.
- As a result of the consultation processes to select new portrait subjects for the \$10 note and the next \$5 note, Canada’s first Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, and first francophone Prime Minister, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, will be honoured on higher value bank notes when they are redesigned.
- These changes mean that former prime ministers William Lyon Mackenzie King and Sir Robert Borden will no longer be portrayed on bank notes. The \$20 denomination will continue to feature the reigning monarch.

Associated links

- For more information on the visual elements and security features on the new \$10 bank note, visit our [website](#) or watch the [video](#). Find conceptual images of the new note on [Flickr](#).
- Watch Viola Desmond’s sister, Wanda Robson, as she reacts to seeing [the new \\$10 bank note](#) for the first time.



- Find out more about [Viola Desmond](#) and how she was chosen as the [iconic Canadian woman](#) portrayed on this new bank note.
- Read about our [principles for bank note design](#).
- Visit our [bank notes](#) page for information and resources on past and current Canadian bank notes.

Notes to editors

- At the request of the family, media wishing to speak with Viola Desmond's relatives are kindly asked to contact the Bank of Canada [Media Relations team](#).
- Videos are available for download upon request.