

Welfare in Canada, 2018

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All of the data contained in this report is available to download at
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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.

This year Maytree would like to extend a special thanks to Ottawa-based social policy analyst and researcher, Anne Tweddle. 2018 marks the last report in the *Welfare in Canada* series with Anne at the helm. She has been the main researcher and writer of the report since 2012, and has indirectly contributed to earlier iterations of the report going back to 2006. Her depth of knowledge and technical expertise will be greatly missed by Maytree and by the jurisdiction contacts she has been working with for so many years.

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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, 2018 looks at the maximum total amount that a household (an individual or family) would have received over the course of the 2018 calendar year, assuming they had no other source of income and minimal 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. In 2018, Maytree assumed responsibility for updating the series.

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. Discretionary and special needs amounts were not included.

To compare how total welfare incomes have changed over time within each jurisdiction, we convert the total welfare incomes from earlier years into 2018 prices using the consumer price index. The only exception is in the *Changes to welfare incomes between 2017 and 2018* section where welfare incomes have not been adjusted for inflation. As prices increase, the same amount of money is able to buy less. Adjusting for inflation means that the trends over time in this report



represent how the value of welfare incomes has increased after accounting for changes to the costs of living.

To demonstrate the adequacy of welfare incomes, we compare total welfare incomes in 2018 to the three measures of low income commonly used in Canada. These are:

- The official poverty measure (also known as the Market Basket Measure or MBM) identifies households whose disposable income is less than the cost of a basket of goods and services that represent a basic standard of living.
- 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).
- 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.

The exact levels of the low income thresholds change every year (in response to changes in costs, in the case of MBM and LICO, and in response to changing average income in the case of LIM) and are produced by Statistics Canada. At the time of publication, the MBM and LIM levels for 2018 were not available. As a result, we have estimated the LIM and MBM thresholds for 2018. To estimate the MBM threshold, which varies by community, we increased the 2017 levels in line with the consumer price index for the applicable city. To estimate the LIM threshold, which is the same across the provinces, we increased the 2017 levels in line with the national consumer price index.

All the low income thresholds used are for after-tax income because welfare incomes are not subject to income taxation.

The territories are not included in this part of the analysis because Statistics Canada does not produce poverty thresholds for the territories.

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 each 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 2018 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 benefits, creating a modest work incentive. Each social assistance program has its own way of calculating earnings exemptions, but there are generally three approaches:

- A *flat-rate amount* permits a recipient to earn a certain amount after which welfare benefits are reduced dollar for dollar.
- 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.
- 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 2018, 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 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 2018, 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 2018 in each province. These amounts are based on a series of assumptions outlined in the *Methodology* section.

Total welfare incomes in each province in 2018

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability*	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Alberta	\$8,106	\$10,301*	\$19,927	\$29,238
British Columbia	\$9,042	\$14,802	\$20,782	\$27,006
Manitoba	\$9,756	\$12,403	\$21,764	\$29,918
New Brunswick	\$7,126	\$9,839	\$19,978	\$26,505
Newfoundland and Labrador	\$11,383	\$11,583	\$23,436	\$29,296
Nova Scotia	\$7,437	\$10,268	\$18,240	\$27,756
Ontario	\$9,646	\$14,954	\$21,463	\$30,998
Prince Edward Island	\$10,445	\$11,208	\$20,977	\$32,757
Quebec	\$9,320	\$13,651	\$21,867	\$30,453
Saskatchewan	\$8,883	\$11,422*	\$21,087	\$29,955

* Alberta and Saskatchewan have specific programs for persons with a severe disability that is likely to be permanent. In 2018, the maximum income of a person with a disability in Alberta's Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped program was \$19,786; for someone in the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability program it was \$15,789.

- In 2018, the highest welfare income of a single person considered employable was in Newfoundland and Labrador at \$11,383, followed by PEI at \$10,445. In all other provinces, welfare incomes clustered at a lower level of around \$7,100 to \$9,800.

- Ontario had the highest welfare income for individuals on a standard disability assistance program at \$14,954, British Columbia was slightly lower at \$14,802, and Quebec was third highest at \$13,651. All other provinces had much lower levels of between \$9,800 and \$12,500.
- Alberta and Saskatchewan have specific programs for persons with a severe disability that is likely to be permanent. These provided higher welfare incomes than those on standard social assistance programs at \$19,786 in Alberta and \$15,789 in Saskatchewan.
- The maximum welfare income for a single parent with one child ranged from \$18,240 in Nova Scotia to \$23,436 in Newfoundland and Labrador, and for a couple with two children it ranged from \$26,505 in New Brunswick to \$32,757 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 (for more information, see the *Methodology* section).

Total welfare incomes in each territory in 2018

Jurisdiction	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Northwest Territories	\$22,163	\$27,553	\$34,447	\$45,567
Nunavut	\$7,782	\$10,782	\$18,098	\$29,561
Yukon	\$18,093	\$21,747	\$34,003	\$50,489

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 considerably lower than in the other two territories, 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 2018.

	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				\$6,448	\$10,881
Provincial child benefits				\$1,121	\$1,682
GST credit	\$282	\$293	\$430	\$712	\$860
Provincial tax credits/benefits	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$450	\$540
Total 2018 income	\$8,106	\$10,301	\$19,786	\$19,927	\$29,238

* The Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program differs from the other social assistance programs referenced in this report in that clients 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 client 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 clients who have \$3,000 or less in non-exempt assets.



Total welfare incomes in Alberta ranged from \$8,106 for the single employable adult to \$29,238 for the couple with two children. A person with a disability on Income Support received \$10,301 in 2018 but one who qualified for Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) benefits received \$19,786, nearly double that amount.

On top of basic social assistance, some households received additional social assistance benefits, as shown in the table. The Personal Needs Allowance provided \$936 (\$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.

Both households with children received the Alberta Child Benefit. This monthly payment increased in July 2018 from \$92.83 to \$94.00 for a one-child household and from \$139.25 to \$141.00 for a two-child household. They also received the Canada Child Benefit which increased in July 2018 from \$533 to \$541 per month for a child under six years of age and from \$450 to \$457 per month for a child aged six to 17.

All households received the GST credit, which increased in July 2018 in line with inflation, and the Alberta Climate Leadership Adjustment Rebate (ACLAR), a provincial tax credit. In January 2018, the annual ACLAR payment increased to \$300 for a single person, \$450 for a single parent with one child, and \$540 for a couple with two children.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Vancouver in 2018.


	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$8,520	\$13,601	\$12,547	\$14,413
Additional SA benefits	\$35	\$659*	\$80	\$365
Federal child benefits			\$6,448	\$10,881
Provincial child benefits			\$660	
GST credit	\$282	\$337	\$712	\$860
Provincial tax credits/benefits	\$205	\$205	\$335	\$488
Total 2018 income	\$9,042	\$14,802	\$20,782	\$27,006

*This includes the \$624 through the Transportation Supplement. Recipients could choose to either receive this as a bus pass or as a \$52 per month payment.

Total welfare incomes in British Columbia ranged from \$9,042 for the single person considered employable to \$27,006 for the couple with two children.

In BC, all of the household types received Income Assistance benefits except for the single person with a disability, who received Disability Assistance benefits. In January 2018, Disability Assistance rates increased by \$52 per month for a single person.

On top of basic social assistance, households received additional social assistance benefits, as shown in the table. 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. The person with a disability also received the Transportation Supplement. Recipients could choose to receive this as a bus pass issued through the BC Bus Pass Program, or as a \$52 per month payment intended to assist with transportation costs.



Households with children received the Canada Child Benefit which increased in July 2018 from \$533 to \$541 per month for a child under the age of six and from \$450 to \$457 per month for a child aged between six and 17. The single parent household also received the provincial Child Benefit, the BC Early Childhood Tax Benefit, which in 2018 provided up to \$55 per month for each child under six years.

All households received the GST credit, which increased in July 2018 in line with inflation, and the provincial tax credits: the BC Sales Tax Credit and the BC Low Income Climate Action Tax Credit.

MANITOBA

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Winnipeg in 2018.


	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	\$6,834	\$8,094	\$9,612	\$9,772
Federal child benefits			\$6,448	\$10,881
Provincial child benefits				
GST credit	\$282	\$332	\$712	\$860
Provincial tax credits/benefits				
Total 2018 income	\$9,756	\$12,403	\$21,764	\$29,918

Total welfare incomes in Manitoba ranged from \$9,756 for the single person considered employable to \$29,918 for the couple with two children.

Unlike other jurisdictions, in Manitoba, households received more in additional social assistance benefits than through the basic amounts. 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 2018, Rent Assist benefits increased for all households receiving social assistance.

Additional benefits also included the Income Assistance for Persons with Disabilities (IAPD) benefit of \$1,260 (\$105 per month) for the 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.

Households with children received the Canada Child Benefit which increased in July 2018 from \$533 to \$541 per month for a child under the age of six and from \$450



to \$457 per month for a child aged between six and 17. Although Manitoba has a provincial Child Benefit, parents receiving social assistance are not eligible.

All households received the GST credit, which increased in July 2018 in line with inflation.

NEW BRUNSWICK

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Moncton in 2018.


	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			\$6,448	\$10,881
Provincial child benefits			\$250	\$500
GST credit	\$282	\$283	\$712	\$860
Provincial tax credits/benefits	\$400	\$400	\$700	\$1,100
Total 2018 income	\$7,126	\$9,839	\$19,978	\$26,505

Total welfare incomes in New Brunswick ranged from \$7,126 for the single person considered employable to \$26,505 for the couple with two children.

In New Brunswick, all of the example households received Transitional Assistance benefits except the single person with a disability, who received Extended Benefits. On top of basic social assistance, some households received additional social assistance benefits, as shown in the table. The single person with a disability received \$1,200 (\$100 per month) through the Disability Supplement, while the households with children received the monthly Income Supplement Benefit (\$1,224 annually) to offset high shelter costs.

Both households with children received the Canada Child Benefit which increased in July 2018 from \$533 to \$541 per month for a child under the age of six and from \$450 to \$457 per month for a child aged between six and 17. They also received the New Brunswick Child Benefit of \$250 per child (\$20.83 per month).

All households received the GST credit, which increased in July 2018 in line with inflation, and provincial tax credits through the Home Energy Assistance



Program (\$100 per household per year) and the New Brunswick Harmonized Sales Tax Credit. In addition, the household with two children received the School Supplement tax credit of \$100 per child per year.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR


The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in St. John's in 2018.

	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			\$6,448	\$10,881
Provincial child benefits			\$392	\$808
GST credit	\$315	\$315	\$712	\$860
Provincial tax credits/benefits	\$220	\$420	\$440	\$727
Total 2018 income	\$11,383	\$11,583	\$23,436	\$29,296

Total welfare incomes in Newfoundland and Labrador ranged from \$11,383 for the single person considered employable to \$29,296 for the couple with two children.

On top of basic social assistance, households received additional social assistance benefits, as shown in the table. The single person with a disability received \$1,800 (\$150 per month) through the Personal Care Allowance paid by the Department of Health and Community Services to social assistance clients receiving supportive services. The other household types received \$1,800 (\$150 per month) through the Supplemental Shelter Benefit. As over 90 per cent of social assistance 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 benefits because they often received 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.



Both households with children received the Newfoundland and Labrador Child Benefit. This monthly payment increased in July 2018 from \$32.16 to \$33.17 for the first child and from \$34.16 to \$35.16 for the second child. They also received the Canada Child Benefit which increased in July 2018 from \$533 to \$541 per month for a child under the age of six and from \$450 to \$457 per month for a child aged between six and 17.

All households received the GST credit, which increased in July 2018 in line with inflation. In terms of provincial tax credits, social assistance households qualified for the Newfoundland and Labrador Income Supplement. The amount was higher for those who were also eligible for the federal Disability Tax Credit.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES


The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Yellowknife in 2018.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$21,733	\$23,055	\$26,472	\$32,652
Additional SA benefits		\$4,068		
Federal child benefits			\$6,448	\$10,881
Territorial child benefits			\$815	\$1,174
GST credit	\$430	\$430	\$712	\$860
Territorial tax credits/benefits				
Total 2018 income	\$22,163	\$27,553	\$34,447	\$45,567

Total welfare incomes in the Northwest Territories ranged from \$22,163 for the single person considered employable to \$45,567 for the couple with two children.

The NWT basic social assistance program pays actual costs of shelter, fuel, and utilities. At the beginning of 2018, the shelter component of basic social assistance for single person households was capped at \$900. In April 2018, the cap was removed and the shelter component was aligned to the market costs of renting a one bedroom apartment. In the table above, single people were assumed to have a shelter allowance of \$900 per month in the first three months of 2018 and \$1,451 per month thereafter (the average market rent for a one-bedroom apartment in 2018 in Yellowknife according to CMHC annual rental market report).

On top of basic social assistance, one household received additional social assistance benefits, as shown in the table. The single person with a disability received the Disability Allowance of \$300 per month and the Incidental Allowance for Persons with Disabilities of \$39 per month.



Both households with children received the Canada Child Benefit which increased in July 2018 from \$533 to \$541 per month for a child under the age of six and from \$450 to \$457 per month for a child aged between six and 17. They also received the NWT Child Benefit. The single parent received \$67.91 per month (the amount provided for one child under the age of six) and the couple household received \$97.83 per month (the amount provided for two children between the ages of six and 17).

All households received the GST credit, which increased in July 2018 in line with inflation.

NOVA SCOTIA

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Halifax in 2018.

	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			\$6,448	\$10,881
Provincial child benefits			\$625	\$1,450
GST credit	\$282	\$293	\$712	\$860
Provincial tax credits/benefits	\$255	\$255	\$315	\$375
Total 2018 income	\$7,437	\$10,268	\$18,240	\$27,756

Total welfare incomes in Nova Scotia ranged from \$7,437 for the single person considered employable to \$27,756 for the couple with two children.

On top of basic social assistance, the couple with children received additional social assistance benefits, as shown in the table. They received the annual School Supplies Supplement of \$50 for the 10-year-old and \$100 for the 15-year-old.

Both households with children received the Canada Child Benefit which increased in July 2018 from \$533 to \$541 per month for a child under the age of six and from \$450 to \$457 per month for a child aged between six and 17. They also received the Nova Scotia Child Benefit of \$52.08 per month for the first child and \$68.75 per month for the second child.

All households received the GST credit, which increased in July 2018 in line with inflation, and the Nova Scotia Affordable Living Tax Credit.

NUNAVUT


The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Iqaluit in 2018.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$10,608	\$17,160
Additional SA benefits		\$3,000		
Federal child benefits			\$6,448	\$10,881
Territorial child benefits			\$330	\$660
GST credit	\$282	\$282	\$712	\$860
Territorial tax credits/benefits				
Total 2018 income	\$7,782	\$10,782	\$18,098	\$29,561

Total welfare incomes in Nunavut ranged from \$7,782 for the single person considered employable to \$29,561 for the couple with two children. Unlike the equivalent figures for other provinces and territories in Canada, this was the social assistance households had after the majority of their housing costs had been paid.

In Iqaluit, 95 per cent of households receiving social assistance live in public housing. Since 2012, these welfare income calculations have used the public housing rent to better reflect the actual amounts paid to households receiving social assistance. Recipients in public housing do not pay 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 the two other territories, the majority of housing costs have already been paid.

In July 2018, the structure of basic social assistance in Nunavut changed when the Food Allowance and Clothing Allowance were replaced by the Basic Allowance. This increased the basic social assistance income of all households.



In addition to basic assistance, the single person with a disability also received \$3,000 (\$250 per month) through the Incidental Allowance.

Both households with children received the Canada Child Benefit which increased in July 2018 from \$533 to \$541 per month for a child under the age of six and from \$450 to \$457 per month for a child aged between six and 17. They also received \$27.50 per child per month through the Nunavut Child Benefit.

All households received the GST credit, which increased in July 2018 in line with inflation.

ONTARIO

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Toronto in 2018.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$8,688	\$13,884	\$11,880	\$14,820
Additional SA benefits				
Federal child benefits			\$6,448	\$10,881
Provincial child benefits			\$1,391	\$2,781
GST credit	\$282	\$369	\$712	\$860
Provincial tax credits/benefits	\$676	\$701	\$1,032	\$1,656
Total 2018 income	\$9,646	\$14,954	\$21,463	\$30,998

Total welfare incomes in Ontario ranged from \$9,646 for the single person considered employable to \$30,998 for the couple with two children.

In Ontario, all households received Ontario Works (OW) benefits except for the single person with a disability, who received Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) benefits. The basic needs and shelter allowances, which together make up each household's basic social assistance income, increased in September 2018 for ODSP recipients and in October 2018 for OW recipients.

Both households with children received the Canada Child Benefit which increased in July 2018 from \$533 to \$541 per month for a child under the age of six and from \$450 to \$457 per month for a child aged between six and 17. They also received the Ontario Child Benefit which increased from \$114.83 to \$116.92 per month per child in July 2018.

All households received the GST credit and the Ontario Trillium Benefit, the provincial tax credit. Both increased in July 2018.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Charlottetown in 2018.


	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$10,053	\$10,053	\$13,652	\$20,501
Additional SA benefits		\$750		\$350
Federal child benefits			\$6,448	\$10,881
Provincial child benefits				
GST credit	\$282	\$295	\$712	\$860
Provincial tax credits/benefits	\$110	\$110	\$165	\$165
Total 2018 income	\$10,445	\$11,208	\$20,977	\$32,757

Total welfare incomes in Prince Edward Island ranged from \$10,445 for the single person considered employable to \$32,757 for the couple with two children.

There were a number of changes affecting welfare incomes in PEI in 2018. PEI had two shelter allowance rates for single adults considered employable: a standard rate of \$346 per month and a higher rate for persons with special accommodation needs of \$539 per month. Beginning in 2016, in recognition of the changing rental market, PEI gradually shifted its policy so that single adults considered employable could receive the higher of the two possible shelter allowances. By the start of 2018 most single employable adults on social assistance were receiving the higher shelter allowance rate. This shift is reflected in the table above.

Over the course of 2018, social assistance shelter rates increased by three per cent in June and by six per cent in December. In November 2018, the Food Allowance increased by ten per cent.

There was also a restructure of benefits affecting the single person with a disability. In July 2018, the former Disability Support Program was enhanced and renamed



AccessAbility Supports. As a result the single person with a disability was eligible to receive \$150 per month through the Community Living Expense as part of the Assured Income component of AccessAbility Supports. On top of basic assistance, the couple with children received an additional \$350 through the School Allowance (\$75 for the 10-year-old and \$100 for the 15-year-old issued in August and December).

Both households with children received the Canada Child Benefit which increased in July 2018 from \$533 to \$541 per month for a child under the age of six and from \$450 to \$457 per month for a child aged between six and 17.

All households received the GST credit, which increased in July 2018 in line with inflation, and the PEI Sales Tax Credit.

QUEBEC

The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Montreal in 2018.


	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$8,061	\$12,347	\$9,369	\$12,028
Additional SA benefits			\$960	\$1,159
Federal child benefits			\$6,448	\$10,881
Provincial child benefits			\$3,282	\$4,044
GST credit	\$282	\$327	\$712	\$860
Provincial tax credits/benefits	\$977	\$977	\$1,096	\$1,482
Total 2018 income	\$9,320	\$13,651	\$21,867	\$30,453

Total welfare incomes in Quebec ranged from \$9,320 for a single person considered employable to \$30,453 for a couple with two children.

In Quebec, all of the example households received Social Assistance benefits, except for the single person with a disability, who received Social Solidarity benefits. For the single parent, the Temporarily Limited Capacity Allowance of \$134 per month was included in the basic amount.

All basic social assistance benefit amounts were increased in January 2018. In February 2018, a new monthly supplement of \$15 per month for each household receiving Social Assistance benefits and \$73 per month for a single person with a disability receiving Social Solidarity benefits was introduced.

In addition to basic assistance, households with children received \$960 (\$80 per month) through the Shelter Allowance benefit (administered by the Société d'habitation du Québec). The household with two children also received the annual School Allowance of \$76 for the 10-year-old and \$123 for the 15-year-old.



Both households with children received the Canada Child Benefit which increased in July 2018 from \$533 to \$541 per month for a child under the age of six and from \$450 to \$457 per month for a child aged between six and 17.

The provincial Child Benefit (Child Assistance) rates also increased in January 2018, to a maximum monthly benefit of \$202.50 for a one-child household and \$303.67 for a two-child household. Single parents received an additional supplement of \$71.00 per month. In 2017, a new benefit — the supplement for the purchase of school supplies — was incorporated into the Child Assistance program. It provided \$100 per year for each child from the ages of four to 16. In 2018, two payments were made; one in January 2018 for the 2017-18 school year and another in July/August for the 2018-19 school year. In late 2018, the Child Assistance program was renamed Family Allowances.

All households received the GST credit and the Quebec Solidarity Tax Credit. Both increased in July 2018.

SASKATCHEWAN


The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Saskatoon in 2018.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single person in SAID program*	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance**	\$8,255	\$9,924	\$14,206	\$13,235	\$17,035
Additional SA benefits		\$840	\$840		\$215
Federal child benefits				\$6,448	\$10,881
Provincial child benefits					
GST credit	\$282	\$312	\$397	\$712	\$860
Provincial tax credits/benefits	\$346	\$346	\$346	\$692	\$964
Total 2018 income	\$8,883	\$11,422	\$15,789	\$21,087	\$29,955

*The Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) program is a needs-tested income support program. It was introduced in 2009 to support individuals in residential care and was expanded in 2012 for people with significant and enduring disabilities living independently.

**In Saskatchewan social assistance programs support households with utility costs in different ways (either covering actual utility costs, providing a flat-rate amount, or a combination of both). The utility component of social assistance used in the table above is the average amount provided for each household type in 2018.

Total welfare incomes in Saskatchewan ranged from \$8,883 for the single person considered employable to \$29,955 for the couple with two children. A person with



a disability received \$11,422 in 2018 under the Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP) but those who qualified for Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) benefits received a much higher amount of \$15,789. The other household types received Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA).

On top of basic assistance, single persons with a disability received additional benefits. A single person with a disability on SAP received the Disability Allowance of \$600 (\$50 per month) and the Special Transportation Allowance of \$240 (\$20 per month). Meanwhile, a person with a disability on SAID received \$840 (\$70 per month) through the Disability Income Benefit.

The School Expenses Allowance was also available for households receiving TEA with school-aged children. It provided the couple with an additional annual payment of \$85 for the 10-year-old and \$130 for the 15-year-old.

Both households with children received the Canada Child Benefit which increased in July 2018 from \$533 to \$541 per month for a child under the age of six and from \$450 to \$457 per month for a child aged between six and 17.

All households received the GST credit, which increased in July 2018 in line with inflation, and the Saskatchewan Low-Income Tax Credit (SLITC).

YUKON


The table below shows the value and components of welfare incomes for four household types living in Whitehorse in 2018.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$16,854	\$16,854	\$24,287	\$33,931
Additional SA benefits	\$809	\$4,463	\$1,736	\$3,193
Federal child benefits			\$6,448	\$10,881
Territorial child benefits			\$820	\$1,624
GST credit	\$430	\$430	\$712	\$860
Territorial tax credits/benefits				
Total 2018 income	\$18,093	\$21,747	\$34,003	\$50,489

Total welfare incomes in the Yukon ranged from \$18,093 for the single person considered employable to \$50,489 for the couple with two children. All basic social assistance rates increased in November 2018.

On top of basic social assistance, all households received additional social assistance benefits. In the Yukon there are many types of additional social assistance benefits:

- the Yukon Supplementary Allowance (\$250 per month for the person with a disability),
- the Christmas Allowance (\$30 annually per person),
- the Winter Clothing Allowance (\$75 annually for persons under 14 years and \$125 for persons 14 years or older),
- the Telephone Allowance (\$37 per month per household),
- the Laundry Service Allowance (\$10 per month per person),
- the Transportation Expense Allowance (\$62 per month per adult), and
- an additional component of the Transportation Expense Allowance which was introduced in 2018 (\$40 per month for each child between the ages of two and 18).



Some households received these additional benefits immediately, while others only qualified after they had been in receipt of social assistance for six consecutive months.

Both households with children received the Canada Child Benefit which increased in July 2018 from \$533 to \$541 per month for a child under the age of six and from \$450 to \$457 per month for a child aged between six and 17. They also received the Yukon Child Benefit (up to \$68.33 per child per month).

All households received the GST credit, which increased in July 2018 in line with inflation.

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 how the welfare incomes of households across Canada changed between 2017 and 2018. It then looks at the longer-term trends in welfare incomes in each province and territory in turn.


Changes to welfare incomes between 2017 and 2018

The table below compares the welfare incomes paid in 2018 with those paid in 2017 without adjusting for inflation. The values *with an ** highlight where welfare income increased by more than the cost of living (based on the 2018 national [rate of inflation](#) of 2.3 per cent). These households could buy more with their welfare incomes in 2018 than they could in 2017. The values *without an ** indicate that welfare incomes did not keep pace with inflation. These households were actually worse off than in the previous year. 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 2017 and 2018 in each province

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Alberta	1.0%	0.7%	0.9%	0.9%
British Columbia	*11.3%	*13.0%	*5.0%	*4.0%
Manitoba	*2.8%	2.2%	1.9%	1.5%
New Brunswick	0.1%	0.0%	0.3%	0.4%
Newfoundland and Labrador	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.4%
Nova Scotia	0.1%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%
Ontario	2.0%	1.9%	1.5%	1.5%
Prince Edward Island	*32.2%	*9.6%	1.7%	1.9%
Quebec	*2.6%	*7.1%	1.5%	*2.7%
Saskatchewan	0.7%	1.3%	0.0%	0.6%

* indicates the welfare incomes that increased by more than costs (based on the 2018 national [rate of inflation](#) of 2.3 per cent).



In 2018, the total annual welfare incomes for all households increased, from a minuscule increase for a single parent in Saskatchewan (0.005 per cent) to 13 per cent for a single person with a disability in British Columbia. Of the 40 different household and jurisdiction combinations in the table, the welfare income rose by more than the cost of living in 2018 in just ten scenarios (indicated by an *).

In British Columbia, welfare incomes rose above inflation for all household types. This was driven by a \$100 increase in monthly social assistance payments for all household types which came into effect in October 2017. Single persons with a disability in BC received a further boost of \$52 to their monthly social assistance income beginning in January 2018.

Welfare incomes in Quebec also rose above inflation in 2018 for all household types except the single parent. Single persons with a disability saw the biggest rise in welfare incomes, driven by a \$73 increase to their monthly social assistance payments beginning in February 2018. At the same time, the monthly social assistance increase of \$15 per month for all other households was enough to meet the rising cost of living for a single person considered employable, but not for the households with children. However, the couple with two children also benefited from a new annual payment of \$100 for each school-age child through the Child Assistance program. The payment for the 2017/18 and 2018/19 school years were both received in the 2018 calendar year.

Compared to other household types and other jurisdictions, the single person considered employable in PEI saw the largest proportional increase to their welfare income in 2018. This was mostly due to a gradual shift in policy in recognition of the changing rental market which meant that single adults considered employable could receive the higher shelter allowance rate of \$539 per month instead of the lower rate of \$346 per month. Meanwhile the welfare income of the person with a disability in PEI increased due to the introduction of a \$150 per month Community Living Allowance in July 2018.

The main change affecting welfare incomes in Manitoba was an increase to the Rent Assist program for all households. This meant that the total welfare income of single adults considered employable, but not other households, kept up with rising prices. Similarly, in Ontario social assistance payments rose slightly for all

household types in 2018, but, nonetheless, total welfare incomes did not keep pace with inflation.

In Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Alberta, there were no changes to social assistance payments between 2017 and 2018. Households in these provinces only saw small shifts in their welfare income through indexed federal child benefits and the GST credit.

Saskatchewan's welfare incomes in 2018 were driven down by a decrease to social assistance rates mid-way through 2017, which was partially countered by a simultaneous increase to the provincial tax credit. But social assistance payments in Saskatchewan are also linked to utility costs, and annual fluctuations in these also influence total welfare incomes.

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 (for more information, see the *Methodology* section).


Change in total welfare income between 2017 and 2018 in each territory

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Northwest Territories	*28.9%	*24.0%	1.1%	*3.0%
Nunavut	*30.8%	*25.4%	*6.4%	*3.0%
Yukon	1.5%	1.3%	*2.8%	*3.2%

* indicates the welfare incomes that increased by more than costs (based on the 2018 national rate of inflation of 2.3 per cent).

In Nunavut, 2018 welfare incomes rose significantly more than the cost of living for all household types. This was mostly the result of a restructure of, and increase to, basic social assistance payments beginning in July 2018.

In the Northwest Territories, welfare incomes rose more than the cost of living for single persons considered employable and single persons with a disability. This was due to a policy change in April 2018 that aligned CMHC's average cost of a one-



bedroom apartment to the shelter component of social assistance for single adults. In 2018, the full impact of the increase to the NWT Child Benefit took effect but it was not enough to keep up with inflation for the single parent. However, the welfare income of the couple with two children increased more than inflation due to both the NWT Child Benefit and a rise in their estimated utility costs (which directly increases their social assistance income).

Lastly, despite an increase in basic social assistance payments to all households in the Yukon, total welfare incomes for single adults did not rise more than the cost of living. However, a new payment for families with children was introduced which meant that the total welfare incomes of the single parent and the couple with two children increased more than the cost of living in 2018.

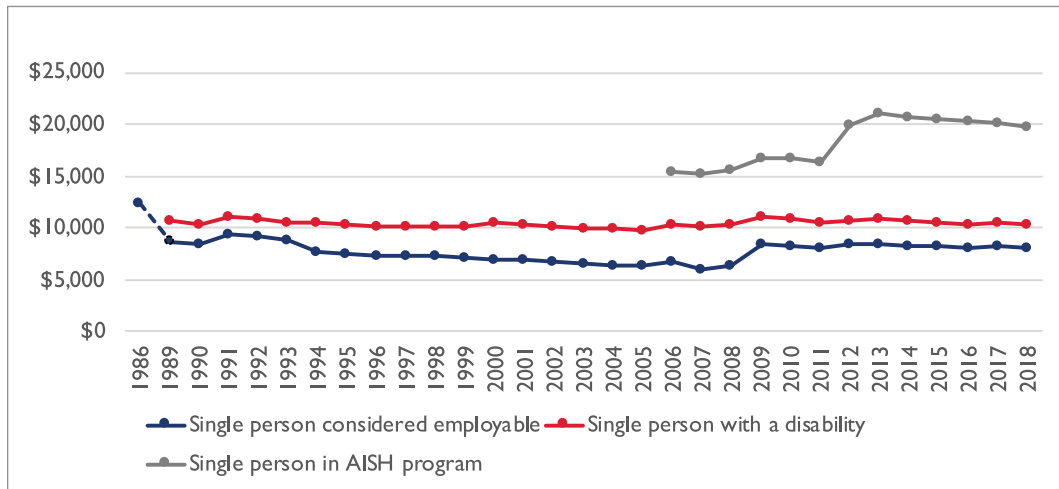
The next section looks at the longer-term changes for each jurisdiction. Rather than present the change as a percentage and compare it to the cost of living (as in the tables above), the next section shows the dollar value of total welfare incomes in each year after adjusting for inflation. Therefore the graphs show how welfare incomes have changed in terms of the goods someone could buy.

Changes by jurisdiction

ALBERTA

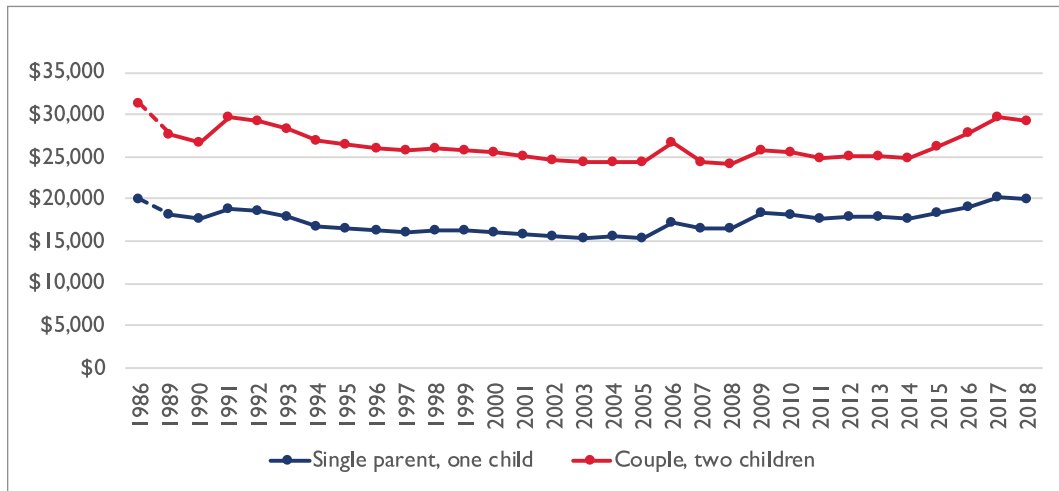
The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2018 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation as measured by the national consumer price index.

Welfare incomes for single adults, 2018 constant dollars



- The welfare income of single persons considered employable in Alberta gradually declined over the 1990s and 2000s, with the only notable increase occurring in 2009. The value has been fluctuating just above \$8,000 since then. In 2018, the single person considered employable received \$8,106.
- Since 1989, the welfare income of a person with a disability receiving income support has been fairly constant, fluctuating around \$10,000. In 2018, it stood at \$10,301.
- Those who qualified for the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program had a welfare income of \$19,786 in 2018, 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 substantially in 2012 but have been falling in value since 2014.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2018 constant dollars

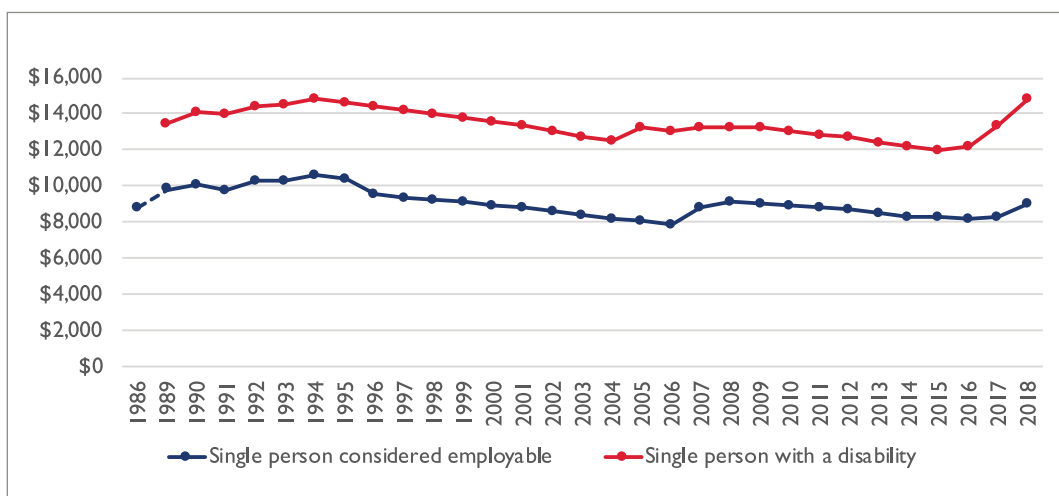


- The welfare incomes of households with children declined gradually between the early 1990s and mid-2000s. They rose from 2015 to 2017 because of changes to federal child benefits and the introduction of the Alberta Child Benefit in July 2016.
- In 2018, a single parent with one child received a welfare income of \$19,927 while a couple with two children received \$29,238.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

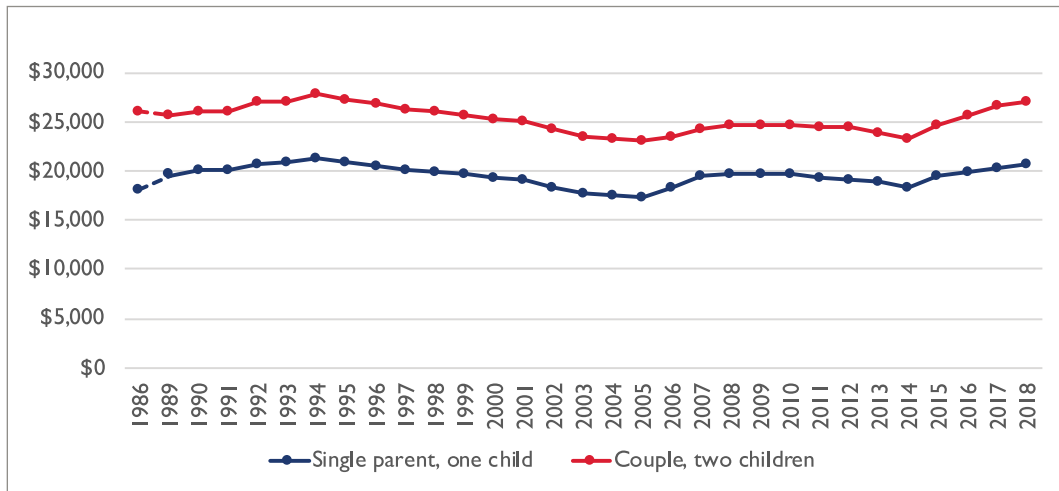
The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2018 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation as measured by the national consumer price index.

Welfare incomes for single adults, 2018 constant dollars



- Welfare incomes for both the single person considered employable and the person with a disability followed a similar pattern. Between the mid-1990s and 2016, they followed a general downward trend, with only a brief increase in the mid-2000s. But since 2016, welfare incomes have risen notably due to regular social assistance rate increases.
- The total welfare income of the single person considered employable rose in 2018 as a result of an increase to basic social assistance rates in October 2017. The single person with a disability also benefited from an increase in the Disability Assistance rate in January 2018.
- In 2018, a single person considered employable received \$9,042 (\$732 higher than in 2017) and a single person with a disability received \$14,802 (\$1,405 higher than in 2017). Despite recent increases, their incomes still fell below 1994, the high point in the time series.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2018 constant dollars

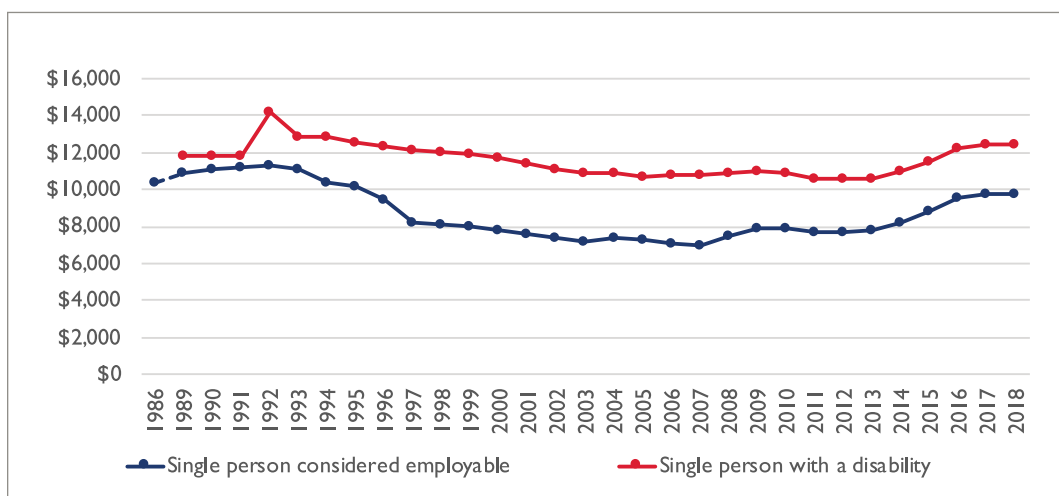


- Households with children showed a similar pattern in welfare incomes as their single counterparts, with a notable drop starting in 1995 that continued into the mid-2000s.
- Despite small increases in the mid-2000s, welfare incomes gradually fell again until 2014. They rose from 2015 to 2017 because of increases to federal child benefits. In 2018, welfare incomes rose due to an increase to basic social assistance rates beginning in October 2017.
- In 2018, a single parent with one child received \$20,782 (\$532 higher than in 2017) and a couple with two children received \$27,006 (\$433 higher than in 2017).

MANITOBA

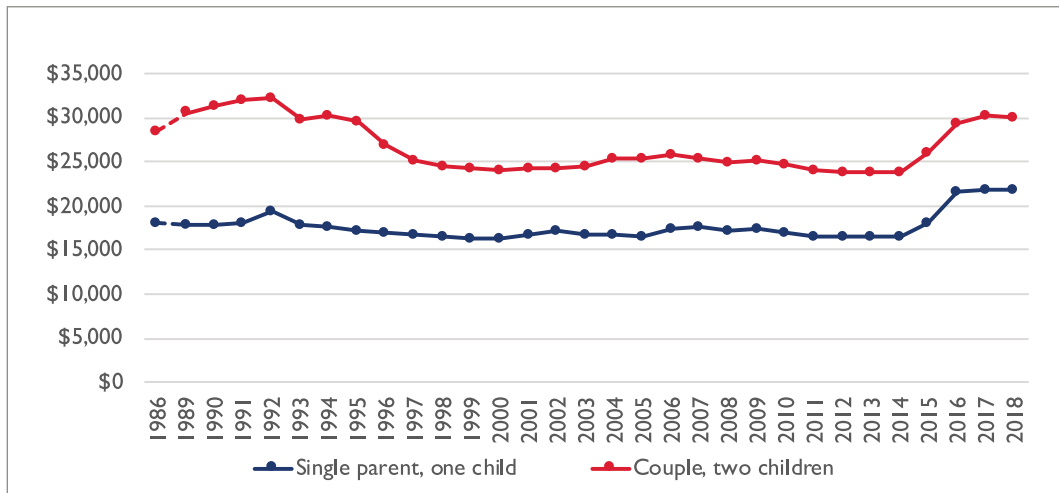
The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2018 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation as measured by the national consumer price index.

Welfare incomes for single adults, 2018 constant dollars



- After peaking in 1992, welfare incomes for the single person considered employable and the person with a disability followed a similar downward trend until the mid-2000s.
- There were noteworthy increases in welfare incomes in 2015 and 2016 for both households, largely due to enhancements to the Manitoba Rent Assist program. Since 2016, welfare incomes have been relatively flat.
- In 2018, a single person with a disability received \$12,403. The welfare income of a single person considered employable stood at \$9,756. Despite recent increases, these incomes still fell below the level in the mid-1990s.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2018 constant dollars



- The welfare incomes of households with children rose considerably in 2015 and 2016, largely due to 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 2018 it stood at \$21,764.
- The welfare income for a couple with two children peaked in 1992 at \$32,324, then declined until the early 2000s. In 2015, this welfare income began to increase substantially but fell slightly in 2018 to \$29,918.

NEW BRUNSWICK

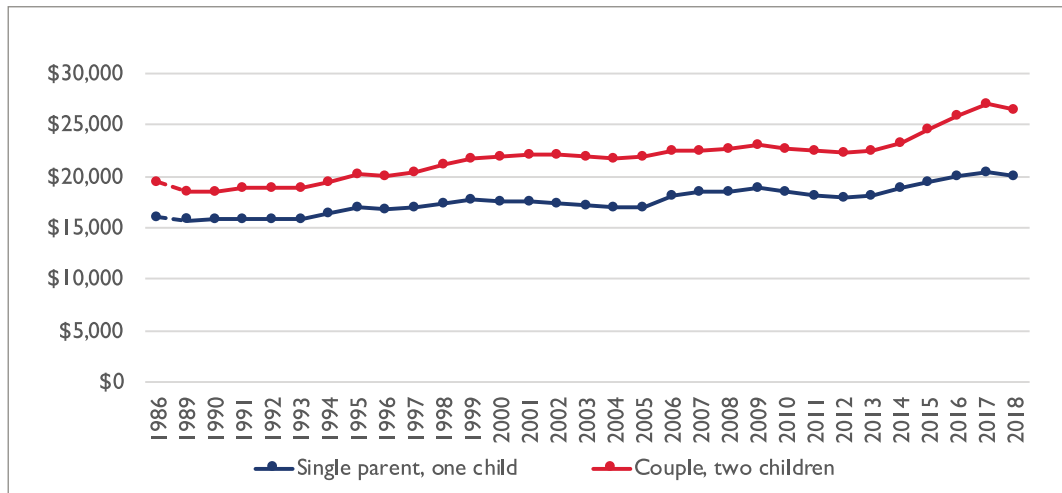
The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2018 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation as measured by the national consumer price index.

Welfare incomes for single adults, 2018 constant dollars



- 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 in 2018 it stood at \$7,126.
- A single person with a disability had a welfare income over \$12,000 until 1993; it then dropped significantly. Since then, it has hovered around \$10,000, and in 2018 stood at \$9,839.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2018 constant dollars

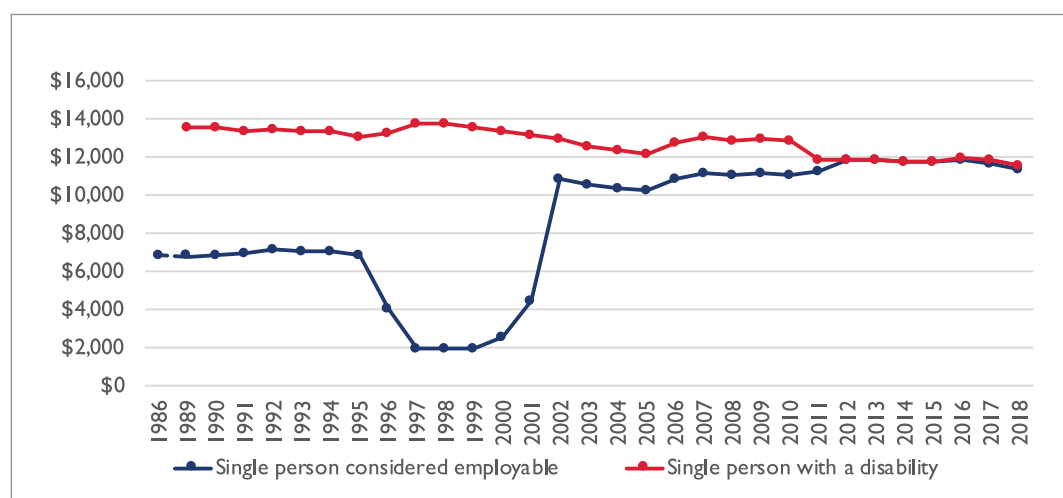


- The welfare incomes of the single parent with one child and the couple with two children have, overall, been increasing since 1989.
- The welfare incomes of households with children rose from 2015 to 2017, largely as a result of changes to federal child benefits and the introduction of the New Brunswick Harmonized Sales Tax Credit in 2016.
- In 2018, the welfare income of the single parent with one child and the couple with two children dropped slightly. They stood at \$19,978 and \$26,505, respectively.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

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 2018 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation as measured by the national consumer price index.

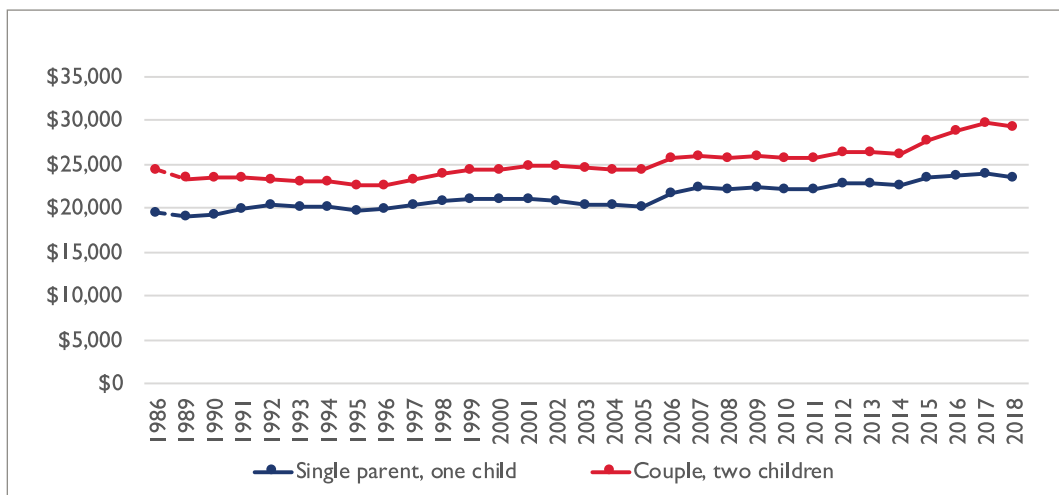
Welfare incomes for single adults, 2018 constant dollars



- In the early 1990s, a single person with a disability had a welfare income nearly double that of a single person considered employable. But the welfare incomes of these two household types have converged. In 2018, a single person with a disability had a total welfare income of \$11,583, compared to \$11,383 for a single person considered employable.
- Between 1995 and 1996, the welfare income of a single person considered employable dropped from nearly \$6,900 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 continued to increase gradually 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 welfare income calculations. This in turn was because persons with disabilities on assistance often received additional financial support towards 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 was not readily available, it could not be included in the welfare income calculations.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2018 constant dollars

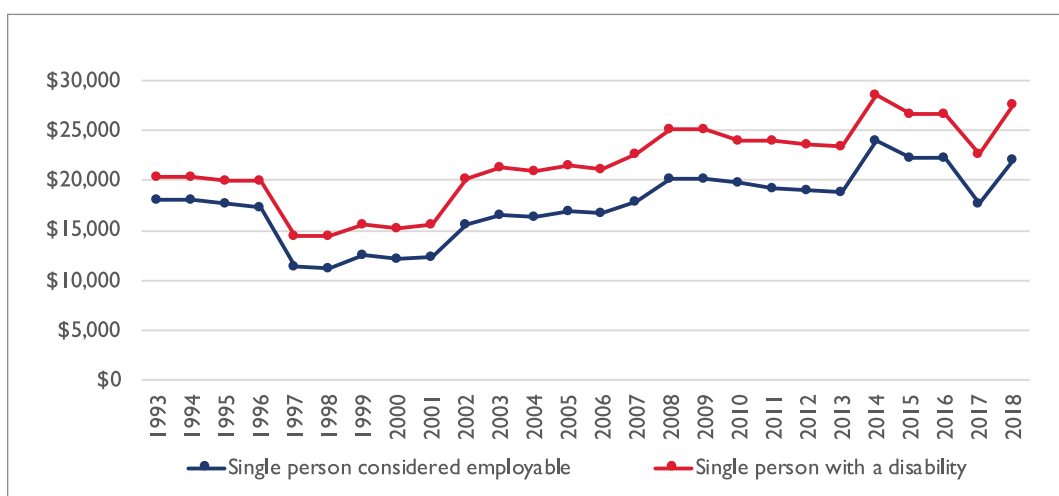


- Over the long term, welfare incomes for both household types with children have gradually increased, with marked rises in 2006 and in the period from 2015 to 2017. The rise in 2006 was the result of a five per cent increase to the Family Benefit rate, while the rise from 2015 to 2017 was largely the result of changes to federal child benefits.
- In 2018, the welfare incomes of the single parent with one child and the couple with two children dropped slightly, and stood at \$23,436 and \$29,296, respectively.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

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 2018 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation as measured by the national consumer price index.

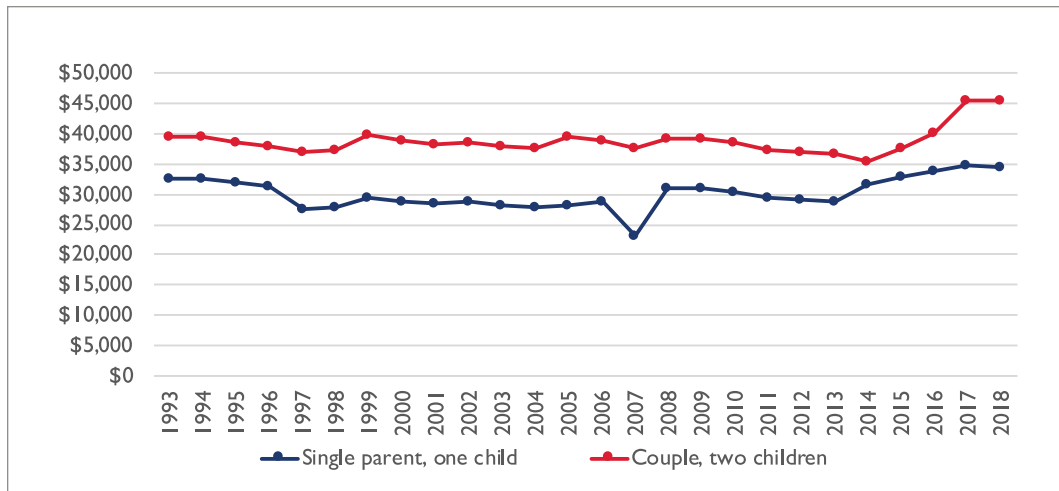
Welfare incomes for single adults, 2018 constant dollars



- The welfare incomes for a single person considered employable and a single person with a disability have mirrored each other over time. They both dropped in 1997, gradually increased until 2008, and decreased until 2013. They have both fluctuated considerably since then.
- The variations between 2013 and 2017 were the result of changes in the way costs were calculated rather than the result of changes to social assistance policy. The rise in 2014 was due to a considerable increase in utility costs, and the fall in 2015 was due to a decrease in the cost of fuel. The fall in 2017 was due to methodological changes in the estimation of utility costs. The welfare incomes data for 2017 are lower in this edition than originally reported due to a revision to shelter and utility costs.
- In April 2018, there was a considerable increase in the welfare incomes of single adults due to a change in policy. This resulted in an increase in the shelter component paid to single persons on assistance from \$900 per month to the average monthly rental cost of a one-bedroom apartment in Yellowknife (\$1,451).

- In 2018, the welfare incomes of a single person considered employable and a single person with a disability stood at \$22,163 and \$27,553, respectively.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2018 constant dollars

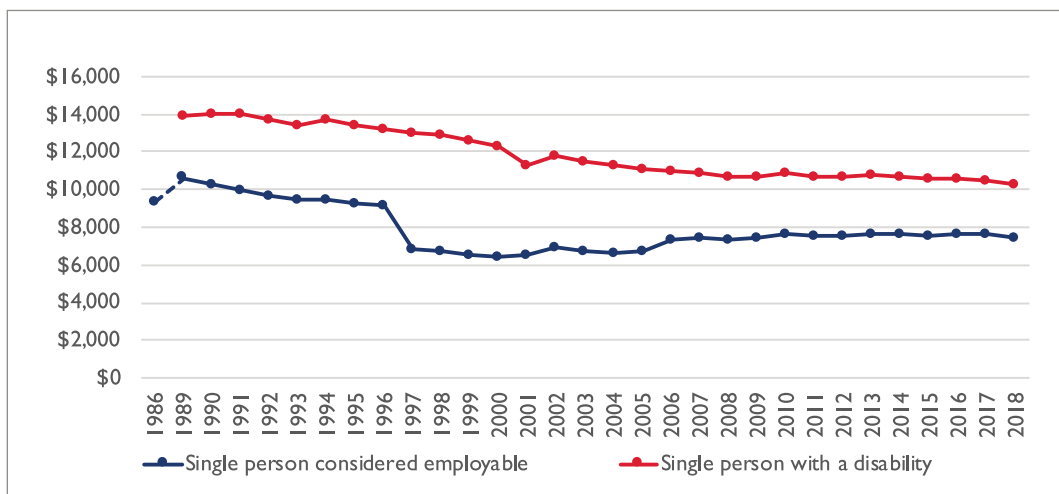


- The maximum welfare incomes of households with children rose from 2015 to 2017, in part due to changes to federal child benefits.
- In 2017, the welfare incomes of both household types with children also increased as a result of changes to the way shelter and utility costs were calculated. The welfare incomes data for 2017 are lower in this edition than originally reported due to a revision to shelter and utility costs.
- In 2018, a single parent with one child had a welfare income of \$34,447 and a couple with two children had \$45,567.

NOVA SCOTIA

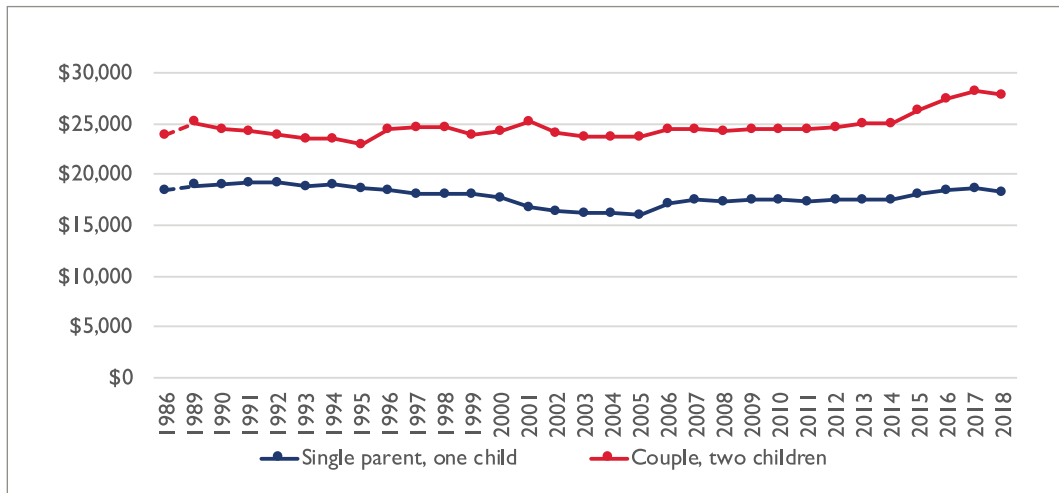
The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2018 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation as measured by the national consumer price index.

Welfare incomes for single adults, 2018 constant dollars



- 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.
- Welfare income for the single person considered employable has remained fairly constant since the mid-2000s; in 2018, it stood at \$7,437.
- Single persons with disabilities have seen a steady decline in their welfare incomes over time. In 2018, it stood at \$10,268, considerably lower than the 1989 figure of nearly \$14,000.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2018 constant dollars



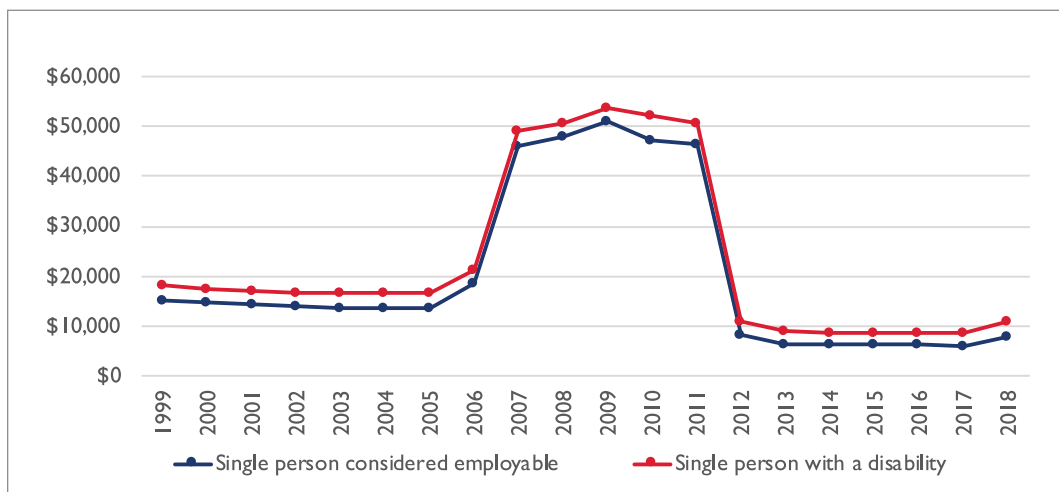
- The welfare incomes of both the single parent and the couple with children have gone up and down over the past three decades, with the changes for single parents being more pronounced.
- From 2015 to 2017, the maximum welfare incomes of households with children rose, largely as a result of changes to federal child benefits.
- In 2018, the welfare incomes of both household types decreased. For the single parent household it stood at \$18,240, still below the amounts paid in the late 1980s and early 1990s. For the couple with children it stood at \$27,756.

NUNAVUT

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 2018 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation as measured by the national consumer price index.

The precipitous drop in income for all household types starting 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 clients 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.

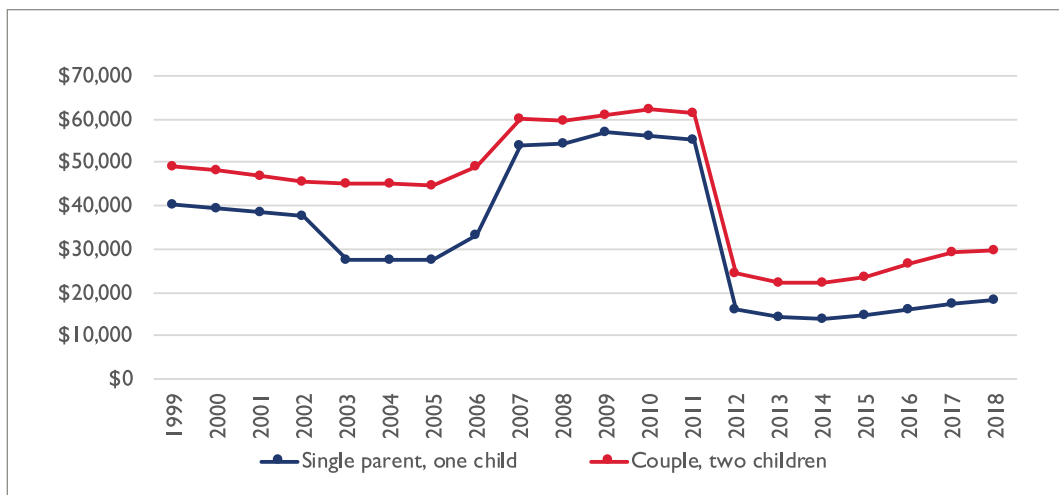
Welfare incomes for single adults, 2018 constant dollars



- The total welfare incomes of the single person considered employable and the person with a disability had remained relatively flat since 2012, when total welfare incomes for all household types dropped as a result of methodological changes.

- But in 2018, welfare incomes increased as a result of the introduction of the Basic Allowance, which replaced and enhanced the former Food Allowance and Clothing Allowance.
- In 2018, a single person considered employable had a welfare income of \$7,782 (\$1,695 higher than in 2017) and a person with a disability received \$10,782 (\$1,984 higher than in 2017).

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2018 constant dollars

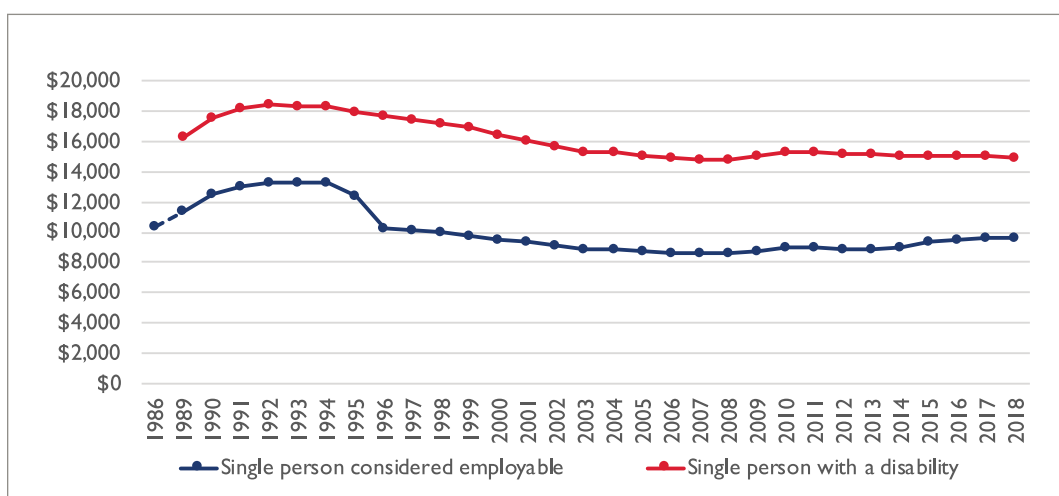


- The welfare incomes for both households with children followed a similar pattern to that of the single person households, with a sharp decrease in 2012 due to a change in methodology, rather than a change in social assistance policy.
- The welfare incomes of households with children rose between 2015 and 2017, largely as a result of changes to federal child benefits.
- In 2018, they rose again due to the introduction the Basic Allowance, which replaced and enhanced the former Food Allowance and Clothing Allowance. The welfare income for a single parent with one child stood at \$18,098 (\$695 higher than in 2017), and for a couple with two children it was \$29,561 (\$193 higher than in 2017).

ONTARIO

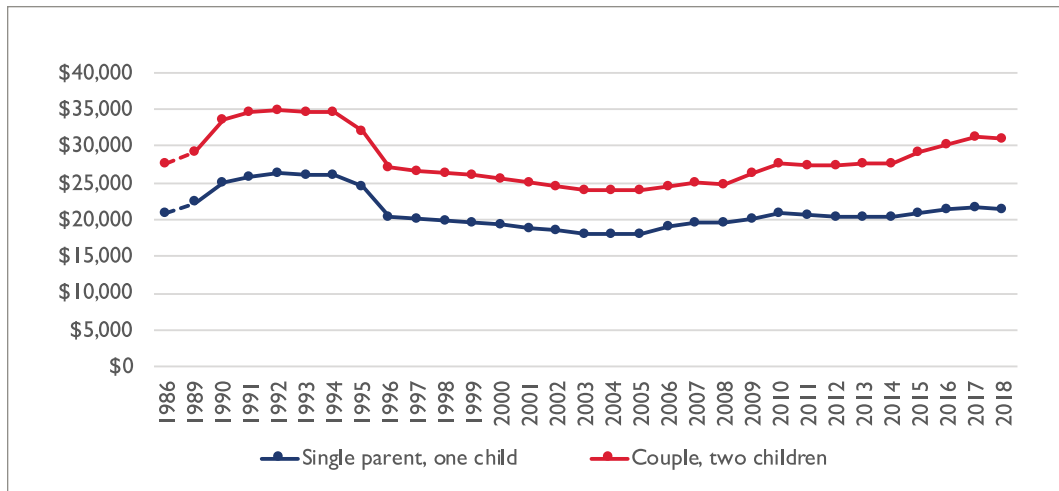
The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2018 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation as measured by the national consumer price index.

Welfare incomes for single adults, 2018 constant dollars



- In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the welfare incomes of a single person considered employable and a single person with a disability increased regularly.
- The welfare income 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. Between 2009 and 2017, welfare incomes gradually increased but remained largely unchanged in 2018. A single person considered employable received \$9,646 in 2018, notably below the levels of the late 1980s and early 1990s.
- Single persons with disabilities also saw a similar but less pronounced decline in their welfare income from the mid-1990s, when rates were also frozen. In 2018, their welfare income stood at \$14,954, still below the levels in the 1980s and 1990s.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2018 constant dollars

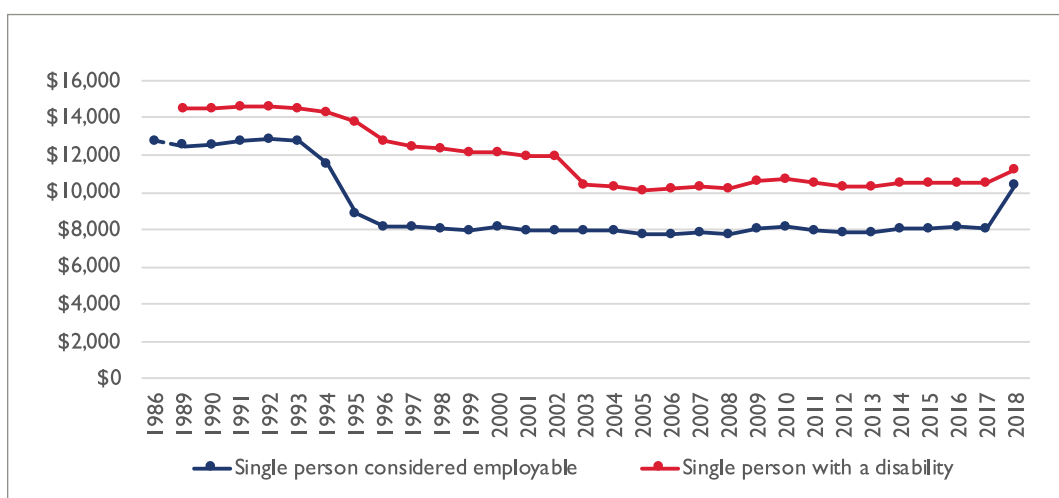


- Welfare incomes for households with children mirrored the pattern of singles, showing early increases followed by a sharp decrease in 1995, a continuing downward trend for the next decade, and then gradual increases.
- The welfare incomes of households with children rose from 2015 to 2017, largely as a result of changes to federal child benefits.
- In 2018, a single parent with a two-year-old child received \$21,463 in welfare income. A couple with two children aged 10 and 15 received \$30,998.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

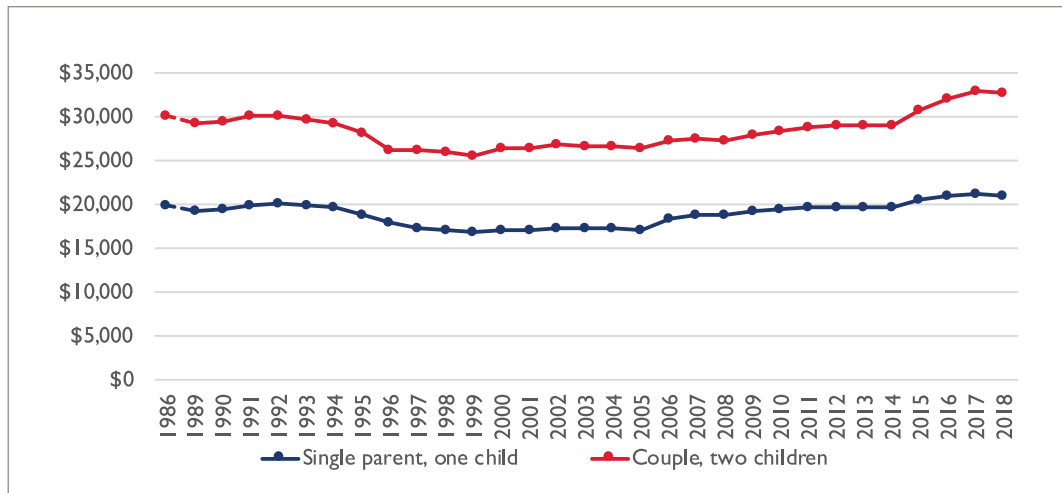
The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2018 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation as measured by the national consumer price index.

Welfare incomes for single adults, 2018 constant dollars



- Both single persons considered employable and single persons with a disability 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 a disability, welfare incomes fell more gradually until 2003. Following that, these welfare incomes remained fairly constant until 2018, when both increased sharply.
- The 2018 increase for the single person considered employable was mostly due to a gradual shift in policy – in recognition of the changing rental market in PEI, single employable recipients could receive the higher shelter allowance rate of \$539 per month instead of the lower rate of \$346 per. The increase for the person with a disability was due to the introduction of a \$150 per month Community Living Allowance in July 2018.
- In 2018, the welfare income of the single person considered employable and the person with a disability stood at \$10,445 and \$11,208 respectively.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2018 constant dollars

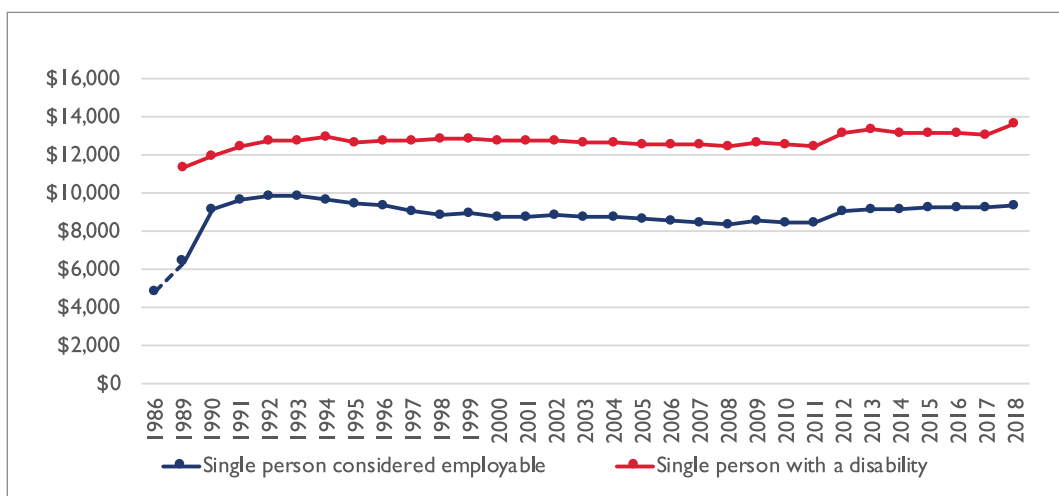


- Unlike single adult households in PEI, households with children have seen a steady increase in their welfare incomes since the mid-2000s.
- The welfare incomes of households with children rose from 2015 to 2017, largely as a result of changes to federal child benefits.
- In 2018, the welfare income of the single parent with one child and the couple with two children stood at \$20,977 and \$32,757, respectively.

QUEBEC

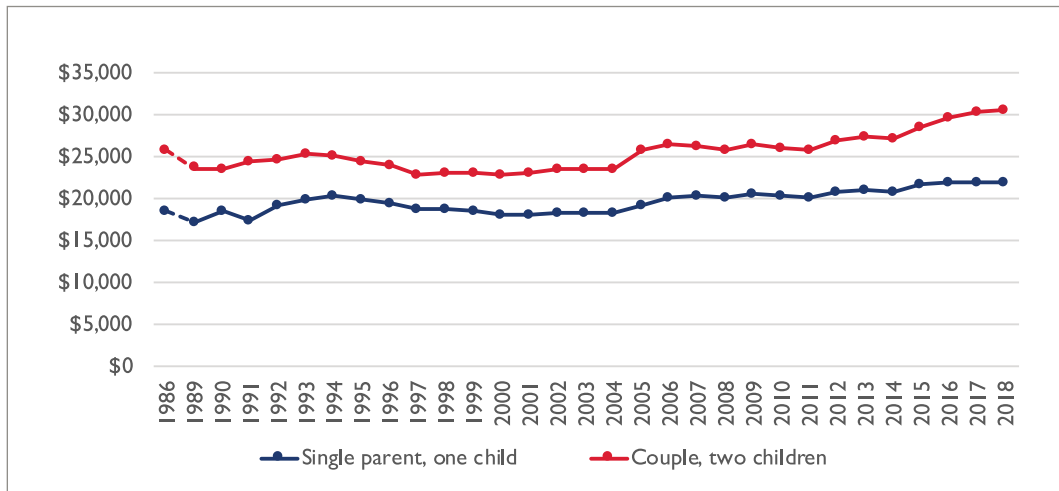
The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2018 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation as measured by the national consumer price index.

Welfare incomes for single adults, 2018 constant dollars



- The welfare income of a single person considered employable declined gradually after the mid-1990s but rose again starting in 2012. Meanwhile, the welfare income of a single person with a disability remained stable throughout the 1990s and 2000s and rose in 2012.
- The increase in welfare incomes in 2012 for both households can be attributed to the introduction of the Quebec Solidarity Tax, which enhanced and replaced earlier tax credit programs.
- In 2018, the welfare income of a single person considered employable stood at \$9,320. Despite a slight increase to social assistance rates in February 2018, their overall income was largely unchanged from the previous year.
- Conversely, there was a notable increase in the welfare income of a single person with a disability due to a larger rise to their social assistance rates in February in 2018. The total welfare income of a single person with a disability was \$13,651 in 2018, \$617 higher than in 2017.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2018 constant dollars

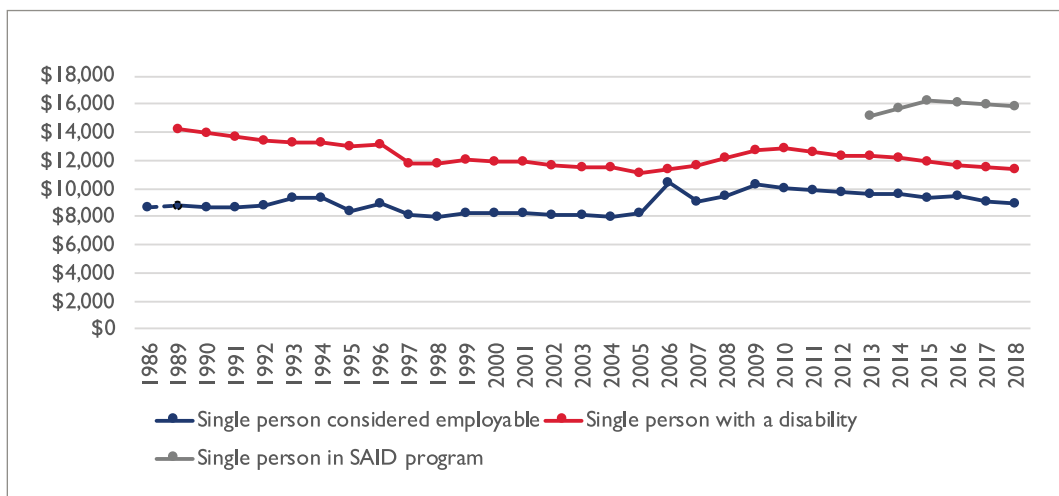


- The welfare incomes of households with children in Quebec fluctuated during the 1990s and 2000s.
- In 2012, both household types saw an increase in their welfare incomes due to the introduction of the Quebec Solidarity Tax Credit, which enhanced and replaced earlier tax credit programs.
- The increase to welfare incomes of families with children from 2015 to 2017 was largely the result of changes to federal child benefits.
- Despite a slight increase to social assistance rates in February 2018 and the introduction of an annual supplement for school supplies for the couple with two children under the Child Assistance program, the value of welfare incomes for households with children barely changed from the previous year.
- In 2018, welfare incomes were \$21,867 for the single parent with one child and \$30,453 for the couple with two children.

SASKATCHEWAN

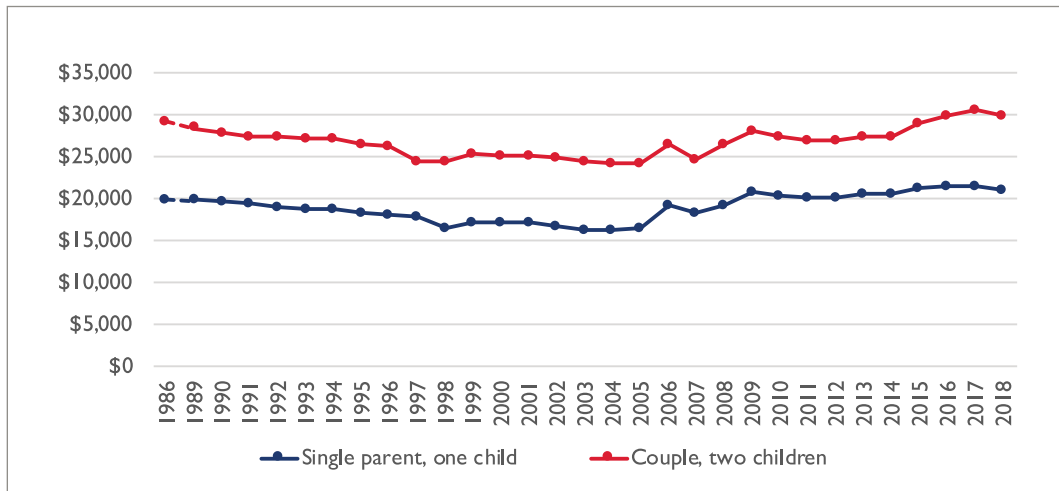
The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2018 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation as measured by the national consumer price index.

Welfare incomes for single adults, 2018 constant dollars



- The welfare income of a single person considered employable has fluctuated over the 1990s and 2000s, but since 2010 has been on a gradual downward trend. In 2018, it stood at \$8,883.
- The welfare income of a single person with a disability receiving Saskatchewan Assistance Plan (SAP) benefits declined until 2006, when it started to gradually increase. However, in 2011 it began to drop again, and in 2018 was \$11,422. This is considerably lower than 1989 when it exceeded \$14,000.
- A single person with a disability who qualified for the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) Program received much more generous benefits than those under SAP. Trends in the SAID incomes have only been tracked since 2013. After consecutive increases, they have been declining since 2016. In 2018, benefits for a single person receiving SAID benefits stood at \$15,789.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2018 constant dollars

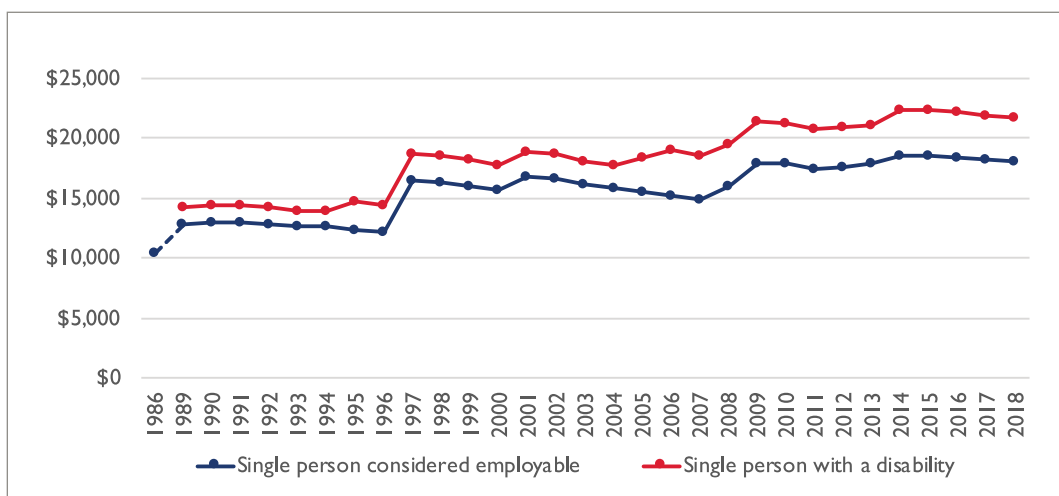


- Both household types with children experienced declines in their welfare incomes during the 1990s, but these amounts later veered upwards in the late-2000s. The welfare incomes of households with children saw a bigger increase from 2015 to 2017, largely as a result of changes to federal child benefits.
- In 2018, the welfare income of the single parent with one child and the couple with two children stood at \$21,087 and \$29,955, respectively.

YUKON

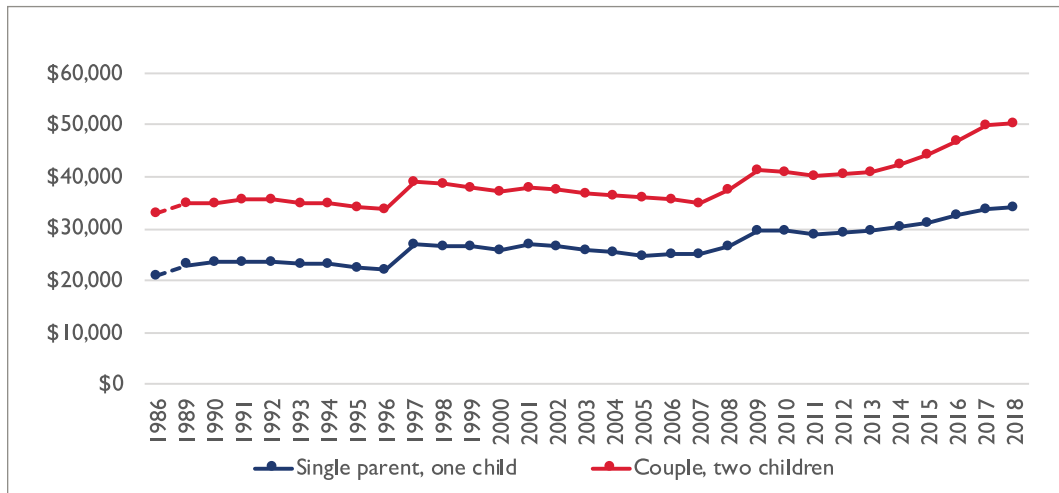
The graphs below show how the total welfare incomes for each of the four illustrative household types have changed over time. The values are in constant 2018 dollars, taking into account the effect of inflation as measured by the national consumer price index.

Welfare incomes for single adults, 2018 constant dollars



- The welfare income of a single person considered employable and a single person with a disability showed distinctive but similar patterns. Over the last three decades, welfare incomes 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 2018, welfare incomes for the single person considered employable and single person with a disability stood at \$18,093 and \$21,747, respectively.

Welfare incomes for households with children, 2018 constant dollars



- The welfare incomes of households with children saw marked increases in 1996 and 2008, but were relatively flat in previous years.
- Since 2013, households with children have seen a consistent increase in their welfare incomes. Between 2013 and 2014, this was due to the inclusion of several additional benefits (telephone, transportation, and laundry allowances). In 2015 to 2017, it was largely due to changes to federal child benefits.
- In January 2018, the Transportation Expenses allowance was expanded to include an additional monthly payment for each child between the age of two and 18. This resulted in an increase in welfare income for both households.
- In 2018, the welfare income of the single parent with one child and the couple with two children was \$34,003 and \$50,489, respectively, the highest over the 32 years in the time series.

ADEQUACY OF WELFARE INCOMES

Introduction


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 turn. The territories are not included in this part of the analysis because Statistics Canada does not produce poverty thresholds for the territories.

Adequacy across Canada

The table below looks at how welfare incomes in 2018 compared to the official poverty measure (the Market Basket Measure of poverty, or MBM) for each of the household types. To demonstrate the range across Canada, the table shows the province with the highest and lowest welfare incomes relative to the poverty threshold. Both the total welfare income and the poverty threshold in the table are for the biggest city in each province.

		Jurisdiction	Welfare income	Poverty threshold	Poverty gap (\$)	% of MBM
Single person considered employable	Lowest	Halifax, NS	\$7,437	\$19,124	-\$11,687	39%
	Highest	St. John's, NL	\$11,383	\$19,502	-\$8,119	58%
Single person with a disability*	Lowest	Calgary, AB	\$10,301	\$20,585	-\$10,284	50%
	Highest	Montreal, QC	\$13,651	\$18,026	-\$4,375	76%
Single parent, one child	Lowest	Halifax, NS	\$18,240	\$27,046	-\$8,806	67%
	Highest	Montreal, QC	\$21,867	\$25,330	-\$3,794	85%
Couple, two children	Lowest	Vancouver, BC	\$27,006	\$41,367	-\$14,361	65%
	Highest	Charlottetown, PEI	\$32,757	\$38,514	-\$5,757	85%

* This does not include the welfare incomes for individuals on distinct disability programs in Alberta or Saskatchewan. The total welfare income of a person on Alberta's Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped program reached 96 per cent of the poverty threshold; for someone on the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability program, it reached 81 per cent of the poverty threshold.



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

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; welfare incomes were typically much lower. The lowest was 39 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. The highest adequacy score for a single person with a disability on a "regular" social assistance program was 76 per cent in Montreal.

Adequacy by province

ALBERTA

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

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single person in AISH program	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$8,106	\$10,301	\$19,786	\$19,927	\$29,238
MBM					
MBM threshold (Calgary)	\$20,585	\$20,585	\$20,585	\$29,111	\$41,170
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$12,479	-\$10,284	-\$799	-\$9,184	-\$11,933
Welfare income as % of MBM threshold	39%	50%	96%	68%	71%
LIM					
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$24,054	\$24,054	\$24,054	\$34,017	\$48,108
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$15,948	-\$13,752	-\$4,268	-\$14,090	-\$18,870
Welfare income as % of LIM threshold	34%	43%	82%	59%	61%

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single person in AISH program	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
LICO					
LICO threshold (Calgary)	\$21,481	\$21,481	\$21,481	\$26,143	\$40,614
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$13,375	-\$11,180	-\$1,695	-\$6,216	-\$11,377
Welfare income as % of LICO threshold	38%	48%	92%	76%	72%

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 (AISH) benefits. They had 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 three low income thresholds (after tax). Because LICO and MBM thresholds vary by community size, the threshold used is for Vancouver.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$9,042	\$14,802	\$20,782	\$27,006
MBM				
MBM threshold (Vancouver)	\$20,684	\$20,684	\$29,251	\$41,367
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$11,642	-\$5,882	-\$8,469	-\$14,361
Welfare income as % of MBM threshold	44%	72%	71%	65%
LIM				
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$24,054	\$24,054	\$34,017	\$48,108
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$15,012	-\$9,251	-\$13,235	-\$21,101
Welfare income as % of LIM threshold	38%	62%	61%	56%


	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
LICO				
LICO threshold (Vancouver)	\$21,481	\$21,481	\$26,143	\$40,614
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$12,439	-\$6,679	-\$5,361	-\$13,608
Welfare income as % of LICO threshold	42%	69%	79%	66%

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 38 per cent and 44 per cent of the low income thresholds. The smallest gap was for single parents with one child — their welfare income was between 61 per cent and 79 per cent of the low income thresholds.

MANITOBA

The table below shows how welfare incomes in Manitoba for the four household types compared three low income thresholds (after tax). Because LICO and MBM thresholds vary by community size, the threshold used is for Winnipeg.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$9,756	\$12,403	\$21,764	\$29,918
MBM				
MBM threshold (Winnipeg)	\$18,714	\$18,714	\$26,466	\$37,428
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$8,958	-\$6,311	-\$4,702	-\$7,510
Welfare income as % of MBM threshold	52%	66%	82%	80%
LIM				
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$24,054	\$24,054	\$34,017	\$48,108
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$14,298	-\$11,651	-\$12,253	-\$18,190
Welfare income as % of LIM threshold	41%	52%	64%	62%
LICO				
LICO threshold (Winnipeg)	\$21,481	\$21,481	\$26,143	\$40,614
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$11,725	-\$9,078	-\$4,379	-\$10,696
Welfare income as % of LICO threshold	45%	58%	83%	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 per cent and 52 per cent of the low income thresholds. The smallest gap was for single parents with one child — their welfare income was between 64 per cent and 83 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 three low income thresholds (after tax). Because LICO and MBM thresholds vary by community size, the threshold used is for Moncton.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$7,126	\$9,839	\$19,978	\$26,505
MBM				
MBM threshold (Moncton)	\$18,206	\$18,206	\$25,747	\$36,412
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$11,080	-\$8,367	-\$5,769	-\$9,907
Welfare income as % of MBM threshold	39%	54%	78%	73%
LIM				
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$24,054	\$24,054	\$34,017	\$48,108
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$16,928	-\$14,215	-\$14,039	-\$21,603
Welfare income as % of LIM threshold	30%	41%	59%	55%
LICO				
LICO threshold (Moncton)	\$18,166	\$18,166	\$22,109	\$34,347
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$11,040	-\$8,327	-\$2,131	-\$7,842
Welfare income as % of LICO threshold	39%	54%	90%	77%




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 30 per cent and 39 per cent of the low income thresholds. The smallest gap was for single parents with one child — their welfare income was between 59 per cent and 90 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 three low income thresholds (after tax). Because LICO and MBM thresholds vary by community size, the threshold used is for St. John's.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$11,383	\$11,583	\$23,436	\$29,296
MBM				
MBM threshold (St. John's)	\$19,502	\$19,502	\$27,579	\$39,003
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$8,119	-\$7,919	-\$4,143	-\$9,707
Welfare income as % of MBM threshold	58%	59%	85%	75%
LIM				
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$24,054	\$24,054	\$34,017	\$48,108
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$12,671	-\$12,471	-\$10,580	-\$18,812
Welfare income as % of LIM threshold	47%	48%	69%	61%
LICO				
LICO threshold (St. John's)	\$18,166	\$18,166	\$22,109	\$34,347
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$6,783	-\$6,583	\$1,327	-\$5,051
Welfare income as % of LICO threshold	63%	64%	106%	85%




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, whose welfare income exceeded the after-tax LICO by six 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 47 per cent and 63 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 three low income thresholds (after tax). Because LICO and MBM thresholds vary by community size, the threshold used is for Halifax.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$7,437	\$10,268	\$18,240	\$27,756
MBM				
MBM threshold (Halifax)	\$19,124	\$19,124	\$27,046	\$38,248
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$11,687	-\$8,856	-\$8,806	-\$10,492
Welfare income as % of MBM threshold	39%	54%	67%	73%
LIM				
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$24,054	\$24,054	\$34,017	\$48,108
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$16,617	-\$13,786	-\$15,777	-\$20,352
Welfare income as % of LIM threshold	31%	43%	54%	58%
LICO				
LICO threshold (Halifax)	\$18,166	\$18,166	\$22,109	\$34,347
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$10,729	-\$7,898	-\$3,869	-\$6,591
Welfare income as % of LICO threshold	41%	57%	83%	81%




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 per cent and 41 per cent of the low income thresholds. The welfare income of single parents with one child and couples with two children both reached just over 80 per cent of the LICO, but amounted to a much lower share of the MBM and LIM.

ONTARIO

The table below shows how welfare incomes in Ontario for the four household types compared to these three low income thresholds (after tax). Because LICO and MBM thresholds vary by community size, the threshold used is for Toronto.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$9,646	\$14,954	\$21,463	\$30,998
MBM				
MBM threshold (Toronto)	\$21,207	\$21,207	\$29,991	\$42,414
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$11,561	-\$6,253	-\$8,529	-\$11,417
Welfare income as % of MBM threshold	45%	71%	72%	73%
LIM				
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$24,054	\$24,054	\$34,017	\$48,108
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$14,408	-\$9,099	-\$12,554	-\$17,110
Welfare income as % of LIM threshold	40%	62%	63%	64%
LICO				
LICO threshold (Toronto)	\$21,481	\$21,481	\$26,143	\$40,614
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$11,835	-\$6,527	-\$4,681	-\$9,617
Welfare income as % of LICO threshold	45%	70%	82%	76%




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 between 40 per cent and 45 per cent of the low income thresholds. The smallest gap was for single parents with one child — their welfare income was between 63 per cent and 82 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 three low income thresholds (after tax). Because LICO and MBM thresholds vary by community size, the threshold used is for Charlottetown.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$10,445	\$11,208	\$20,977	\$32,757
MBM				
MBM threshold (Charlottetown)	\$19,257	\$19,257	\$27,234	\$38,514
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$8,812	-\$8,049	-\$6,257	-\$5,757
Welfare income as % of MBM threshold	54%	58%	77%	85%
LIM				
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$24,054	\$24,054	\$34,017	\$48,108
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$13,609	-\$12,846	-\$13,040	-\$15,351
Welfare income as % of LIM threshold	43%	47%	62%	68%
LICO				
LICO threshold (Charlottetown)	\$17,939	\$17,939	\$21,835	\$33,920
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$7,494	-\$6,731	-\$858	-\$1,163
Welfare income as % of LICO threshold	58%	62%	96%	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 single parents with one child and couples with two children stood at 96 per cent and 97 per cent of the LICO, respectively. As a proportion, the biggest gap was for single adults considered employable — their welfare income was between 43 per cent and 58 per cent of the low income thresholds.

QUEBEC

The table below shows how welfare incomes in Quebec for the four household types compared to three low income thresholds (after tax). Because LICO and MBM thresholds vary by community size, the threshold used is for Montreal.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$9,320	\$13,651	\$21,867	\$30,453
MBM				
MBM threshold (Montreal)	\$18,026	\$18,026	\$25,493	\$36,052
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$8,706	-\$4,375	-\$3,627	-\$5,599
Welfare income as % of MBM threshold	52%	76%	86%	84%
LIM				
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$24,054	\$24,054	\$34,017	\$48,108
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$14,734	-\$10,402	-\$12,150	-\$17,654
Welfare income as % of LIM threshold	39%	57%	64%	63%
LICO				
LICO threshold (Montreal)	\$21,481	\$21,481	\$26,143	\$40,614
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$12,161	-\$7,830	-\$4,277	-\$10,161
Welfare income as % of LICO threshold	43%	64%	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 per cent and 52 per cent of the low income thresholds. The smallest gap was for single parents with one child — their welfare income was between 64 per cent and 86 per cent of the low income thresholds.

SASKATCHEWAN

The table below shows how welfare incomes in Saskatchewan for the four household types compared to three low income thresholds (after tax). Because LICO and MBM thresholds vary by community size, the threshold used is for Saskatoon.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single person in SAID program	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
Total welfare income	\$8,883	\$11,422	\$15,789	\$21,087	\$29,955
MBM					
MBM threshold (Saskatoon)	\$19,414	\$19,414	\$19,414	\$27,456	\$38,829
Welfare income minus MBM threshold	-\$10,531	-\$7,992	-\$3,625	-\$6,369	-\$8,874
Welfare income as % of MBM threshold	46%	59%	81%	77%	77%
LIM					
LIM threshold (Canada-wide)	\$24,054	\$24,054	\$24,054	\$34,017	\$48,108
Welfare income minus LIM threshold	-\$15,171	-\$12,631	-\$8,264	-\$12,930	-\$18,153
Welfare income as % of LIM threshold	37%	47%	66%	62%	62%

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single person in SAID program	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
LICO					
LICO threshold (Saskatoon)	\$18,166	\$18,166	\$18,166	\$22,109	\$34,347
Welfare income minus LICO threshold	-\$9,283	-\$6,744	-\$2,377	-\$1,022	-\$4,392
Welfare income as % of LICO threshold	49%	63%	87%	95%	87%

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 between 37 per cent and 49 per cent of the low income thresholds. The higher benefits available to persons with disabilities through the SAID program reached between 66 and 87 per cent of the low income thresholds. However, the gap was smallest for single parents with one child — their welfare income was between 62 per cent and 95 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 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 2018. Any changes that occurred during the year are described in the footnotes.

Liquid asset exemption levels as of January 2018 ¹

	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
NB ⁵	\$1,000	\$10,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
NL	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$5,500	\$5,500
NS	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
NT	\$300	\$50,000	\$380	\$560
NU	\$500	\$5,000	\$1,000	\$1,000

- 1 Asset limits are for both individuals applying for and receiving social assistance 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 based on household composition. For families with children, this includes a portion of the Canada Child Benefit. Households receive an additional \$33 as part of core benefits for each child over the age of 12. Legislation passed in December 2018 changed core rates and liquid asset exemption levels effective January 1, 2019.
- 3 The liquid asset limit for those in the “Barriers to Full Employment” category of Income Support is equivalent to two months’ core benefits based on household composition. The asset limit also includes the Personal Needs Supplement of \$78 per month. Legislation passed in December 2018 changed core rates and asset exemption levels effective January 1, 2019.
- 4 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. Legislation passed in December 2018 changed core rates and liquid asset exemption levels effective January 1, 2019.
- 5 Asset limits refer to New Brunswick’s Transitional Assistance program except in the case of the single person with a disability; in that case, they refer to the Extended Benefits program.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
ON ⁶	\$10,000	\$40,000	\$10,500	\$16,000
PE ⁷	\$50 to \$200 ⁸	\$900	\$1,200 ⁸	\$1,800 ⁸
QC ⁹	Applicants: \$887 Recipients: \$1,500	\$2,500	Applicants: \$1,268 Recipients: \$2,924	Applicants: \$1,807 Recipients: \$3,045
SK ¹⁰	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$3,000	\$4,000
SK, SAID ¹¹	Not applicable	\$1,500	\$3,000	\$4,000
YT	\$500	\$1,500	\$1,000	\$1,600

- 6 Asset limits refer to the Ontario Works (OW) program except in the case of the single person with a disability; in that case, they refer to the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).
- 7 In July 2018, asset levels for the single person, single person with a disability, single parent with one child, and couple with two children increased to \$2,500, \$5,000, \$3,500, and \$6,000, respectively.
- 8 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. As of July 2018, there is no longer any differentiation between long- and short-term assistance and the higher levels apply to all applicants.
- 9 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 household assets. After the first month under the Social Assistance program, higher asset limits apply for recipients with no severe limitations to employment.
- 10 Asset limits refer to the Transitional Employment Allowance program except in the case of the single person with a disability; in that case, they refer to the Saskatchewan Assistance Program.
- 11 The asset limits for the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) Program are the same as those under the Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP).

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:

- A *flat-rate amount* permits a client to earn a certain amount after which welfare benefits are reduced dollar for dollar.
- 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.
- 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, 2018. Any changes that occurred during the year are described in the footnotes to the table.

Monthly earnings exemption levels as of January 2018¹

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
AB ²	Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income Recipients: The first \$230 of net earnings is exempt, a 25% exemption rate applies thereafter	Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income Recipients: The first \$230 of net earnings is exempt, a 25% exemption rate applies thereafter	Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income Recipients: The first \$230 of net earnings is exempt, a 25% exemption rate applies thereafter	Applicants: support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income Recipients: For each earner, the first \$115 of net earnings is exempt, a 25% exemption rate applies thereafter
AB, AISH ³	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

- 1 Earning exemptions are for both those applying for and receiving social assistance unless otherwise stated.
- 2 All exemptions described are the “Expected to Work” and “Barriers to Full Employment” households and are for employment income they can access. If a dependent is attending school, their income is fully exempt. If a dependent is not in school, the first \$350 of net earnings is exempt and a 25% exemption rate applies thereafter.
- 3 AISH refers to the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped program in Alberta. Legislation passed in December 2018 changed earnings exemptions levels effective January 1, 2019.

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
BC ⁴	<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 \$12,000 of net <i>annual</i> 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 \$600 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 \$600 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter</p>
MB ^{5,6}	<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>

- 4 In BC, the recipient amount applies to those on assistance for at least one month.
- 5 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.
- 6 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 ⁷	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 ⁸	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

7 All amounts refer to the Transitional Assistance program except in the case of the single person with a disability; in that case, they refer to the Extended Benefits program.

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

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
NS ^{9, 10}	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 ¹¹	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
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	The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 50% exemption rate is applied to the next \$600	The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 50% exemption rate is applied to the next \$600	The first \$400 of net earnings is exempt, a 50% exemption rate is applied to the next \$600	The first \$400 of net earnings is exempt, a 50% exemption rate is applied to the next \$600

9 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.

10 In October 2018, earnings exemptions levels increased to \$250 per month, then 75% of the next \$250, 50% of the next \$250 (earnings between \$500.01 and \$750), and 25% of amounts in excess of \$750. For a single person with a disability in supported employment it increased to \$350 per month, then 75% of the next \$150, 50% of the next \$250, and 25% of amounts in excess of \$750.

11 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
ON ^{12, 13}	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 ¹⁴	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: For each adult, the first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 50% exemption rate applies thereafter
PE ¹⁵	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

12 All amounts refer to the Ontario Works (OW) program except in the case of the single person with a disability; in that case, the amount refers to the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).

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

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

15 In July 2018, monthly earnings exemption levels changed. For applicants, support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income. For recipients, monthly earnings exemption levels increased to: \$250 for a single person, \$500 for a single person with a disability and \$400 for couples. In addition, a 30% exemption rate applies to income in excess of these amounts.

	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 ¹⁶	The first \$100 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter ¹⁷	The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter ¹⁸	The first \$300 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter ¹⁹
SK ²⁰	TEA clients: Support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income	SAP clients: The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 25% exemption rate is applied to the next \$500, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter	TEA clients: Support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income SAP clients: The first \$125 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter ²¹	TEA clients: Support is reduced dollar for dollar on all earned income SAP clients: The first \$125 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter ²¹

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

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

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

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

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

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

	Single person considered employable	Single person with a disability	Single parent, one child	Couple, two children
SK, SAID ²²	Not applicable	The first \$200 of net earnings is exempt, a 25% exemption rate is applied to the next \$500, support is reduced dollar for dollar 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
YT	Applicants: The first \$100 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter 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	Applicants: The first \$100 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter 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 ²³	Applicants: The first \$150 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter 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	Applicants: The first \$150 of net earnings is exempt, support is reduced dollar for dollar thereafter 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

22 SAID refers to the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability Program.

23 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.