



Social Assistance Summaries 2019

Canada

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The *Social Assistance Summaries* series was established by the Caledon Institute of Social Policy to maintain data previously published in the Social Assistance Statistical Report by the federal government.

Maytree thanks all jurisdictions for their cooperation in the production of the social assistance summaries data presented in this report.

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About Social Assistance Summaries

What is Social Assistance Summaries?

Social Assistance Summaries uses data provided by provincial and territorial government officials to track the number of social assistance recipients across Canada. It also includes a brief description of the social assistance programs in each jurisdiction.

This resource was established by the Caledon Institute of Social Policy to maintain data previously published in the *Social Assistance Statistical Report* by the federal government.

Who can claim social assistance?

Eligibility for social assistance is determined on the basis of a needs test. This test takes into account the household's basic needs and its financial resources, which include both assets and income. The needs test assesses whether there is a shortfall between available financial resources and the legislated amounts for basic needs (i.e., food, shelter, clothing, household, and personal needs). Additional amounts may be paid on a discretionary basis for special needs based on each household's circumstances.

Where does the data come from?

Every year provincial and territorial government officials provide us with an update of the social assistance case and recipient numbers. (Some jurisdictions also publish this information online.) They can provide this data as a calendar year average, a fiscal year average, or as point-in-time data for March 31.

Data from before 2014 comes from two federal government reports: the *Social Assistance Statistical Report: 2008* and the *Social Assistance Statistical Report: 2009-13*. When the federal data did not reconcile with provincial/territorial figures, the Caledon Institute of Social Policy worked with jurisdictional representatives to present data in the format most often used by their governments.

What is the difference between cases and beneficiaries?

Cases are equivalent to an individual or family: the person who applied for benefits, their partner, and any dependent children count as a single case.

Beneficiaries or recipients refer to the total number of people who benefit from a single social assistance claim, i.e., the individual claimant plus their partner, and any dependent children within their household.

How does each jurisdiction vary in its reporting?

Each jurisdiction uses its own methodology for tracking and reporting social assistance caseloads. For example, some provinces include households that receive a partial benefit or top-up from social assistance while others do not; some include First Nations living on reserve while others do not.

They also vary in the way they calculate the number of social assistance cases and beneficiaries:

- Three jurisdictions provide data for the situation on March 31 – Nova Scotia, Alberta, and Yukon
- Two jurisdictions provide an average over the calendar year – Newfoundland and Labrador and Nunavut
- Eight jurisdictions provide an average over the fiscal year (April to March) – New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Ontario, and the Northwest Territories

Can I compare the data for different jurisdictions?

Comparisons between jurisdictions can be misleading because each jurisdiction has different eligibility criteria for social assistance and different methods for recording social assistance data. For example, the numbers will be lower for jurisdictions that count only households in receipt of full benefits.

The data is also affected by how federal programs interact with provincial/territorial benefits. For example, a higher take-up of related income security programs such as Employment Insurance typically reduces social assistance caseloads.

Why does the number of claims change from year to year?

There are two main reasons why the social assistance caseloads change from year to year. One reason is a change in the social and economic situation in an area. For example, a rise in unemployment is likely to result in a rise in social assistance claims. The other reason is a change in the way that social assistance programs operate. For example, people are ineligible for social assistance if their savings are above a certain threshold; if a jurisdiction increases this threshold, more people would be eligible and the number of claimants is likely to increase. Similarly, changes to eligibility for federal benefits can also have a knock-on effect on provincial/territorial caseloads.

Does the data include on-reserve First Nations claiming social assistance?

Not all jurisdictions include First Nations living on reserve in their social assistance data. For details, see the “data notes” under the statistics section for each province or territory.

Does the data in this report reflect the COVID-19 pandemic crisis?

No. This report includes data from 2019. It does not contain numbers for 2020, and therefore does not reflect any changes in cases that might occur as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.



Social Assistance Summaries 2019

Alberta

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Alberta's social assistance program

Social assistance is the income program of last resort. It is intended for those who have exhausted all other means of financial support. Every province and territory has its own social assistance program(s) and no two are the same.

In Alberta, there are two social assistance programs:

- Alberta Works
- Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped

Alberta Works

Alberta Works helps unemployed people to find and keep jobs, employers to meet their need for skilled workers, and Albertans with low incomes to cover their basic costs of living. There are four components to Alberta Works:

1. Employment and Training Services – help to find employment, take training, or plan a new career
2. Income Support – money to meet basic needs
3. Child Support Services – free service to get child support agreements or court orders
4. Health Benefits – supplementary health coverage

The caseload and beneficiary data below refers to those receiving the Income Support component of Alberta Works. There are four channels through which Albertans can qualify for Income Support:

1. Barriers to Full Employment – for those who cannot work due to chronic health problems or other barriers to employment
2. Expected to Work – for those looking for work, working but not earning enough, or temporarily unable to work
3. Learners – for those who need training so they can get a job
4. Emergency Allowance – for those with an unexpected, one-time emergency through no fault of their own (e.g., sudden eviction due to fire)

Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)

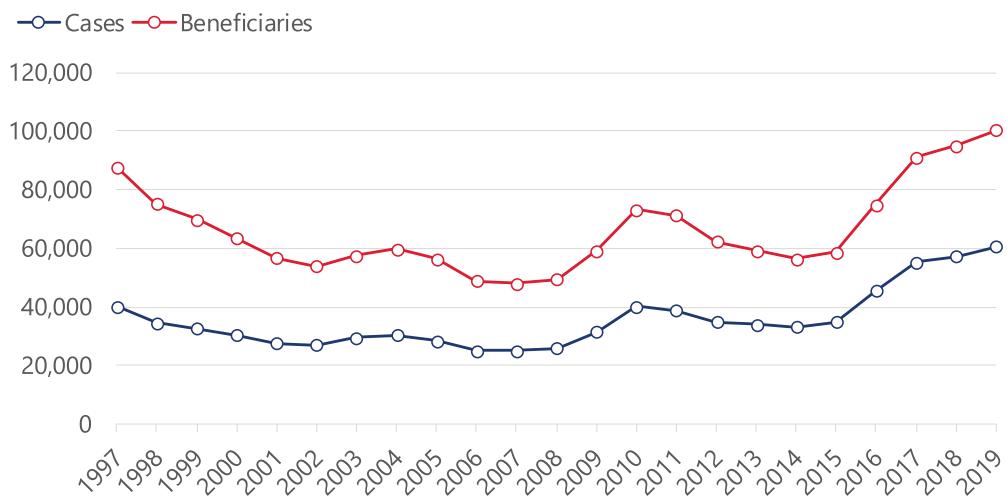
The AISH program provides financial and health-related assistance to eligible adult Albertans with a disability. To be eligible for AISH, individuals must have a mental or physical impairment that causes substantial limitation in their ability to earn a livelihood, and is likely to affect them permanently. They must also meet criteria for income, assets, age, and residency.

How many people claim social assistance?

Alberta Works

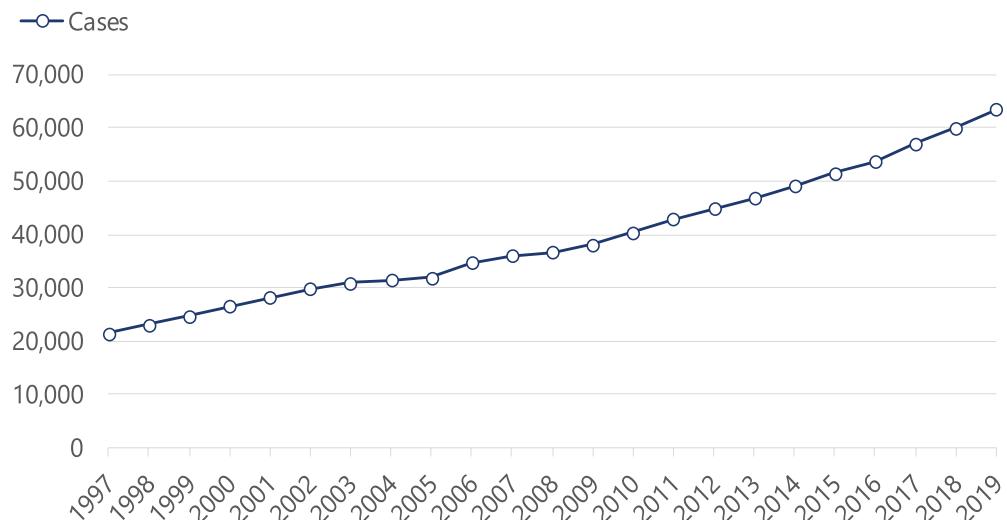
In March 2019, the number of cases (families and single adults) in the Alberta Works program reached 60,600, the highest it has been for at least 20 years. Between March 2018 and March 2019, the number of cases rose by 3,300, which is much smaller than the annual increase of 10,000 between 2015 and 2017.

Overall, 100,300 people (individual claimants, their partners, and dependent children) benefited from Alberta Works in March 2019.



Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)

In March 2019, there were 63,500 cases in Alberta's AISH program. The number of cases has been rising steadily over the last two decades.



Year	Alberta Works Cases	Alberta Works Beneficiaries	AISH Cases
1997	40,100	87,700	21,500
1998	34,500	75,100	23,100
1999	32,800	70,000	24,700
2000	30,400	63,400	26,500
2001	27,600	56,800	28,200
2002	27,200	53,800	29,800
2003	29,600	57,500	30,900
2004	30,300	59,900	31,500
2005	28,500	56,400	32,000
2006	25,100	49,000	34,800
2007	25,200	48,100	36,100
2008	25,961	49,379	36,747
2009	31,615	59,176	38,065
2010	40,146	73,350	40,439
2011	38,955	71,137	42,820
2012	34,852	62,426	44,901
2013	34,068	59,356	46,805
2014	33,211	56,433	49,060
2015	35,009	58,653	51,492
2016	45,428	74,989	53,590
2017	55,241	91,267	57,012
2018	57,219	95,105	60,027
2019	60,581	100,329	63,453

Data notes

- Alberta Works was implemented in 2004. The data for 2003 and earlier is for its predecessor, the Supports for Independence program.
- The data reflects the number of cases and beneficiaries on March 31 of each year.
- Alberta Works figures do not include First Nations living on reserves. AISH figures include First Nations living on reserves.
- Figures for 1997 to 2007 are drawn from the 2008 and 2009-13 Social Assistance Statistical Reports with figures rounded to 100s. Figures for 2008 onwards are the actual numbers supplied by Alberta Community and Social Services.



Social Assistance Summaries 2019

British Columbia

Published May 2020

British Columbia's social assistance program

Social assistance is the income program of last resort. It is intended for those who have exhausted all other means of financial support. Every province and territory has its own social assistance program(s) and no two are the same.

In British Columbia, basic support and shelter benefits are provided through the British Columbia Employment and Assistance (BCEA) program.

BCEA clients are divided into two main streams of assistance:

1. Income Assistance (also called Temporary Assistance)
2. Disability Assistance

Those who are not eligible for income or disability assistance may be able to access support for essential costs through BCEA Hardship Assistance, such as those awaiting other income or benefits like Employment Insurance or those completing the work search required to receive regular assistance. Hardship assistance is provided on a temporary basis for one month at a time.

Income Assistance

Income Assistance consists of a support allowance and a shelter allowance. The support allowance is intended to cover the cost of food, clothing, and personal and household items of the family. The shelter allowance is intended to pay for actual shelter costs (up to a maximum amount). The maximum amount of support allowance and shelter allowance available varies by family size.

In order to be eligible for Income Assistance, applicants must meet income requirements and fit the criteria of one of four groups:

1. Expected to Work - for employable individuals
2. Expected to Work Medical Condition - for employable individuals with short-term medical issues
3. Temporarily Excused - for single parents with a child under 3 and seniors
4. Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers - for individuals with a medical condition that precludes or impedes employment

Disability Assistance

The Disability Assistance stream of BCEA recognizes that people with disabilities may require additional supports in order to meet the challenges of daily living through a higher assistance rate, supplementary assistance, and specialized employment supports.

The BC Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act defines a person with disabilities as an individual who is at least 18 years of age, with a severe physical or mental impairment that is expected to continue for at least two years, and who:

- is significantly restricted in his or her ability to perform daily living activities
- requires assistance with daily living activities

This includes individuals with episodic illnesses that restrict daily living activities continuously or periodically for extended periods.

Once individuals qualify for Disability Assistance, they keep their Persons with Disabilities designation after they leave assistance (for employment or other income support programs) and may maintain their medical assistance.

BCEA Supplements

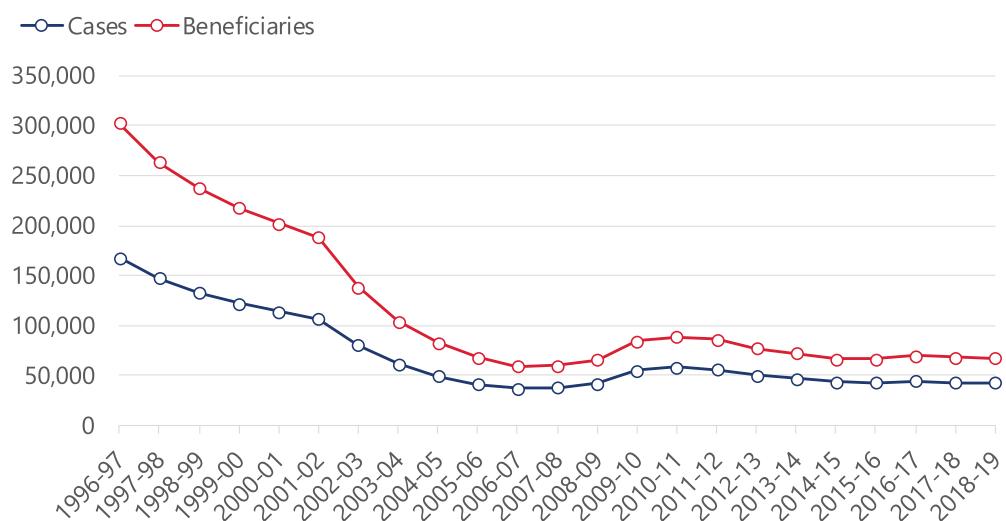
Along with assistance for everyday living and shelter costs, recipients may also qualify for General Supplements and Health Supplements through BCEA. These are intended to offset certain additional costs that some families face (such as the extra costs associated with a child's schooling or the transportation costs associated with essential medical treatment).

How many people claim social assistance?

On average, there were 148,000 cases (families and single adults) in British Columbia's social assistance program during 2018/19. Around 30 per cent (42,900) received Income Assistance (also known as Temporary Assistance) and 70 per cent (105,200) received Disability Assistance. The total number of social assistance cases increased by 3,100 in 2018/19; all of this increase was due to a rise in the number receiving Disability Assistance.

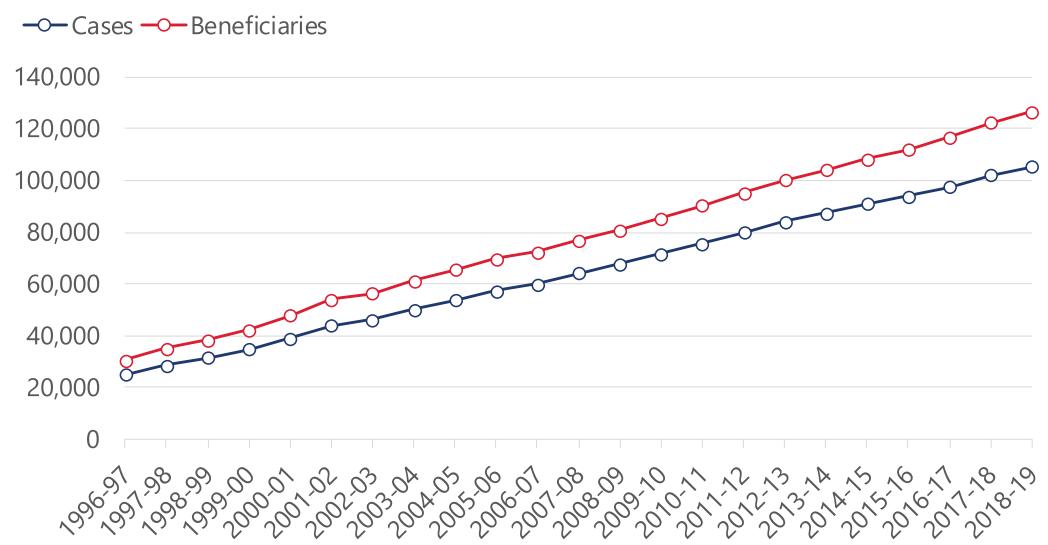
Income Assistance

The number of Income Assistance cases and beneficiaries fell substantially in the late 1990s and early 2000s and then rose in the late-2000s following the recession. In 2018/19, the average number of Income Assistance cases and beneficiaries was 42,900 and 67,800, respectively. These numbers are lower than the post-recession peak of 2010/11 but remain higher than the pre-recession low in 2006/07.



Disability Assistance

In 2018/19, there was an average of 105,200 cases in British Columbia's Disability Assistance program, and 126,600 beneficiaries (individual claimants, their partners, and dependent children). Both numbers have been steadily rising over the last two decades.



Year	Income Assistance		Disability Assistance		Total	
	Cases	Beneficiaries	Cases	Beneficiaries	Cases	Beneficiaries
1996-97	168,113	302,551	25,153	30,578	193,266	333,129
1997-98	147,872	263,438	28,741	35,027	176,613	298,465
1998-99	133,005	237,100	31,556	38,339	164,562	275,439
1999-00	122,154	217,561	34,838	42,411	156,992	259,972
2000-01	114,121	202,503	39,094	47,857	153,215	250,359
2001-02	106,785	187,924	44,060	54,234	150,845	242,158
2002-03	80,178	138,789	46,175	56,439	126,354	195,229
2003-04	61,412	104,592	50,235	61,331	111,647	165,923
2004-05	49,663	83,101	53,730	65,374	103,393	148,475
2005-06	41,343	68,087	57,524	69,708	98,867	137,795
2006-07	37,236	59,555	60,087	72,441	97,323	131,996
2007-08	38,203	59,872	64,300	77,036	102,503	136,908
2008-09	42,517	65,893	67,836	81,010	110,353	146,902
2009-10	55,231	84,518	71,647	85,514	126,878	170,032
2010-11	58,151	88,712	75,652	90,210	133,803	178,921
2011-12	56,009	85,885	79,996	95,344	136,005	181,229
2012-13	50,307	77,684	84,104	100,214	134,410	177,898
2013-14	47,189	72,773	87,402	104,172	134,591	176,944
2014-15	43,504	66,833	90,944	108,331	134,448	175,164
2015-16	43,275	66,669	94,028	111,993	137,303	178,663
2016-17	44,920	70,221	97,662	116,683	142,582	186,904
2017-18	42,820	68,220	102,097	122,431	144,917	190,651
2018-19	42,854	67,821	105,204	126,617	148,058	194,438

Data notes

- The data reflects the average number of cases and beneficiaries over the fiscal year (April 1 to March 31).
- The numbers do not include First Nations living on reserves.



Social Assistance Summaries 2019

Manitoba

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Manitoba's social assistance program

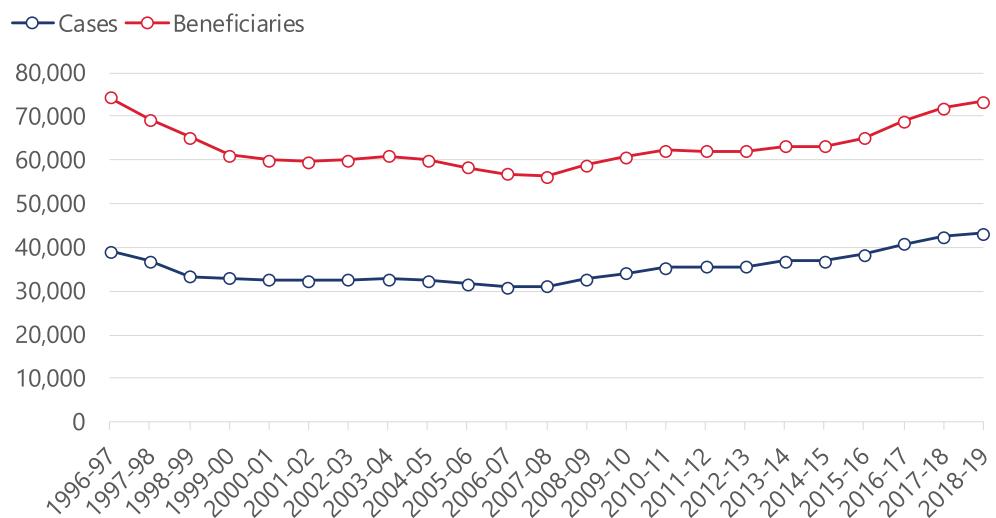
Social assistance is the income program of last resort. It is intended for those who have exhausted all other means of financial support. Every province and territory has its own social assistance program(s) and no two are the same.

In Manitoba, social assistance is delivered through the Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) program.

EIA provides income assistance to Manitobans in need. In partnership with Training and Employment Services, it also provides employability assessments, personal job planning, work incentives, and other supports to assist Manitobans in entering, re-entering, or remaining in the labour force.

How many people claim social assistance?

On average, there were 43,300 cases (families and single adults) in Manitoba's Employment and Income Assistance program in 2018/19, and 73,500 beneficiaries (individual claimants, their partners, and dependent children). This marked a continuation in the steady increase in social assistance cases in Manitoba over the last decade.



Employment and Income Assistance		
Year	Cases	Beneficiaries
1996-97	39,200	74,400
1997-98	36,900	69,300
1998-99	33,300	65,300
1999-00	33,000	61,100
2000-01	32,600	60,100
2001-02	32,400	59,700
2002-03	32,600	60,000
2003-04	32,800	60,900
2004-05	32,400	60,000
2005-06	31,600	58,300
2006-07	30,900	56,800
2007-08	31,100	56,300
2008-09	32,800	58,900
2009-10	34,100	60,800
2010-11	35,400	62,300
2011-12	35,500	62,000
2012-13	35,600	62,000
2013-14	36,900	63,100
2014-15	36,900	63,100
2015-16	38,400	65,100
2016-17	40,800	68,900
2017-18	42,400	72,000
2018-19	43,300	73,500

Data notes

- The data reflects the average number of cases and beneficiaries over the fiscal year (April 1 to March 31).
- Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.
- The numbers do not include First Nations living on reserves.
- Statistics represent all welfare cases in Manitoba and combine municipal and provincial income assistance statistics where appropriate.



Social Assistance Summaries 2019

New Brunswick

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New Brunswick's social assistance program

Social assistance is the income program of last resort. It is intended for those who have exhausted all other means of financial support. Every province and territory has its own social assistance program(s) and no two are the same.

In New Brunswick, social assistance is delivered under two programs:

1. Transitional Assistance Program (TAP)
2. Extended Benefits Program (EBP)

A third program, the Interim Assistance Program, was terminated in 2010.

Transitional Assistance Program (TAP)

Transitional assistance is intended for individuals who are employable as well as those requiring support and intervention to become employable. Within TAP, two rate categories exist:

1. Transitional Assistance Program is paid to those who are employable, as well as those requiring support and intervention to become employable. Most families are provided assistance under this program along with single adults who have a designated need;
2. Transitional Assistance Program – Single Employable is paid to those who do not have a designation and are not certified as blind, deaf, or having a disability.

Extended Benefits Program (EBP)

EBP benefits are intended for individuals who are certified by the Medical Advisory Board as blind, deaf, or having a disability. It also includes some individuals who have been on assistance for many years and have a special designation.

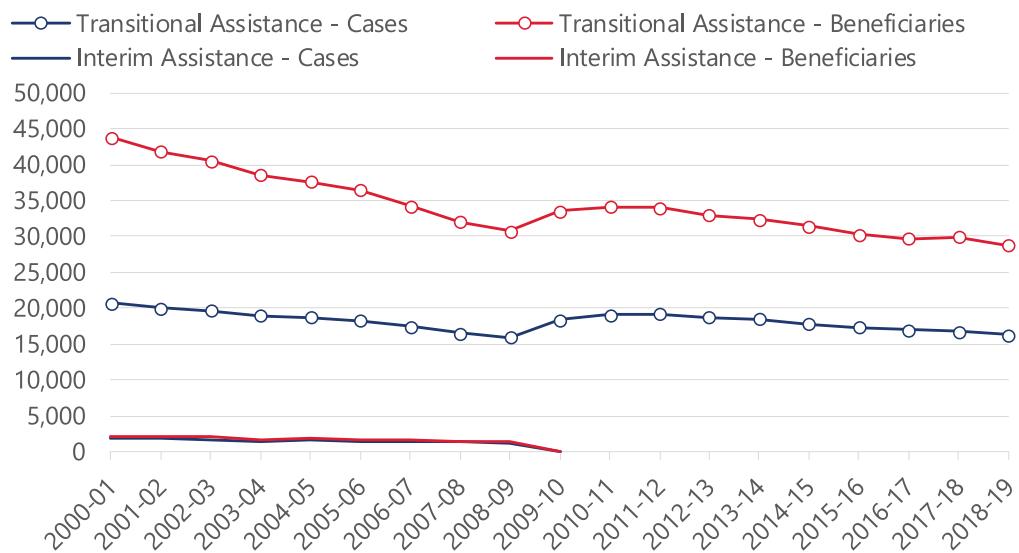
How many people claim social assistance?

On average, there were 22,400 cases (families and single adults) in New Brunswick's social assistance program during 2018/19. Around three quarters (16,300) received support through the Transitional Assistance Program, and a quarter (6,100) received support through the Extended Benefits Program.

Transitional Assistance Program (TAP)

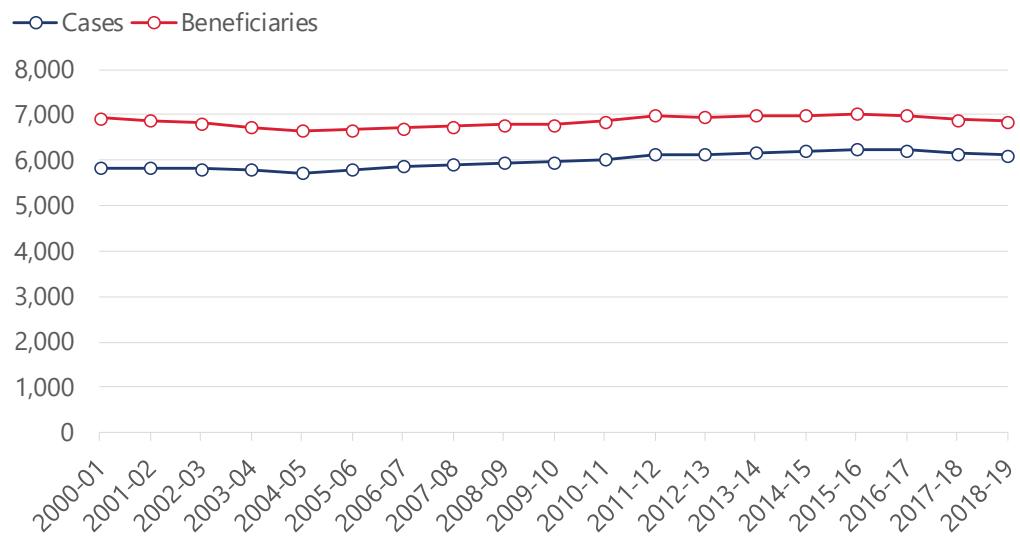
On average there were 16,300 cases in New Brunswick's Transitional Assistance Program in 2018/19, and 28,800 beneficiaries (individual claimants, their partners, and dependent children). Both of these numbers decreased between 2017/18 and 2018/19.

In the 2000s, the Transitional Assistance Program operated alongside the Interim Assistance Program, which had between 1,300 and 1,800 cases until it was terminated in 2011.



Extended Benefits Program (EBP)

In 2017/18, there were an average of 6,100 cases in New Brunswick's Extended Benefits Program, and 6,900 beneficiaries. These numbers have remained steady over the last 15 years.



Year	Transitional Assistance		Extended Benefits		Interim Assistance		Total	
	Cases	Beneficiaries	Cases	Beneficiaries	Cases	Beneficiaries	Cases	Beneficiaries
2000-01	20,705	43,780	5,837	6,941	1,827	2,182	28,369	52,903
2001-02	20,066	41,777	5,837	6,873	1,827	2,082	27,730	50,732
2002-03	19,633	40,480	5,822	6,819	1,767	2,031	27,222	49,330
2003-04	18,928	38,510	5,792	6,724	1,544	1,767	26,264	47,001
2004-05	18,764	37,644	5,728	6,656	1,641	1,894	26,133	46,194
2005-06	18,282	36,431	5,802	6,673	1,518	1,741	25,602	44,845
2006-07	17,461	34,199	5,875	6,713	1,519	1,746	24,855	42,658
2007-08	16,527	32,072	5,903	6,743	1,327	1,523	23,757	40,338
2008-09	15,987	30,765	5,946	6,787	1,284	1,455	23,217	39,007
2009-10	18,426	33,594	5,955	6,787	-	-	24,381	40,381
2010-11	19,061	34,180	6,023	6,861	-	-	25,084	41,041
2011-12	19,217	34,055	6,138	6,992	-	-	25,355	41,047
2012-13	18,683	32,943	6,134	6,958	-	-	24,817	39,901
2013-14	18,461	32,424	6,164	6,986	-	-	24,625	39,410
2014-15	17,825	31,471	6,206	6,994	-	-	24,031	38,465
2015-16	17,306	30,306	6,234	7,022	-	-	23,540	37,328
2016-17	16,936	29,662	6,230	6,998	-	-	23,166	36,660
2017-18	16,758	29,873	6,153	6,898	-	-	22,911	36,771
2018-19	16,251	28,810	6,121	6,854	-	-	22,372	35,664

Data notes

- The data reflects the average number of cases and beneficiaries over the fiscal year (April 1 to March 31).
- The numbers do not include First Nations living on reserves.
- In the late 1990s, the province's statistical agency was in the early stages of publishing data and provincial figures for 1997 to 2000 cannot be verified.
- The Transitional Assistance Program operated alongside the Interim Assistance Program through the 2000s until it was terminated in 2011.



Social Assistance Summaries 2019

Newfoundland and Labrador

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Newfoundland and Labrador's social assistance program

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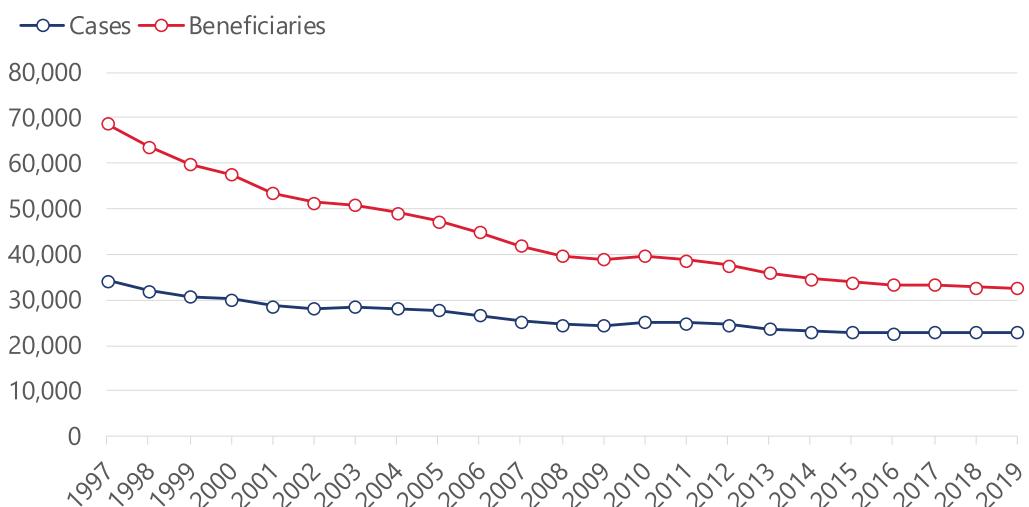
In Newfoundland and Labrador, social assistance is referred to as Income Support (IS).

IS provides financial benefits and other services to eligible low-income people to assist in meeting daily living expenses. Basic benefits include a family and individual benefit (to assist with expenses such as food, clothing, personal care, household maintenance, and utilities) and a shelter benefit (to assist with rent, mortgage costs, utilities and municipal taxes).

Depending on individual circumstances, recipients may also qualify for non-basic benefits such as municipal tax payments, prescription glasses, and special diets. Recipients can also receive further benefits outside of IS by other departments and agencies such as a prescription drug card, medical transportation and medical equipment.

How many people claim social assistance?

On average, there were 22,800 cases (families and single adults) in Newfoundland and Labrador's Income Support program in 2019, and 32,600 beneficiaries (individual claimants, their partners, and dependent children). These numbers are similar to the previous three years. Over the longer term, the number of cases and beneficiaries fell consistently during the 2000s but has fallen at a slower pace since.



Year	Income Support	
	Cases	Beneficiaries
1997	34,245	68,855
1998	32,046	63,816
1999	30,737	59,900
2000	30,255	57,578
2001	28,720	53,520
2002	28,146	51,364
2003	28,454	50,783
2004	28,173	49,278
2005	27,650	47,324
2006	26,590	44,881
2007	25,337	41,916
2008	24,517	39,680
2009	24,336	38,946
2010	25,050	39,639
2011	24,917	38,676
2012	24,506	37,557
2013	23,679	35,862
2014	23,098	34,712
2015	22,850	33,853
2016	22,790	33,365
2017	22,848	33,246
2018	22,821	32,811
2019	22,828	32,632

Data notes

- The data reflects the average number of cases and beneficiaries over the calendar year (January 1 to December 31).
- There are three First Nations reserves in Newfoundland and Labrador. Conne River is self-governed and operates its own social services programs. Its case and beneficiary numbers are not included in the data. The two other reserves in Labrador are Natuashish and Sheshatshiu. From April 1, 2016, the delivery of Income Support was devolved to the Innu and statistics for these communities are no longer included in the data.



Social Assistance Summaries 2019

Northwest Territories

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Northwest Territories' social assistance program

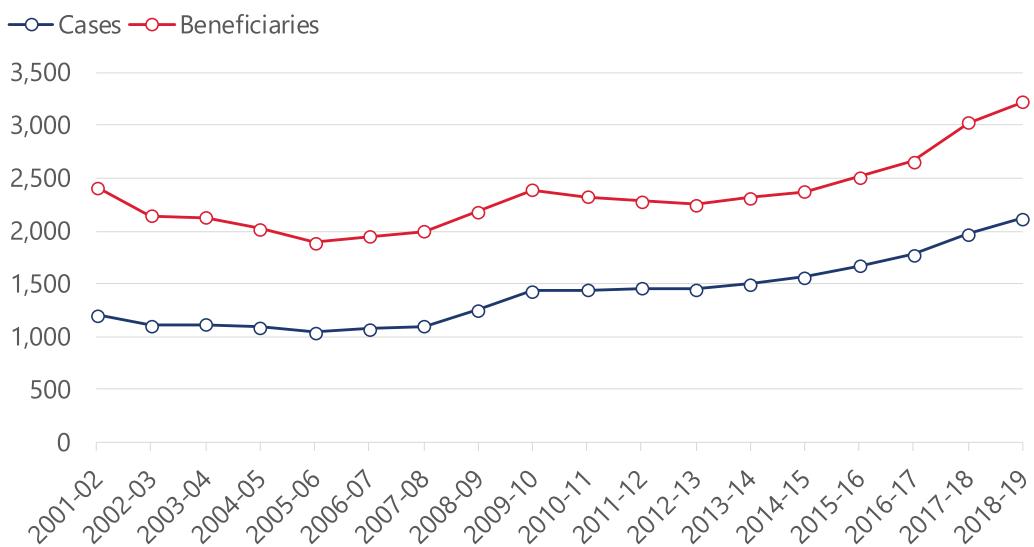
Social assistance is the income program of last resort. It is intended for those who have exhausted all other means of financial support. Every province and territory has its own social assistance program(s) and no two are the same.

In the Northwest Territories, the Income Assistance Program provides financial assistance to residents to help meet basic living needs, such as food, shelter, and utilities. In combination with developmental opportunities, it aims to help recipients become self-reliant as individual capacity allows, to participate fully in community life, and to share in the opportunities available to them.

Alongside financial assistance for basic living needs, recipients may also qualify for enhanced benefits depending on their circumstances (such as clothing, educational assistance, child care, furniture, incidentals, and allowances for seniors and persons with a disability).

How many people claim social assistance?

On average, there were 2,100 cases (families and single adults) in the Northwest Territories' Income Assistance Program in 2018/19, and 3,200 beneficiaries (individual claimants, their partners, and dependent children). The number of cases and beneficiaries has increased for six consecutive years.



Year	Income Assistance	
	Cases	Beneficiaries
2001-02	1,204	2,411
2002-03	1,105	2,142
2003-04	1,118	2,125
2004-05	1,093	2,022
2005-06	1,042	1,888
2006-07	1,079	1,948
2007-08	1,102	1,997
2008-09	1,255	2,188
2009-10	1,432	2,388
2010-11	1,443	2,323
2011-12	1,462	2,279
2012-13	1,453	2,249
2013-14	1,497	2,316
2014-15	1,565	2,371
2015-16	1,673	2,513
2016-17	1,776	2,659
2017-18	1,974	3,025
2018-19	2,119	3,219

Data notes

- The data reflects the average number of cases and beneficiaries over the fiscal year (April 1 to March 31).
- Fiscal year averages prior to 2001 are not available due to changes in the gathering and reporting of case and beneficiary data.
- These income assistance numbers only represent clients served by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment of the Government of Northwest Territories. First Nations on reserve are included in this data.



Social Assistance Summaries 2019

Nova Scotia

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Nova Scotia's social assistance program

Social assistance is the income program of last resort. It is intended for those who have exhausted all other means of financial support. Every province and territory has its own social assistance program(s) and no two are the same.

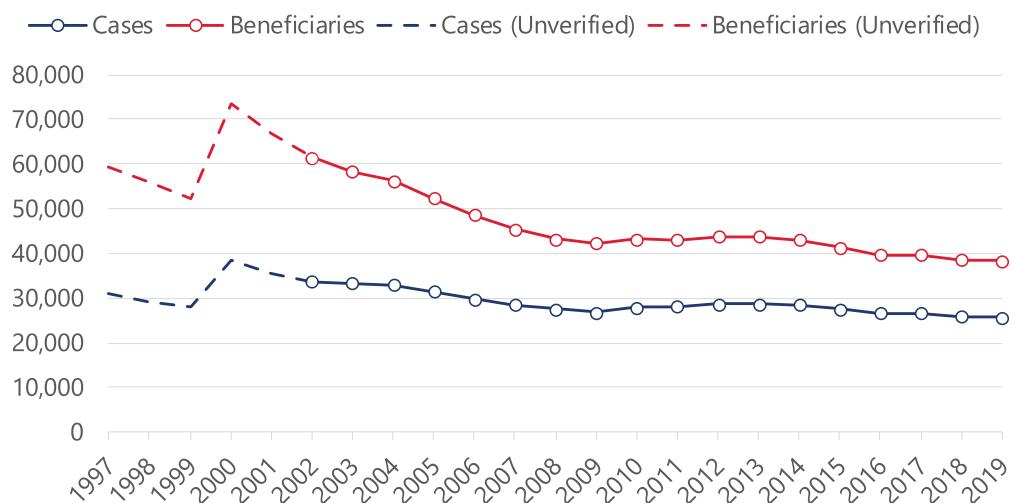
In Nova Scotia, social assistance is called Employment Support and Income Assistance (ESIA), which replaced the Family Benefits Program and Municipal Social Assistance in 2001.

ESIA provides financial assistance and employment supports to help people maximize their self-sufficiency by increasing their employability and independence. Basic assistance through ESIA consists of a personal allowance and a shelter allowance. The personal allowance covers the cost of food, clothing, and miscellaneous essentials for adults in the family. The shelter allowance is intended to cover rent/mortgage, fuel and utilities costs, up to an allowed maximum. This maximum is adjusted to reflect family size and the type of accommodation.

How many people claim social assistance?

There were 25,600 cases (families and single adults) in Nova Scotia's Employment Support and Income Assistance program in March 2019, and 38,400 beneficiaries (individual claimants, their partners, and dependent children). These numbers fell rapidly during the mid-2000s and have been falling much more gradually since 2013. In March 2019, both the number of cases and the number of beneficiaries were at their lowest level for at least two decades.

The data for 1997 to 2001 cannot be validated as they may include municipal assistance in addition to provincial family benefits. During this period, it was common for family benefits clients to access special needs benefits from their local municipal social assistance offices.



Year	Employment Support and Income Assistance	
	Cases	Beneficiaries
1997	31,000	59,400
1998	29,300	56,000
1999	28,000	52,400
2000	38,300	73,700
2001	35,300	66,800
2002	33,800	61,500
2003	33,300	58,300
2004	33,000	56,300
2005	31,500	52,300
2006	29,800	48,600
2007	28,500	45,400
2008	27,500	43,200
2009	26,800	42,300
2010	28,000	43,200
2011	28,200	43,100
2012	28,700	43,700
2013	28,700	43,800
2014	28,500	43,100
2015	27,500	41,300
2016	26,700	39,600
2017	26,550	39,700
2018	25,874	38,611
2019	25,604	38,432

Data notes

- The data reflects the number of cases and beneficiaries on March 31 of each year, except for 2007, when the data reflects the numbers in January.
- Figures for 1997 to 2001 may include municipal assistance caseload and beneficiary figures in addition to provincial family benefits. During this period, it was common for family benefits clients to access special needs benefits from their local municipal social assistance offices. As a result, caseload figures for these years cannot be validated.
- The numbers do not include First Nations living on reserves.



Social Assistance Summaries 2019

Nunavut

Published May 2020

Nunavut's social assistance program

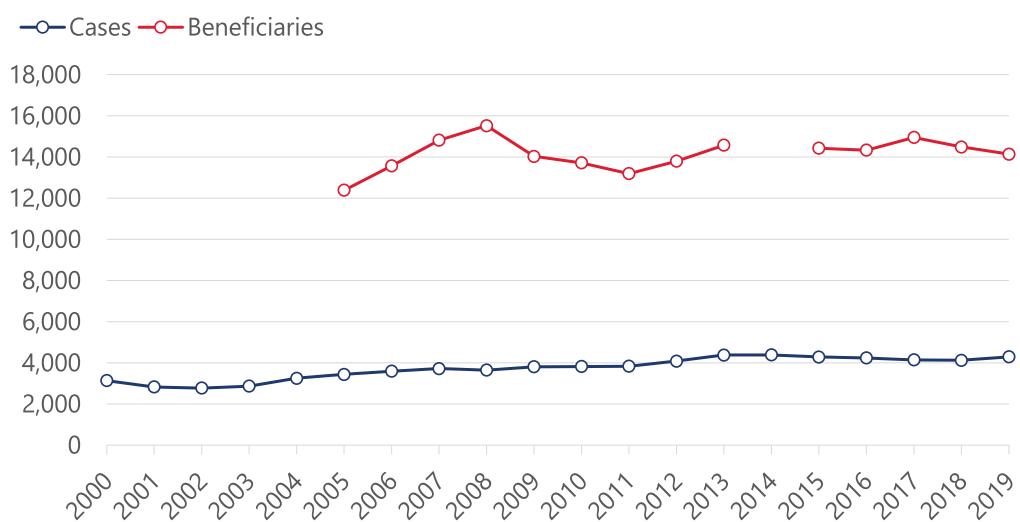
Social assistance is the income program of last resort. It is intended for those who have exhausted all other means of financial support. Every province and territory has its own social assistance program(s) and no two are the same.

In Nunavut, social assistance is delivered under the Income Assistance Program. It is intended to help Nunavut families and individuals meet their basic needs when, for various reasons, including disability, illness, low income or periods of unemployment, they are unable to provide for themselves.

The Income Assistance Program provides basic benefits to residents 18 years of age and older for food, shelter, utilities, fuel, and municipal services. Extended benefits for clothing, incidental allowance (for seniors and people with disabilities), household furniture, security/damage deposits, emergency, and education are also paid to eligible individuals.

How many people claim social assistance?

On average there were 4,300 cases (families and single adults) in Nunavut's Income Assistance Program in 2019, and 14,100 beneficiaries (individual claimants, their partners, and dependent children). While the number of cases is slightly higher than in the previous year, the number of beneficiaries is slightly lower. This suggests that while there was a decrease in the number of families receiving social assistance, this was countered by an increase in the number of single adult households receiving social assistance. Over the longer term, the number of social assistance cases rose during the 2000s and early 2010s but has been relatively stable in recent years.



Year	Income Assistance	
	Cases	Beneficiaries
2000	3,137	
2001	2,831	
2002	2,774	
2003	2,869	
2004	3,249	
2005	3,440	12,392
2006	3,594	13,570
2007	3,725	14,820
2008	3,646	15,523
2009	3,806	14,037
2010	3,822	13,716
2011	3,838	13,197
2012	4,083	13,797
2013	4,382	14,578
2014	4,389	
2015	4,287	14,428
2016	4,236	14,337
2017	4,147	14,952
2018	4,124	14,488
2019	4,293	14,142

Data notes

- The data reflects the average number of cases and beneficiaries over the calendar year (January 1 to December 31).
- Recipient statistics are not available for 2000 to 2004 and for 2014.
- The data for 2019 is an average for the months of January to October. The data in November and December has been omitted due to validity concerns.



Social Assistance Summaries 2019

Ontario

Published May 2020

Ontario's social assistance program

Social assistance is the income program of last resort. It is intended for those who have exhausted all other means of financial support. Every province and territory has its own social assistance program(s) and no two are the same.

In Ontario, social assistance is composed of two programs:

1. Ontario Works (OW), which provides income and employment assistance to people in financial need
2. Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), which is intended to help people with disabilities and their families live as independently as possible, and to reduce or eliminate disability-related barriers to employment

Both Ontario Works and ODSP provide income and employment supports, as well as a range of benefits.

Ontario Works

Ontario Works income assistance includes an amount for shelter and basic needs such as food and clothing. In addition, employment assistance helps clients find, prepare for, and maintain a job.

Ontario Disability Support Program

ODSP provides income support and employment supports to eligible individuals with disabilities and their families. ODSP income support helps with the cost of basic needs as well as providing certain health- and employment-related benefits.

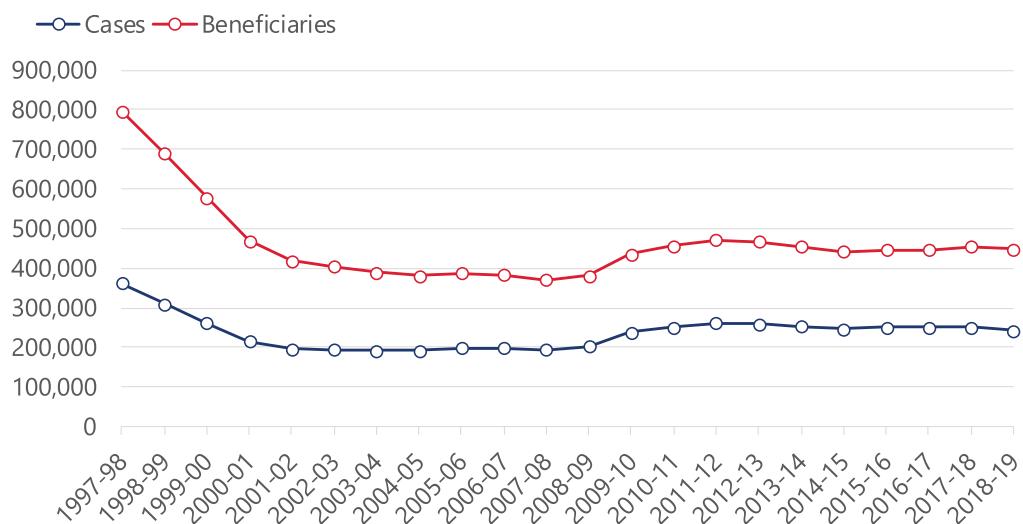
ODSP includes employment supports – a voluntary program that provides employment assistance to help people with disabilities prepare for, find, and keep a job. Individuals do not have to receive ODSP income support to be eligible for employment supports.

How many people claim social assistance?

On average, there were 615,000 cases (families and single adults) in Ontario's social assistance programs during 2018/19. Around 40 per cent (244,000) received Ontario Works and 60 per cent (371,000) received ODSP.

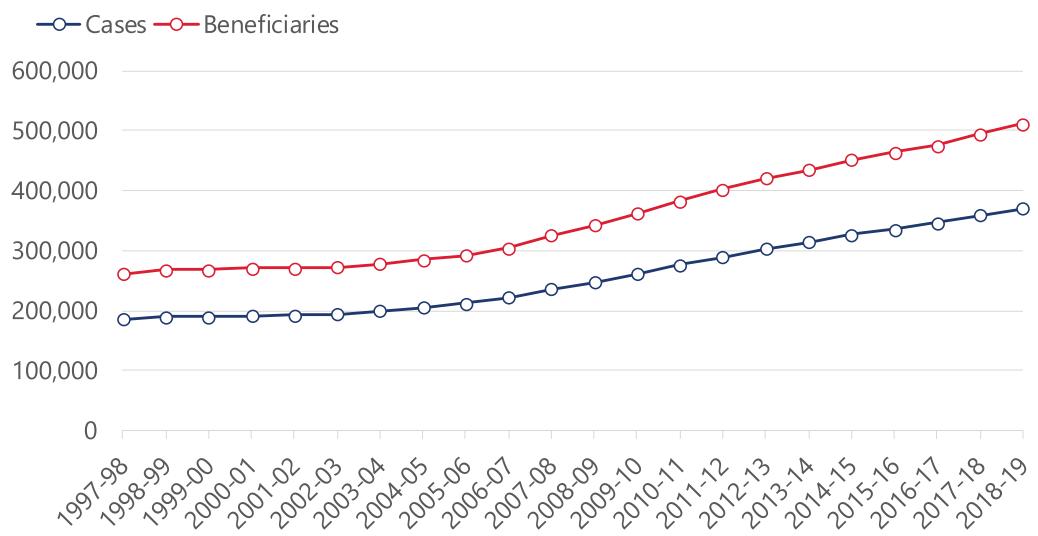
Ontario Works

On average, there were 244,000 families or individuals receiving Ontario Works in 2018/19, this was 6,400 less than in 2017/18 but the number of cases remains above the pre-financial crisis level of 200,000. The number of beneficiaries stood at 449,000 in 2018/19, 5,500 less than the previous year.



Ontario Disability Support Program

In 2018/19, there was an average of 371,000 cases in the Ontario Disability Support Program, and 511,000 beneficiaries. Both numbers have been steadily rising since the early 2000s.



Year	Ontario Works		ODSP		Total	
	Cases	Beneficiaries	Cases	Beneficiaries	Cases	Beneficiaries
1997-98	362,334	796,109	185,479	261,737	547,813	1,057,846
1998-99	310,493	690,608	189,392	268,159	499,884	958,767
1999-00	262,439	577,620	189,536	268,286	451,975	845,907
2000-01	215,618	469,494	191,885	271,144	407,503	740,637
2001-02	196,596	419,493	192,048	270,558	388,644	690,051
2002-03	195,137	404,067	194,140	271,740	389,277	675,807
2003-04	192,096	389,754	200,087	278,393	392,183	668,148
2004-05	191,723	380,670	205,880	285,231	397,603	665,901
2005-06	198,377	386,801	212,058	292,622	410,435	679,423
2006-07	199,242	383,068	221,718	305,202	420,960	688,270
2007-08	194,920	371,876	235,672	325,552	430,592	697,428
2008-09	202,181	380,442	247,476	342,149	449,657	722,591
2009-10	237,634	435,721	261,509	362,594	499,143	798,315
2010-11	251,280	457,774	276,191	383,341	527,471	841,115
2011-12	260,766	471,154	289,676	402,307	550,441	873,461
2012-13	259,819	468,074	302,733	420,128	562,552	888,202
2013-14	252,767	454,520	314,033	435,052	566,800	889,572
2014-15	246,903	442,942	326,293	451,576	573,196	894,518
2015-16	250,640	445,466	335,933	463,889	586,573	909,355
2016-17	252,247	447,408	346,070	475,637	598,317	923,044
2017-18	250,292	454,246	359,330	494,402	609,622	948,648
2018-19	243,875	448,724	370,673	511,206	614,549	959,930

Data notes

- The data reflects the average number of cases and beneficiaries over the fiscal year (April 1 to March 31).
- The numbers include First Nations living on reserves.
- Ontario Works was proclaimed on May 1, 1998 and replaced the General Welfare Assistance Act (GWA).
- Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) was proclaimed on June 1, 1998 and replaced the Family Benefits Act (FBA).
- Data prior to June 1998 have been adjusted to reflect Ontario Works and ODSP.



Social Assistance Summaries 2019

Prince Edward Island

Published May 2020

Prince Edward Island's social assistance program

Social assistance is the income program of last resort. It is intended for those who have exhausted all other means of financial support. Every province and territory has its own social assistance program(s) and no two are the same.

Prince Edward Island delivers both a Social Assistance Program and an AccessAbility Supports program (formerly Disability Support Program).

Social Assistance Program

The Social Assistance Program delivers benefits on a case-by-case basis to residents who meet the eligibility requirements. The amount of financial support available varies depending on the individual's circumstances, such as the number of dependents in the household and whether they are a home owner. Assistance may include help with food and shelter costs, personal expenses, medical, dental, and optical care, and funeral costs. Changes were announced in June 2018 to increase income exemptions and support transitioning to work.

AccessAbility Supports

AccessAbility Supports (AAS) is the new name for the former Disability Support Program. The Disability Support Program was the first program in Canada to distinguish disability-specific support from social assistance. Enhancements were announced in July 2018.

People with disabilities (physical, intellectual, neurological, sensory, or mental health) can access tools they need to reach their full potential and contribute to society as fully as possible. Supports are identified using a capability assessment tool that helps to better understand how the disability affects activities of daily living to ensure appropriate support is provided.

There are five areas of support available:

1. Personal Supports

These supports help with personal daily living. Examples include life skills training, technical aids and assistive devices, in-home supports, or personal care workers.

2. Housing Supports

Independent living can be supported by financial assistance for a caregiver to provide daily supervision and guidance in a community-based residential setting or financial help for home and vehicle modifications.

3. Community Supports

These supports help active participation in the community. Examples include assistance with finding or keeping a job, supporting youth transitioning from the education system to the workforce, and enabling active participation in the community.

4. Caregiver Supports

Provides help for family members or caregivers. Examples of supports include respite for caregivers to allow time for breaks to recharge or support to provide supervision for adults who are unable to stay home alone safely so that caregivers can go to work or school.

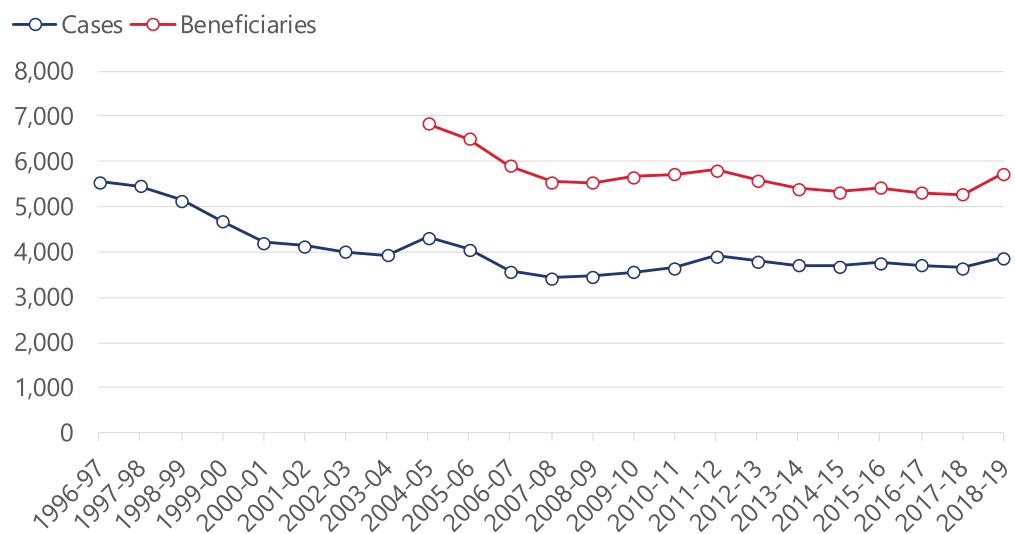
5. Financial Supports

Assured Income is the financial support component of AAS. It covers basic needs, such as food, clothing, shelter, and household and personal supplies. Previously, if a person with a disability required financial assistance, he/she would need to apply to the Social Assistance Program.

These supports are not meant to duplicate or replicate existing services.

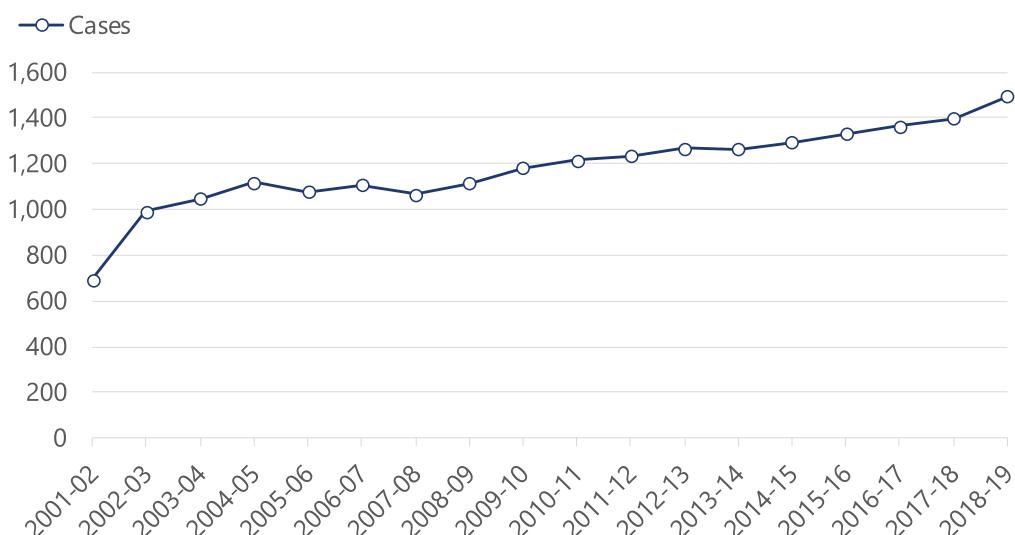
How many people claim social assistance?

On average, there were 3,900 cases (families and single adults) in Prince Edward Island's Social Assistance Program during 2018/19. This number fell in the late 1990s and early 2000s but has been reasonably stable over the last decade. On average 5,700 people (individual claimants, their partners, and dependent children) benefited from social assistance in 2018/19.



AccessAbility Supports

On average, 1,500 individuals received support through the AccessAbility Supports program. The number of cases has risen gradually since its introduction in 2001/02.



Year	Social Assistance		AccessAbility Supports
	Cases	Beneficiaries	Cases
1996-97	5,562		
1997-98	5,465		
1998-99	5,143		
1999-00	4,668		
2000-01	4,213		
2001-02	4,135		691
2002-03	3,999		991
2003-04	3,927		1,047
2004-05	4,330	6,848	1,117
2005-06	4,066	6,510	1,076
2006-07	3,568	5,905	1,106
2007-08	3,431	5,554	1,065
2008-09	3,455	5,529	1,115
2009-10	3,566	5,668	1,183
2010-11	3,660	5,724	1,215
2011-12	3,916	5,809	1,232
2012-13	3,800	5,597	1,269
2013-14	3,700	5,406	1,264
2014-15	3,687	5,335	1,294
2015-16	3,755	5,420	1,330
2016-17	3,700	5,302	1,365
2017-18	3,649	5,270	1,399
2018-19	3,872	5,733	1,495

Data notes

- Social Assistance Program beneficiary figures for the years 1996/97 to 2003/04 are not available.
- The Disability Support Program was introduced in 2001/02. In August 2018, it was expanded and became AccessAbility Supports.
- The data reflects the average number of cases and beneficiaries over the fiscal year (April 1 to March 31).
- The numbers do not include First Nations living on reserves.



Social Assistance Summaries 2019

Quebec

Published May 2020

Quebec's social assistance program

Social assistance is the income program of last resort. It is intended for those who have exhausted all other means of financial support. Every province and territory has its own social assistance program(s) and no two are the same.

In Quebec, the social assistance program is known as Last Resort Financial Assistance, which includes the Aim for Employment (objectif emploi), the Social Assistance program (aide sociale), and the Social Solidarity program (solidarité sociale).

Aim for Employment (objectif emploi)

The Aim for Employment program was introduced in April 2018, and it aims to help recipients improve their employability. It is a 12-month program that is mandatory for new social assistance recipients (with some exceptions). In addition to the basic benefit, recipients receive a participation allowance for carrying out the activities in their labour market entry plan.

Social Assistance Program (aide sociale)

The Social Assistance program provides basic benefits to adults and not children. Between September 1997 and 2005, children's basic benefits were delivered through the Quebec Family Allowance, but since 2005 children's basic benefits have been available through the Child Assistance Measure.

Social Solidarity Program (solidarité sociale)

The Social Solidarity program is for those with severely limited capacity for employment. To obtain a social solidarity allowance, a medical report must be produced confirming that the applicant's physical or psychological condition is significantly impaired and will be so permanently or for an indeterminate time. Such conditions, in combination with their socio-occupational profile (little schooling, no work experience) qualify the applicant as having a severely limited capacity for employment. In the case of a family composed of two adults, only one adult must prove his or her severely limited capacity for employment in order for the family to be eligible for the program.

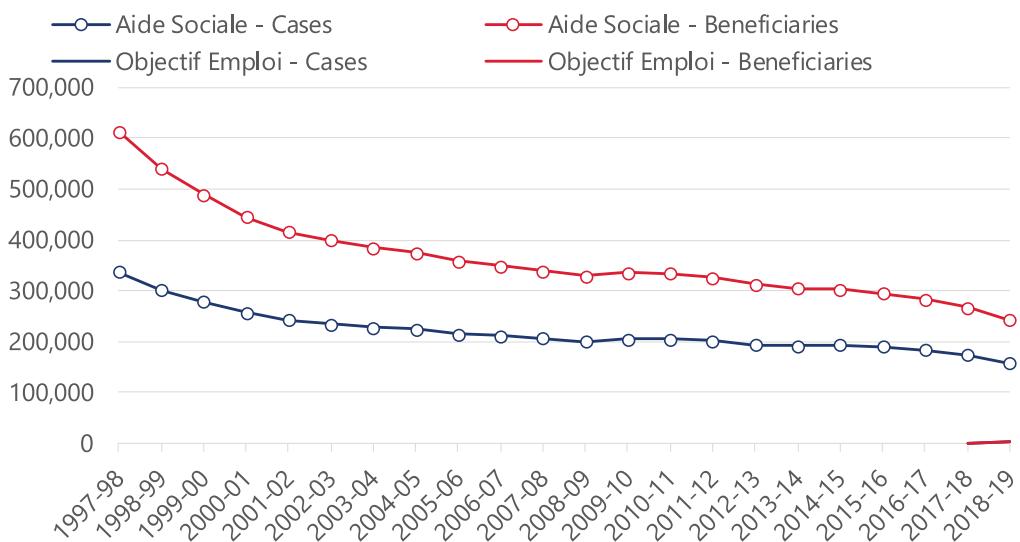
How many people claim social assistance?

On average, there were 287,000 cases (families and single adults) in Quebec's social assistance programs during 2018/19. A very small proportion (one per cent) were part of the newly introduced Aim for Employment Program, over half (55 per cent) received support through the Social Assistance Program and the remainder (44 per cent) received support through the Social Solidarity Program.

Aim for Employment Program (objectif emploi) and Social Assistance Program (aide sociale)

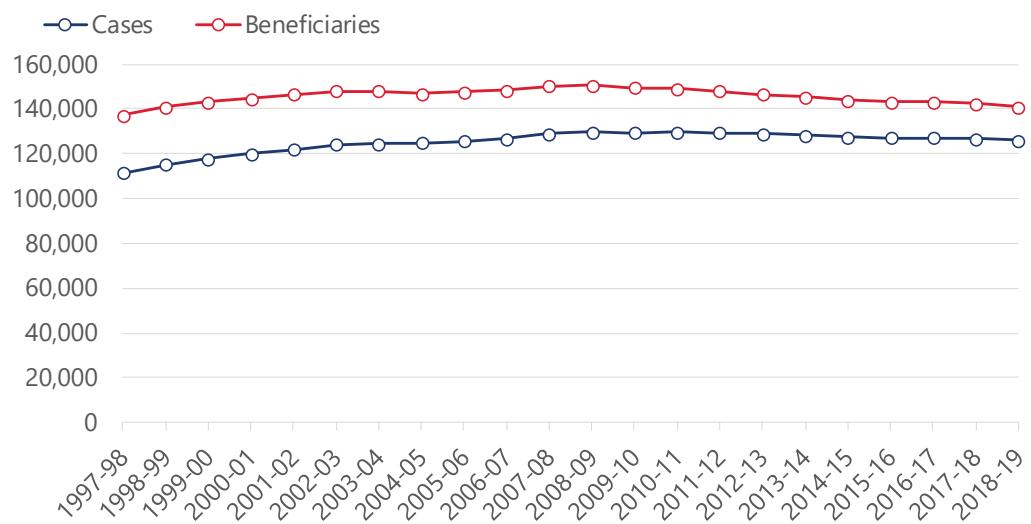
The number of Social Assistance Program cases in Quebec fell by 15,500 to reach 158,000 in 2018/19. Overall, the number of cases and beneficiaries has fallen most years since the mid-1990s, but the most recent decrease has been somewhat countered by the 3,400 new cases in the Aim for Employment Program, which was introduced in April 2018. With this program in place, most individuals and families seeking income assistance in Quebec receive support through the Aim for Employment Program for 12 months; those still in need of income support at the end of this period may then transition to the Social Assistance Program or Social Solidarity Program.

On average there were 243,000 beneficiaries (individual claimants, their partners, and dependent children) of Quebec's Social Assistance Program in 2018/19, 24,600 fewer than the year before; but there were also 5,000 new beneficiaries of the Aim for Employment Program in 2018/19.



Social Solidarity Program (solidarité sociale)

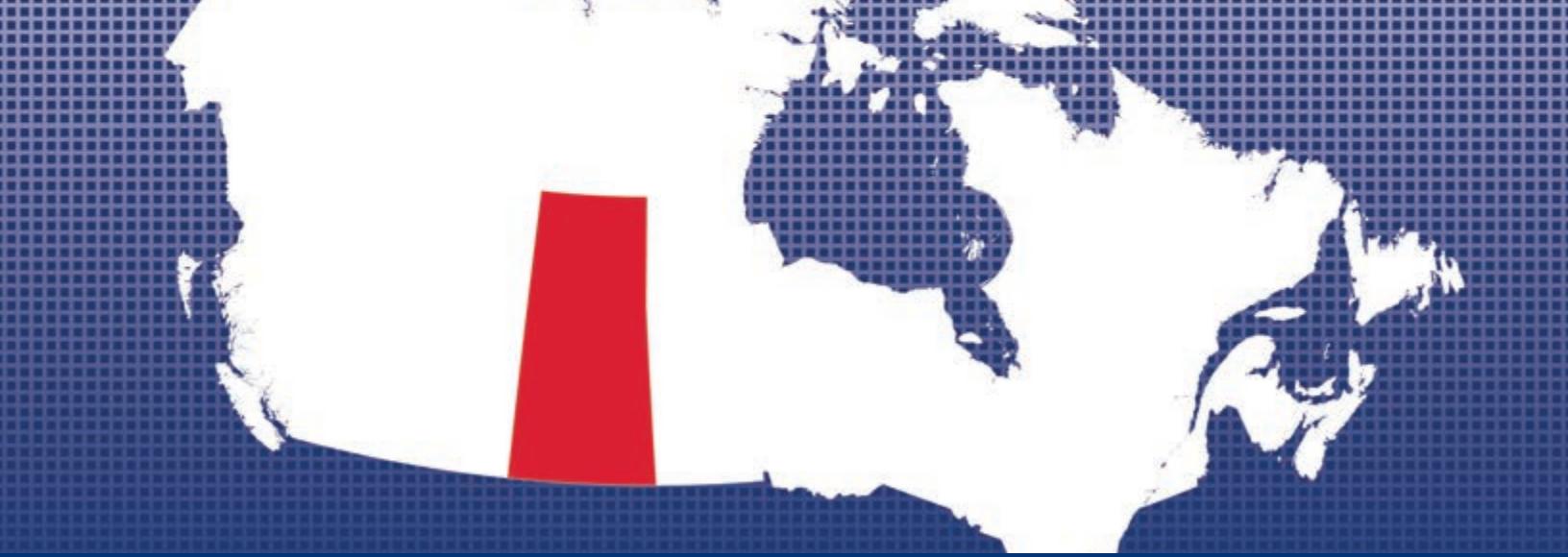
In 2018/19, there was an average of 126,000 Social Solidarity Program cases and 141,000 beneficiaries. Both numbers have remained relatively stable over the last decade, having gradually risen in the decade before that.



Year	Objectif Emploi		Aide Sociale		Solidarité Sociale		Total	
	Cases	Beneficiaries	Cases	Beneficiaries	Cases	Beneficiaries	Cases	Beneficiaries
1997-98			337,681	613,626	111,548	137,244	449,229	750,870
1998-99			301,896	539,593	115,115	140,847	417,011	680,439
1999-00			278,326	489,087	117,815	143,023	396,141	632,110
2000-01			256,641	445,626	119,883	144,517	376,523	590,142
2001-02			241,984	415,886	122,011	146,349	363,995	562,235
2002-03			234,209	398,614	123,954	147,987	358,164	546,600
2003-04			228,822	385,299	124,663	147,969	353,485	533,268
2004-05			224,006	374,278	124,681	146,961	348,687	521,239
2005-06			215,623	358,242	125,691	147,503	341,314	505,745
2006-07			211,823	349,398	126,872	148,402	338,695	497,800
2007-08			206,149	339,002	128,785	150,327	334,934	489,329
2008-09			200,830	329,809	129,571	150,621	330,401	480,430
2009-10			205,698	336,554	129,407	149,593	335,105	486,148
2010-11			205,116	334,482	129,675	149,251	334,791	483,733
2011-12			201,438	326,070	129,269	147,852	330,707	473,922
2012-13			194,313	313,379	128,814	146,420	323,127	459,799
2013-14			191,392	305,388	128,209	145,196	319,601	450,584
2014-15			193,619	303,036	127,503	144,066	321,121	447,102
2015-16			190,615	294,244	126,946	143,258	317,561	437,502
2016-17			183,974	283,011	127,120	143,201	311,095	426,211
2017-18			173,635	267,705	126,879	142,538	300,514	410,244
2018-19	3,380	5,000	158,133	243,145	125,959	141,045	287,472	389,189

Data notes

- The data reflects the average number of cases and beneficiaries over the fiscal year (April 1 to March 31).
- The numbers do not include First Nations living on reserves.
- Objectif Emploi was introduced in April 2018 to help people who are newly eligible for social assistance benefits to improve their employability and become financially self-sufficient. It is a 12-month program that is mandatory for new social assistance recipients (with some exceptions).



Social Assistance Summaries 2019

Saskatchewan

Published May 2020

Saskatchewan's social assistance program

Social assistance is the income program of last resort. It is intended for those who have exhausted all other means of financial support. Every province and territory has its own social assistance program(s) and no two are the same.

In Saskatchewan, there are three social assistance programs:

1. Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP)
2. Transitional Employment Allowance (TEA)
3. Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID)

Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP)

SAP is a basic income support program for families and individuals who, for various reasons, cannot meet basic living costs. The program has an adult allowance which includes food, clothing, travel, personal, and household items. In addition, there is a shelter allowance which varies depending on the community, accommodations (shared or not), employability, and family size. A variety of other financial benefits as well as Supplementary Health Program coverage are provided.

Transitional Employment Allowance (TEA)

TEA was introduced in 2003 as an income support program to assist applicants participating in pre-employment programs and services or those who are “job ready” and seeking employment. TEA recipients are given a fixed allowance to provide for basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, and utilities. Recipients are expected to budget the benefits to meet their monthly needs. TEA recipients also receive coverage from the Supplementary Health Program.

Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID)

SAID was designed in collaboration with members of the disability community. It provides an income for persons with significant and enduring disabilities separate from SAP. It was introduced in 2009 for individuals in residential care settings and expanded in June 2012 to include people who live independently. Over the course of 2011-12 and 2012-13, approximately 6,500 former SAP clients with disabilities were enrolled in SAID.

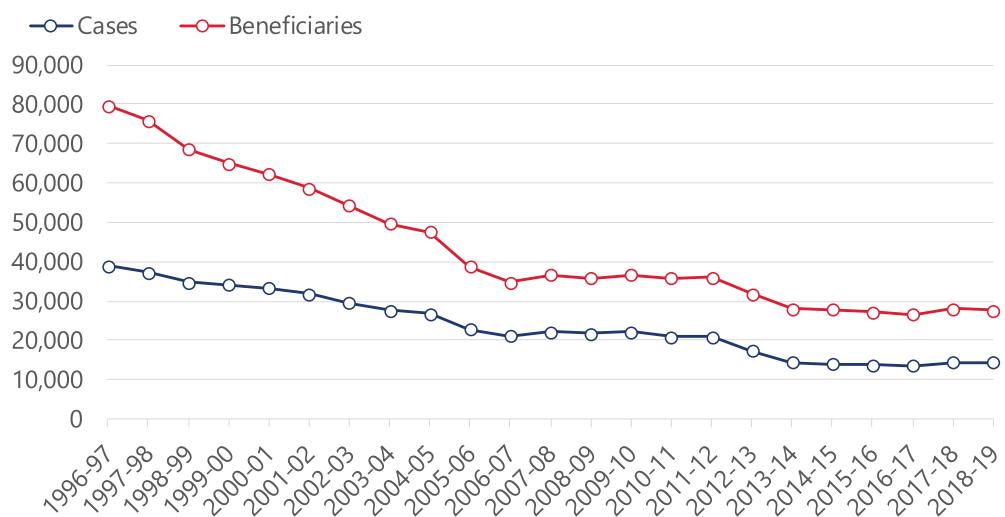
Eligibility for the SAID program is determined by financial criteria as well as a disability impact assessment. SAID provides a living income benefit for basic needs, a disability needs benefit, and Supplementary Health Program coverage.

How many people claim social assistance?

On average, there were 36,600 cases (families and single adults) in Saskatchewan's social assistance programs during 2018/19. Around 42 per cent (15,600) received support through the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID), 49 per cent (14,300) received support through the Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP), and the remaining 18 per cent (6,700) received support through the Transitional Employment Allowance (TEA). The total number of social assistance cases in Saskatchewan has been rising since 2011/12.

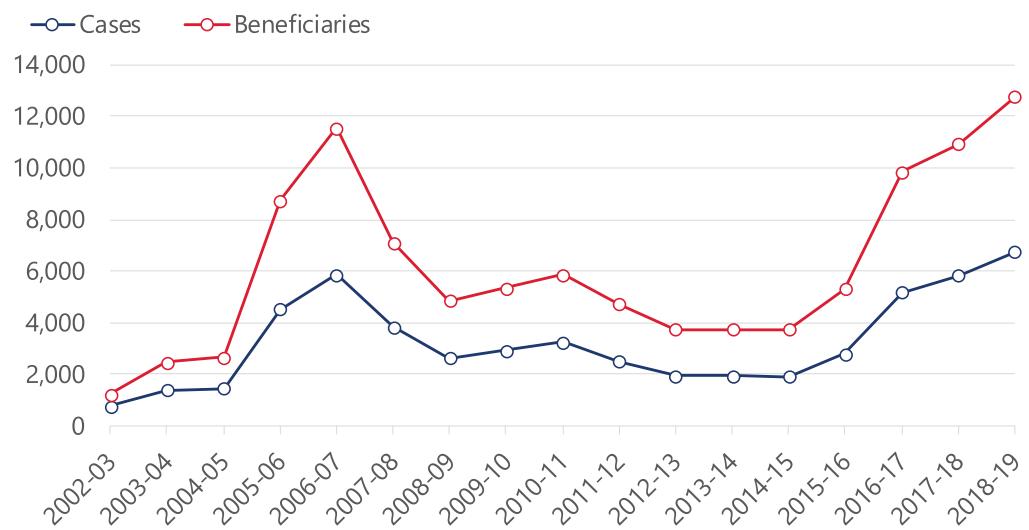
Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP)

During 2018/19, on average, there were 14,300 cases in the SAP, and 27,600 beneficiaries (individual claimants, their partners, and dependent children). These numbers have fallen almost every year over the last two decades.



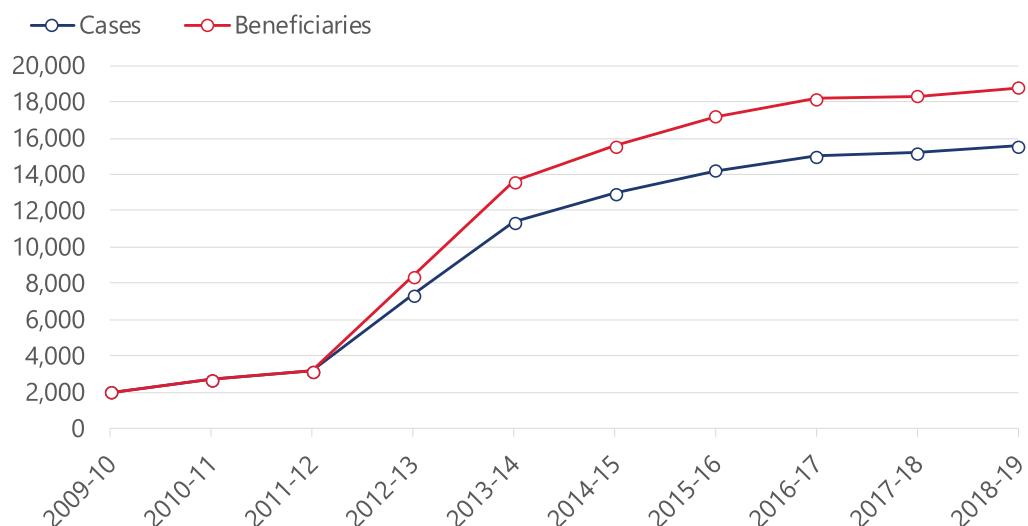
Transitional Employment Allowance (TEA)

On average, there were 6,700 cases in the TEA program in 2018/19, and 12,700 beneficiaries. In the last four years, these numbers have risen sharply and by 2018/19 exceeded the previous peak in 2006/07.



Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID)

During 2018/19, on average, there were 15,600 cases in the SAID program and 18,800 beneficiaries. These numbers rose sharply in the two years after eligibility was expanded in 2012 and have risen at a slower pace since then.



Year	SAP		TEA		SAID		Total	
	Cases	Beneficiaries	Cases	Beneficiaries	Cases	Beneficiaries	Cases	Beneficiaries
1996-97	38,900	79,685					38,900	79,685
1997-98	37,190	75,886					37,190	75,886
1998-99	34,842	68,560					34,842	68,560
1999-00	34,249	64,993					34,249	64,993
2000-01	33,363	62,241					33,363	62,241
2001-02	31,821	58,699					31,821	58,699
2002-03	29,554	54,225	777	1,231			30,331	55,456
2003-04	27,549	49,770	1,382	2,469			28,931	52,239
2004-05	26,818	47,513	1,470	2,670			28,288	50,183
2005-06	22,780	38,810	4,519	8,750			27,299	47,560
2006-07	21,218	34,804	5,861	11,542			27,079	46,346
2007-08	22,123	36,665	3,839	7,094			25,962	43,759
2008-09	21,766	35,843	2,646	4,870			24,412	40,713
2009-10	22,149	36,738	2,921	5,338	1,994	2,003	27,064	44,079
2010-11	20,915	35,858	3,255	5,875	2,687	2,698	26,857	44,431
2011-12	20,859	35,953	2,493	4,734	3,142	3,157	26,494	43,844
2012-13	17,383	31,757	1,948	3,730	7,357	8,397	26,688	43,884
2013-14	14,485	28,111	1,950	3,761	11,386	13,588	27,821	45,460
2014-15	14,077	27,861	1,933	3,758	12,939	15,545	28,949	47,164
2015-16	13,726	27,285	2,811	5,320	14,208	17,177	30,745	49,782
2016-17	13,584	26,639	5,194	9,845	14,988	18,172	33,767	54,657
2017-18	14,445	28,068	5,835	10,919	15,172	18,320	35,452	57,308
2018-19	14,334	27,620	6,738	12,743	15,564	18,756	36,636	59,119

SAP - Saskatchewan Assistance Program

TEA - Transitional Employment Allowance

SAID - Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability

Data notes

- Transitional Employment Allowance was introduced in 2003.
- Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability was introduced in 2009 and expanded in June 2012.
- The data reflects the average number of cases and beneficiaries over the fiscal year (April 1 to March 31).
- The numbers do not include First Nations living on reserves.



Social Assistance Summaries 2019

Yukon Territory

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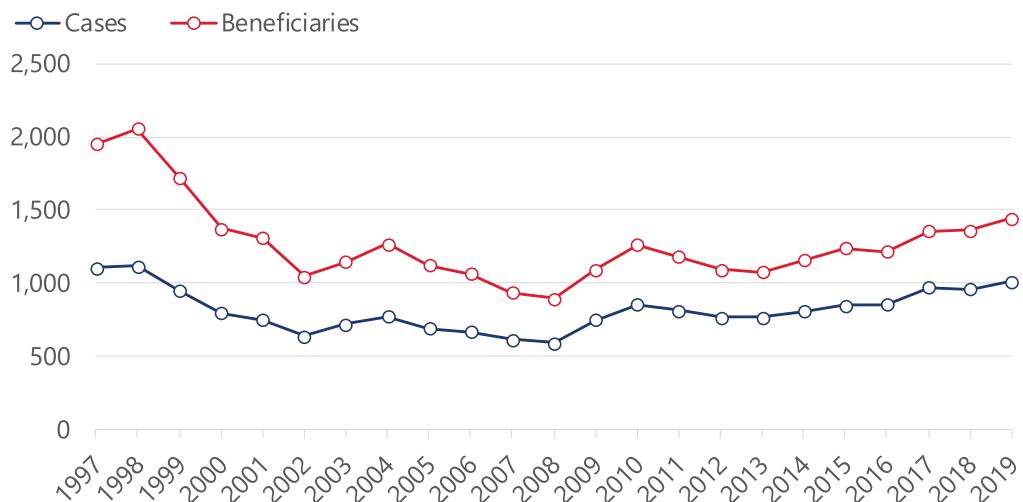
Yukon Territory's social assistance program

Social assistance is the income program of last resort. It is intended for those who have exhausted all other means of financial support. Every province and territory has its own social assistance program(s) and no two are the same.

In the Yukon Territory, the Social Assistance (SA) program provides benefits to eligible adults and children. Basic assistance consists of a basic allowance (for the cost of food, clothing, and personal and household items) and a shelter allowance (for the cost of shelter and sometimes utilities). The amount of support available is based on the household's size, composition, and geographical location. In addition, the basic assistance recipients may also qualify for the Yukon Supplementary Allowance – a disability benefit.

How many people claim social assistance?

At the end of March 2019, there were 1,010 cases (families and single adults) in the Yukon Territory's social assistance program, and 1,440 beneficiaries (individual claimants, their partners, and dependent children). Since 2012, these numbers have risen slightly most years.



Year	Social Assistance	
	Cases	Beneficiaries
1997	1,108	1,952
1998	1,117	2,055
1999	949	1,717
2000	798	1,376
2001	751	1,308
2002	637	1,048
2003	722	1,144
2004	773	1,272
2005	694	1,126
2006	667	1,067
2007	618	936
2008	595	895
2009	750	1,096
2010	855	1,264
2011	816	1,184
2012	770	1,097
2013	768	1,074
2014	810	1,156
2015	847	1,239
2016	857	1,219
2017	974	1,359
2018	961	1,363
2019	1,012	1,442

Data notes

- These numbers represent only clients served by the Yukon Government. They do not include clients served by Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada or the self-governing First Nations that administer their own social assistance programs.
- The data reflects the number of cases and beneficiaries on March 31 of each year.

