



Department of Social Development and Seniors

2024-25

POVERTY ELIMINATION STRATEGY ACT ANNUAL REPORT



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Message from the Minister

May It Please Your Honour,

I am pleased to present the 2024-25 Annual Report in accordance with Section 7 of the Prince Edward Island Poverty Elimination Strategy Act.



The *Poverty Elimination Strategy Act* presents a bold vision to reduce and ultimately eliminate poverty for all Islanders. Government is taking coordinated action across departments and working closely with the Poverty Elimination Council, community organizations, and other levels of government to meet the targets established in the Act. These goals aim to eradicate poverty, food insecurity, and chronic homelessness by 2035.

In 2024-25, those goals were supported by many new or expanded initiatives, including:

- An increase to the minimum wage on PEI to \$15.40 on April 1, 2024, and again to \$16.00 on October 1, 2024.
- A commitment to the development of a new Poverty Elimination Strategy and Seniors Action Plan.
- The launch of the PEI Child Benefit which supports low-to medium-income families to help offset the costs of raising children.
- The launch of the At-Home Caregiver Benefit, which offers financial assistance to a primary caregiver who is providing a significant amount of unpaid, ongoing help to a person requiring care.
- The release of a new 5-year Housing Strategy.

These initiatives and many others detailed in this report will reinforce our work to strengthen support systems and implement key actions aimed at advancing our poverty elimination goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barb Ramsay". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Barb" on the top line and "Ramsay" on the bottom line.

Honourable Barb Ramsay
Minister of Social Development and Seniors

Message from the Poverty Elimination Council

It has been four years since the *Poverty Elimination Strategy Act* was enacted and this Council was established. In previous years, we focused on finding our footing — learning how best to collaborate with the Department team and advise the Minister on eliminating poverty in Prince Edward Island (PEI). With many of the initial challenges resolved, we have now hit our stride.

This year, we increased the pace of our work with the goal of producing a high-impact Strategy next year. We have focused on compiling and sharing knowledge — both within the Council, through monthly “I Can Speak To” sessions, and through presentations from subject-matter experts. Topics have included growing up in poverty in urban and rural PEI, Guaranteed Basic Income, Targeted Basic Income Guarantee (TBIG, a current program), Meals on Wheels, the Community Outreach Centre, Community Navigators, and navigating and accessing programs and benefits through Access PEI and 211PEI.

Most importantly, over the spring and summer, we heard from hundreds of Islanders across the province — people living in or at risk of poverty, those who have escaped it, and leaders who work in this space daily. We are deeply grateful to everyone who shared their experiences. That feedback will be the foundation of a new Strategy. While there were no major surprises in what we heard, the consultations confirmed and quantified much of what was previously anecdotal.

With a stronger, data-driven understanding of poverty in PEI, we also explored innovative solutions to help reach our targets. We must continually remind ourselves that PEI’s *Poverty Elimination Strategy Act* remains both bold and unique — placing our province among global leaders in poverty elimination.

In May 2021, our elected representatives made a courageous and legally binding commitment to eliminate chronic homelessness, food insecurity, and poverty by 2035. Achieving those targets requires creativity, bold thinking, and decisive action. It means breaking with the status quo. To that end, we continue to study jurisdictions in Canada and abroad that have implemented ambitious poverty-reduction measures.

The Department of Social Development and Seniors continues to do exceptional work with the resources available. The Council has built a strong rapport with the Department team, whose efforts have resulted in meaningful initiatives such as the School and Summer Food Programs and TBIG. PEI provides some of the highest social assistance rates in the country — thanks in large part to the Department’s dedication.

However, inflation, rising living costs, and broader economic pressures continue to challenge Islanders. Again this year, data shows that we have moved further from our targets. This reality makes the upcoming Poverty Elimination Strategy more important than ever.

In this, our fourth report, our message remains unchanged: meeting the targets in the *Poverty Elimination Strategy Act* requires bold leadership, commitment, and action from government. The Council can advise, and the Department can work tirelessly — but real progress depends on vision and leadership from our elected officials.

We are proud of the depth of analysis, engagement, and advice our Council has provided this year, and we are confident that the Department and Executive Council will be well positioned to deliver an impactful five-year Strategy. The data is clear — our elected officials have the opportunity to give thousands of hardworking Islanders the dignity and quality of life they deserve. We look forward to seeing a genuinely bold Strategy from the Government of PEI — one that takes meaningful steps toward eliminating poverty once and for all.

Thank you,

The Poverty Elimination Council

Poverty Elimination Council Membership as of March 31, 2025

Adina Nault

James Mallard

Alyssa Bernard

Jason MacGregor

Andrea MacDonald

Liza Jamani

Barry Galloway

Roxanne Carter-Thompson

Caitlin Perrot

Sandokhan Cleare

Haley Zavo

Poverty Elimination Strategy Act Annual Report, 2024-25

The *Poverty Elimination Strategy Act* (the “Act”) became law in May 2021. The Government of Prince Edward Island (PEI) is required by the Act to provide an annual report on progress made toward targets to eliminate poverty, food insecurity, and chronic homelessness.

The *Poverty Reduction Action Plan 2019-2024* (PRAP) has served as the first Strategy under the Act. The goals within the PRAP are:

1. To help Islanders in need;
2. To support the most vulnerable;
3. To build on our supportive communities and partners; and,
4. To improve the well-being of children and youth.

Under the framework of the PRAP, the Government has taken significant actions to address poverty, food insecurity and chronic homelessness in PEI. This report highlights actions taken from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025.

2024-25 Achievements

Goal #1 – Help Islanders in Need

Actions under this goal support people in PEI who are experiencing poverty by creating better access to supports and services, improving income supports and benefits, and creating opportunities in education, training, and skill development.

Poverty Elimination Strategy

- Work began on the Poverty Elimination Strategy, which will replace the PRAP.
- Public engagement sessions were held in 2024 and are informing the development of the Strategy.
- The Poverty Elimination Strategy is expected to be released in winter 2025-26.

Housing Strategy

- In February 2024, the PEI Housing Corporation (PEIHC) released *Building Together, Prince Edward Island Housing Strategy 2024-2029*. The priorities emphasize accelerating housing development to expand housing supply, enhancing affordability to create more options for low-and medium-income Islanders, and addressing vulnerability by strengthening supports for those most in need.

Minimum Wage

- Minimum wage on PEI increased to \$15.40 on April 1, 2024 and increased to \$16.00 on October 1, 2024.

PEI Child Benefit

- The PEI Child Benefit was launched January 1, 2025. This benefit supports low-to medium-income families to help offset the costs of raising children. This non-taxable benefit is provided by the Government of PEI and helps supplement the Canada Child Benefit.

At Home Caregiver Benefit

- In July 2024, the At Home Caregiver Benefit was launched. This program offers financial assistance to a primary caregiver who is providing a significant amount of unpaid, ongoing help to a person requiring care. The primary caregiver can be a family member, friend or neighbour helping with housework, finances, shopping, transportation, personal care, meals or other supports.

Canada-Î.-P.-É. Bursary Program

- Available to graduates from a French or Immersion High School Program, the Canada-Î.-P.-É. Bursary was increased from \$2,000 to \$3,000 per year, increasing access to French post-secondary education outside of PEI.

Marion L. Reid Grant

- Launched in fall 2024, the Marion L. Reid Grant provides funding for PEI residents who are enrolled in eligible health care programs at universities and colleges across Canada. The University of PEI's Registered Nurse and Nurse Practitioner programs are eligible for this grant.

Emergency Shelters

- The ten-bed, low-barrier Summerside Emergency Shelter was opened in October 2024, providing overnight accommodation and meal support. The Summerside Emergency Shelter is gender-inclusive and can support singles, couples and people with pets. The Shelter also offers laundry facilities and shower facilities twice a week for any person who is experiencing homelessness but choosing not to stay at the shelter.
- Funded and operated by the PEIHC, the Park Street Emergency Shelter in Charlottetown is a safe place for adults (18 years and older) experiencing homelessness to spend the night. This overnight emergency shelter is open seven days a week, 12 hours a day from 8:00 pm to 8:00 am. The 50-bed shelter has accessible units for people with physical mobility challenges, is gender inclusive, and will accommodate pets.
- The PEIHC provides operational funding to several shelters operating in PEI, including:
 - Blooming House Women's Shelter Inc. operates an eight-bed shelter for female-identifying individuals in the Charlottetown area;

- Bedford MacDonald House is a ten-bed shelter located in Charlottetown for male-identifying individuals. This shelter is operated by the Salvation Army;
- The LifeHouse Emergency Shelter provides an around-the-clock emergency shelter and Transitional Home for women and children in Summerside and surrounding area (four rooms);
- Native Council of PEI operates the 10-bed Winter Street Shelter around-the-clock in Summerside for Indigenous and non-Indigenous male-identifying adults; and,
- The Chief Mary Bernard's Memorial Womens Shelter on Lennox Island First Nation is a five-bed shelter for women in distress, women without housing, or young mothers who need extra support.

System of Care for Islanders Experiencing Complex Issues

- In June 2024, the Department of Housing, Land and Communities released the *Enhancing the System of Care for Islanders Experiencing Complex Issues* report and have initiated work to identify and implement recommendations.
- Work has been initiated on enhancing service delivery through the creation of two new bodies: the Minister's Task Force for the System of Care for Complex Populations, and the Community Action Committee on System of Care for Complex Populations.

Supportive Housing

- The PEIHC purchased a building in Montague that contains 11 supportive housing units.
- LifeHouse opened 10 transitional housing units in Summerside to offer services for women, transgender and non-binary individuals and their children. It is operated by the Boys and Girls Club Prince County with funding support from the PEIHC.
- Lennox Island Health Centre's Transitional Housing Project received a \$50,000 grant through the Community Housing Fund, administered through the Canadian Mental Health Association. This grant will support the preliminary project planning and design for a new Transitional Housing Building on Lennox Island First Nation. The Community Housing Fund is a collaboration between the Canadian Mental Health Association (PEI Division) and the Government of PEI to develop sustainable affordable housing.

Social Housing

- PEIHC maintained 452 rent supplement units through funding approaching \$5,000,000.
- PEIHC supported 1,585 households through mobile rental vouchers, providing a financial contribution towards rent costs in private market units. This represents an investment of approximately \$7,000,000.
- The PEIHC has increased its social housing inventory by 149 units, bringing it to 2,025 owned units operated by both the PEIHC and Family Housing Authority Boards. The social housing registry is the lowest that it has been in a decade.
- PEIHC has partnered with Holland College and the Construction Association of PEI to construct three single family homes. PEIHC has also partnered with high schools to build tiny homes to support skill development.

- Under the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's Rapid Housing Initiative, the PEIHC partnered with the City of Charlottetown to award a contract for an 82-unit modular apartment building on Malpeque Road.

Community Housing Expansion Pilot

- Through the Community Housing Expansion Pilot, the PEIHC is partnering with non-profit and co-operative housing organizations to support capacity building, operational development, and creation of affordable housing units in the rental market through acquisition of existing units and construction of new units.
- Three local non-profit and co-operative housing organizations were selected to expand their housing portfolios. They have received funding as strategic support to develop and implement capacity building exercises, including management, governance, real estate development and property management in a cohort environment with guidance from the Canadian Housing Transformation Centre. These three community partners will support the creation of 116 new affordable units.

Community Housing Fund

- The Community Housing Fund (CHF) is a collaboration between the PEI division of the Canadian Mental Health Association and the Government of PEI to develop sustainable, affordable housing. This program provides affordable and transitional/supportive housing for complex populations.
- The CHF provides funding through three streams, capacity building and research, professional services, and construction.
- In 2024-2025, 22 housing units were completed, bringing the program total to 84 units. An additional 33 units are currently under construction.
- Abegweit First Nation received a CHF grant to aid in the construction of 12 new homes to address affordability, overcrowding and homelessness for Abegweit First Nation members. Along with creating meaningful employment for Abegweit First Nation members, these energy efficient homes will enable community members to live and work in the community.

Affordable Housing Development Program

- The Affordable Housing Development Program (AHD) provides forgivable loans of up to \$55,000 per unit to developers to increase affordable housing options. AHD is open to non-profit organizations, private entrepreneurs, development corporations, housing cooperatives, or municipalities. The AHD funded the completion of five affordable housing units and 12 market units during 2024-25, and approved funding for 72 affordable housing units and 230 market units.

Community Legal Clinics

- The Department of Justice and Public Safety entered into an agreement with Community Legal Information for the development of a community legal clinic. These clinics are intended to address basic legal needs and increase access to justice. The Department of Justice and Public Safety also secured a commitment from the Law Foundation of PEI to contribute operational funding.

New Employment Standards Act

- The new *Employment Standards Act (ESA)* was passed in November 2024. This new legislation is intended to update the employment standards landscape in PEI to align with current and emerging legislative and workplace trends. The *ESA* has not yet been proclaimed, as regulatory work is ongoing.

Personal Income Tax Changes

- Personal income tax changes came into effect for the 2025 tax year. These include:
 - Increasing the basic personal amount to \$14,650;
 - Increasing the spousal and equivalent amount to \$12,443;
 - Increasing the age credit amount and income threshold to \$6,510 and \$36,600, respectively; and,
 - Increasing the income threshold for the low-income tax reduction to \$22,650.

Insulin Pump Program Expansion

- As of September 1, 2024, the Insulin Pump Program expanded its program eligibility criteria to include all PEI residents living with type 1 diabetes, regardless of age. Previously, the program was limited to individuals under the age of 25.

Goal #2 – Support the Most Vulnerable

Some PEI residents face profound challenges that prevent them from supporting themselves through employment. This population requires a broader and more comprehensive range of supports. Families, communities, and government all have a vital role to play in ensuring that every individual's basic needs are met, that they enjoy a good quality of life, and that they are able to live with dignity.

Supports for Seniors

- The Seniors Navigator Program has seen a steady increase in requests for support. In 2024-25, the Seniors Navigators received approximately 470 requests per month. The Seniors Navigators held approximately 25 outreach sessions in 19 different communities per month.
- In fall 2024, public and interest-holder engagement sessions were conducted to inform the creation of a five-year Seniors Action Plan. The Seniors Action Plan is expected to be released in winter 2025-26.

Community Outreach Centre Programming

- The model of care at the Community Outreach Centre (COC), located in Charlottetown, has evolved to better align services with the needs of individuals at risk or experiencing homelessness, particularly those with complex needs. This evolving model of care at the COC includes:
 - Establishing a formal medical clinic and formal care pathways for residents, in partnership with Health PEI; and,
 - Improving communication and collaboration with other service providers (e.g., Park Street Emergency Shelter, Summerside Emergency Shelter, and other non-profit organizations where appropriate) to provide enhanced case conferencing and care plans for clients (with their approval).

Substance Abuse Supports

- The Chief Public Health Office provided free naloxone kits to PEI pharmacies, and launched a substance use public survey to gather valuable information on trends, attitudes, and knowledge around multiple substances.

Promoting Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Healthcare

- The Women and Gender Diverse People's section of the Department of Health and Wellness hosted learning events on Indigenous health considerations and health equity in action.
- Throughout 2024-25, the Department of Health and Wellness led a social marketing campaign aimed at reducing stigma and fostering healthier, more inclusive environments – particularly for women, gender diverse individuals, and other equity-denied groups.

Goal #3 – Build on Supportive Communities and Partners

Strong community partners are an essential part of fostering supportive communities and building resiliency. Actions under this goal aim to enhance these partnerships.

Social Support Funding

- Through the Social Programs division, the Department of Social Development and Seniors provided over \$20 million in annual funding to organizations that deliver services to vulnerable Islanders. These services include residential services, accessibility supports, transportation, day programming, advocacy, and recovery services.

Community Housing Partners

- In 2024-2025, the Department of Housing, Land and Communities:
 - Funded the Building Your Foundation pilot program for clients experiencing homelessness and addictions. This program is delivered by the Reach Foundation; and,

- Implemented two positions within Community Legal Information to expand the reach of the Renting PEI project. The project continues to provide legal information, referrals, and support during the rental hearing process. Through this program, a renting guide was created and is available via hard copy and electronically.

Food Waste Reduction Strategy

- In August 2024, work was initiated by the Department of Agriculture to collect public input to better understand the issue of food waste. These consultations were conducted with members of the food supply chain, community organizations, and Government partners to understand the challenges in food waste reduction.

Emergency Preparedness

- The Fuel Station Resiliency Program was launched in August 2024 by the Emergency Management Office. This program provides fuel security for all PEI residents in the event of a large-scale emergency. Once completed, 82% of all fuel stations across the province will have auxiliary power, enhancing resiliency in emergency situations.
- The Emergency Management Office partnered with the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency to establish seven provincially run reception centres across the province, with two additional centres expected. These sites are strategically located and will provide emergency social services to PEI residents during emergencies.

Digital Health Strategy

- The Department of Health and Wellness and Health PEI released a five-year Digital Health Strategy to improve the availability and use of health information.

Development of a Wellness Action Plan

- The Chief Public Health Office launched the *Consultation Paper on Wellness in Prince Edward Island* to engage PEI residents in developing a 5-year provincial wellness action plan.

Health Innovation Fund

- The Department of Health and Wellness launched a \$2 million Health Innovation Fund (HIF) to improve access to care for PEI residents. The HIF provides one-time financial assistance to new projects or initiatives that support best practices in health care, implementation of new technologies, and application of new approaches across the health care system.
- Through HIF grants:
 - The sleep apnea program was expanded to benefit low-income residents, by providing an additional \$50,000 to LungNSPEI. This additional funding will help to upgrade equipment and expand the LungNSPEI Sleep Apnea Refurbishment Program, which helps low-income residents with obstructive sleep apnea and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease;

- A new mobile optometry service was established to offer on-site eye exams for long-term and community care residents in western PEI, improving access to eye care;
- A pilot program was launched to bring mobile x-ray services to long-term care homes; and,
- A one-year pilot program was created through the PEI Physiotherapy Association to provide pelvic floor physiotherapy for PEI residents that are under-insured or have no insurance coverage.

Goal #4 – Improve the Well-Being of Children and Youth

Investing in children and youth, including poverty elimination measures, directly affects their growth, development and well-being. This leads to better health outcomes, emotional and social skills, and performance in school and training. It also means that the next generation will be better equipped to thrive, lead, and participate in their communities.

Child, Youth and Family Services Act

- In September 2024, the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYFSA)* was enacted, replacing the *Child Protection Act*. This new legislation placed the best interests of the child as the paramount consideration in all decisions made under the legislation.
- The CYFSA also:
 - Expands the Extended Services Program to allow the opportunity for youth who are in the temporary or permanent care of the Director of Child Protection and turning 18 years of age to receive further support. The CYFSA increases the maximum age from 21 years of age to 25 years for this service; and,
 - Allows for increased support for grandparents and alternative care providers by providing greater clarity on the legal status of children in these situations.

PEI School Food Program

- In November 2024, the Department of Social Development and Seniors secured a \$7.2 million funding commitment from the Government of Canada over a three-year period to support provincial school food initiatives.
- With this additional federal funding, the Department of Social Development and Seniors was able to sign a long-term funding agreement with PEI School Food Program Inc. to accommodate ongoing increases to program uptake.

School Breakfast and Snack Programs

- During the 2024-25 school year, the Department of Education and Early Years provided \$495,000 in funding to school-based breakfast and snack programs.
- During the school year, there were 74 schools (56 Public Schools Branch, six La Commission scolaire de langue française, 12 Public Schools Branch Alternative Education) operating 102 programs (69 breakfast / 33 snack). These programs provided approximately 77,000 breakfasts and snacks to 17,000 students (77% of the student population) each week.

Children's Summer Food Program

- The Children's Summer Food Program expanded to provide seven healthy frozen meals per week to registered school-aged children across PEI during July and August 2024. These meals were provided at no cost to families who identified a need for support in accessing food during the summer break.
- In summer 2024, approximately 143,000 meals were delivered across PEI.

Kindergarten Readiness Pilot Program

- In 2024-25, a kindergarten readiness pilot program was established. Foundational kindergarten readiness refers to a child's essential skills and developmental milestones to thrive in a kindergarten environment. It encompasses social-emotional development, fine and gross motor skills, self-care skills, developmental play, and language and communication skills.

Canada-PEI Early Learning and Child Care Agreement Extension

- In March 2025, PEI reached an agreement with the Government of Canada to extend the Canada-PEI Early Learning and Child Care Agreement beyond 2026. Over the next five years, \$199 million will continue to support affordable childcare spaces in PEI, as well as improving staff wages to help recruit and retain more educators in the workforce.

Affordable Childcare Spaces

- In 2024-25, there were 511 affordable childcare spaces created:
 - 381 childcare spaces in designated Early Years Centres;
 - 105 spaces in probationary Early Years Centres; and,
 - 25 spaces in Family Home Centres.
- Families are charged \$10 per day for these new childcare spaces.

Supporting Families During Separation and Divorce

- The Family Law Navigation website was launched. This website provides information for individuals with children at any stage of separation or divorce, and includes:
 - Information regarding available support services, including mental health, parenting, child support, and family violence; and,
 - A Self-Navigation Tool which helps parents learn about free services that can most support them based on their family's circumstances.
- The Department of Justice and Public Safety is reviewing and updating the Child Support Regulations under the *Children's Law Act*. The intention of this review is to modernize administrative processes for the child support recalculation process.
- Additional mediators were secured for the Parenting Plan Mediation Service to meet the growing demand for family mediation. The Service also began offering a virtual mediation option.
- The Department of Justice and Public Safety increased the accessibility/plain language of documentation for the Family Law program.

Child and Youth Inpatient Mental Health Unit

- In 2024-25, the contract for the design of the Child and Youth Mental Health and Addictions Acute Care Unit was awarded. Development of the unit is underway at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Charlottetown. Once completed, the unit will provide access to appropriate accommodations and program delivery spaces for individuals under the age of 18 in need of acute mental health, addiction, and substance use care.

Quit Your Way Program

- The Chief Public Health Office expanded the Quit-Your-Way program. This program supports youth and young adults who use tobacco or vaping products, and who are interested in learning more about quitting.

Youth Gambling Supports

- The Department of Health and Wellness issued a request for proposals to explore the impacts of youth gaming in addiction.
- The Department of Health and Wellness created a new Youth Gambling Specialist position to better support the development of programs and resources available to youth and families in PEI.

Looking Forward to 2025-26

While the Government of PEI has undertaken significant investments and initiatives over the 2024-25 reporting year, it recognizes that continued efforts are required to eliminate poverty, food insecurity, and chronic homelessness. In 2025-26, the Government of PEI anticipates that additional actions will be undertaken to help meet the legislated targets. These actions include:

Creating a Poverty Elimination Strategy

- In collaboration with the Poverty Elimination Council, the Department of Social Development and Seniors is developing a new Poverty Elimination Strategy.
- The Poverty Elimination Strategy will be developed with input from PEI residents, community organizations, and subject-matter experts.

Creating the Seniors Action Plan

- In partnership with the PEI Seniors' Secretariat, the Department of Social Development and Seniors is developing a new 5-Year Seniors Action Plan.
- The Seniors Action Plan will focus on addressing the needs of PEI's aging population, with an emphasis on well-being, quality of life, and ensuring seniors have the range of supports and resources they need to age well in their communities.

Further Increasing Minimum Wage

- Minimum wage will increase to \$16.50 per hour on October 1, 2025.

Reviewing the Targeted Basic Income Guarantee Pilot Program

- The Targeted Basic Income Guarantee Pilot Program will undergo a review in 2025-26, to ensure the program is meeting its intended outcomes.

Personal Income Tax Changes

- Following the introduction of the 2025-26 provincial budget, the following personal income tax changes were introduced for the 2026 tax year:
 - Increasing the basic personal amount to \$15,000;
 - Increasing the spousal and equivalent amount to \$12,740;
 - Increasing the income threshold for the low-income tax reduction to \$23,000; and,
 - Increasing the five provincial tax brackets by 1.8%.

Further Increasing the Housing Supply

- 24 supportive housing units owned by PEIHC are now in development/construction. 13 units will be completed in 2025 with 11 more units expected to be added in 2026, subject to finalization. This is in addition to 24 supportive housing units under development/construction through funding provided to Boys & Girls Club Prince County.
- A Housing First pilot project is anticipated to be developed and implemented in the coming year(s). This pilot project will help to support some of PEI's most vulnerable residents who are experiencing homelessness.
- The PEIHC has 125 social housing units under construction that will be completed in 2025-26, and an additional 109 that will be completed in 2026-27. Units anticipated to be finished in 2025-26 include:
 - 10 subsidized units at Alberton Apartments;
 - 30 subsidized units at Beach Grove Apartments;
 - 82 subsidized units at Malpeque Road Modular Affordable Housing Building 1; and,
 - 3 subsidized units on Richmond Street.

Implementing the National Pharmacare Program

- The National Pharmacare Program will be implemented in May 2025. This program will allow PEI residents to have further coverage for certain medications, including expanded access to blood glucose strips and contraceptives.

Launching MyHealthPEI

- MyHealthPEI is a new, secure online service offering PEI residents convenient access to their personal health information, self-entry tools and other features to support their health and well-being.
- It is anticipated that the MyHealthPEI service will be available to PEI residents in late 2025-26.

Opening the Child and Youth Inpatient Mental Health Unit

- Building on the design phase undertaken in 2024-25, the Child and Youth Inpatient Mental Health Unit will transfer to Health PEI for operation in early 2026.

Launching the “Your Guide to Digital Health” Campaign

- The Department of Health and Wellness will launch the “Your Guide to Digital Health” public awareness campaign. This campaign will enhance understanding and literacy around digital health tools and resources.

Strengthening Post Secondary Supports

- The Marion L. Reid Grant will increase to \$3,500 annually.
- The George Coles Bursary will increase to \$3,500 annually.

Measuring Poverty, Food Insecurity, and Homelessness

Key Indicators

The Act sets out targets for five key indicators for measuring poverty on PEI. As laid out in the Act, the 2025 targets utilize 2018 data to establish baseline measurements. The five key indicators as mandated by the Act are:

Indicator	2025 Target	2030 Target	2035 Target	As Measured By
Poverty rate for all persons	25% reduction	50% reduction	Rate is 0	Market Basket Measure
Poverty rate for those under 18	50% reduction	Rate is 0	Rate is 0	Market Basket Measure
Food insecurity for all persons	50% reduction	Rate is 0	Rate is 0	Canada Income Survey
Food insecurity for those under 18	Rate is 0	Rate is 0	Rate is 0	Canada Income Survey
Chronic homelessness	Rate is 0	Rate is 0	Rate is 0	2022 and 2023: Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) 2024: Point in Time Count

Poverty

Canada's official measure of poverty is the Market Basket Measure (MBM). MBM is based on the cost of a basket of goods and services representing a modest, basic standard of living. These goods and services include food, clothing, shelter, transportation and other necessities.

The MBM is calculated for 52 geographic regions within Canada, including three within PEI. Statistics Canada generally publishes the MBM two years after the data is collected.

In November 2025, Statistics Canada revised how the goods and services are calculated to generate MBM. This change was applied retroactively to MBM rates since 2020, which has resulted in changes to the poverty rates across Canada. Due to this update, the poverty rates reported in this report are different than rates reported in previous *Poverty Elimination Strategy Act* annual reports.

Market Basket Measure Thresholds 2022, 2023 and 2024 for a sample family of four, PEI Regions

Region	2022	2023	2024
PEI – Rural	\$46,640	\$48,322	\$49,135
PEI – Population under 30,000	\$50,546	\$52,354	\$53,246
PEI – Charlottetown	\$51,411	\$53,217	\$54,121

Food Insecurity

The Household Food Security Survey Model is collected through the Canadian Income Survey (previously collected through the Canadian Community Health Survey). This survey asks 18 questions relating to the amount of food available to parents and children in the home. Based on the answers, an individual can be food secure or can experience marginal, moderate or severe levels of food insecurity.

Homelessness

Differing estimates are available on the number of individuals experiencing overall homelessness (including both chronic and episodic homelessness, and including those staying in emergency and temporary shelter, transitional housing, and those unsheltered).

According to the John Howard Society Coordinated Access Dashboard, between 168 and 236 individuals experienced some form of homelessness at different points in time during the reporting period. This dashboard is based on data entered into the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) by organizations who are client-facing.

The provincial Point in Time (PiT) Count was conducted over 12 days in October 2024 by the John Howard Society of PEI, in partnership with many different organizations and sectors. This PiT Count surveyed homeless people on the streets and in shelters across the province. While homelessness is challenging to measure, the methodology used and the data obtained from the PiT Count are Federally-approved and considered to be best practice by the Government of Canada.

Poverty, Food Insecurity, and Homelessness Rates

Percentage of Persons Experiencing Poverty in Prince Edward Island 2021, 2022 and 2023,
Market Basket Measure

All Persons

Region	2021	2022	2023
PEI	7.5	8.9	10.5
Canada	7.9	10.3	10.9

Statistics Canada Table 11-10-0135-01, November 7, 2025

Persons Under 18 Years of Age

Region	2021	2022	2023
PEI	5.8*	7.4*	12.3
Canada	6.8	10.4	11.8

Statistics Canada Table 11-10-0135-01, November 7, 2025

*Low sample size, use this data with caution

Percentage of Persons Experiencing Food Insecurity 2021, 2022, and 2023, Canadian Income Survey

All Persons*

Region	2021	2022	2023
PEI	23.6	28.6	24.6
Canada	18.4	22.9	25.5

Statistics Canada Table 13-10-0835-01, May 1, 2025

*Combination of persons reporting marginal, moderate and severe food insecurity

Percentage of Persons Experiencing Food Insecurity 2021, 2022, and 2023, Canadian Income Survey

Persons under 18 Years of Age*

Region	2021	2022	2023
PEI	35.1	41.0	31.2
Canada	24.3	28.4	32.9

Statistics Canada Table 13-10-0835-01, May 1, 2025

*Combination of persons reporting marginal, moderate and severe food insecurity

Homelessness*

	2022 (HIFIS)	2023 (HIFIS)	2024 (PiT*)
Number of people experiencing homelessness (street count, file reviews, surveys)	231	217	318
Survey Data	2022	2023	2024***
Gender	Male- 67% Female- 33%	Male – 69% Female – 30% Non-Binary – 1%	Male – 67% Female – 32% Non-Binary – 1%
Other characteristics	Indigenous – N/A** Immigrant or refugee – 3% Veteran – 1.7%	Indigenous – 15.2% Immigrant or refugee – 3% Veteran – 1%	Indigenous – 17.1% Immigrant or refugee – 3% Veteran – 2.5%

* Caution should be exercised when comparing 2024 data to 2022 and 2023 data as a different collection method was used in 2024.

** This data has been omitted due to statistical unreliability.

*** Only 275 of the 318 persons experiencing homelessness completed the demographic survey.

PEI Report Card

The Act sets out the below target rates for poverty, food insecurity and chronic homelessness for January 1, 2025.

Metric	Legislated Target (By January 1, 2025)	2018 Rate	2023 Rate	2025 Target Rate
Poverty Rate: All Persons	Reduced by 25%	13.4%	10.5%	10.1%
Poverty Rate: Children	Reduced by 50%	12.5%	12.3%	6.3%
Food Insecurity: All Persons	Reduced by 50%	17.3%	24.6%	8.7%
Food Insecurity: Children	Reduced to 0%	24.5%	31.2%	0%
Chronic Homelessness	Reduced to 0	86 (per 2018 PiT count)	318 (per 2024 PiT count)	0



Department of Social Development and Seniors

PO Box 2000

Charlottetown PE C1A 7N8

Tel: 902-620-3777 Email: DeptSDS@gov.pe.ca

www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/topic/social-development-and-seniors

