

POVERTY REPORT CARD SNAPSHOT FOR ACTION



Food Banks
Canada

Banques
alimentaires
Canada



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ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE

NEW BRUNSWICK



OVERALL GRADE

REPORT CARD HIGHLIGHTS

Social assistance as a
percentage of the poverty line:



Food insecurity:



Legislative progress:



PROVINCIAL
OVERVIEW

CONTEXT

With an F grade, New Brunswick recorded the weakest provincial performance in Canada in 2026, reflecting deep affordability challenges across housing, food, and income security. Households spend nearly two-thirds of income on essentials, and rates of food insecurity and housing-cost burden are among the highest nationally. Despite recent affordability initiatives, the scale of support remains insufficient relative to need, particularly given very low income-assistance levels.

KEY FINDINGS

Everyday costs are overwhelming household budgets: People in New Brunswick spend nearly two-thirds of their income on essentials like rent, bills, and food — the highest rate in Canada.

Social assistance is not enough to live on: Income supports are far too low, leaving many people unable to afford the basics. This limits progress on poverty reduction.

Policy action is not closing the affordability gap: New Brunswick has introduced housing and affordability measures, but many key initiatives are temporary or incomplete, limiting their impact.

SELECT POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Make rent protection permanent and strengthen tenant rights:** New Brunswick should make the temporary 3% rent cap permanent. Stronger protections are also needed to prevent displacement as housing costs continue to rise.
- **Raise social assistance to a level that meets basic needs — and index it to inflation:** New Brunswick should raise social assistance and keep it indexed to inflation. Current benefit levels are too low to cover basic needs and are leaving people in deep poverty.
- **Build a plan to raise the minimum wage to a living wage:** New Brunswick should establish a clear, multi-year plan to raise the minimum wage to a living wage. Current wages are not keeping up with the cost of living, and too many workers are living with food insecurity.