

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Asset Test

In order to qualify and continue to be eligible for welfare, a household's assets must fall below certain limits set by each province or territory. These limits can vary by household size, and some jurisdictions set different limits for those applying for welfare compared to those already receiving it.

Asset tests tend to only consider a household's *liquid* assets, such as cash on hand and in a bank account, as well as stocks, bonds, and securities that can be readily converted to cash. *Fixed* assets, such as primary residence, primary vehicle, personal effects, and items needed for employment, are typically exempt (within reason) from the asset test. All jurisdictions also exempt the value of Registered Education Savings Plans (RESPs) and Registered Disability Savings Plans (RDSPs), and several have some exemptions for Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs).

The table below shows the liquid asset exemption levels in effect as of January 2019. Any changes that occurred during the year are described in the footnotes. Asset limits are for households that are both applying for and receiving social assistance unless otherwise stated.

Liquid asset exemption levels as of January 2019

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
AB ¹	\$2,235	\$2,598	\$4,095	\$5,820
AB, AISH ²	Not applicable	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
BC ³	\$2,000	\$100,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
MB	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$8,000	\$16,000
NB ⁴	\$1,000	\$10,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
NL	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$5,500	\$5,500
NS	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
NT	\$300	\$50,000	\$380	\$560
NU	\$500	\$5,000	\$1,000	\$1,000

- 1 Effective January 1, 2019, the liquid asset limit for those in both the “Expected to Work” and “Barriers to Full Employment” categories of Income Support was equivalent to three months’ core benefits based on household composition. Core benefits include Core Essential benefits, Core Shelter, the “Federal Child Benefit” amount as determined by the Minister of Alberta Community and Social Services, the High School Incentive Benefit, the Handicap Benefit, the Personal Needs Allowance, and the Earnings Replacement Allowance.
- 2 Both single persons and families could apply for the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program. Some assets were exempt from the limit, such as principal residence, a non-recreational vehicle, an adapted vehicle, clothing and household items, a locked-in retirement account (LIRA), and a Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP). Those with assets of \$5,000 or less may also have received Personal Benefits (e.g., for childcare, moving, and addiction treatment), and a monthly Child Benefit of \$200 for the first dependent child and \$100 for each subsequent child. If both parents were AISH clients, only one parent received the Child Benefit. These amounts were effective January 1, 2019.
- 3 Asset limits for Income Assistance applicants and recipients were increased in July 2019 to \$5,000 for a single person and \$10,000 for families. No changes were made to asset limits for Disability Assistance. The Income Assistance primary vehicle equity limit of \$10,000 was also removed in July 2019; this limit was never applied in Disability Assistance. Subsequent vehicles were not exempt and were counted towards asset limits for both Income Assistance and Disability Assistance applicants and recipients.
- 4 Asset limits refer to New Brunswick’s Transitional Assistance program except in the case of the single person with a disability; in that case, they refer to the Extended Benefits program.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
ON ⁵	\$10,000	\$40,000	\$10,500	\$16,000
PE ⁶	\$2,500	\$5,000	\$4,000	\$6,000
QC ⁷	Applicants: \$887 Recipients: \$1,500	\$2,500	Applicants: \$1,268 Recipients: \$2,931	Applicants: \$1,807 Recipients: \$3,054
SK ⁸	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$3,000	\$4,000
SK, SAID ⁹	Not applicable	\$1,500	\$3,000	\$4,000
YT	\$500	\$1,500	\$1,000	\$1,600

- 5 Asset limits refer to the Ontario Works (OW) program except in the case of the single person with a disability; in that case, they refer to the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).
- 6 These asset levels were effective as of July 2018.
- 7 Income received during the month of application for rent, heating, and public utility costs were not considered household assets. After the first month under the Social Assistance program, higher asset limits applied for recipients with no severe limitations to employment.
- 8 Asset limits refer to the Transitional Employment Allowance program except in the case of the single person with a disability; in that case, they refer to the Saskatchewan Assistance Program. In July 2019, the Government of Saskatchewan launched the Saskatchewan Income Support (SIS) program and suspended intake of new applications for the SAP and TEA programs. SAP and TEA are scheduled to wind down in summer 2021.
- 9 The asset limits for the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) Program are the same as those under the Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP).