




Canada Social Report
Provincial/Territorial
Policy Monitor

January 2010



CANADA SOCIAL REPORT



The [Caledon Institute of Social Policy](#) regularly scans provincial and territorial government websites in order to follow policy and program developments related to our core work and interests. A partial list includes: disability, education, health, housing, income security, poverty reduction, recreation, seniors and youth. This tracking is intended to inform our analysis of policy trends. Monitors can be searched on the Canada Social Report website by date, jurisdiction and category.

Newfoundland and Labrador

INCOME SECURITY

On January 1, minimum wage increased by 50 cents to \$9.50 per hour (government committed to increasing the rate to \$10 per hour by July 2010).

<http://www.releases.gov.nl.ca/releases/2009/hrle/1222n01.htm>

Nova Scotia

No updates this month.

New Brunswick

DISABILITY

On January 1, 2010, the disability supplement was added to the social assistance benefits extended to persons with disabilities and will be paid monthly. Persons who were not previously eligible for the benefit may qualify, depending on their income. Previously, certified deaf, blind and disabled clients who qualified for social assistance were eligible for a once-a-year special benefit of \$1,000. The benefit recognizes that persons with disabilities often face considerable disability-related expenses and require additional support to purchase essential goods and services.

The original internet link to this item is no longer available.

<http://www.gnb.ca/0048/PCSDP/Directories/DirectoryofFinancialAid-2012En.pdf>

INCOME SECURITY

On January 1, 2010, tax brackets and non-refundable amounts for personal income tax were indexed by two percent. The four-year "Plan for Lower Taxes" will deliver \$258 million in tax savings in 2010-11 and a total of \$380 million in savings over four years.

<http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/news/fin/2009e2036fn.htm>

On January 1, 2010, social assistance clients who had previously qualified for the interim assistance rate qualified for an 82 percent increase in their monthly benefits under the transitional assistance program (a \$2.8 million investment).

<http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/news/fcs/2010e0061sd.htm>

POVERTY REDUCTION

Minimum wage will increase to meet the Atlantic average by 2011:

April 1, 2010 to \$8.50 per hour, Sept. 1, 2010 to \$9 per hour;

April 1, 2011 to \$9.50 per hour, Sept. 1, 2011 to \$10 per hour.

<http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/news/pet/2010e0003pe.htm>

The province will encourage economic growth and new opportunities for northern New Brunswick through a three-year regional plan. The plan urges governments at every level, private industry and community partners to embrace a shared vision for growth.

<http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/news/rdc/2010e0092rd.htm>



Social Development \$986.7 million Budget estimate has grown by \$61.4 million, an increase of 6.6 percent. Highlights include:

- \$14 million to support the poverty reduction plan as part of the government-wide commitment of more than \$15 million invested in fiscal 2010-11 (this includes funding for the elimination of the interim rate, development of the Community Inclusion Corporation and creation of a Supporting our Local Schools fund)
- \$3.8 million to improve accessibility to child care and to enhance the quality of early learning in daycares
- \$1.2 million in the Enhanced Emergency Fuel Benefit Program
- \$1.4 million to implement youth protection service delivery model
- \$1.5 million to support phase 2 of the child protection multiple response model.

<http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/news/fcs/2010e0116sd.htm>

SENIORS

The province issued a request for proposals for a service-delivery contract related to seniors living in public housing. The service provider will visit and conduct risk assessments for tenants at least once a year. If there are concerns about their ability to live independently, the service provider may carry out additional visits or make recommendations to the senior and his or her family for further support services. These services may be coordinated through the Department of Social Development.

<http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/news/sha/2010e0054sd.htm>

Budget highlights for seniors:

- a first-year investment of \$24.7 million for the replacement and renovation of nursing homes as part of the \$400 million replacement and renovation plan
- an additional \$8.9 million in the growth of long-term care
- \$3 million to improve wages and benefits of home support workers
- \$300,000 to promote wellness and active living for seniors.

<http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/news/fcs/2010e0116sd.htm>

Prince Edward Island

HOUSING

\$210,000 from Homelessness Partnering Strategy and CMHC and \$105,000 from the province helped fund the Supported Transitional Apartment and Community Complex in Queen's County. It includes three supported living units and a common area that will be the base for a life skills training centre for people with disabilities who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

Québec

DISABILITIES

\$305,767 for after school care needs of 12- to 21-year-old high school students with disabilities to allow them to take part in after-school programming.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

INCOME SECURITY

January 1, 2010 – *Soutien aux enfants* (child support) payments will be increased by 0.48 percent. Some 868,000 families will receive \$2.04 billion in payments. Support for children with disabilities will also increase by 0.48 percent (\$172) – 300,000 families will receive \$68 million.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

Social assistance rates will be indexed by 0.48 percent in January 2010 (percentage corresponds with the Consumer Price Index for the previous year).

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

SENIORS

The Ministry responsible for seniors tasked *le Conseil des aînés* (seniors' council), the Québec Gerontology Association and Innov-Âge (an interveners organization interested in the advanced understanding and research associated with aging) with conducting a two-day conference in May on the topic of ensuring the full participation of aging Québécois in the workplace.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

Ontario

ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

First Nations government and economic development leaders met with the Governments of Canada and Ontario on a coordinated approach to build more sustainable economies in First Nations across Ontario. Three areas considered most important to First Nations economic development are: resource development, socio-economic development, and partnerships between First Nations and Ontario business.

<http://www.news.ontario.ca/maa/en/2010/01/canada-ontario-and-first-nations-work-together-for-stronger-first-nations-communities-and-a-stronger.html>

DISABILITIES

January 1, 2010 – introduction of the province's first accessibility standard (for customer service). Ministries, hospitals, schools, municipalities and other public sector organizations must train staff about meeting the needs of customers with a variety of disabilities, communicate with a person in a manner that takes into account their disability and permit customers to bring their service animals, such as guide dogs, onto their



premises. The customer service standard is part of a larger plan to make the province accessible for people with disabilities by 2025.

<http://www.news.ontario.ca/mcss/en/2009/12/accessibility-standard-coming-into-force-for-public-sector.html>

INCOME SECURITY

Ninety-three percent of income tax payers will get a permanent tax cut. The province is cutting the first income bracket tax rate by one percentage point, from 6.05 percent to 5.05 percent.

<http://www.news.ontario.ca/rev/en/2009/12/income-tax-cut-for-93-of-ontario-taxpayers.html>

Social Assistance Review Advisory Council will advise the Minister of Community and Social Services on possible short-term changes to social assistance rules and provide the government with a recommended scope for a review of Ontario's social assistance system.

<http://www.news.ontario.ca/mcss/en/2010/01/council-appointed-to-shape-review-of-social-assistance.html>

POVERTY REDUCTION

The Governments of Canada and Ontario announced infrastructure funding to expand United Way services in Toronto. The joint investments will establish a 62,000 square-foot Rexdale Multi-Service Community Hub and build a new 7,000 square foot Bathurst-Finch Community Hub. Hubs will provide residents in under-served priority neighbourhoods with access to the resources and services they need.

<http://www.news.ontario.ca/mei/en/2010/01/canada-and-ontario-announce-funding-to-build-united-way-community-hubs-in-toronto.html>

Manitoba

EDUCATION

\$195,000 for three new community schools and \$60,000 to pilot the incorporation of parent-child centres in the schools. Community schools build relationships, share resources and strengthen a community's identity by bringing teachers, parents, elders and other local leaders together in a welcoming environment. The concept was piloted in 2004 in Thompson and today there are 25 community schools across the province.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2010-01-01&item=7676>

HOUSING

Completion of a 22-unit supportive housing facility in Swan River. \$1.1 million in federal funding (from the Homelessness Partnering Strategy) and provincial support (part of All Aboard: Manitoba's Poverty Reduction Strategy and HOMEWorks! Homeless Strategy with a Focus on Mental Health Housing). CMHA will offer counseling and support, such as teaching better living and basic housekeeping skills to individuals who previously have had difficulty maintaining a good tenant history.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2010-01-01&item=7437>

Saskatchewan

DISABILITIES

Owners of approved private-service homes for people with intellectual disabilities will have access to an enhanced respite subsidy (up to \$380,000 annually). The enhancement will enable the purchase of up to an additional 21 days of respite per year for each person with an intellectual disability who lives in the home (rate of \$30 per client, per day, to a maximum of \$630).

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

Opening of a six-space group home in Kipling for people with intellectual disabilities. The project is part of the province's four-year, \$76.9 million commitment to eliminate the waitlist of 440 Saskatchewan people with intellectual disabilities who require residential, day and specialized programs that meet their assessed needs.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

People with intellectual disabilities in Wilkie will have greater access to residential programs and services following the construction of three new independent-living suites in the basements of existing group homes in that community.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

\$175,000 for a three-space group home in Estevan. \$430,000 in additional annual operating funding to Estevan Diversified Services for programs for people with intellectual disabilities, allowing 100 additional hours per week of supported living services to its clients and the hiring of more staff.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

HOUSING

\$65,000 per month in 2009-10 to operate a new 41-bed emergency shelter for women and women with children in Saskatoon. \$50,000 in capital funding to assist in the purchase of a Regina dwelling that will be utilized as a five-space peer-home residence for male youth, ages 15 to 18.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

\$1.4 million for two four-unit affordable rental housing projects in Battleford for low-income families. The units provide easy access to an elementary school and downtown services.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

Alberta

HOUSING

\$7.3 million to the Hope Mission for the construction of 52 permanent homes for the homeless in Edmonton. Budget 2009 committed \$100 million for 700 units across the province. With lower than expected building costs, a total of 900 units will be built. An additional \$32 million will allow community-based agencies to deliver support services for



addictions, mental illness and employment support services for those moving into the units. Services include treatment for addictions and mental illness, life skills training, and help finding employment (part of A Plan for Alberta: Ending Homelessness in 10 Years).

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/edmonton-homeless-shelter-gets-7m-for-new-units-1.904492>

British Columbia

EDUCATION

Four new StrongStart BC early learning centres open in Burnaby.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010EDUC0005-000093.htm

HOUSING

\$5.6 million to the Door to Roof Society toward the purchase and upgrade of two existing apartment buildings to provide affordable rental housing for Kamloops residents.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010HSD0001-000005.htm

Vancouver shelter and resource centre now provides 32 new transitional housing beds with support services for homeless and at-risk youth, ages 16 to 22. \$850,000 provincial grant for renovations and \$3.9 million for operations over the next three years. Human Resources and Skills Development Canada provided an \$800,000 grant. Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games provided \$250,000 as part of their Olympic Legacies program.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010HSD0003-000019.htm

A new \$28-million (\$20.8 million from the province, \$7.6 from the City) supportive housing development in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside will provide 108 new apartments for women who are homeless.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010HSD0005-000027.htm

\$853,000 to purchase a vacant hotel as a first step toward creating a new centralized co-ed emergency shelter with transitional housing options in Kamloops.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010HSD0009-000048.htm

\$10.4 million for the purchase and renovation of the Russell Housing Centre (formerly College Place Hotel), which will provide 40 single room occupancy housing units and 15 shelter beds for adults at risk of homelessness in New Westminster.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010HSD0012-000061.htm

\$1.9-million to provide five apartments of affordable, supportive housing for people with developmental disabilities and low-income families, and one condo for affordable homeownership in Vernon.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010HSD0017-000090.htm

INCOME SECURITY

Basic personal income tax credit will increase to \$11,000 from \$9,373, which will also eliminate personal provincial income tax for an additional 75,000 British Columbians. With the introduction of the BC Tax Reduction in 2005, a total of 325,000 additional low-income earners will now pay no personal provincial income tax.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2009FIN0025-000802.htm

SENIORS

A new rate structure was announced for all residential care clients to reduce the burden on low-income seniors and support ongoing improvements to the residential care system. (Residential care provides 24-hour nursing care as well as room, board and recreational programs to more than 26,000 British Columbians with complex care needs.)

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2009HSE RV0022-000451.htm

The province is subsidizing 22 assisted living units in Abbotsford to provide seniors with improved access to affordable housing with integrated support services. Assisted living homes are self-contained units with a 24-hour response system where residents receive personal care services, such as recreational opportunities and assistance with medications, housekeeping, meals and laundry services.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010HSD0002-000012.htm

Through an amendment to the Canada-British Columbia Affordable Housing Agreement, the federal and provincial governments are contributing a combined total of \$15.5 million for the construction of the 322 modular housing units. As part of the Seniors' Rental Housing initiative, these modular units will be shipped to selected rural communities across the province to provide affordable housing for independent seniors and persons with disabilities.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010HSD0015-000069.htm

Yukon Territory

No updates this month.



Northwest Territories

BUDGET

Budget commits to maintaining service levels and injecting \$744 million in capital and housing infrastructure over 2009-10 and 2010-11. A small operating surplus of \$35 million is forecast for 2010-11, although the government expects to borrow \$89 million in short term debt by March 31, 2011 to help finance its infrastructure investment program. The Budget also proposes new investments designed to meet the goal of sustainable, vibrant and safe communities; to support children, youth and families; and to protect the environment.

http://www.fin.gov.nt.ca/sites/default/files/documents/2010-11_budget_address.pdf

EMPLOYMENT

Launch of eRecruit, an online tool that will allow potential employees to submit applications for territorial government jobs over the Internet.

<http://news.exec.gov.nt.ca/erecruit/>

YOUTH

Launch of Proud2bNWT, a website for youth in the NWT.

<http://nationtalk.ca/story/proud2bnwt-youth-website-launched/>

Nunavut

No updates this month.