

POVERTY REPORT CARD SNAPSHOT FOR ACTION



Food Banks
Canada

Banques
alimentaires
Canada



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ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE

MANITOBA



OVERALL GRADE

REPORT CARD HIGHLIGHTS

Poverty rate:



People feeling worse off
compared to last year:



Legislative progress:



PROVINCIAL
OVERVIEW

CONTEXT

Manitoba's government has taken some of the most progressive poverty-reduction steps in the country this year — including eliminating childcare fees for families living on low incomes and removing PST from groceries. However, it has maintained a four-year freeze on Employment and Income Assistance rates, leaving the province's most vulnerable households worse off as food costs have risen approximately 20% over that same period. This government needs to address low social-assistance incomes to continue making strong progress on poverty reduction.

KEY FINDINGS

Proof that housing affordability can improve: At a time when housing affordability has remained stubbornly high across most of Canada, Manitoba is seeing a sharp decline in the number of households struggling with high housing costs.

Social assistance is not enough to live on: Core social assistance incomes remain below half of the poverty line and have been frozen for four straight years, despite a 20% increase in food costs.

Real improvement in standard of living: Material deprivation showed the sharpest improvement in the country. Severe deprivation fell to 18% and moderate deprivation dropped from 34% to 26%, though food security remains elevated at 27.9%.

SELECT POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Immediately increase and index Employment and Income Assistance rates:** End the social-assistance rate freeze that has significantly eroded real purchasing power for the province's most vulnerable residents, and index rates to inflation.
- **Develop a comprehensive, provincewide food-security strategy:** This should be done in partnership with Indigenous governments and Northern communities, addressing local food production, transportation infrastructure, and Indigenous-led food sovereignty.
- **Enhance the Rent Assist program:** Raise eligibility thresholds by 20% and increase the benefit to cover at least 80% of median rent — closing the gap that has opened since 2015.