

Welfare in Canada, 2017

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November 2018



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ISBN 978-1-928003-10-6

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Welfare in Canada was established by the Caledon Institute of Social Policy to maintain data previously published by the National Council of Welfare.

Maytree thanks all jurisdictions for their cooperation in the production of the welfare incomes data presented in this report.

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INTRODUCTION

About Welfare in Canada

Welfare in Canada is a series that presents the welfare incomes of four example households living on social assistance in a given year.

Welfare incomes refers to a household's total income from government transfers and not just social assistance payments. Individuals and families who are in receipt of basic rates of social assistance will also be eligible for financial support through tax credits, child benefits for households with children, and, where applicable, additional social assistance payments that are automatic and recurring (for example, an annual back-to-school allowance). Together these form the total welfare income of a household. The value varies in every province and territory because each jurisdiction has distinct social assistance programs.


Welfare in Canada 2017 looks at the maximum total amount that a household (an individual or family) would have received over the course of the 2017 calendar year, assuming they had no other source of income and no assets. Some households may have received less if they had income from other sources, while some households may have received more if they had special health- or disability-related needs.

The report looks at:

- Eligibility criteria for social assistance
- Components of a household's total welfare income
- Variations in welfare incomes by province/territory
- Changes in welfare incomes over time
- Adequacy of welfare incomes compared to poverty thresholds

In each jurisdiction, the total welfare income for which a household is eligible depends on its specific composition. For illustrative purposes this resource focuses on the welfare incomes of four household types:

1. Single person considered employable
2. Single person with a disability
3. Single parent with one child age 2
4. Couple with two children ages 10 and 15



Welfare in Canada was established by the Caledon Institute of Social Policy to maintain data previously published by the National Council of Welfare.

Methodology

The methodology replicates the approach used by the National Council of Welfare. To calculate the welfare income for each household type, we made the following assumptions:

- The households started to receive assistance on January 1 and remained on assistance for the entire year.
- The households had no earnings so were eligible to receive the maximum rate of assistance.
- The heads of all households were deemed fully employable, with the exception of the single person with a disability.
- The households lived in the largest city in their province or territory.
- The households lived in private market housing and utility costs were included in the rent.
- The households filed an income tax return at the end of the previous tax year.
- Changes to welfare rates or other program rates over the course of the year were accounted for.
- Basic rates and additional items (for example, a Christmas allowance or a back-to-school allowance) were included where applicable. Special needs amounts were not included.

Maytree thanks all jurisdictions for their cooperation in the production of the welfare incomes data presented in this report.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

This section outlines how jurisdictions determine if an individual or family is eligible for social assistance. Households in receipt of social assistance are also eligible for other payments (such as tax credits and child benefits) which together form the household's total welfare income.

What is social assistance?

Social assistance is the income program of last resort. It is intended for those who have exhausted all other means of financial support.

Who is eligible for social assistance?

Each province and territory has its own social assistance program(s), so no two are the same. Each program has different administrative rules, eligibility criteria, benefit levels, and provisions concerning special types of assistance. However, the basic structure of social assistance is much the same across the country, even though the specifics vary.

In every jurisdiction, eligibility for social assistance is determined on the basis of a needs test which takes into account a household's financial assets and income.

Asset limits

In order to qualify for social assistance, a household's assets must fall below certain limits set by each province and territory. These limits can vary by household size and, in some jurisdictions, they vary 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 exempt (within reason) from the asset test.

Appendix 1 shows the liquid asset exemption levels in effect as of January 2017 and details of the changes that occurred during the year.

Income limits

Once a household has met the asset test, it has to complete an income test to determine if it is eligible for social assistance. Certain aspects of a household's income are not taken into account when determining the amount of social assistance. For example, the Canada Child Benefit, child welfare payments, and federal and provincial/territorial tax credits are all considered exempt income but Employment Insurance benefits and Workers' Compensation payments are not. For every dollar of non-exempt income a household has, its social assistance payment is reduced by a dollar.

Some earnings from employment are also exempt from the income test. This allows recipients to earn a certain amount of money without affecting their social assistance payments, creating a modest work incentive. Each social assistance program has its own way of calculating earnings exemptions, but there are generally three approaches:

1. A *flat-rate amount* permits a recipient to earn a certain amount after which welfare benefits are reduced dollar for dollar.
2. A *percentage of earnings* approach means that welfare benefits are reduced by a certain percentage. For example, a 25 per cent exemption rate means that welfare benefits are reduced by 75 cents for every dollar earned.
3. A *combination of flat-rate and a percentage* means that once the flat rate is exceeded, benefits are reduced by a percentage amount.

Appendix 2 shows the earnings exemption approach in effect as of January 2017, and details of the changes that occurred during the year.

TOTAL WELFARE INCOMES

Introduction

Households that qualify for basic social assistance payments also qualify for other financial support including:

- GST/HST credit
- Provincial/territorial tax credits or benefits
- Federal and provincial/territorial child benefits (for households with children)
- Recurring additional social assistance payments (for example, an annual back-to-school allowance)

Together, these combine with basic social assistance payments to form the total welfare income of a household. Households may receive less if they have income from other sources, while some households may receive more if they have special health- or disability-related needs.

The maximum value of each component of welfare income varies by household composition and area because each jurisdiction has distinct income security programs.

This section summarizes how the total welfare income of the four example households varied across the provinces and territories in 2017, before looking at the components of that income in each jurisdiction.

Welfare incomes across Canada

The table below shows the maximum total welfare income four different household types would have received in 2017 in each province. These amounts are based on a series of assumptions outlined in the methodology section.

Total welfare incomes in each province in 2017

Jurisdiction	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability*	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Alberta	\$8,027	\$10,225 (or \$19,705)	\$19,743	\$28,989
British Columbia	\$8,124	\$13,096	\$19,795	\$25,976
Manitoba	\$9,494	\$12,132	\$21,364	\$29,483
New Brunswick	\$7,122	\$9,837	\$19,920	\$26,412
Newfoundland and Labrador	\$11,379	\$11,579	\$23,364	\$29,178
Nova Scotia	\$7,433	\$10,264	\$18,182	\$27,663
Ontario	\$9,461	\$14,682	\$21,136	\$30,545
Prince Edward Island	\$7,900	\$10,229	\$20,619	\$32,135
Quebec	\$9,083	\$12,741	\$21,536	\$29,657
Saskatchewan	\$8,820	\$11,276 (or \$15,645)	\$21,086	\$29,776

* The maximum income of a person with a disability on Alberta's Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped program was higher at \$19,705. The maximum income of a person with a disability on the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability program was \$15,645.

- In 2017, the highest welfare income of a single person considered employable was in Newfoundland and Labrador at almost \$11,400, but in all other provinces, welfare incomes clustered at a lower level of around \$7,000 to \$9,500.

- Ontario had the highest welfare income for individuals on a standard disability assistance program at almost \$14,700, with all other provinces falling between \$9,800 and \$13,100. But Alberta and Saskatchewan had specific programs for persons with a severe and permanent disability, with higher welfare incomes that reached \$19,705 and \$15,645, respectively.
- The maximum welfare income for a single parent with one child ranged from just under \$18,200 in Nova Scotia to \$23,364 in Newfoundland and Labrador, and for a couple with two children it ranged from \$25,976 in British Columbia to \$32,135 in Prince Edward Island.

The next table shows the same information but for the territories. It is based on the same methodology as the provincial figures, but they are not directly comparable because of the distinct situation in the territories.

Total welfare incomes in each territory in 2017

Jurisdiction	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Northwest Territories	\$25,358	\$26,260	\$40,932	\$48,357
Nunavut	\$5,950	\$8,600	\$17,012	\$28,708
Yukon Territory	\$17,820	\$21,474	\$33,082	\$48,915

The welfare incomes in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories were generally higher than in the provinces, reflecting the higher cost of living in the territories. Conversely, welfare incomes in Nunavut were lower than in the provinces, reflecting the high proportion of households on social assistance living in subsidized housing whose living costs are reduced through housing subsidies.

Components of welfare incomes by jurisdiction


ALBERTA

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Calgary in 2017.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single person in AISH program*	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$7,524	\$8,772	\$19,056	\$11,196	\$15,000
Additional SA benefits		\$936			\$275
Federal child benefits				\$6,400	\$10,800
Provincial child benefits				\$1,107	\$1,661
GST credit	\$278	\$292	\$424	\$702	\$848
Provincial tax credits/ benefits	\$225	\$225	\$225	\$338	\$405
Total 2017 income	\$8,027	\$10,225	\$19,705	\$19,743	\$28,989

* The Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program differs from the other social assistance programs referenced in this report in that recipients are provided with a flat-rate living allowance benefit that is not linked to household size. In addition to the living allowance, AISH may provide a \$100 Child Benefit for each dependent child and Personal Benefits for the recipient and his or her dependent children to meet one-time or ongoing needs, such as a special diet and child care. Personal Benefits are provided only to recipients who have \$3,000 or less in non-exempt assets.

On top of basic social assistance payments, some households benefited from additional social assistance programs. The Personal Needs Allowance provided \$78 per month to the single person with a disability, and the annual School Expense Allowance provided the couple with children with \$100 for the 10-year-old and \$175 for the 15-year-old.



In January 2017, a new provincial tax credit came into effect. The Alberta Climate Leadership Adjustment Rebate (ACLAR) was paid to low- and middle-income households to help them adjust to the new provincial carbon price. In the first 6 months of 2017, this credit amounted to \$100 for a single person, \$150 for a single parent with one child, and \$180 for a couple with two children. In July, the value of the rebate increased. In the second half of 2017, it amounted to \$125 for a single person, \$187.50 for a single parent with one child, and \$225 for a couple with two children.

July 2017 also saw a small increase in the maximum monthly payment for the Alberta Child Benefit, from \$91.67 to \$92.83 for a one-child household and from \$137.50 to \$139.25 for a two-child household.

Total welfare incomes in Alberta ranged from \$8,027 for a single employable adult to \$28,989 for a couple with two children. A person with a disability in Alberta on Income Support received \$10,225 in 2017, but those who qualified for Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) benefits received a much higher amount of \$19,705.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Vancouver in 2017.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$7,620	\$12,551	\$11,647	\$13,513
Additional SA benefits	\$35	\$35	\$80	\$365
Federal child benefits			\$6,400	\$10,800
Provincial child benefits			\$660	
GST credit	\$278	\$319	\$702	\$848
Provincial tax credits/benefits	\$191	\$191	\$306	\$450
Total 2017 income	\$8,124	\$13,096	\$19,795	\$25,976

In British Columbia, all of the example household types received Income Assistance (IA) benefits except for the single person with a disability, who received Disability Assistance benefits. In April 2017, the monthly rate for Disability Assistance increased by \$50, and in October 2017, monthly rates for both Income Assistance and Disability Assistance increased by \$100 per month.

On top of the basic social assistance amounts, all households received an annual Christmas Supplement and the couple with two children received an annual School Start-Up Supplement of \$100 for the 10-year-old and \$175 for the 15-year-old.

In BC, provincial tax credits/benefits included the BC Sales Tax Credit and the BC Low Income Climate Action Tax Credit. The BC Early Childhood Tax Benefit, which provided a monthly tax-free benefit of up to \$55 for each child under 6 years was also delivered through the tax system, but is shown in the table as a provincial child benefit.

Total welfare incomes in BC ranged from \$8,124 for a single person considered employable to \$25,976 for a couple with two children.

MANITOBA

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Winnipeg in 2017.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$2,640	\$3,977	\$4,992	\$8,405
Additional SA benefits	\$6,576	\$7,836	\$9,270	\$9,430
Federal child benefits			\$6,400	\$10,800
Provincial child benefits				
GST credit	\$278	\$319	\$702	\$848
Provincial tax credits/benefits				
Total 2017 income	\$9,494	\$12,132	\$21,364	\$29,483

Unlike other jurisdictions, in Manitoba the example households received more through additional social assistance programs than through the basic amount. This is principally because financial support for rental costs was delivered through the Rent Assist program (though social assistance recipients received the payment through their basic benefit cheque). In July 2017, Rent Assist benefits for social assistance recipients increased from \$533 to \$563 a month for the single adult households, and from \$758 to \$787 a month for the households with children.

Additional benefits also included the Income Assistance for Persons with Disabilities (IAPD) benefit of \$105 per month for a single person with a disability, and the annual School Supplies Allowance of \$60 for the 10-year-old and \$100 for the 15-year-old.

Although Manitoba had a provincial Child Benefit program providing up to \$35 per month per child, parents receiving Employment and Income Assistance (social assistance) were not eligible.

Total welfare incomes in Manitoba ranged from \$9,494 for a single person considered employable to \$29,483 for a couple with two children.

NEW BRUNSWICK

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in St. John in 2017.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$6,444	\$7,956	\$10,644	\$11,940
Additional SA benefits		\$1,200	\$1,224	\$1,224
Federal child benefits			\$6,400	\$10,800
Provincial child benefits			\$250	\$500
GST credit	\$278	\$281	\$702	\$848
Provincial tax credits/benefits	\$400	\$400	\$700	\$1,100
Total 2017 income	\$7,122	\$9,837	\$19,920	\$26,412

Note: Starting in 2017, the School Supplement, which was reported as an additional SA benefit in previous editions of this report, is reported as a tax credit. In 2011, the program was expanded to include all low-income households with children, and it is now paid through the income tax system.

In New Brunswick, all of the example households received Transitional Assistance except the single person with a disability, who received Extended Benefits. On top of the basic social assistance amounts, the single person with a disability received \$100 per month through the Disability Supplement, while the households with children received the Income Supplement Benefit to offset high shelter costs.

Provincial tax credits included the Home Energy Assistance Program (\$100 per household per year), the New Brunswick Harmonized Sales Tax Credit, and the School Supplement. The maximum New Brunswick Child Benefit payment was \$20.83 per child per month.

Total welfare incomes in New Brunswick ranged from \$7,122 for a single person considered employable to \$26,412 for a couple with two children.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR


The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in St. John's in 2017.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$9,048	\$9,048	\$13,644	\$14,220
Additional SA benefits	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$1,800
Federal child benefits			\$6,400	\$10,800
Provincial child benefits			\$382	\$788
GST credit	\$311	\$311	\$702	\$848
Provincial tax credits/benefits	\$220	\$420	\$436	\$722
Total 2017 income	\$11,379	\$11,579	\$23,364	\$29,178

For the single person with a disability, the additional benefits component of welfare income included the Personal Care Allowance of \$150 per month paid by Health and Community Services to social assistance recipients receiving supportive services. For the other household types, additional benefits included the Supplemental Shelter Benefit of \$150 per month. As over 90 per cent of households living in St. John's had rental costs that exceeded the basic benefit, it was assumed they automatically received the shelter supplement.

Persons with disabilities on assistance were ineligible for the Supplemental Shelter Benefit because they could receive additional financial benefits towards the actual cost of shelter and utilities from the Department of Health and Community Services. The value of this additional assistance was not readily available and so could not be included in the total welfare income calculations.

In July 2017, the maximum monthly Newfoundland and Labrador Child Benefit increased from \$31.58 to \$32.16 for the first child and from \$33.50 to \$34.16 for the second child.



In terms of provincial tax credits, social assistance recipients qualified for the Newfoundland and Labrador Income Supplement, and those who were eligible for the federal Disability Tax Credit received an additional credit from the province.

Total welfare incomes in Newfoundland and Labrador ranged from \$11,379 for a single person considered employable to \$29,178 for a couple with two children.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Yellowknife in 2017.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$24,934	\$21,768	\$33,312	\$35,916
Additional SA benefits		\$4,068		
Federal child benefits			\$6,400	\$10,800
Territorial child benefits			\$518	\$793
GST credit	\$424	\$424	\$702	\$848
Territorial tax credits/benefits				
Total 2017 income	\$25,358	\$26,260	\$40,932	\$48,357

The NWT Income Assistance program pays actual costs of shelter, fuel, and utilities and the figures in the table were based on estimates of the average costs of these items in Yellowknife. An improved data source was used to estimate these costs for 2017 resulting in an increase in the value of Income Assistance amounts.¹

Alongside basic social assistance payments, a single person with a disability received \$4,068 in additional benefits (including the Disability Allowance of \$300 per month and the Incidental Allowance for Persons with Disabilities of \$39 per month).

The NWT Child Benefit was enhanced and restructured in July 2017. Before then, households received the same payment for children regardless of age; after July 2017, households received a higher payment for children under the age of 6.

Total welfare incomes in the Northwest Territories ranged from \$25,358 for a single person considered employable to just over \$48,357 for a couple with two children.

1 Shelter costs for 2017 were taken from the CMHC 2017 Rental Market Report: Yellowknife Highlights (previous years' data were based on information from the NWT Public Housing Corporation information). Utility and fuel costs for 2017 were provided by the NWT government based on a new and more accurate database.

NOVA SCOTIA

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Halifax in 2017.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$6,900	\$9,720	\$10,140	\$14,040
Additional SA benefits				\$150
Federal child benefits			\$6,400	\$10,800
Provincial child benefits			\$625	\$1,450
GST credit	\$278	\$289	\$702	\$848
Provincial tax credits/benefits	\$255	\$255	\$315	\$375
Total 2017 income	\$7,433	\$10,264	\$18,182	\$27,663

Beyond basic social assistance rates, only households with children received additional provincial benefits. In September, the couple with children received an annual School Supplies Supplement of \$50 for the 10-year-old and \$100 for the 15-year-old. In addition, households with children received the monthly Nova Scotia Child Benefit of up to \$52.08 for the first child and \$68.75 for the second child. All the example households benefited from the Nova Scotia Affordable Living Tax Credit.

Total welfare incomes in Nova Scotia ranged from \$7,433 for a single person considered employable to \$27,663 for a couple with two children.

NUNAVUT

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Iqaluit in 2017.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$5,672	\$5,772	\$9,580	\$16,400
Additional SA benefits		\$2,550		
Federal child benefits			\$6,400	\$10,800
Territorial child benefits			\$330	\$660
GST credit	\$278	\$278	\$702	\$848
Territorial tax credits/benefits				
Total 2017 income	\$5,950	\$8,600	\$17,012	\$28,708

In Iqaluit, 95 per cent of social assistance recipients live in public housing. Since 2012, these welfare income calculations have used the public housing rent to better reflect the actual amounts paid to Income Assistance households. Recipients in public housing do not pay for fuel, water, sewage, garbage, and/or municipal needs, and their electricity costs are heavily subsidized. This means that although the totals for basic assistance appear to be much lower than elsewhere in Canada, the majority of housing costs have already been paid.

Alongside basic levels of social assistance, a single person with a disability in Nunavut received an additional benefit in the form of the Incidental Allowance which rose from \$175 to \$250 per month in July. Meanwhile, households with children received \$27.50 per child per month through the Nunavut Child Benefit.

Total welfare incomes in Nunavut ranged from \$5,950 for a single person considered employable to \$28,708 for a couple with two children. Unlike the equivalent figure for the other provinces and territories in Canada, this was the income social assistance claimants had after the majority of their housing costs had been paid.

ONTARIO

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Toronto in 2017.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$8,517	\$13,628	\$11,652	\$14,535
Additional SA benefits				
Federal child benefits			\$6,400	\$10,800
Provincial child benefits			\$1,367	\$2,734
GST credit	\$278	\$364	\$702	\$848
Provincial tax credits/benefits	\$666	\$691	\$1,015	\$1,628
Total 2017 income	\$9,461	\$14,682	\$21,136	\$30,545

In Ontario, all of the example households received Ontario Works (OW) except the single person with a disability, who received Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) benefits. Basic social assistance rates increased by 2 per cent in September 2017 for ODSP recipients, and by 2 per cent in October 2017 for OW recipients.

While none of the household types received additional social assistance benefits, they all benefited from the Ontario Trillium Benefit, a provincial tax credit.

Households with children also received the Ontario Child Benefit which, in July 2017, increased from \$113 to \$114.83 per month per child.

Total welfare incomes in Ontario ranged from \$9,461 for a single person considered employable to \$30,545 for a couple with two children.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Charlottetown in 2017.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$7,512	\$9,828	\$13,352	\$19,972
Additional SA benefits				\$350
Federal child benefits			\$6,400	\$10,800
Provincial child benefits				
GST credit	\$278	\$291	\$702	\$848
Provincial tax credits/benefits	\$110	\$110	\$165	\$165
Total 2017 income	\$7,900	\$10,229	\$20,619	\$32,135

In November 2017, monthly basic social assistance payments in Prince Edward Island increased, rising by \$6 for the single adult households, \$10 for the single parent household and \$20 for the couple with children. Alongside basic social assistance, the couple with children also received \$350 in additional benefits through the School Allowance (\$75 for the 10-year-old and \$100 for the 15-year-old issued in August and December). In addition, all households in PEI benefited from the PEI Sales Tax Credit.

Most social assistance recipients with disabilities received additional financial support through the Disability Support Program (DSP). Recipients ineligible for the DSP could have applied for the Personal Comfort Allowance (\$71 per month), Special Care Allowance (up to \$40 per month), or Disability Allowance (up to \$150 per month) through the social assistance program, but these amounts were not part of the “standard package” of benefits and were not included in the table.

Total welfare incomes in PEI ranged from \$7,900 for a single person considered employable to \$32,135 for a couple with two children.

QUEBEC

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Montreal in 2017.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$7,836	\$11,448	\$9,132	\$11,767
Additional SA benefits			\$960	\$1,159
Federal child benefits			\$6,400	\$10,800
Provincial child benefits			\$3,255	\$3,614
GST credit	\$278	\$324	\$702	\$848
Provincial tax credits/benefits	\$969	\$970	\$1,087	\$1,469
Total 2017 income	\$9,083	\$12,741	\$21,536	\$29,657

In Quebec, all of the example households received Social Assistance except the single person with a disability, who received Social Solidarity benefits. For the single parent, part of the basic social assistance amount included the Temporarily Limited Capacity Allowance of \$133 a month.

Additional social assistance benefits included the monthly Shelter Allowance Benefit of \$80 per month for households with children (administered by the Société d'habitation du Québec) and the Annual School Allowance for the couple with children (amounting to \$76 for the 10-year-old and \$123 for the 15-year-old).

Child Assistance rates increased alongside rates for basic social assistance payments in January 2017. Households with children received up to \$200.83 per month in Child Assistance for their first child, and \$100.33 for the second child. Single parents received an additional monthly supplement of \$70.42.

All of the household types benefited from the Quebec Solidarity Tax Credit.

Total welfare incomes in Quebec ranged from \$9,083 for a single person considered employable to \$29,657 for a couple with two children.

SASKATCHEWAN

Saskatchewan has three social assistance programs:

- Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) which assists people participating in pre-employment programs and services or those who are “job ready” and seeking employment.
- Saskatchewan Assistance Plan (SAP) for households which, for various reasons, cannot meet basic living costs.
- Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) for persons with significant and enduring disabilities.

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Saskatoon in 2017.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single person in SAID program*	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance**	\$8,246	\$9,828	\$14,114	\$13,392	\$17,089
Additional SA benefits		\$840	\$840		\$215
Federal child benefits				\$6,400	\$10,800
Provincial child benefits					
GST credit	\$278	\$312	\$394	\$702	\$848
Provincial tax credits/ benefits	\$296	\$296	\$296	\$592	\$824
Total 2017 income	\$8,820	\$11,276	\$15,645	\$21,086	\$29,776

* The SAID program, introduced in 2009, is an income support program for persons with significant and enduring disabilities. Initially it supported individuals in residential care, but in June 2012 it was expanded to include persons living independently. It is a needs-tested program that pays higher benefits than those under SAP.

** Support for SAP recipients includes actual utility costs while TEA recipients receive a flat-rate utility amount and SAID uses a combination of both. The table above reflects the utility component of support by using the average annual utility amounts for each household type.

All of the example households received TEA, except for the single person with a disability, who received benefits through SAP and SAID. In July 2017, TEA rates decreased by \$20 per month per adult.

Through SAP, the single person with a disability received some additional social assistance benefits – a Disability Allowance of \$50 per month and a Special Transportation Allowance of \$20 per month. Meanwhile, a person with a disability on the SAID program received \$70 per month through the Disability Income Benefit component.

The only additional benefit through TEA that applied to the example households was the Education Expenses Allowance, which provided the couple with an annual payment of \$85 for their 10-year-old and \$130 for their 15-year-old. All of the household types benefited from the Saskatchewan Low-Income Tax Credit (SLITC).

Total welfare incomes in Saskatchewan ranged from \$8,820 for a single person considered employable to \$29,776 for a couple with two children. A person with a disability in the SAP program received \$11,276 in 2017 but those who qualified for SAID benefits received a much higher amount of \$15,645.

YUKON TERRITORY

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Whitehorse in 2017.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$16,587	\$16,587	\$23,904	\$33,394
Additional SA benefits	\$809	\$4,463	\$1,256	\$2,233
Federal child benefits			\$6,400	\$10,800
Territorial child benefits			\$820	\$1,640
GST credit	\$424	\$424	\$702	\$848
Territorial tax credits/benefits				
Total 2017 income	\$17,820	\$21,474	\$33,082	\$48,915

In the Yukon Territory, a person with a disability received the same basic needs amount as a single adult considered employable, but also received \$250 per month through the Yukon Supplementary Allowance for persons with disabilities. The rates of basic social assistance for all households increased in November 2017. Households with children received \$68.33 per child per month through the Yukon Child Benefit.

The table shows the total value of the additional benefits that were available to households receiving social assistance in the Yukon Territory. They included a Christmas Allowance (\$30 per person), annual Winter Clothing Allowance (\$75 for persons under 14 years and \$125 for persons 14 years or older), Telephone Allowance (\$37 per month per household), Transportation Expense (\$62 per month per adult), and Laundry Service (\$10 per month per person). Some households received these additional benefits instantly, while others only qualified after they had been in receipt of social assistance for six consecutive months.

Total welfare incomes in the Yukon Territory ranged from \$17,820 for a single person considered employable to \$48,915 for a couple with two children.

CHANGES TO WELFARE INCOMES

Introduction

This section looks at how the value of welfare incomes has changed over time in Canada. It begins by summarizing the trends across Canada in how different components of welfare income changed in the last year. It then shows the longer term trends in each province and territory in turn.

Changes across Canada

The table below shows how the value of welfare incomes in each province for each household type changed between 2016 and 2017. The values for 2016 have been adjusted based on the national rate of inflation. This means that in areas where benefit rates have not changed, the table will show this as a slight fall in value as, due to rising prices, the same benefit amount can buy less goods. The table does not include the three territories because of the distinct nature of social assistance in each of them.

Change in total welfare income between 2016 and 2017 (adjusted for inflation)

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Alberta	\$104	\$67	\$1,032	\$1,822
British Columbia	\$179	\$1,183	\$369	\$980
Manitoba	\$169	\$139	\$216	\$796
New Brunswick	\$43	-\$2	\$367	\$1,074
Newfoundland and Labrador	-\$213	-\$115	\$89	\$856
Nova Scotia	-\$34	-\$80	\$171	\$811
Ontario	\$136	\$18	\$278	\$919

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Prince Edward Island	-\$44	-\$81	\$181	\$808
Quebec	-\$13	-\$108	\$142	\$738
Saskatchewan	-\$402	-\$74	\$74	\$499

In 2017, the total welfare incomes for both household types with children increased in every province. This was mostly the result of the new Canada Child Benefit as 2017 was the first full year it was paid. For a single parent with one child the typical increase in annual welfare income was around \$200, and for a couple with two children the increase was around four times higher. Families with children in Alberta saw the biggest increase in their welfare incomes in 2017 because they also benefited from an increase to the Alberta Child Benefit and the introduction of the Alberta Climate Leadership Adjustment Rebate.

The change in welfare incomes for single adult households was less substantial and less consistent than for households with children. The total welfare income for a single person considered employable rose in value in five provinces and fell in five. In most cases, these changes were relatively small. The biggest shift was in Saskatchewan where the total welfare income fell by \$402. While some of the fall is the result of a reduction in social assistance rates during 2017, the main driver of the change in value was a decrease in the estimated average expenditure on utilities by single employable adults receiving social assistance and not a specific policy or rate change (see page 48 for more details). This drop in the value of income was slightly countered by an increase in provincial tax credits. The decrease in Newfoundland and Labrador was mostly due to the discontinuation of the Home Heating Rebate program in 2016.

Similarly, the welfare income for a single person with a disability rose in some provinces and fell in others. Overall these changes were relatively small, except in British Columbia, where the welfare income for a single person with a disability rose in value by \$1,183 following two increases to Disability Assistance rates during 2017.

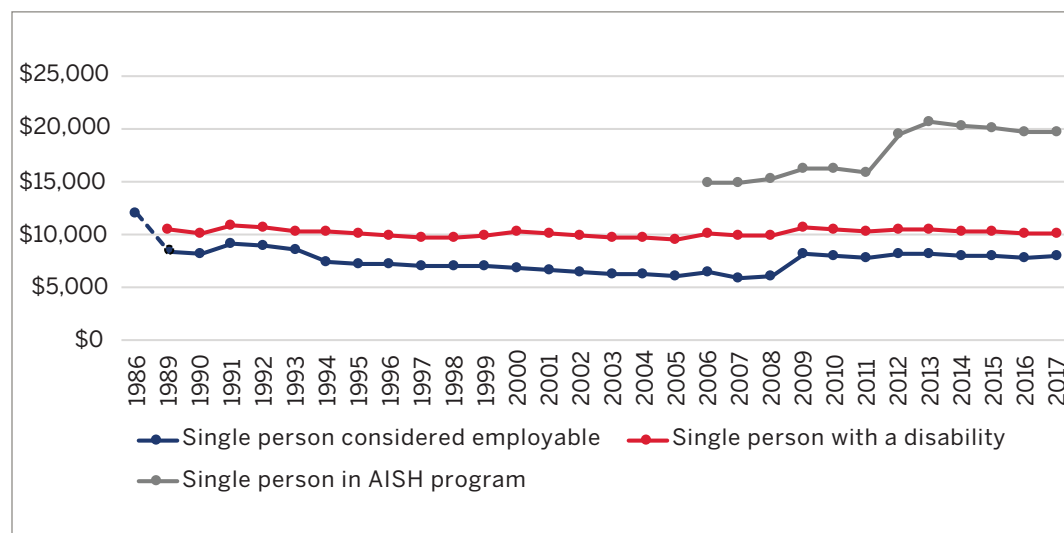
Changes by jurisdiction

ALBERTA

There were two changes that affected welfare incomes in Alberta in 2017. First, this was the first full year the new Canada Child Benefit was paid and so the welfare incomes for households with children increased as a result. Second, Alberta implemented the Alberta Climate Leadership Adjustment Rebate (ACLAR) in January 2017 to help households adjust to the new provincial carbon levy. The rebate was increased in July 2017.

The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2017 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation.

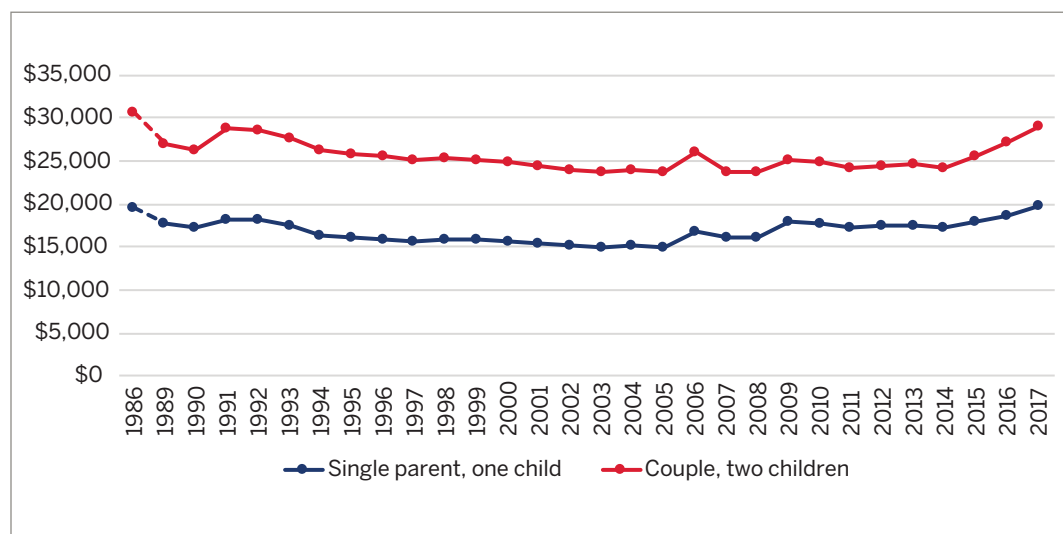
Welfare incomes for single adults, 2017 prices



- The welfare income of single persons considered employable gradually declined over the 1990s and 2000s, with the only notable increase occurring in 2009. The value has been fluctuating around the \$8,000 range since then. In 2017, a single person considered employable received up to \$8,027.
- For the past 25 years, the maximum welfare income of a person with a disability receiving income support has been fairly constant, fluctuating around \$10,000. In 2017, it stood at \$10,225.

- Those who qualified for the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) benefit had a welfare income of \$19,705 in 2017, almost double their counterparts on regular social assistance.
- Trends in AISH payments have only been tracked since 2006. Welfare incomes of AISH recipients were boosted in 2011 and 2012 but have been falling in value since 2013.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2017 prices



- The welfare incomes of households with children remained mostly unchanged between the mid-1990s and mid-2000s. But since 2015, they have risen for three consecutive years, largely as a result of changes to federal child benefits and the introduction of the Alberta Child Benefit in July 2016.
- In 2017, a single parent with one child received a welfare income of \$19,743, while a couple with two children received \$28,989.
- While the welfare incomes of households with children in 2017 were worth more than in the mid-1990s and 2000s, only that of the single parent with one child surpassed the 1986 amount.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

There were several significant changes that affected welfare incomes in British Columbia in 2017. In April 2017, Disability Assistance rates increased by \$50 a month, and, in October 2017, there was a further increase of \$100 a month to Disability Assistance and Income Assistance rates. In addition, 2017 was the first full year that the Canada Child Benefit was paid, increasing the welfare incomes of households with children.

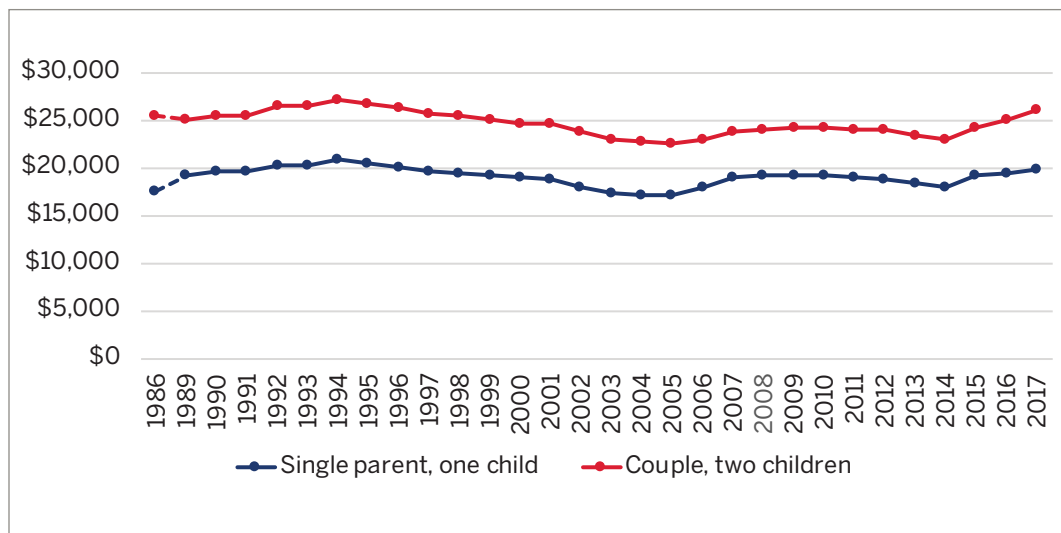
The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2017 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation.

Welfare incomes for single adults, 2017 prices



- The welfare incomes of both a single person considered employable and a single person with a disability have followed a similar pattern. Between the mid-1990s and 2016, rates followed a general downward trend, broken only by a brief increase in the mid-2000s.
- In 2017, a single person considered employable received a maximum of \$8,124. Meanwhile a single person with a disability saw a significant increase in income (due to two increases to Disability Assistance rates), and their total income reached \$13,096. However, the welfare incomes for both of these groups remained lower than in the early 1990s.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2017 prices



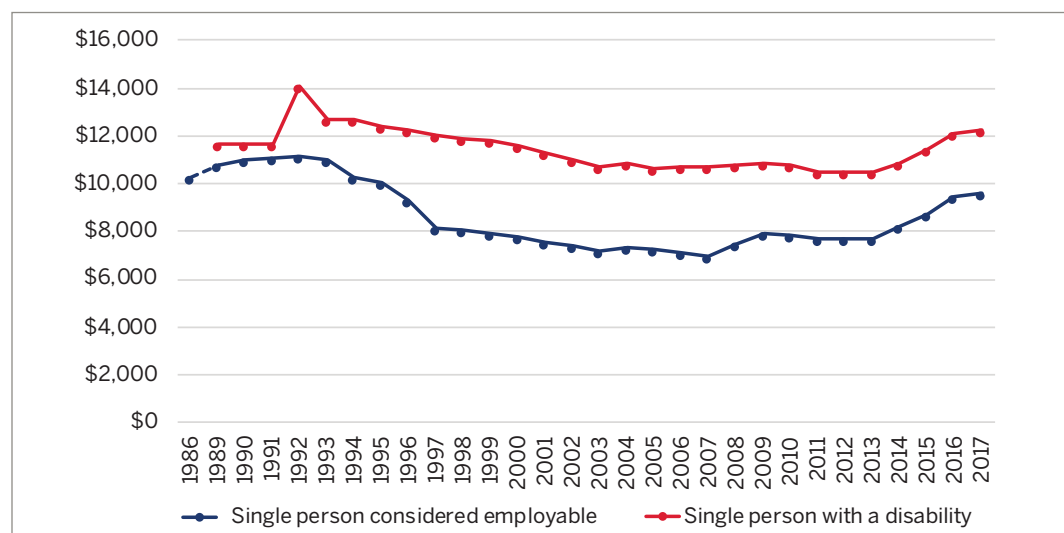
- Households with children showed a similar pattern in welfare incomes as single adults, with a notable drop starting in 1995 that continued to the mid-2000s.
- Despite small increases in the mid-2000s, welfare incomes fell again until 2015 when they started to rise, largely as a result of increases to federal child benefits.
- In 2017, a single parent with one child received \$19,795, and a couple with two children received \$25,976.

MANITOBA

There were two changes that affected welfare incomes in Manitoba in 2017. This was the first full year the new Canada Child Benefit was paid, resulting in higher welfare incomes for the two household types with children. Then, in July 2017, Manitoba Rent Assist benefits were increased for all Employment and Income Assistance households, resulting in higher welfare incomes for all household types.

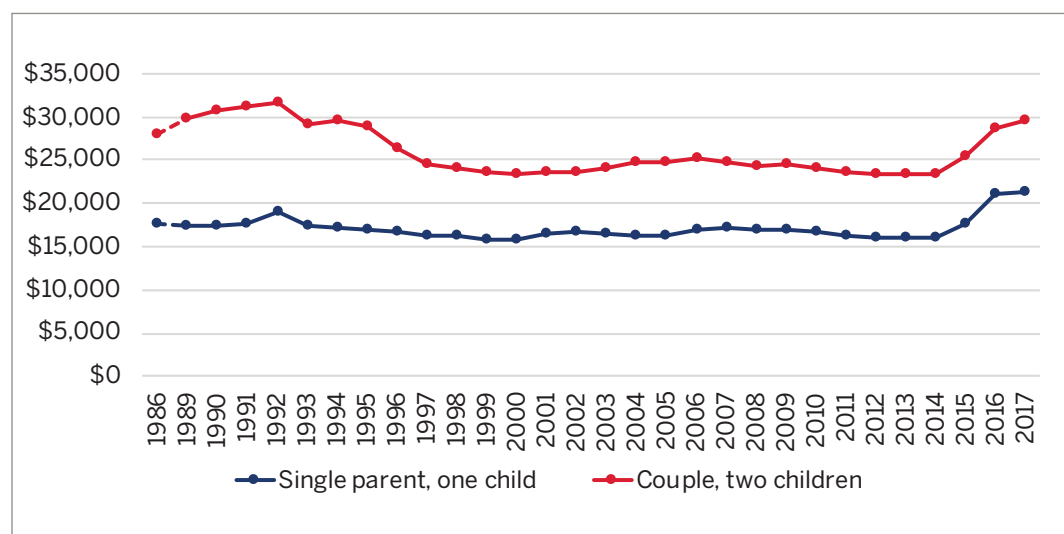
The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2017 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation.

Welfare incomes for single adults, 2017 prices



- After peaking in 1992, welfare incomes for a single person considered employable and a single person with a disability followed a similar downward trend until the mid-2000s.
- There have been noteworthy increases in welfare incomes since 2014 for both households, largely due to enhancements to the Manitoba Rent Assist program.
- In 2017, a single person with a disability received a welfare income of \$12,132, and a single person considered employable received \$9,494.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2017 prices



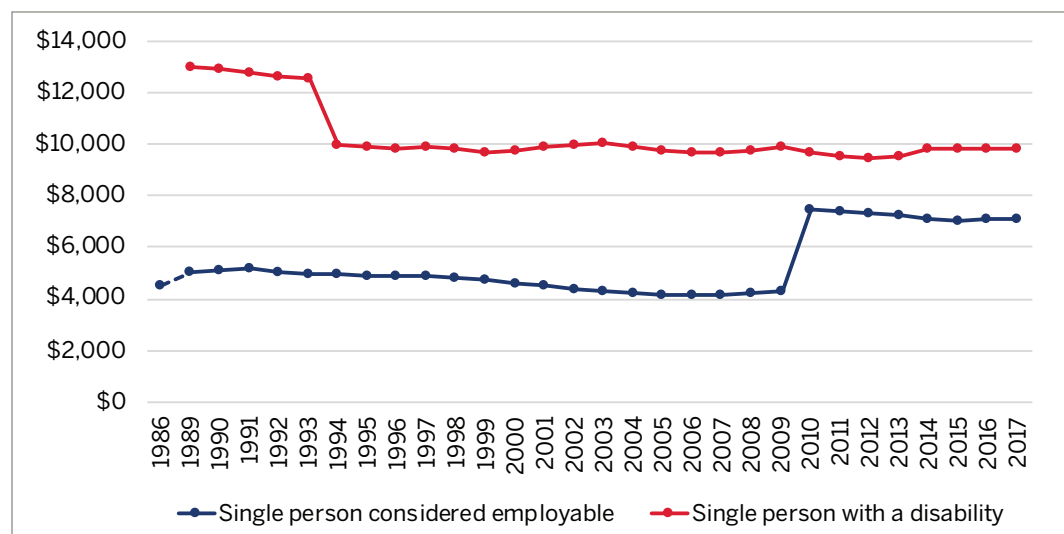
- The maximum welfare incomes of households with children started to rise in 2015, as a result of changes to federal child benefits and enhancements to the Manitoba Rent Assist program.
- For the two decades after 1993, the welfare income of a single parent with one child remained relatively flat. But in 2015 and 2016 it increased substantially, and by 2017 it stood at \$21,364, the highest amount over the 31-year period.
- The welfare income for the couple with two children peaked in 1992 at \$31,591 and declined rapidly until the early 2000s. In 2015, their welfare income began to increase substantially and in 2017 stood at \$29,483.

NEW BRUNSWICK

There was only one substantive change that affected welfare incomes in New Brunswick in 2017. This was the first full year the new Canada Child Benefit was paid, resulting in higher welfare incomes for the two household types with children.

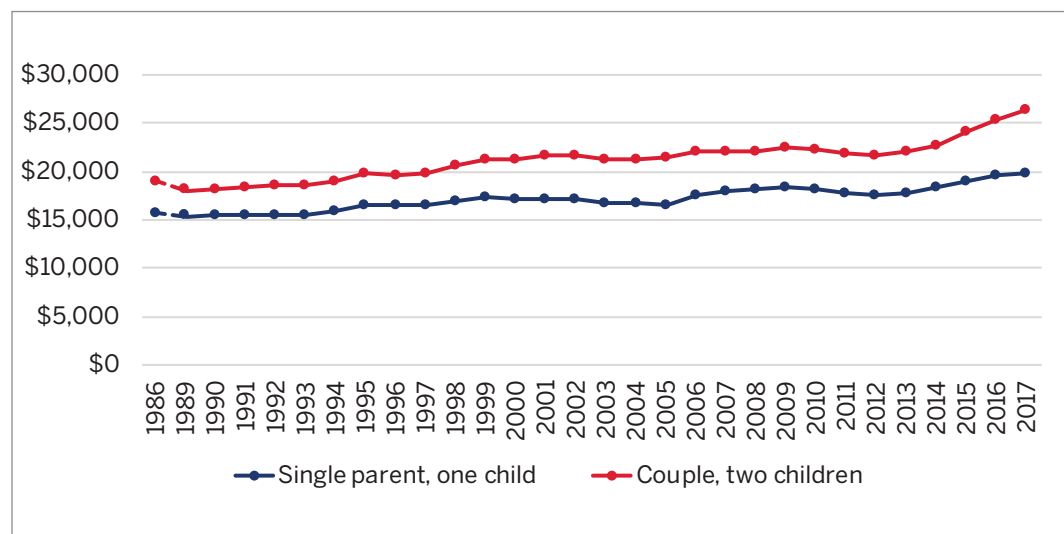
The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2017 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation.

Welfare incomes for single adults, 2017 prices



- A single person considered employable had a very low welfare income in New Brunswick until 2010; it then jumped significantly. This was due to the province's decision to abolish the Interim Assistance program, so all single persons considered employable became eligible for Transitional Assistance benefits.
- Following this rise in 2010, the welfare income of a single person considered employable declined, and by 2017 stood at \$7,122.
- A single person with a disability had a maximum welfare income over \$12,000 until 1993; it then dropped significantly. Since then, it has hovered around \$10,000, and in 2017 stood at \$9,837.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2017 prices



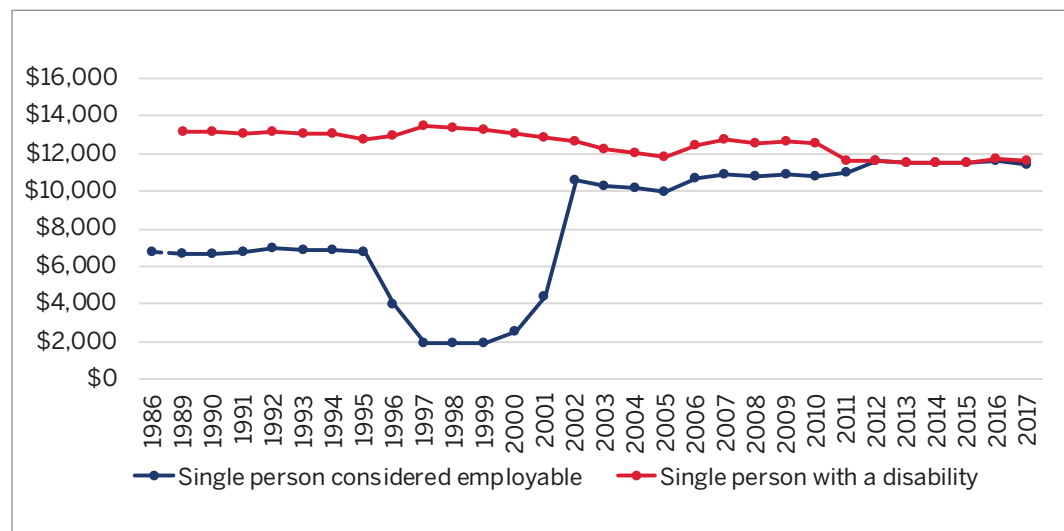
- The welfare incomes of a single parent with one child and a couple with two children have, overall, been increasing since 1986.
- The maximum welfare incomes of households with children have risen at a faster rate since 2015, largely as a result of changes to federal child benefits.
- In 2017, the welfare incomes of a single parent with one child and a couple with two children stood at \$19,920 and \$26,412, respectively, the highest they have been over the past 31 years.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

There was only one substantive change that affected welfare incomes in Newfoundland and Labrador in 2017. This was the first full year that the Canada Child Benefit was paid in full, resulting in higher welfare incomes for the two household types with children.

The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2017 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation.

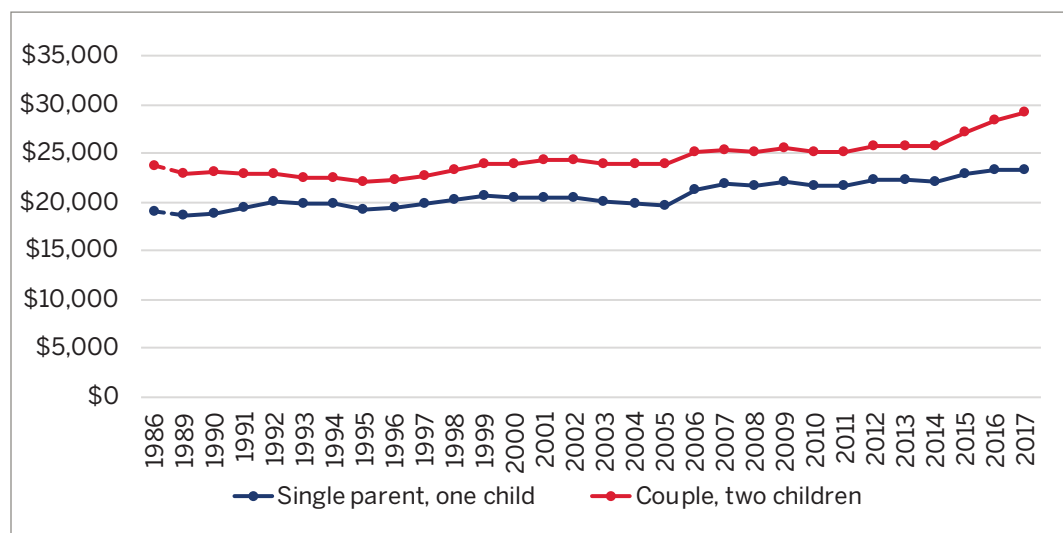
Welfare incomes for single adults, 2017 prices



- In the early 1990s, a single person with a disability had a welfare income nearly double the maximum for a single person considered employable. But the welfare incomes of these two groups have converged. In 2017, a single person with a disability had a total welfare income of \$11,579 compared to \$11,379 for a single person considered employable.
- Between 1995 and 1996, the welfare income of a single person considered employable dropped from over \$6,500 to under \$2,000. This was the result of a policy change where recipients no longer received shelter benefits for market rent and instead received significantly lower room and board allowances. Between 2000 and 2002, the total amount more than recovered to the previous level, and then increased at a more gradual pace until 2012.

- Between 1997 and 2005, the welfare income of a single person with a disability consistently declined. It fell again in 2011, but this was due to the shelter supplement no longer being included in the total welfare income calculations. This in turn was because persons with disabilities on assistance often received additional financial assistance for the cost of shelter and utilities from the Department of Health and Community Services and were therefore ineligible for the shelter supplement. Since the amount of this additional assistance is not readily available, it could not be included in the welfare income calculations.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2017 prices



- Over the long term, welfare incomes for both household types with children have gradually increased, with marked rises in 2006 and 2015. The rise in 2006 was the result of a five per cent increase to the Family Benefit rate, while the rise in 2015 was largely the result of changes to federal child benefits.
- In 2017, the welfare incomes of a single parent with one child and a couple with two children stood at \$23,364 and \$29,178, respectively.

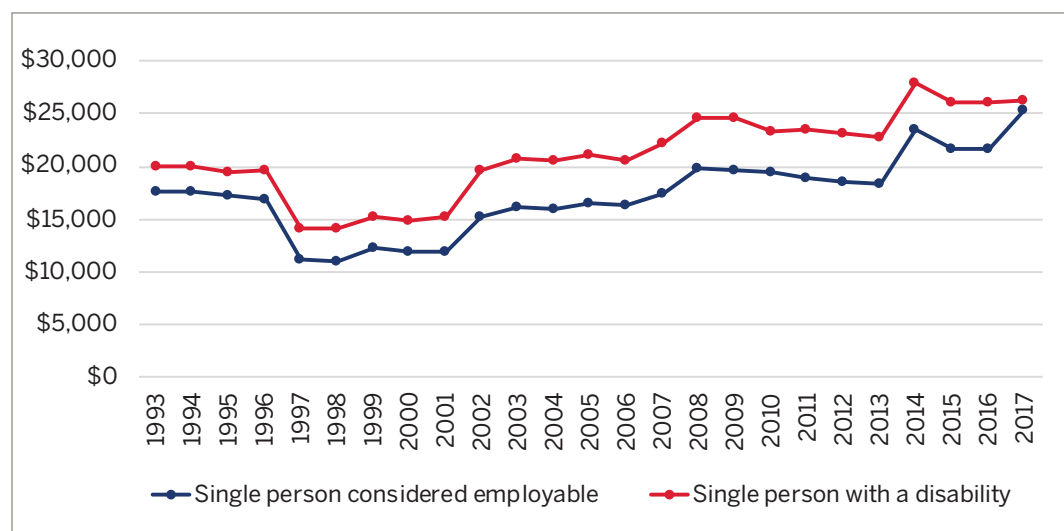
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

The biggest change to welfare incomes in the Northwest Territories in 2017 impacted households with children as this was the first full year that the federal Canada Child Benefit was paid. In addition, the NWT Child Benefit was enhanced in July 2017, with a greater increase for children under 6 years of age. But the impact this had on household income was small compared to the impact of the Canada Child Benefit.

NWT Income Assistance values also increased in 2017 but this was the result of a methodological change rather than a change in policy. The NWT Income Assistance program covers the actual costs of shelter, fuel, and utilities. To calculate the value of this benefit, we estimate the average cost of these items in Yellowknife. In 2017, an improved data source was used to estimate these costs which increased the value of Income Assistance amount for all household types.²

The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2017 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation.

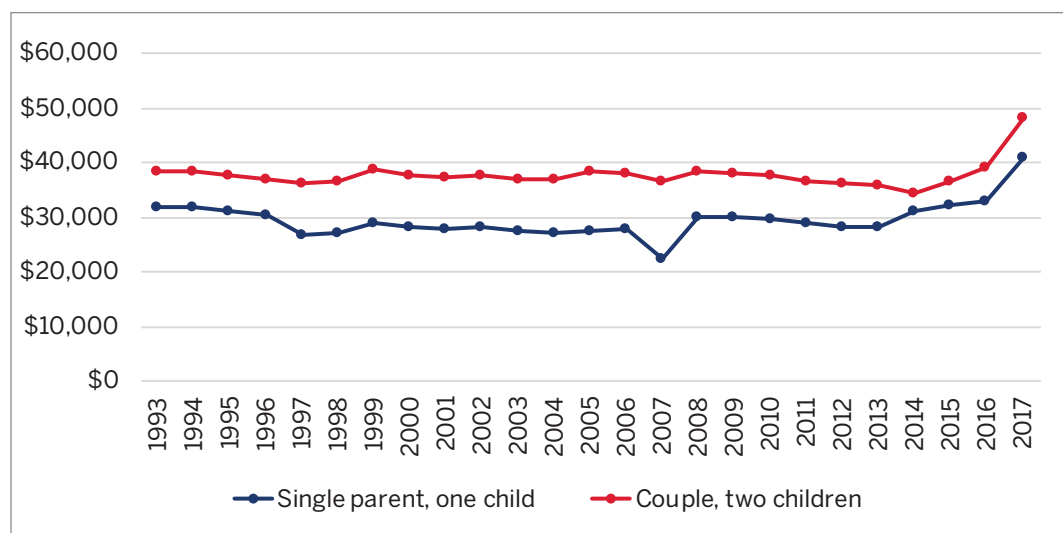
Welfare incomes for single adults, 2017 prices



- Shelter costs for 2017 were taken from the CMHC 2017 Rental Market Report: Yellowknife Highlights (previous years' data were based on information from the NWT Public Housing Corporation information). Utility and fuel costs for 2017 were provided by the NWT government based on a new and more accurate database.

- The welfare incomes for a single person considered employable and a single person with a disability have followed a similar trend. They both dropped in 1997, gradually increased until 2008, and then decreased until 2013.
- The changes starting in 2013 were due to changes in the way costs were calculated. In 2014, utility costs were considerably higher than in earlier years, and in 2015 the cost of fuel decreased. The increase in 2017 was the result of a methodological change which resulted in a higher, but more accurate, estimate of utility costs.
- In 2017, the welfare incomes of a single person considered employable and a single person with a disability stood at \$25,358 and \$26,260, respectively.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2017 prices



- The maximum welfare incomes of households with children started to rise in 2015, largely as a result of changes to federal child benefits.
- In 2017, the welfare incomes of both household types with children increased dramatically. This was the result of changes in the way shelter and utility costs were calculated – described above – as well as changes to federal child benefits.
- In 2017, a single parent with one child had a welfare income of \$40,932 and a couple with two children had \$48,357, the highest amounts paid over the 31-year time series.

NOVA SCOTIA

There was only one substantive change that affected welfare incomes in Nova Scotia in 2017. This was the first full year that the Canada Child Benefit was paid, resulting in higher welfare incomes for the two household types with children.

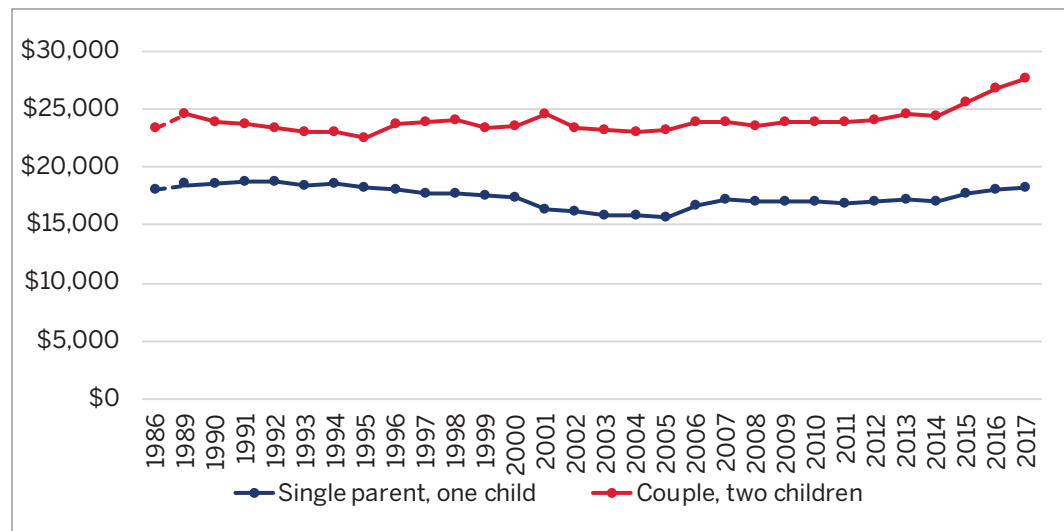
The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2017 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation.

Welfare incomes for single adults, 2017 prices



- Single persons considered employable had higher welfare incomes in the early 1990s because, prior to 1997, social assistance rates for the City of Halifax were considerably higher than those paid in other municipalities. In April 1996, the municipal and provincial social assistance systems were amalgamated, and a uniform rate was paid to single persons considered employable across the province.
- Since the 2000s, the welfare income for a single person considered employable has remained fairly constant, and in 2017 stood at \$7,433.
- Single persons with disabilities have seen a steady decline in their welfare income over time. In 2017, it stood at \$10,264, considerably lower than the 1989 figure of \$13,613.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2017 prices



- The maximum welfare incomes of both a single parent family and a couple with children have gone up and down over the past three decades, with the rate changes for single parents being more pronounced.
- Since 2015, the maximum welfare incomes of households with children has been rising, largely as a result of changes to federal child benefits.
- For a single parent with one child the maximum welfare income in 2017 stood at \$18,182, still below the amounts paid in the early 1990s. For a couple with two children it reached \$27,663 in 2017, the highest level in the 31-year period.

NUNAVUT

There were two main changes that affected welfare incomes in Nunavut in 2017. First, 2017 was the first full year that the Canada Child Benefit was paid, impacting households with children. Second, in July 2017, the monthly Incidental Allowance increased by \$75, impacting single persons with disabilities.

The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2017 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation.

The precipitous drop in income for all household types in 2012 was due to a change in methodology. Prior to 2012, shelter costs were calculated based on market rents, as was and continues to be the case in the rest of the country. However, this changed in 2012 when Nunavut started using subsidized housing costs. Over 95 per cent of recipients in Iqaluit live in public housing and this change in approach more accurately reflects this reality. When looking at welfare incomes in Nunavut, it is important to take into account the fact that most housing costs have already been paid.

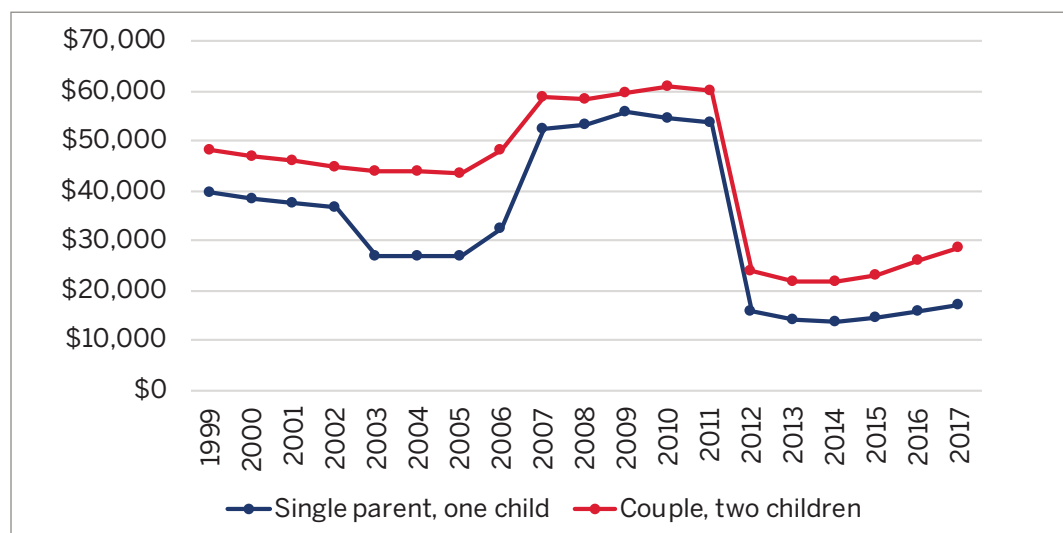
Welfare incomes for single adults, 2017 prices



- Since 2012, when total welfare incomes for all household types dropped as a result of methodological changes, the total welfare incomes of a single employable person and a person with a disability have been relatively flat.

- In 2017, a single person considered employable had a maximum welfare income of \$5,950, and a person with a disability had a maximum of \$8,600.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2017 prices

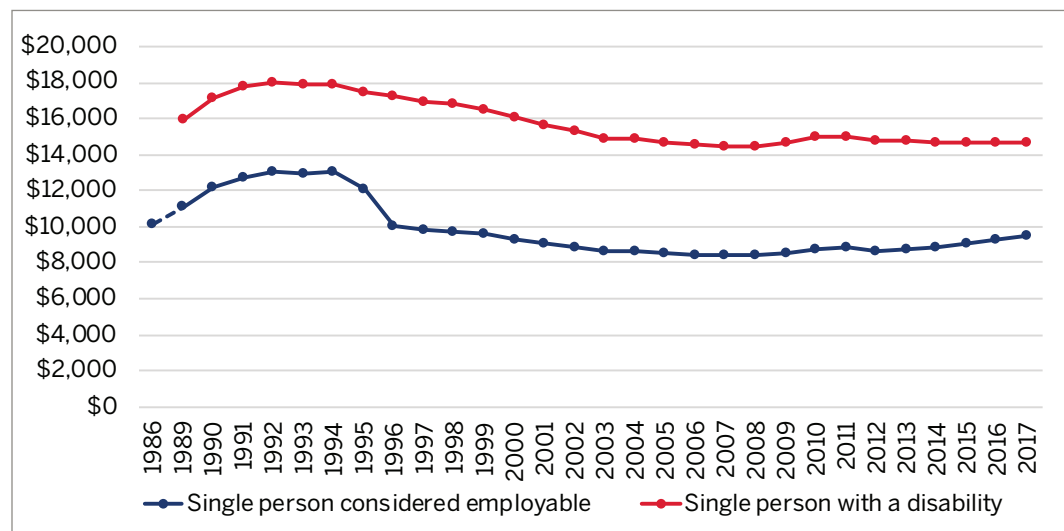


- The welfare incomes for both households with children followed a similar pattern to that of the single person households with the sharp decrease in 2012 due to a change in methodology rather than social assistance policy.
- The maximum welfare incomes of households with children started to rise in 2015, largely as a result of changes to federal child benefits.
- By 2017, the income for a single parent with one child stood at \$17,012, and for a couple with two children at \$28,708.

ONTARIO

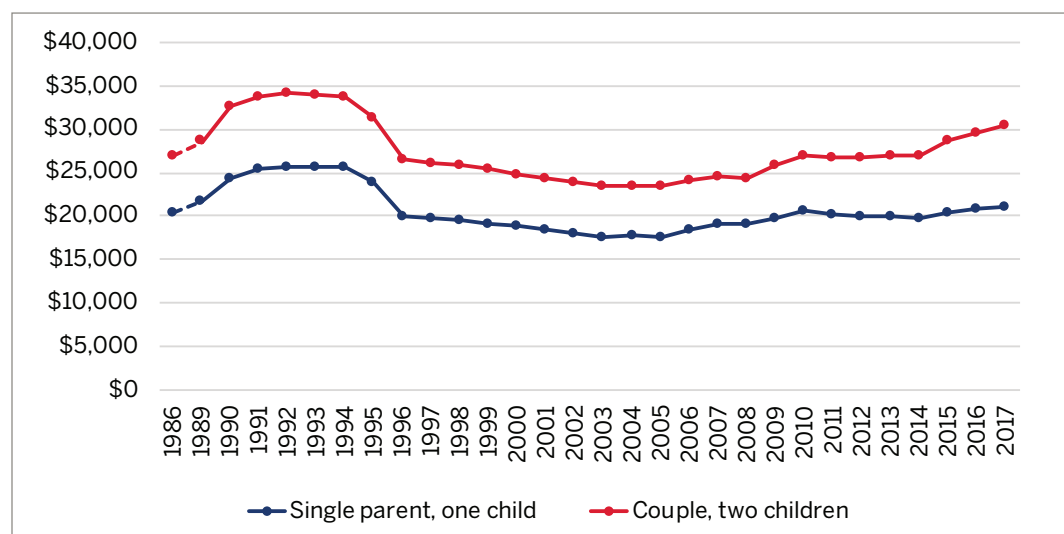
There was only one substantive change that affected welfare incomes in Ontario in 2017. This was the first full year that the Canada Child Benefit was paid, resulting in higher welfare incomes for the two household types with children. The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2017 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation.

Welfare incomes for single adults, 2017 prices



- In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the welfare incomes of a single person considered employable and a single person with a disability saw regular increases.
- The welfare incomes of single persons considered employable dropped substantially in 1995, due to a cut of 21.6 per cent to benefit rates. For the next 13 years, rates were frozen and continued to erode in value as prices increased. Since 2009, welfare incomes have been gradually increasing, and in 2017, a single person considered employable received up to \$9,461. But this remains notably below the levels of the early 1990s.
- Single persons with disabilities also saw the value of their welfare incomes erode throughout the 1990s to the late 2000s. In 2017, the maximum welfare income for single persons with disabilities stood at \$14,682.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2017 prices



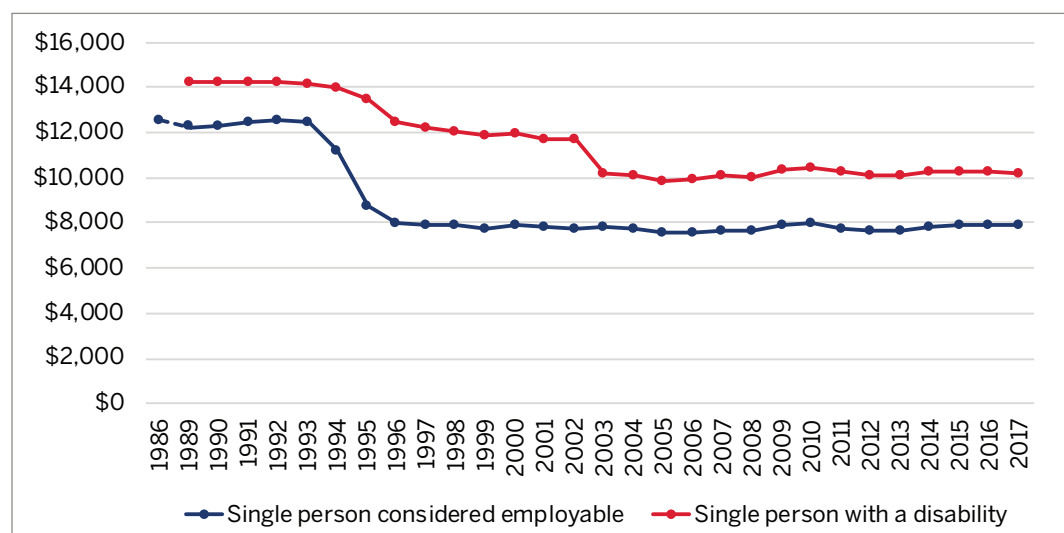
- Welfare incomes for households with children mirrored the pattern of singles, showing early increases followed by a sharp decrease in 1995, a continuing downward trend for the next decade, and then gradual increases.
- The maximum welfare incomes of households with children started to rise in 2015, largely as a result of changes to federal child benefits.
- In 2017, a single parent with a two-year-old child received a maximum of \$21,136 in welfare income. A couple with two children aged 10 and 15 received \$30,545.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

There was only one substantive change that affected welfare incomes in Prince Edward Island in 2017. This was the first full year that the Canada Child Benefit was paid, resulting in higher welfare incomes for the two household types with children.

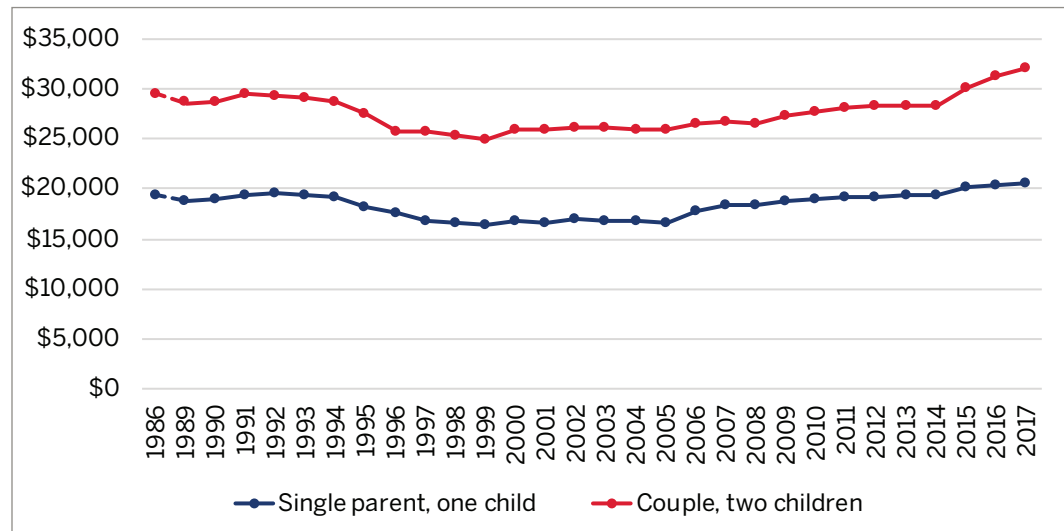
The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2017 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation.

Welfare incomes for single adults, 2017 prices



- Both single persons considered employable and single persons with disabilities saw their welfare incomes drop significantly starting in 1994. For single persons considered employable, the drop was much sharper and occurred over three years. For single persons with disabilities, welfare incomes fell more gradually until 2003. Since then, welfare incomes have remained fairly constant.
- In 2017, the maximum welfare income of a single person considered employable and a single person with a disability stood at \$7,900 and \$10,229, respectively. Both of these amounts were nearly \$4,000 lower than in the early 1990s.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2017 prices



- Unlike single adult households in PEI, households with children have seen a steady increase in their welfare incomes since the mid-1990s, with a more notable increase from 2015 as federal child benefits changed.
- In 2017, the maximum welfare income of a single parent with one child and a couple with two children stood at \$20,619 and \$32,135, respectively, the highest levels over the entire time period.

QUEBEC

There was only one substantive change that affected welfare incomes in Quebec in 2017. This was the first full year that the Canada Child Benefit was paid, resulting in higher welfare incomes for the two household types with children.

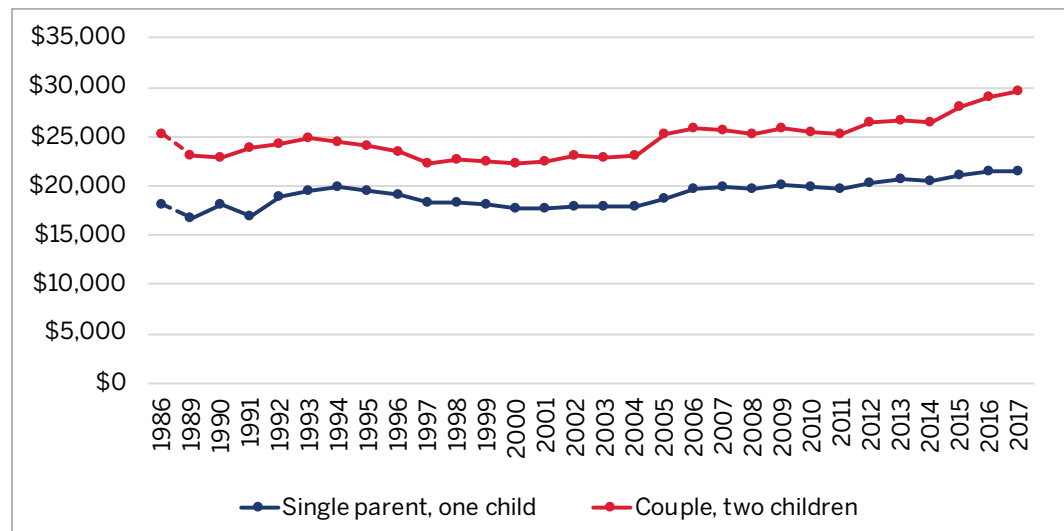
The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2017 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation.

Welfare incomes for single adults, 2017 prices



- The welfare income of a single person considered employable declined gradually after the mid-1990s but rose again in 2012. In 2017, the welfare income of a single person considered employable stood at \$9,083.
- The welfare income of a single person with a disability remained stable throughout the 1990s and 2000s and rose in 2012. The welfare income of a single person with a disability was \$12,741 in 2017.
- The increase in 2012 for both household types occurred as a result of the introduction of the Quebec Solidarity Tax Credit, which enhanced and replaced earlier tax credit programs.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2017 prices



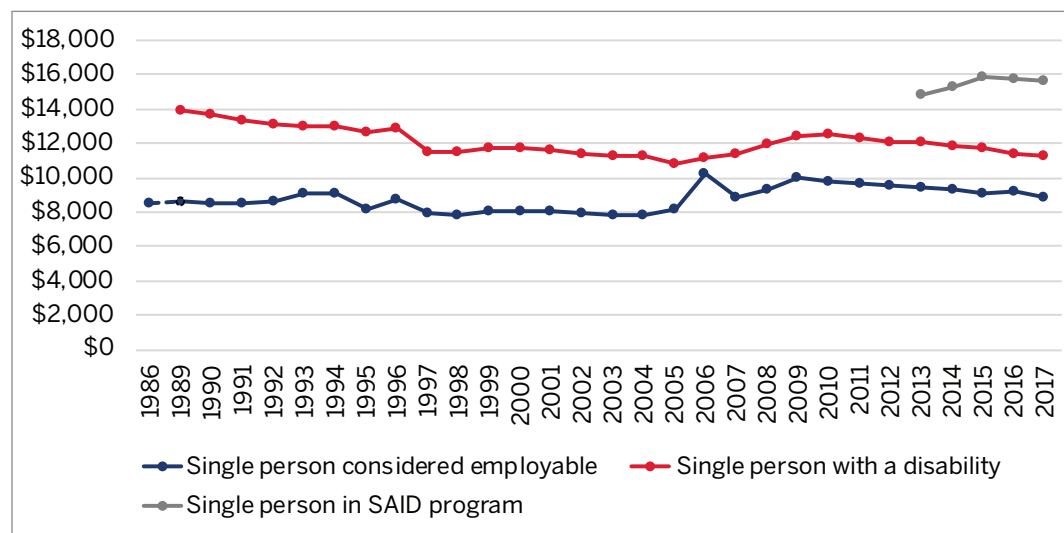
- The welfare incomes of households with children in Quebec fluctuated during the 1990s and 2000s.
- In 2012, both household types saw an increase in their welfare incomes due to the introduction of the Quebec Solidarity Tax Credit, which enhanced and replaced earlier tax credit programs. The increase to welfare incomes since 2015 was largely the result of changes to federal child benefits.
- In 2017, welfare incomes stood at \$21,536 for a single parent with one child and at \$29,657 for a couple with two children. These are the highest amounts over the 31-year time period.

SASKATCHEWAN

There were multiple changes affecting household's welfare incomes in Saskatchewan in 2017. In July, the basic social assistance rates through Transitional Employment Allowance (TEA) fell by \$20 per month per adult. This meant that the single person considered employable and the single parent received \$120 less from social assistance in the second half of 2017, and the couple with two children received \$240 less. This drop was slightly countered by an increase in the Saskatchewan Low-Income Tax Credit (SLITC) in the second half of the year (which increased the annual income of the single adults by \$50, the single parent by \$100, and the couple with two children by \$140). The year 2017 was also the first full year the Canada Child Benefit was paid, boosting the welfare incomes for the two household types with children.

The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2017 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation.

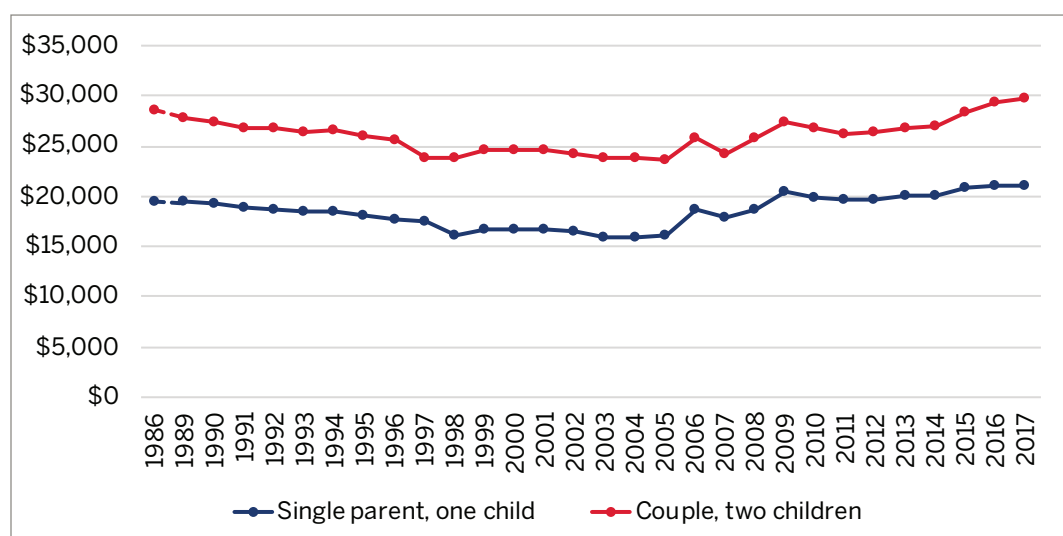
Welfare incomes for single adults, 2017 prices




- The welfare income of a single person considered employable has fluctuated over the 1900s and 2000s, but since 2010 it has been on a gradual downward trend. In 2017, it stood at \$8,820.

- In 2017 the total welfare income of the single adult deemed employable fell. Some of the fall is due to changes in social assistance rates described above but the main driver was a drop in the estimated average expenditure on utilities and not a specific policy or rate change.³
- The welfare income of a single person with a disability receiving Saskatchewan Assistance Plan (SAP) benefits fell in the years to 2006, when it started to increase gradually. However, after 2011 it began to drop again, and in 2017 stood at \$11,276.
- A single person with a disability who qualified for the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) program received a higher welfare income than those in the SAP program. In 2017, the welfare income for a single person receiving SAID benefits was \$15,645.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2017 prices



- Both household types with children experienced declines in their welfare incomes during the 1990s, but these amounts later veered upwards in the late-2000s.
- 3 To estimate the typical welfare income of a single person household in Saskatoon, the utility cost component of social assistance is the average amount paid through the TEA program to single employable persons living in Saskatoon. The estimated annual average was \$192 less in 2017 than in 2016. TEA's flat-rate utility allowance is based on location, family size and type of utility need. Given that the rate remained unchanged, this difference may be attributed to changes in the other factors.

- 
- The welfare incomes of households with children, particularly the couple, started to rise again in 2015, largely as a result of changes to federal child benefits.
 - In 2017, the welfare income of the single parent with one child and the couple with two children stood at \$21,086 and \$29,776, respectively.

YUKON TERRITORY

There was only one substantive change that affected welfare incomes in the Yukon Territory in 2017. This was the first full year that the Canada Child Benefit was paid, resulting in higher welfare incomes for the two household types with children.

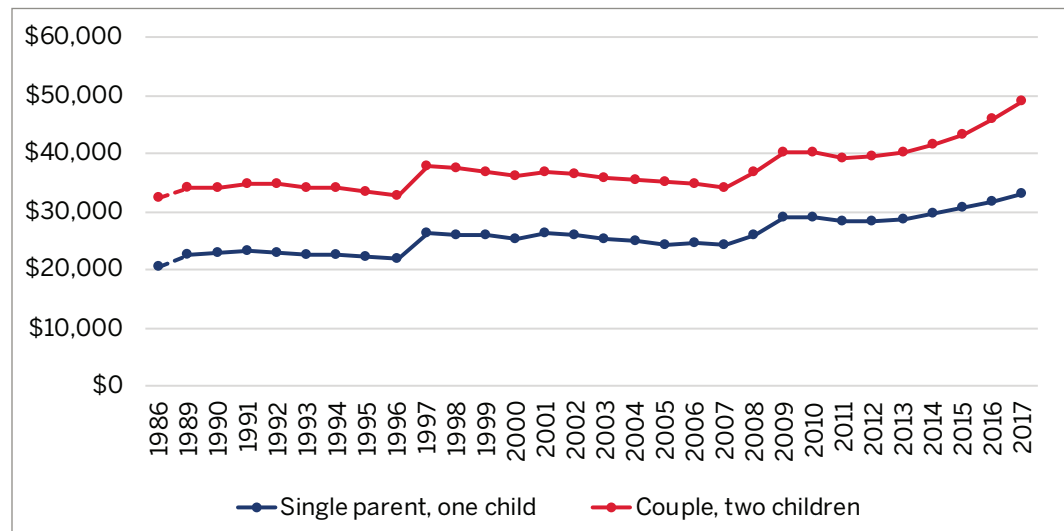
The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative family types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2017 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation.

Welfare incomes for single adults, 2017 prices



- The welfare incomes of a single person considered employable and a single person with a disability showed distinctive but similar patterns. Over the last three decades, welfare income levels were reasonably flat but saw marked increases in 1996 and 2008. There were also smaller increases between 2013 and 2014 due to the inclusion of several additional benefits (telephone, transportation, and laundry allowances).
- In 2017, welfare incomes for a single person considered employable and a single person with a disability stood at \$17,820 and \$21,474, respectively.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2017 prices



- The welfare income levels of households with children saw marked increases in 1996 and 2008 but were fairly flat in previous years.
- Since 2013, households with children have seen a consistent increase in their welfare income levels. Initially this was due to the inclusion of several additional benefits (telephone, transportation, and laundry allowances). From 2015, it was the result of changes in federal child benefits.
- In 2017, the welfare income of the single parent with one child and the couple with two children was \$33,082 and \$48,915, respectively, the highest over the 31-year time period.

ADEQUACY OF WELFARE INCOMES

Introduction

The adequacy of a household's total welfare income can be assessed by comparing it to a set threshold of low income. In Canada there are three commonly used measures⁴:

1. The Market Based Measure of poverty (MBM), which the National Poverty Strategy set as the official poverty measure, identifies households whose disposable income is less than the cost of a basket of goods and services that represent a basic standard of living.
2. The Low Income Measure of poverty (LIM) identifies households whose income is substantially below what is typical in society (less than half of the median income).
3. The Low Income Cut-Off measure (LICO) identifies households that are likely to spend a disproportionately large share of their income on the necessities of food, clothing, and shelter.

This section first summarizes how the welfare incomes across Canada compare to the MBM measure of poverty. It then looks at total welfare incomes against the three low income thresholds for each province in turn⁵. The territories are not included in this part of the analysis because the poverty thresholds are set using the Canadian Income Survey, which does not cover the three territories.

4 Hannah Aldridge. 2017. How do we measure poverty? Retrieved from <https://maytree.com/publications/how-do-we-measure-poverty/>

5 Welfare in Canada uses the after-tax low income thresholds because welfare incomes are not subject to income taxation.

Adequacy across Canada


The table below looks at how welfare incomes in 2017 compared to the official poverty measure (the MBM) for each of the household types. To demonstrate the range across Canada, it shows the province with the highest and lowest welfare incomes relative to the poverty threshold. As the poverty threshold varies locally within each province due to different cost of basic goods, the welfare incomes were compared to the poverty thresholds for the biggest city in each province.

		Juris- diction	Welfare income	Poverty threshold	Poverty gap (\$)	% of MBM
Single person considered employable	Lowest	Halifax, NS	\$7,433	\$19,348	-\$11,915	38%
	Highest	St. John's, NL	\$11,379	\$19,692	-\$8,313	58%
Single person with a disability*	Lowest	Calgary, AB	\$10,225	\$20,543	-\$10,318	50%
	Highest	Montreal, QC	\$12,741	\$17,911	-\$5,170	71%
Single parent, one child	Lowest	Halifax, NS	\$18,182	\$27,363	-\$9,181	66%
	Highest	Montreal, QC	\$21,536	\$25,330	-\$3,794	85%
Couple, two children	Lowest	Vancouver, BC	\$25,976	\$40,913	-\$14,937	63%
	Highest	Montreal, QC	\$29,657	\$35,822	-\$6,165	83%

* This does not include the welfare incomes for individuals on the specialist disability programs in Alberta or Saskatchewan.

Even where welfare incomes were highest, they fell short of the poverty threshold. The closest was in Quebec where the welfare income of a single parent reached 85 per cent of the poverty threshold in Montreal; for a couple with two children it reached 83 per cent.

Welfare incomes in Montreal had the highest adequacy score for three of the four household types. This was not because welfare incomes are highest in Quebec, but because costs in Montreal were lower than in many other provincial cities, so welfare incomes stretched further.



Welfare incomes for adults considered employable were particularly low. Even the highest level in Newfoundland and Labrador amounted to just 58 per cent of the poverty threshold in St. John's. It was typically much lower (the next highest adequacy score was 52 per cent in Winnipeg, Manitoba), and reached just 38 per cent in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The lowest adequacy score for a single person with a disability was in Alberta where it amounted to just 50 per cent of the poverty threshold in Calgary. However, individuals eligible for Alberta's Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped program received a much higher welfare income which amounted to 96 per cent of the poverty threshold in Calgary.

Adequacy by province

ALBERTA

The table below shows how welfare incomes in Alberta for the four household types compared to the three low income thresholds. Because LICO and MBM thresholds vary by community size, the threshold taken is for Calgary, the largest city in Alberta.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single person in AISH program*	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$8,027	\$10,225	\$19,705	\$19,743	\$28,989
MBM					
MBM threshold (Calgary)	\$20,543	\$20,543	\$20,543	\$29,052	\$41,086
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$12,516	-\$10,318	-\$838	-\$9,310	-\$12,098
Welfare income as % of MBM	39%	50%	96%	68%	71%
LIM					
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$23,020	\$23,020	\$23,020	\$32,555	\$46,039
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$14,993	-\$12,795	-\$3,315	-\$12,812	-\$17,051
Welfare income as % of LIM	35%	44%	86%	61%	63%
LICO					
LICO threshold (Calgary)	\$20,998	\$20,998	\$20,998	\$25,555	\$39,701

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single person in AISH program*	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$12,971	-\$10,773	-\$1,293	-\$5,813	-\$10,713
Welfare income as % of LICO	38%	49%	94%	77%	73%

For each household type, the maximum welfare income was below all low income measures. As a proportion, the biggest gap was for single adults considered employable – their maximum welfare income was less than 40 per cent of the low income thresholds. The smallest gap was for single adults with a disability who qualified for Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped benefits, which provided an income close to, but still below, the low income thresholds.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

The table below shows how welfare incomes in British Columbia for the four household types compared to the three low income thresholds. The LICO and MBM thresholds are for Vancouver, the largest city in British Columbia.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$8,124	\$13,096	\$19,795	\$25,976
MBM				
MBM threshold (Vancouver)	\$20,456	\$20,456	\$28,930	\$40,913
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$12,333	-\$7,360	-\$9,135	-\$14,937
Welfare income as % of MBM	40%	64%	68%	63%
LIM				
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$23,020	\$23,020	\$32,555	\$46,039
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$14,896	-\$9,924	-\$12,760	-\$20,063
Welfare income as % of LIM	35%	57%	61%	56%
LICO				
LICO threshold (Vancouver)	\$20,998	\$20,998	\$25,555	\$39,701
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$12,875	-\$7,902	-\$5,760	-\$13,725
Welfare income as % of LICO	39%	62%	77%	65%

For each household type, the maximum welfare income fell well below all of the low income measures. As a proportion the biggest gap was for single adults considered employable – their welfare income was between 35 and 40 per cent of the low income thresholds. The smallest gap was for the single parent with one child, ranging between 61 and 77 per cent of the low income thresholds.

MANITOBA

The table below shows how welfare incomes in Manitoba for the four household types compared to the three low income thresholds. The LICO and MBM thresholds are for Winnipeg, the largest city in Manitoba.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$9,494	\$12,132	\$21,364	\$29,483
MBM				
MBM threshold (Winnipeg)	\$18,416	\$18,416	\$26,043	\$36,831
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$8,922	-\$6,284	-\$4,679	-\$7,348
Welfare income as % of MBM	52%	66%	82%	80%
LIM				
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$23,020	\$23,020	\$32,555	\$46,039
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$13,526	-\$10,887	-\$11,191	-\$16,556
Welfare income as % of LIM	41%	53%	66%	64%
LICO				
LICO threshold (Winnipeg)	\$20,998	\$20,998	\$25,555	\$39,701
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$11,504	-\$8,866	-\$4,191	-\$10,218
Welfare income as % of LICO	45%	58%	84%	74%

For each household type, the maximum welfare income fell well below all of the low income measures. As a proportion the biggest gap was for single adults considered employable – their welfare income was between 41 and 52 per cent of the low income thresholds. The smallest gap was for the single parent with one child, ranging between 66 and 84 per cent of the low income thresholds.

NEW BRUNSWICK

The table below shows how welfare incomes in New Brunswick for the four household types compared to the three low income thresholds. The LICO and MBM thresholds are for Moncton, the largest city in New Brunswick.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$7,122	\$9,837	\$19,920	\$26,412
MBM				
MBM threshold (Moncton)	\$18,281	\$18,281	\$25,854	\$36,563
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$11,159	-\$8,444	-\$5,934	-\$10,151
Welfare income as % of MBM	39%	54%	77%	72%
LIM				
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$23,020	\$23,020	\$32,555	\$46,039
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$15,898	-\$13,183	-\$12,635	-\$19,627
Welfare income as % of LIM	31%	43%	61%	57%
LICO				
LICO threshold (Moncton)	\$17,758	\$17,758	\$21,612	\$33,575
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$10,636	-\$7,921	-\$1,692	-\$7,163
Welfare income as % of LICO	40%	55%	92%	79%

For each household type, the maximum welfare income fell well below all of the low income measures. As a proportion the biggest gap was for single adults considered employable – their welfare income was between 31 and 40 per cent of the low income thresholds. The smallest gap was for the single parent with one child, ranging between 61 and 92 per cent of the low income thresholds.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

The table below shows how welfare incomes in Newfoundland and Labrador for the four household types compared to the three low income thresholds. The LICO and MBM thresholds are for St. John's, the largest city in the province.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$11,379	\$11,579	\$23,364	\$29,178
MBM				
MBM threshold (St. John's)	\$19,692	\$19,692	\$27,848	\$39,383
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$8,313	-\$8,113	-\$4,484	-\$10,205
Welfare income as % of MBM	58%	59%	84%	74%
LIM				
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$23,020	\$23,020	\$32,555	\$46,039
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$11,640	-\$11,440	-\$9,191	-\$16,861
Welfare income as % of LIM	49%	50%	72%	63%
LICO				
LICO threshold (St. John's)	\$17,758	\$17,758	\$21,612	\$33,575
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$6,379	-\$6,179	\$1,752	-\$4,397
Welfare income as % of LICO	64%	65%	108%	87%

For each household type, the maximum welfare income fell well below all of the low income measures with one notable exception: the single parent with one child, where the welfare income exceeded the LICO threshold by 8 per cent (but was significantly below the MBM and LIM thresholds). As a proportion, the biggest gap was for single adults considered employable – their welfare income was between 49 and 64 per cent of the low income thresholds.

NOVA SCOTIA

The table below shows how welfare incomes in Nova Scotia for the four household types compared to the three low income thresholds. The LICO and MBM thresholds are for Halifax, the largest city in the province.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$7,433	\$10,264	\$18,182	\$27,663
MBM				
MBM threshold (Halifax)	\$19,348	\$19,348	\$27,363	\$38,697
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$11,915	-\$9,084	-\$9,181	-\$11,034
Welfare income as % of MBM	38%	53%	66%	71%
LIM				
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$23,020	\$23,020	\$32,555	\$46,039
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$15,587	-\$12,756	-\$14,373	-\$18,376
Welfare income as % of LIM	32%	45%	56%	60%
LICO				
LICO threshold (Halifax)	\$17,758	\$17,758	\$21,612	\$33,575
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$10,325	-\$7,494	-\$3,430	-\$5,912
Welfare income as % of LICO	42%	58%	84%	82%

For each household type, the maximum welfare income fell well below all of the low income measures. As a proportion the biggest gap was for single adults considered employable – their welfare income was between 32 and 42 per cent of the low income thresholds. The welfare income of the single parent with one child and the couple with two children both reached just over 80 per cent of the LICO thresholds, but amounted to a much lower share of the MBM and LIM thresholds.

ONTARIO

The table below shows how welfare incomes in Ontario for the four household types compared to the three low income thresholds. The LICO and MBM thresholds are for Toronto, the largest city in Ontario.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$9,461	\$14,682	\$21,136	\$30,545
MBM				
MBM threshold (Toronto)	\$21,069	\$21,069	\$29,796	\$42,138
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$11,609	-\$6,387	-\$8,660	-\$11,593
Welfare income as % of MBM	45%	70%	71%	72%
LIM				
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$23,020	\$23,020	\$32,555	\$46,039
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$13,559	-\$8,337	-\$11,419	-\$15,494
Welfare income as % of LIM	41%	64%	65%	66%
LICO				
LICO threshold (Toronto)	\$20,998	\$20,998	\$25,555	\$39,701
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$11,538	-\$6,316	-\$4,419	-\$9,156
Welfare income as % of LICO	45%	70%	83%	77%

For each household type the maximum welfare income fell below all of the low income measures. As a proportion the biggest gap was for single adults considered employable – their welfare income was 45 per cent or less of the low income thresholds. The smallest gap was for the single parent with one child, ranging between 65 and 83 per cent of the low income thresholds.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

The table below shows how welfare incomes in Prince Edward Island for the four household types compared to the three low income thresholds. The LICO and MBM thresholds are for Charlottetown, the largest city in PEI.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$7,900	\$10,229	\$20,619	\$32,135
MBM				
MBM threshold (Charlottetown)	\$19,596	\$19,596	\$27,713	\$39,193
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$11,696	-\$9,367	-\$7,094	-\$7,058
Welfare income as % of MBM	40%	52%	74%	82%
LIM				
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$23,020	\$23,020	\$32,555	\$46,039
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$15,120	-\$12,790	-\$11,936	-\$13,904
Welfare income as % of LIM	34%	44%	63%	70%
LICO				
LICO threshold (Charlottetown)	\$17,536	\$17,536	\$21,344	\$33,157
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$9,636	-\$7,307	-\$725	-\$1,022
Welfare income as % of LICO	45%	58%	97%	97%

For each household type, the maximum welfare income fell well below all of the low income measures with two exceptions: the welfare income of both households with children reached 97 per cent of the LICO threshold, but they amounted to a much smaller share of the MBM and LIM thresholds. As a proportion, the biggest gap was for single adults considered employable – their welfare income was between 34 and 45 per cent of the low income thresholds.

QUEBEC

The table below shows how welfare incomes in Quebec for the four household types compared to the three low income thresholds. The LICO and MBM thresholds are for Montreal, the largest city in Quebec.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare incomes	\$9,083	\$12,741	\$21,536	\$29,657
MBM				
MBM threshold (Montreal)	\$17,911	\$17,911	\$25,330	\$35,822
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$8,828	-\$5,170	-\$3,794	-\$6,165
Welfare income as % of MBM	51%	71%	85%	83%
LIM				
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$23,020	\$23,020	\$32,555	\$46,039
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$13,937	-\$10,278	-\$11,019	-\$16,382
Welfare income as % of LIM	39%	55%	66%	64%
LICO				
LICO threshold (Montreal)	\$20,998	\$20,998	\$25,555	\$39,701
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$11,915	-\$8,257	-\$4,019	-\$10,044
Welfare income as % of LICO	43%	61%	84%	75%

For each household type, the maximum welfare income fell well below all of the low income measures. As a proportion, the biggest gap was for single adults considered employable – their welfare income was between 39 and 51 per cent of the low income thresholds. The smallest gap was for the single parent with one child, ranging between 66 and 85 per cent of the low income thresholds.

SASKATCHEWAN

The table below shows how welfare incomes in Saskatchewan for the four household types compared to the three poverty thresholds. The LICO and MBM thresholds are for Saskatoon, the largest city in the province.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single person in SAID program	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$8,820	\$11,276	\$15,645	\$21,086	\$29,776
MBM					
MBM threshold (Saskatoon)	\$19,360	\$19,360	\$19,360	\$27,379	\$38,720
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$10,540	-\$8,084	-\$3,715	-\$6,293	-\$8,944
Welfare income as % of MBM	46%	58%	81%	77%	77%
LIM					
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$23,020	\$23,020	\$23,020	\$32,555	\$46,039
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$14,200	-\$11,744	-\$7,375	-\$11,469	-\$16,263
Welfare income as % of LIM	38%	49%	68%	65%	65%
LICO					
LICO threshold (Saskatoon)	\$17,758	\$17,758	\$17,758	\$21,612	\$33,575
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$8,938	-\$6,482	-\$2,113	-\$526	-\$3,799

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single person in SAID program	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Welfare income as % of LICO	50%	63%	88%	98%	89%

For each household type, the maximum welfare income fell well below all of the low income measures with one exception: the single parent with one child, for whom the welfare income reached 98 per cent of the LICO threshold (but just 77 per cent of the MBM and 65 per cent of the LIM thresholds). As a proportion, the biggest gap was for single adults considered employable – their welfare income was between 38 per cent and 50 per cent of the poverty thresholds. The higher benefits available to persons with disabilities through the SAID program reached between 68 and 81 per cent of the low income thresholds.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Asset test

In order to qualify for welfare, a household's assets must fall below certain limits set by each province and territory. These limits can vary by household size, and, in some jurisdictions, they vary 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 exempt (within reason) from the asset test. All jurisdictions also exempt at least some of the value of Registered Education Savings Plans (RESPs) and Registered Disability Savings Plans (RDSPs), and several also have some exemptions for Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs).

The table below shows the liquid asset exemption levels in effect as of January 2017. Any changes that occurred during the year are described in the footnotes.

Liquid asset exemption levels as of January 2017¹

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
AB ²	\$627	\$1,618 ³	\$1,125	\$1,612
AB, AISH ⁴	Not applicable	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
BC	\$2,000	\$100,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
MB	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$8,000	\$16,000

- 1 Asset limits are for individuals applying for social assistance as well as for those receiving it unless otherwise stated.
- 2 The liquid asset limit for those in the “expected to work” category of Income Support is equivalent to one month’s core benefit for the household unit. For households with children this includes the Federal Child Benefit (equivalent to the National Child Benefit Supplement under the former Canada Child Tax Benefit). Households receive an additional \$33 for each child over the age of 12.
- 3 Asset limits refer to the “barriers to full employment” category of Income Support. The liquid asset limit is equivalent to two months’ core benefits. Asset limits also include the Personal Needs Supplement of \$78 per month.
- 4 AISH refers to the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped program in Alberta. Both single adults and families can apply for the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program. Some assets are 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 \$3,000 or less may also receive Personal Benefits (e.g., for child care, moving, addiction treatment) and a monthly Child Benefit of \$100 per dependent child.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
NB ⁵	\$1,000	\$10,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
NL	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$5,500	\$5,500
NS ⁶	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
NT	\$300	\$50,000	\$380	\$560
NU ⁷	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	\$0
ON ^{8 9}	\$2,500	\$5,000	\$3,000	\$6,000

- 5 Asset limits refer to New Brunswick's Transitional Assistance program except for a single person with a disability. In this case, the asset limit refers to the Extended Benefits program.
- 6 On February 21, 2017, asset levels increased to \$2,000 for a single person considered employable and a single person with a disability, and to \$4,000 for a single parent with one child and a couple with two children.
- 7 In July 2017, Nunavut introduced a \$500 asset limit for a single person considered employable and \$1,000 for a single parent with one child and a couple with two children.
- 8 Asset limits refer to the Ontario Works (OW) program except for a single person with a disability. In this case, the asset limit refers to the Ontario Disability Support Program.
- 9 In September 2017, asset levels for a single employable person, a single parent with one child and a couple with two children increased to \$10,000, \$10,500 and \$16,000, respectively. The asset level for a single person with a disability increased to \$40,000.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
PE	\$50 to \$200 ¹⁰	Up to \$900	Up to \$1,200 ¹⁰	Up to \$1,800 ¹⁰
QC ¹¹	Applicants: \$887 Recipients: \$1,500	\$2,500	Applicants: \$1,268 Recipients: \$2,921	Applicants: \$1,807 Recipients: \$3,041
SK ¹²	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$3,000	\$4,000
SK, SAID ¹³	Not applicable	\$1,500	\$3,000	\$4,000
YT	\$500	\$1,500	\$1,000	\$1,600

10 Applicants for short-term assistance (four months or less) have an asset limit of \$50. The higher asset limit applies to those requiring long-term assistance.

11 An applicant's asset limits are set according to family size. Income received during the month of application for rent, heating, and public utility costs are not considered as household assets. After the first month under the Social Assistance program higher asset limits apply for recipients with no severe limitations to employment.

12 Asset limits refer to the Transitional Employment Allowance program except for a single person with a disability. In this case, the asset limit refers to the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan.

13 SAID refers to the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability program. The asset limits for SAID are the same as those under the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan.

Appendix 2: Earnings exemptions

Some earnings from employment are exempt under the income test. This allows welfare recipients to earn a certain amount of money without affecting their benefits, creating a modest work incentive. Each social assistance program has its own way of calculating earnings exemptions, but there are generally three approaches:

1. A *flat-rate amount* permits a recipient to earn a certain amount after which welfare benefits are reduced dollar for dollar.
2. A *percentage of earnings* approach means that welfare benefits are reduced by a certain percentage. For example, a 25 per cent exemption rate means that welfare benefits are reduced by 75 cents for every dollar earned.
3. A *combination of flat-rate and a percentage* means that once the flat rate is exceeded, benefits are reduced by a percentage amount.

The table below shows the earnings exemption levels in effect as of January 1, 2017. Any changes that occurred during the year are described in the footnotes to the table.

Monthly earnings exemption levels as of January 2017¹⁴

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
AB	<p>Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income</p> <p>Recipients: The first \$230 of net earnings is exempt, a 25% exemption rate applies thereafter</p>	<p>Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income</p> <p>Recipients: The first \$230 of net earnings is exempt, a 25% exemption rate applies thereafter</p>	<p>Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income</p> <p>Recipients: The first \$230 of net earnings is exempt, a 25% exemption rate applies thereafter</p>	<p>Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income</p> <p>Recipients: For each earner, the first \$115 of net earnings is exempt, a 25% exemption rate applies thereafter</p>
AB, AISH ¹⁵	Not applicable	The first \$800 of net earnings is exempt, a 50% exemption rate applies thereafter	The first \$1,950 of net earnings is exempt, a 50% exemption rate applies thereafter	The first \$1,950 of net earnings is exempt, a 50% exemption rate applies thereafter

¹⁴ Earning exemptions are for those applying for social assistance as well as those receiving it unless otherwise stated.

¹⁵ AISH refers to the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped program in Alberta.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
BC ^{16 17}	<p>Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income</p> <p>Recipients: The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter</p>	<p>Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income</p> <p>Recipients: The first \$9,600 of net <i>annual</i> earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter¹⁸</p>	<p>Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income</p> <p>Recipients: The first \$400 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter</p>	<p>Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income</p> <p>Recipients: The first \$400 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter</p>
MB ^{19,20}	<p>Applicants: The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter</p> <p>Recipients: The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 30% exemption rate applies thereafter</p>	<p>Applicants: The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter</p> <p>Recipients: The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 30% exemption rate applies thereafter</p>	<p>Applicants: The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter</p> <p>Recipients: The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 30% exemption rate applies thereafter</p>	<p>Applicants: The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter</p> <p>Recipients: For each earner, the first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 30% exemption rate applies thereafter</p>

16 In BC, the recipient amount applies to those on assistance for at least one month.

17 In October 2017, earnings exemption levels for Income Assistance recipients increased by \$200 per month. For a single employable person, it increased to \$400. For a single parent with one child and a couple with two children, it went up to \$600.

18 In 2015, BC replaced the monthly earnings exemption for persons receiving Disability Assistance with an annualized earnings exemption. In October 2017, the maximum annual exemption for a single person with a disability increased to \$12,000 per year.

19 Manitoba also provides the Rewarding Work Allowance (RWA) to all employed adults without disabilities on income assistance. The RWA is \$100 for people without disabilities working more than 80 hours or 10 days in a month, or \$50 for those working less. Employed persons with disabilities receive similar benefits.

20 In Manitoba, the recipient amount applies to those on assistance for at least one month.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
NB ²¹	Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income Recipients: The first \$150 of net earnings is exempt, a 30% exemption rate applies thereafter	Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income Recipients: The first \$500 of net earnings is exempt, a 30% exemption rate applies thereafter	Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income Recipients: The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 30% exemption rate applies thereafter	Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income Recipients: The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 30% exemption rate applies thereafter
NL	The first \$75 of net earnings is exempt, a 20% exemption rate applies thereafter	The first \$150 of net earnings is exempt, a 20% exemption rate applies thereafter ²²	The first \$150 of net earnings is exempt, a 20% exemption rate applies thereafter	The first \$150 of net earnings is exempt, a 20% exemption rate applies thereafter
NS ²³	Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income Recipients: The first \$150 of net earnings is exempt, a 30% exemption rate applies thereafter	Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income Recipients: The first \$300 of net earnings is exempt, a 30% exemption rate applies thereafter ²⁴	Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income Recipients: The first \$150 of net earnings is exempt, a 30% exemption rate applies thereafter	Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income Recipients: For each earner, the first \$150 of net earnings is exempt, a 30% exemption rate applies thereafter

21 All amounts refer to the Transitional Assistance program except for a single person with a disability. In this case, the amount refers to the Extended Benefits program.

22 This applies to a single person with a disability requiring supportive services.

23 In Nova Scotia, families already in receipt of assistance may also earn up to \$3,000 annually through the Harvest Connection program without these earnings affecting their basic Income Assistance payment.

24 This applies to persons with disabilities participating in supported employment.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
NT	The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 15% exemption rate applies thereafter	The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 15% exemption rate applies thereafter	The first \$400 of net earnings is exempt, a 15% exemption rate applies thereafter	The first \$400 of net earnings is exempt, a 15% exemption rate applies thereafter
NU ²⁵	The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter	The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter	The first \$400 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter	The first \$400 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter
ON ^{26,27}	Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income Recipients: The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 50% exemption rate applies thereafter	The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 50% exemption rate applies thereafter ²⁸	Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income Recipients: The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 50% exemption rate applies thereafter	Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income Recipients: The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 50% exemption rate applies thereafter
PE	The first \$75 of net earnings is exempt, a 10% exemption rate applies thereafter	The first \$75 of net earnings is exempt, a 10% exemption rate applies thereafter	The first \$125 of net earnings is exempt, a 10% exemption rate applies thereafter	The first \$125 of net earnings is exempt, a 10% exemption rate applies thereafter

25 In July 2017, earnings exemptions in Nunavut increased. On top of the amounts shown above, an additional 50 per cent of the next \$600 in earnings is also exempt.

26 All amounts refer to the Ontario Works (OW) program except for a single person with a disability. In this case, the amount refers to the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).

27 In Ontario, the recipient amount applies to those on assistance continuously for at least 3 months.

28 In addition, a \$100 Work-Related Benefit is paid to each eligible adult family member in any month they receive earnings.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
QC	The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter ²⁹	The first \$100 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter ³⁰	The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter ³¹	The first \$300 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter ³²
SK ³³	TEA: Support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income	SAP: The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 25% exemption rate applies thereafter	TEA: Support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income SAP: The first \$125 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter ³⁴	TEA: Support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income SAP: The first \$125 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter ²¹
SK, SAID ³⁵	Not applicable	The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 25% exemption rate applies thereafter	The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter	The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter

29 This applies to a person with no severe limitations to employment in the Social Assistance program.

30 This applies to a person with severe limitations to employment in the Social Solidarity program.

31 This applies to a person in the Social Assistance program with temporary limitations to employment.

32 This applies to couples in the Social Assistance program regardless of the type of limitations to employment.

33 TEA refers to the Transitional Employment Allowance program; SAP refers to Saskatchewan Assistance Program.

34 Families with monthly earnings over \$125 on either SAP or TEA are eligible for the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement.

35 SAID refers to the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability program.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
YT	<p>Applicants: The first \$100 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter</p> <p>Recipients: The first \$100 of net earnings is exempt. A 50% exemption rate is applied to any extra earnings for the first 36 months and then a 25% exemption rate is applied</p>	<p>Applicants: The first \$100 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter</p> <p>Recipients: The first \$100 of net earnings is exempt. A 50% exemption rate is applied to any extra earnings for the first 36 months and then a 25% exemption rate is applied³⁶</p>	<p>Applicants: The first \$150 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter</p> <p>Recipients: The first \$150 of net earnings is exempt. A 50% exemption rate is applied to any extra earnings for the first 36 months and then a 25% exemption rate is applied</p>	<p>Applicants: The first \$150 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter</p> <p>Recipients: The first \$150 of net earnings is exempt. A 50% exemption rate is applied to any extra earnings for the first 36 months and then a 25% exemption rate is applied</p>

³⁶ Persons who qualify for the Yukon Supplementary Allowance (payable to persons with disabilities and the elderly) are eligible for an additional annual earned income exemption of up to \$3,900.

