

# POVERTY REPORT CARD SNAPSHOT FOR ACTION



Food Banks  
Canada

Banques  
alimentaires  
Canada



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## PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND



OVERALL GRADE

### REPORT CARD HIGHLIGHTS

Worse off compared  
to last year:



Legislative progress:



Food insecurity:



PROVINCIAL  
OVERVIEW

### CONTEXT

Prince Edward Island (PEI) is the only province in Canada with a legislated goal to eliminate poverty by 2035 — yet child poverty remains at 16.7%. A 2025 Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives report concluded the province has made “very, very little progress” toward that target. With the province projecting its largest deficit in history, fiscal constraints threaten to stall momentum when low-income Islanders need investment the most. PEI has shown some progress and taken good steps, but more must be done.

### KEY FINDINGS

**Hard work is not enough:** In PEI, roughly 35% of food bank clients are working people, underscoring that a steady job is no longer a sure path out of poverty.

**Social assistance is not enough to live on:** Social assistance covers 64.4% of the poverty line — the highest among the provinces — yet rates were not increased in 2025/26. Benefits still fall well short of what people need to live with dignity.

**Housing cost spike:** Housing affordability deteriorated sharply, with the share of people spending 30%+ of their income on housing jumping from 23% to 37% in one year.

### SELECT POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Raise social assistance rates to the poverty line and index them to inflation:** Partial progress is not good enough when the stated goal is poverty elimination.
- **Get serious about building more housing:** Establish a permanent affordable housing financing fund prioritizing purpose-built rental and non-market housing to ensure supply growth reaches those who need it most.
- **Increase the minimum wage:** Increase the minimum wage to \$19.30/hour by 2030, as recommended by PEI’s Special Committee on Poverty. Having a job should be enough to keep people out of poverty.