

Preparing to enter the workforce

If you receive social assistance and are employable, government will help you prepare to enter the workforce.

Employment readiness

You will receive life-skills training and coaching on how to look for a job.

Skill development

Government will help you develop your skills and explore transportation options for getting to work.

(To be introduced over the next 12 months)

Making things easier

A single point of contact

Just one toll-free phone call to 1-877-569-0546 will answer all your questions about the provincial government's social programs. This single point of contact will make it easier to access the support you need.

More electronic options

New and easier ways to access social assistance will be introduced including online applications, reloadable bank cards (instead of cheques), and web and smartphone applications. (To be introduced over the next 12 months)



Modernizing SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Existing supports

In addition to these new improvements, the Prince Edward Island government continues to assist low-income Islanders by:

- **increasing food rates** over the last five years (*a \$1.8 million investment*) and again in 2018-19 (*a \$420,000 investment*);
- committing to **increase shelter rates** in 2018-19 (*a \$500,000 investment*); and
- partnering with the federal government over the last three years to **invest a combined \$40 million each year** to reduce poverty in Prince Edward Island.



These significant social assistance changes are a key part of the provincial government's Poverty Reduction Action Plan, which will be completed in October 2018.

For more information visit
princeedwardisland.ca/SA-renewal
or call 1-877-569-0546

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The Prince Edward Island government is making changes to social assistance that will empower Islanders and help them improve their lives.

You can have more savings – and earn more income – without losing benefits

Higher income exemptions

You can earn more money each month without your benefits being reduced. **New monthly income exemptions** will be:

- for a single person – \$250 a month plus 30 percent of any additional income (*was \$75 a month plus 10 percent of additional income*);
- for a couple – \$400 a month plus 30 percent of additional income (*was \$125 a month plus 10 percent of additional income*); and
- for a person or couple with a disability – \$500 a month plus 30 percent of additional income (*was \$125 a month plus 10 percent of additional income*).

Child support won't affect benefits

Child support payments will no longer be counted as income so they won't lower your social assistance benefits.

More 'liquid assets' are exempt

You can have more money in savings – or own more things that can be sold for cash (*also known as liquid assets*) – and still receive social assistance benefits.

New liquid-asset exemptions will be:

- \$2,500 or less for a single person (*was \$50*);
- \$3,500 or less for a single person with dependent children, plus \$500 for each dependent (*was \$900, plus \$300 for each dependent*);
- \$5,000 or less for a single person with a disability (*was \$900*);
- \$6,000 or less for a single person with a disability and dependents, \$500 for each dependent (*was \$900, plus \$300 for each dependent*);
- \$5,000 or less for a couple (*was \$1,200*);
- \$5,000 or less for a couple with dependents, plus \$500 for each dependent (*was \$1,200, plus \$300 for each dependent*); and
- \$10,000 or less for a couple with a disability and dependents, plus \$500 for each dependent (*was \$1,800, plus \$300 for each dependent*).

(effective July 1, 2018)

Supporting your work transition

If you are able to leave social assistance for the workforce, government will help you make this important transition to self reliance.

Medical, dental, optical benefits extended

Islanders who leave social assistance for a job on Prince Edward Island will receive benefits for the first 24 months including:

- medical benefits;
- dental benefits; and
- optical benefits.

These benefits may be extended beyond 24 months if losing them becomes a barrier to keeping your job.

Help to buy clothes, get driver's license

You may also receive up to \$750 to buy clothes for a job interview, get a driver's license, or to overcome any other barrier to starting work.

(effective July 1, 2018)