

Improving Social and Economic Well-Being in Newfoundland and Labrador

Discussion Guide

This is your opportunity to have your say on how the Provincial Government can best address social and economic well-being in Newfoundland and Labrador, and inform a review of the Income Support Program. We look forward to your input.



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Background

Having strong social and economic well-being generally means we are financially stable, socially connected, feel we belong in our community, and have a purpose. It means we have the tools and supports that we need to create and maintain the lives we want for ourselves. Around the world, many countries are taking a well-being approach in all decisions, ensuring that policies, programs and services work towards improving the overall well-being and quality of life for all.

Our individual and joint well-being impacts our families, communities and province. When our well-being is poor, it can negatively affect our ability to work, our income level, our housing stability, our food security, our connections to others and our physical and mental health. This can then lead to costs related to income support, healthcare and various other social supports. Alternatively, our levels of social support, food security, housing security impacts our well-being. A successful approach to well-being must consider the impact of these components on one another, recognizing that struggles in any area of well-being can influence other areas of our lives.

The Provincial Government plays a leadership role in supporting individuals, families and communities in Newfoundland and Labrador to achieve improved social and economic well-being, including reduced poverty. The Provincial Government has committed to develop a renewed approach to addressing poverty, as well as a coordinated focus on prevention and early intervention to improve social and economic well-being outcomes for children, youth and their families. Given the close link between reducing poverty

Health Accord NL was established to develop a 10-year health accord. One key message from the final report is that we can improve health for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians by making changes in the social, economic, and environmental conditions that affect our health (social determinants of health). These include early childhood development, education, employment, income and social environments, the focus of this plan.

and increasing well-being, the Provincial Government is taking a well-being approach to this work through the development of a Social and Economic Well-Being Plan. This will add to the work that is being done throughout the Provincial Government regarding other aspects of well-being, such as physical well-being, mental well-being and environmental well-being.

Based on research and consultation, we will develop and implement actions to improve social and economic well-being of residents of Newfoundland and Labrador. This work will include a focus on the social determinants of health, those non-medical factors that impact our health and well-being, as recommended by Health Accord NL.



Social and Economic Well-Being: A Focused Approach

A focused approach has been developed to guide our shared discussions on social and economic well-being for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. This includes consideration of the lifecycle within the identified component of social and economic well-being. These discussions will then inform the development of a Social and Economic Well-Being Plan.

The Lifecycle

Our well-being begins before we are born and continues throughout our lives. What happens in our early years of life can affect our long-term well-being. It is also possible that our well-being can change throughout our lives, depending on what is happening around us. The Provincial Government is proposing a lifecycle approach to developing this work, looking at what we need at various stages of life to foster strong well-being.

Components

The Provincial Government proposes a focus on the following components that impact social and economic well-being:

- Early Years
- Education
- Income and Benefits
- Food Security
- Housing
- Community

Social and Economic Well-Being: What more needs to be done?

This section provides (1) context for each of the components, (2) an overview of some of the work that the Provincial Government is already doing within each of the identified components, followed by (3) discussion questions for each component.

Early Years

The early years are important to development, and what happens in those years can impact that child's future well-being. Adverse Childhood Experiences are potentially stressful experiences that occur in a child's life and include violence, abuse, or neglect. These experiences are also any aspect of the child's life that can take away their sense of safety, stability, and bonding, such as growing up in a household with substance use problems, mental health problems, parental separation or household members being incarcerated. Adverse Childhood Experiences are linked to chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance misuse in adulthood. Safe, stable and healthy relationships and environments for all children and families can prevent such experiences and support the well-being of children.

Early Years – What is already being done?

- ▶ The Provincial Government provides core funding to 31 Family Resource Centres to deliver programs that promote positive parent-child contact intended to support healthy child development, as well as the Healthy Baby Club, which supports healthy

nutrition during the pregnancy and early post-natal period and to promote healthy pregnancy and newborn outcomes.

- ▶ The Provincial Government and the Innu Nation formally launched the Inquiry into the Treatment, Experiences and Outcomes of Innu in the Child Protection System. The Inquiry aims to examine the treatment, experiences and outcomes of Innu children, youth and families in the child protection system and identify recommendations for change.
- ▶ The Provincial Government reduced child care fees to \$15 a day from \$25 a day, as a result of the Canada–Newfoundland and Labrador Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. This will be further reduced to \$10 a day in 2023.
- ▶ The Provincial Government's Early Learning and Childcare Action Plan aims to increase the affordability, increase access and enhance the quality of early childhood learning and child care.
- ▶ The Provincial Government's Child Care Subsidy Program is an income tested program designed to assist families with the cost of child care fees at regulated child care services.

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- ▶ The Provincial Government provides parent resource kits to parents of newborns and toddlers and include a variety of items to help learning at home.
 - ▶ The Regional Health Authorities offer parent and child health programs that promote healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy, improve parenting and family supports and strengthen early childhood development. These include prenatal education and support, the Healthy Beginnings postnatal follow-up program, and child health clinics.

Early Years – What more needs to be done?

1. What Provincial Government supports for parents/caregivers are currently working well?

2. How can the Provincial Government and the community sector better support parents to increase well-being for themselves and their families? (The community sector is the collection of non-profit organizations that provides services to support the well-being of individuals, families and communities.)



Education

Education has become one of the most significant influences on employment and income and strong predictors of well-being. School absenteeism is directly correlated to child poverty and decreases the likelihood of high school graduation. High school graduation is generally considered the lowest education level needed to participate fully in the work force. Therefore, not completing high school can harm a person's ability to work and earn income. Early childhood education affects lifelong development, and high school graduation and post-secondary education impact success and well-being as adults. Reading ability, digital, and financial literacy are also important to lifelong well-being.

Education - What is already being done?

- ▶ The provincial Education Action Plan aims to improve educational outcomes in the province.
- ▶ The provincial Student Aid Program provides a combination of grants and forgivable loans for low income students who attend post-secondary education.
- ▶ The Provincial Government, in collaboration with the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee, is committed to ensuring Indigenous students see their culture reflected in the provincial curriculum and resources; revised curriculum is infused with the history, traditions and contemporary culture of Indigenous peoples.
- ▶ The provincial Literacy Action Plan aims to build a more educated province so people can reach their potential, take part in training; and find and keep jobs.
- ▶ The provincial Skills Development Program provides financial support to eligible individuals who are seeking full-time post-secondary training at a public or private training institution.
- ▶ The provincial Adult Basic Education Program supports adult learners in achieving a high school equivalency diploma.



Education - What more needs to be done?

3. What are the strengths of our current education system (early learning, K-12, Adult Basic Education and post-secondary) in Newfoundland and Labrador?

4. How can the Provincial Government help to improve educational opportunities and outcomes (including literacy) across the lifecycle, especially for marginalized people?

Income and Benefits

It is generally accepted that income is one of the most important social determinants of health. It shapes overall living conditions and determines the quality of other social determinants of health such as food security and housing. Benefits such as prescription drug, dental and vision care programs are also important to well-being.

Income and Benefits - What is already being done?

- ▶ The Provincial Government recently announced a gradual increase in minimum wage to \$15 an hour by October 1, 2023.
- ▶ The provincial Income Support Program provides supports and services to eligible people without financial resources to meet basic daily living expenses. This program is currently undergoing a three-year review that aims to improve benefits and ease of access, and strengthen supports for self-reliance.
- ▶ Provincial financial benefits available to support individuals living in low income, delivered through the tax system, including:
 - The Newfoundland and Labrador Income Supplement helps low income individuals, seniors, families and persons with disabilities.
 - The Newfoundland and Labrador Seniors' Benefit helps seniors in low income.
 - The Newfoundland and Labrador Child Benefit is a provincial tax credit for low income families with children under 18.
 - The Low Income Tax reduction is a personal income tax deduction for low income individuals and families.
- The Pre-natal Infant Nutrition Supplement assists low income parents with the extra cost of food during pregnancy and infancy.
- ▶ Provincial health-related benefits to support low income individuals, including:
 - The Newfoundland and Labrador Drug Prescription Program covers 100 per cent of eligible prescription drugs for Income Support clients and subsidized clients of the Long-Term Care and Community Support Services System. In addition, financial assistance is available for the purchase of prescription medications for individuals in low income and those with high drug costs relative to income.
 - The provincial Dental Health Plan provides access to eligible dental services for children, as well as individuals and families in low income.
 - The Income Support Medical Transportation Assistance Program covers 100 per cent of eligible expenses for Income Support clients to access medical services.
- ▶ Provincial programs aimed at removing barriers and improving incentives for employment, including:
 - The Labour Market Partnership Program provides funding for labour market strategies and activities.
 - The JobsNL Wage Subsidy Program is designed to connect employers and employees by providing funding to employers to create long-term employment or seasonal/short term employment



- The Job Creation Partnerships Program provides support to community-based, not-for-profit projects to provide eligible participants with opportunities to gain work experience to improve their employment options.
- The Employment Enhancement Program provides funding to employers to create long-term or seasonal employment. A training allowance is provided to support new employees.
- The School Transitions to Work Program supports high school students with intellectual disabilities in supported employment during evenings, weekends, or during the summer.
- The Provincial Government requires Women's Employment Plans for outside resource development projects, infrastructure projects and proponents of mid-size commercial projects in order to ensure that women benefit from all project employment opportunities.

Income and Benefits - What more needs to be done?

5. What improvements can the Provincial Government make to Income Support and other income-related programs and benefits to best serve those with low incomes?

6. What do you think are the main barriers that keep people from leaving the Income Support program for employment?

7. What can the Provincial Government do to better support people wanting to enter and fully participate in the workforce?



Food Security

Food security means having financial and physical access to adequate amounts of nutritious, safe, and culturally appropriate food that meets our dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Food insecurity is primarily related to a lack of adequate income and negatively impacts physical, mental, and social health, and can increase costs to the healthcare system. Based on a household's experience, food insecurity can be categorized into three categories:

- Marginal food insecurity: Worry about running out of food and/or limited food selection due to a lack of money for food.
- Moderate food insecurity: Compromise in quality and/or quantity of food due to a lack of money for food.
- Severe food insecurity: Miss meals, reduce food intake, and at the most extreme, go day(s) without food.

Food Security - What is already being done?

- ▶ The Provincial Government provides funding for:
 - Food First NL, an organization that works with communities to ensure everyone has access to affordable, healthy, and culturally appropriate food.
 - School Lunch Association, an organization that provides hot, nutritious lunches to school students.
 - Kids Eat Smart, an organization that operates the Breakfast Club program in schools.
 - A Community Garden Support Program that provides funding for the creation and improvement of community gardens.



Food Security - What more needs to be done?

8. Are there any current initiatives/approaches related to food security that are having a positive impact for individuals and families that you would like to see the Provincial Government build upon? If so, please list them.

9. Apart from income measures, what can the Provincial Government do to improve access to nutritious, safe, and culturally appropriate food?



Housing

Safe, stable, adequate and affordable housing is important for the social and economic well-being of individuals, families and our communities. Where we live can also impact other areas of well-being such as education, employment and a sense of belonging. Appropriate housing is the foundation we need in order to achieve strong social and economic well-being.

Housing: What is already being done?

- ▶ Provincial programs to address housing and homelessness needs along the full continuum, including:
 - The Rental Housing Program for low income households.
 - The Home Energy Savings Program assists low income households in making energy efficient retrofits to their home.
 - The Home Modification Program provides funding to low income homeowners who require accessibility changes to their homes.
 - The provincial Home Repair Program assists low income households in improving privately-owned households.
 - Partner-Managed Housing Program supports social housing actions in partnership with non-profit housing groups.
 - The Supportive Living Program that provides core funding to non-profit organizations to prevent and end homelessness.
 - Emergency shelter services for individuals experiencing homelessness.
 - The Transition House program for women and children fleeing intimate partner violence.
- ▶ The 2022 Federal Budget outlined \$300 million over five years, beginning in 2022-23, to launch an urban, rural and northern Indigenous housing strategy, along with \$845 million over seven years to further support housing across Inuit Nunangat (the homeland of the Inuit people in Canada).



Housing: What more needs to be done?

10. What are strengths of the current housing supports in Newfoundland and Labrador?

11. What are some additional actions and/or partnership opportunities that could improve access to safe, stable and affordable housing in Newfoundland and Labrador?

Community

Feeling that we are part of a community can have a positive impact on our well-being. Community involvement can provide a sense of belonging and social connection, while an accessible and inclusive community can show us that we are supported and valued. The non-profit community sector in Newfoundland and Labrador plays a valuable role in providing supports and services that contribute to social and economic well-being.

Community: What is already being done?

- ▶ The Provincial Government provides approximately \$70 million in core funding to community-based organizations annually. Additionally, various project grants are available, such as:
 - The Age-Friendly Newfoundland and Labrador Communities Program assists communities with the development of policies, plans and projects that enable us to age in place, and supporting the creation of age-friendly communities.
 - The Accessible Vehicle Funding Program aims to reduce costs associated with disability and provide an accessible transportation option to individuals and families.
 - The Accessible Taxi Funding Program seeks to expand the availability of accessible transportation.
 - The Capacity Grant Program aims to enable persons with disabilities to become fully engaged in their community.
 - The Inclusion Grants Funding Program provides grants to eligible community-based and non-profit organizations to help them create more accessible and inclusive facilities and events.
- The Indigenous Violence Prevention Grants Program supports Newfoundland and Labrador's Indigenous governments and organizations in their efforts to prevent violence against Indigenous women and children and to engage Indigenous men and boys in the prevention of violence.
- The Newfoundland and Labrador Community Transportation Program supports alternate transportation services for individuals who experience barriers to accessible, affordable and inclusive transportation.
- The Seniors' Social Inclusion Initiative supports seniors' organizations across Newfoundland and Labrador to organize and promote activities and programs that support social inclusion, healthy aging, mental wellness, intergenerational activities and overall well-being.
- The Newfoundland and Labrador Multiculturalism Grant Program helps communities celebrate the cultural diversity that exists throughout the province.
- ▶ The Ministerial Committee on Anti-Racism consults with the public, community and private sectors, labour, academia and other areas regarding longstanding and emerging issues related to racism, and opportunities to address them.
- ▶ The Premier's Roundtable on Gender Equity provides an opportunity to identify gender equity issues, provide context and help shape solutions that create and foster inclusion and respect.



Community: What more needs to be done?

Various measures show that Newfoundland and Labrador has a strong sense of community.

12. What do you think contributes to the sense of community in our province?

13. What can the Provincial Government do to help maintain and improve this sense of belonging?

14. Please identify the population that your organization serves and describe their sense of belonging/sense of community connection?



15. How can the Provincial Government support stronger social connections and sense of belonging?

16. What do you think is needed to better support the community sector in Newfoundland and Labrador?

Additional Questions:

17. What else can the Provincial Government do to improve social and economic well-being?

18. How can your organization contribute to this work?



APPENDICES



Social and Economic Well-Being:

What We Know

It is important to understand our current levels of social and economic well-being. There are a number of available indicators for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians that can provide us with insight.

Child and Youth Statistics

- Poverty is a risk for Adverse Childhood Experiences. 19.1 per cent of children below 18 or 16,900 individuals are in poverty (Newfoundland and Labrador Market Basket Measure, 2019).
- There are 2,710 couple families with children in poverty (NLMBM, 2019).
- There are 8,820 single-parent families with children in poverty, 7,590 of these are led by women (NLMBM, 2019).
- There are 2,380 families, involving 3,945 children, in the Protective Intervention Program (December 2021). These are children that are still living at home.
- There are 910 children or youth in foster or alternate care with Children, Seniors and Social Development (December 2021).
- There are 250 youth involved in Children, Seniors and Social Development's Youth Services Program (December 2021).

Education Statistics

- A high school drop-out is a 20-24 year old without a high school diploma and is not in school. 4.8 per cent dropped out in 2021 compared to 4.5 per cent for Canada. This has improved over time from 8.9 per cent in 2010, when the Canadian rate was 8.5 per cent (Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, 2021).
- Chronic absenteeism is a predictor of dropping out of school. The Newfoundland and Labrador English School District reports a chronic absenteeism rate of 10 per cent (6,604) of its students missing at least 18 days during 2016-17. This is approximately 10 per cent of class time. The absenteeism rates during that academic year ranged from a low of 3.1 per cent in Grade 1 to a high of 25.9 per cent in Grade 12. Annual comparative data are not available.

- In 2016, 15.7 per cent of individuals ages 25-64 had no high school certificate, or post-secondary diploma or degree (Census, Statistics Canada, 2016). This was higher than the Canadian average of 11.5 per cent and higher than all other provinces.
- The most recent literacy statistics, while dated, are included until newer statistics are available. Additional data will be available November, 2022. While there has been some improvement, our adult literacy levels are among the lowest in Canada.
 - 56.8 per cent of adults age 16-65 in Newfoundland and Labrador have inadequate literacy skills according to the Conference Board of Canada. This was the highest rate among the provinces (2012).
 - In the most recent assessment of provincial literacy and numeracy levels (PIAAC, 2012), Newfoundland and Labrador's scores for 16 to 65 year olds across all areas (literacy, numeracy, and problem solving in technology-rich environments) remained below the national average, and third lowest among all provinces and territories.

Income Statistics

- The Market Basket Measure (MBM) is the official measure of poverty in Canada. The MBM sets poverty thresholds based on the cost of a basket of food, clothing, shelter, transportation and other necessities. Data are gathered through the Canadian Income Survey and people with disposable income less than the threshold in their region, are considered to be in poverty. This measure is important since it allows for provincial comparisons.
- There has been a decline in low income prevalence in Newfoundland and Labrador over the past five years, with the most recent data placing it at 7 per cent. In 2020, in response to the economic shutdowns and restrictions put in place to limit the spread of COVID-19, the Government of Canada introduced a number of income supports. It is important to consider the 2020 MBM data in light of the unprecedented events during the first year of the pandemic.

Table 1: MBM – NL low income prevalence 2015-2020:

MBM - NL	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
per cent of all persons in low income	13	12.2	11.3	11.4	11.2	7

- As of 2020, Newfoundland and Labrador low income prevalence was 6th out of 10 provinces at 7 per cent and above the Canadian average of 6.4 per cent.

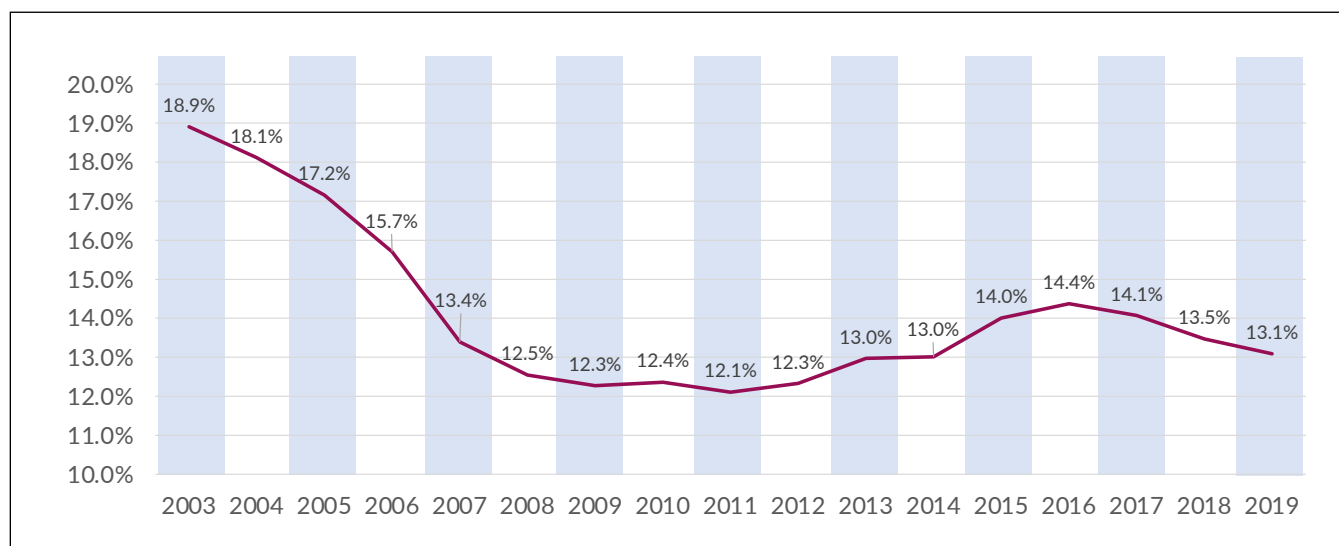
Table 2: MBM 2020 – Provincial comparison of low income prevalence:

MBM 2020	QC	AB	CAN	SK	ON	MB	NL	NB	BC	PEI	NS
per cent of all persons in low income	4.8	5.5	6.4	6.7	6.8	6.8	7	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.7

- To build on MBM data, the Newfoundland and Labrador MBM (NLMBM) is produced by the Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency and has the same definition and similar methodology; however, income tax data, rather than survey data, is used to determine if households or families are in low income. It is based on all tax filers and; therefore, allows for additional analysis of low income rates within sub-populations, such as different ages, gender and family status. The most recent data available is for 2019.
- Since 2003, when the low income prevalence was 18.9 per cent, the NLMBM gradually declined to a low of 12.1 per cent in 2011 and was at 13.1 per cent for the most recent NLMBM data in 2019.

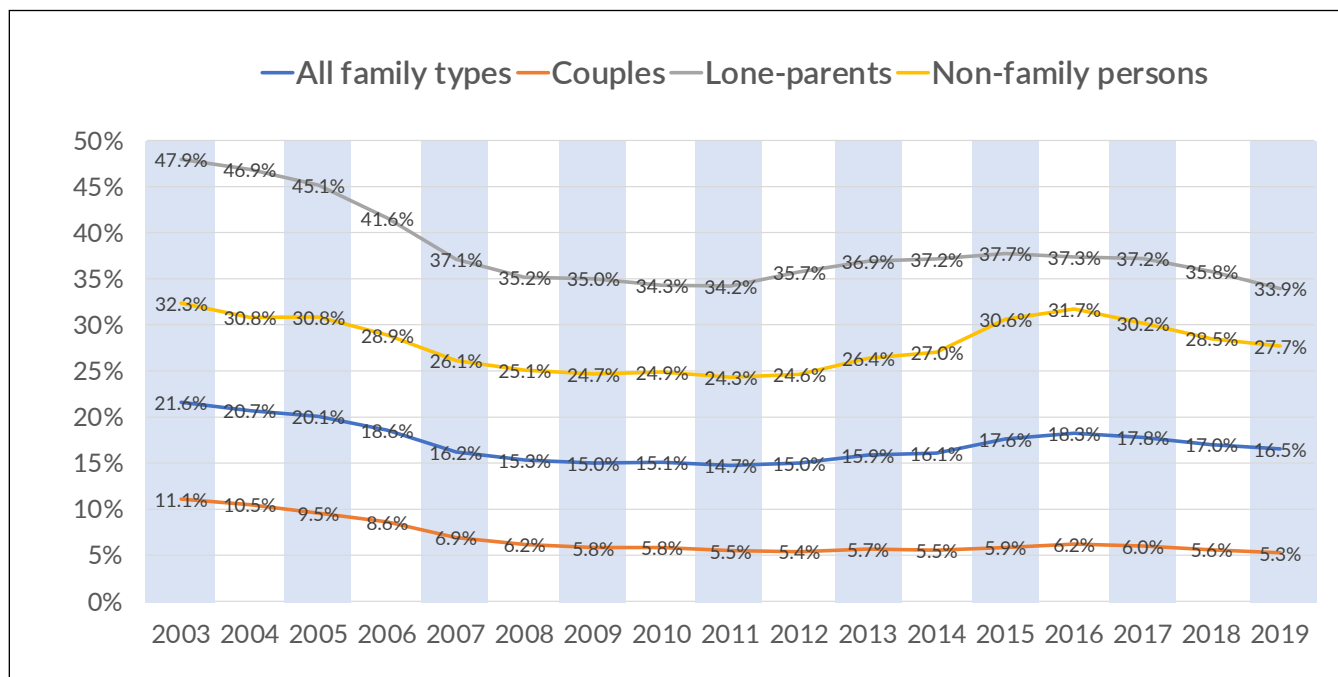
Graph 1: NLMBM – Low Income Prevalence for all Persons 2003-2019:

Source: Newfoundland and Labrador Market Basket Measure of Low Income.



- In Newfoundland and Labrador, 16.5 per cent of all families were in low income in 2019. The term families includes couples with and without children, single parent families (same as lone-parent families), and single people (same as non-family persons). Couple families have the lowest prevalence of low income across all family types, while single parents have the highest prevalence. Single people also have a high prevalence in comparison to couple families. Since 2003, there have been significant improvements for families with children, but single adults have not experienced the same decrease in low income prevalence.

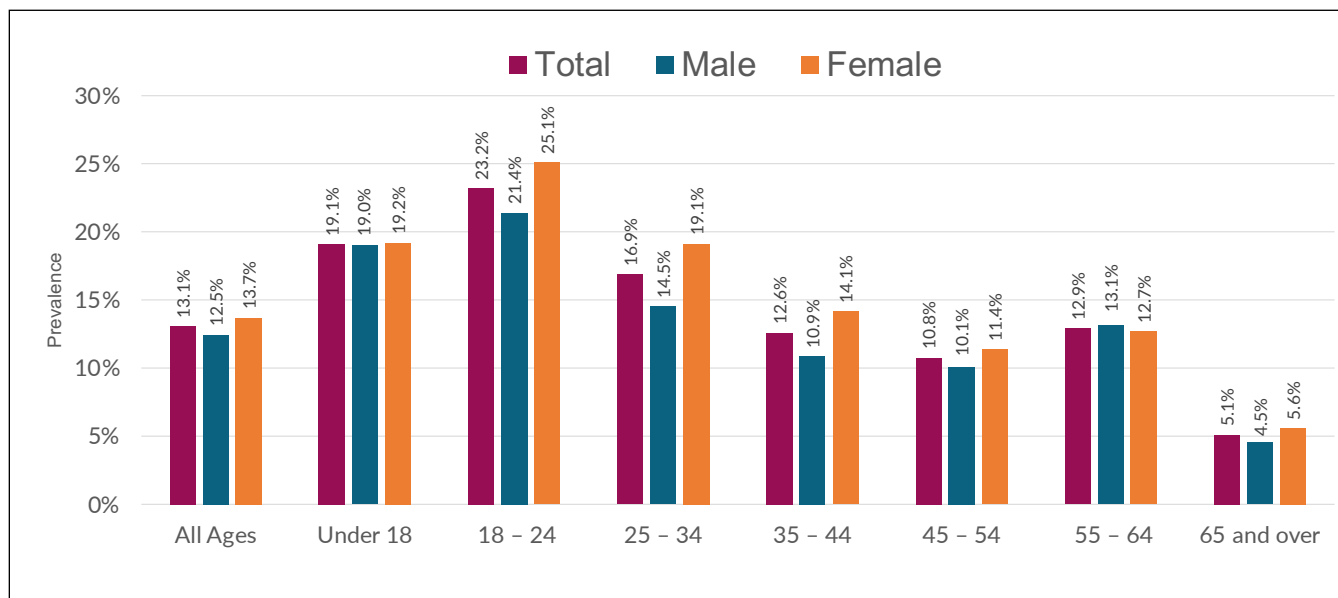
Graph 2: NLMBM – Low Income Prevalence by Family Type 2003 – 2019



Source: Newfoundland and Labrador Market Basket Measure of Low Income.

- In the general population according to the 2016 - 2021 Census, men were approximately 48.99 per cent of the population while women were the remaining 51.1 per cent. Of those in low income, 46.5 per cent were men in 2019 while 53.5 per cent were women. There is a higher prevalence of women in nearly all of the age groups. However, for single adults in low income, 27 per cent are men, while 22 per cent are women.

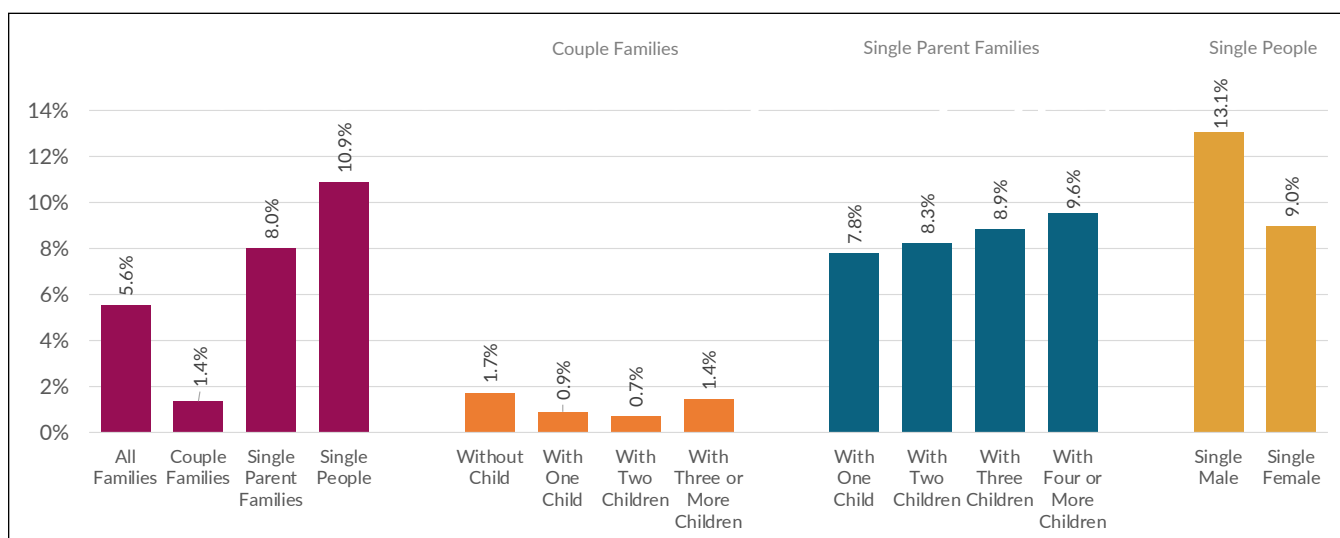
Graph 3: NLMBM – Low Income Prevalence by Age Group and Gender, 2019



Source: Newfoundland and Labrador Market Basket Measure of Low Income.

- Extreme low income status refers to a severe shortfall in disposable income of less than half the required disposable income to purchase the NLMBM Market Basket in their community are in extreme low income. In Newfoundland and Labrador, 3.8 per cent of all people were in extreme low income in 2019.
- The age group 18 to 24 had the highest extreme low income prevalence of all age groups.

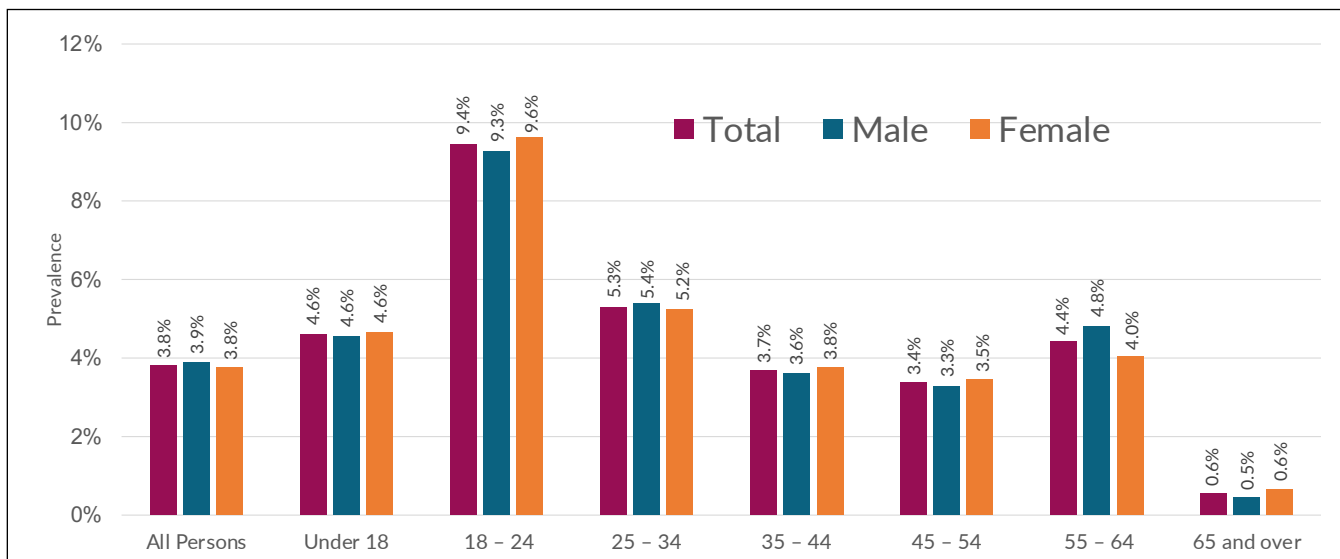
Graph 4: NLMBM Prevalence of Extreme Low Income by Family Type, 2019



Source: Newfoundland and Labrador Market Basket Measure of Low Income.

- When looking at extreme low income prevalence by family type, single males as a family type have one of the highest levels of extreme low income prevalence, while couple families have the lowest prevalence of extreme low income.

Graph 5: NLMBM - Prevalence of Extreme Low Income, All Persons by Age, 2019



Source: Newfoundland and Labrador Market Basket Measure of Low Income.

- Income Support Program – In 2021, 20,068 households received Income Support each month. This included 21,534 adults and families that had 6,716 children. This is a significant decrease from 1996 when there were 71,308 individuals on the caseload. However, while single adults made up 49 per cent of the caseload in 1996, in 2021 they made up 76 per cent of all cases (a total of 15,119).
- Minimum Wage - There were 13,900 minimum wage employees in 2021, with a breakdown of 60 per cent women and 40 per cent men (Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, 2021).
- Newfoundland and Labrador Income Supplement - There are approximately 162,000 individuals and families receiving this benefit (March 2022).
- Newfoundland and Labrador Seniors' Benefit – There are 50,000 seniors receiving this benefit (March 2022).
- Guaranteed Income Supplement – In 2021, there were 54,440 seniors receiving this benefit (Employment and Social Development Canada).

Food Security Statistics

- Food insecurity is measured through the Household Food Security Survey Module of the Canadian Income Survey and contains 18 questions designed to measure food insecurity resulting from limited financial resources.
- Including marginal, moderate and severe food insecurity, 17.5 per cent of households were food insecure in 2020 versus 15.8 per cent for Canada. This was an improvement over 2018, when the provincial rate was 19.2 per cent and the rate for Canada was 16.5 per cent. (Canadian Income Survey, Statistics Canada).

Housing Statistics

- A household is said to be in 'core housing need' if its housing falls below at least one of the adequacy, affordability or suitability standards and it would have to spend 30 per cent or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing. In the Newfoundland and Labrador context:
 - 7.4 per cent of households in the province are deemed to be in "core housing need" (Canadian Housing Survey, 2021).
 - In the Canadian context 9.8 per cent of provincial households are in core housing need (Canadian Housing Survey, 2021).
 - Within the Nunatsiavut region, 25.3 per cent of households are in core housing need (Statistics Canada, 2016).

- In 2021-22, over 5,580 households are served by Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation's social housing stock, with an additional 2,020 households subsidized in the private rental market.
- A further 996 units are supported and operated under the community based Partner Managed Housing Program.
- In 2021-22, 1,223 low income households were financially supported to undertake modest home repairs under the Provincial Home Repair Program. A further 355 households were supported to undertake modifications to make their homes more accessible.
- In 2021-22, throughout Newfoundland and Labrador over 980 individuals were supported by the emergency shelter program.
- In 2021-22, the province's 10 transition houses serving women and children fleeing domestic violence, reported 955 admissions.

Community Statistics

- The Canadian Social Survey (Statistics Canada, 2021) collects information from Canadians age 15+ years on a variety of social topics such as health, well-being, activities, time-use, and emergency preparedness. Newfoundland and Labrador specific data includes the following:
 - 59.1 per cent rated their life satisfaction as high. This rate was higher than the Canadian rate of 52.1 per cent.
 - 65.9 per cent rated their sense of meaning and purpose as high. This rate was higher than the Canadian rate of 59.1 per cent.
 - 70.8 per cent of females versus 60.9 per cent of males rated their sense of meaning and purpose as high. The Newfoundland and Labrador results were higher than the Canadian results for both male (56.7 per cent) and female (61.5 per cent).
 - 61.1 per cent indicated they always have a hopeful view of the future, which is lower than the Canadian rate of 63.1 per cent, but not statistically different.
 - 12.8 per cent indicated they always or often feel lonely, which is lower than the Canadian rate of 13.8 per cent, but not statistically different.
 - 76.1 per cent indicated they have people to depend on when they need it, which is higher than the Canadian rate of 73.4 per cent, but not statistically different.



Social and Economic Well-Being: What is Being Done

The Provincial Government is already doing work within each of the identified components. Much of this work is coordinated with a range of federal programs, benefits and services, and often in partnership or collaboratively with community-based organizations and Indigenous Governments. This is a high level overview of some of this work.

Early Years:

- The Provincial Government provides core funding to 31 Family Resource Centres throughout the province to deliver programs that promote positive parent-child contact intended to support healthy child development, as well as the Healthy Baby Club, which supports healthy nutrition during the pregnancy and early post-natal period and to promote healthy pregnancy and newborn outcomes.
- The Provincial Government and the Innu Nation formally launched the Inquiry into the Treatment, Experiences and Outcomes of Innu in the Child Protection System. The Inquiry aims to examine the treatment, experiences and outcomes of Innu children, youth and families in the child protection system and identify recommendations for change.
- The Provincial Government reduced child care fees to \$15.00 a day from \$25.00 a day, as a result of the Canada–Newfoundland and Labrador Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. This will be further reduced to \$10.00 a day in 2023.
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Education:

- The provincial Education Action Plan aims to improve educational outcomes in the province.
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- The Provincial Government, in collaboration with the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee, is committed to ensuring Indigenous students see their culture reflected in the provincial curriculum and resources; revised curriculum is infused with the history, traditions and contemporary culture of Indigenous peoples.
- The provincial Literacy Action Plan aims to build a more educated province so people can reach their potential, take part in training; and find and keep jobs.
- The provincial Skills Development Program provides financial support to eligible individuals who are seeking full-time post-secondary training at a public or private training institution.
- The provincial Adult Basic Education Program supports adult learners in achieving a high school equivalency diploma.

Income and Benefits:

- The Provincial Government recently announced an increase in minimum wage to \$15.00 per hour by October 1, 2023.
- The provincial Income Support Program provides supports and services to eligible people without financial resources to meet basic daily living expenses. This program is currently undergoing a three-year review that aims to improve benefits and ease of access, and strengthen supports for self-reliance.
- Provincial financial benefits available to support individuals living in low income, delivered through the tax system, including:
 - The Newfoundland and Labrador Income Supplement helps low income individuals, seniors, families and persons with disabilities.
 - The Newfoundland and Labrador Seniors' Benefit helps seniors in low income.
 - The Newfoundland and Labrador Child Benefit is a provincial tax credit for low income families with children under 18.
 - The Low Income Tax Reduction is a personal income tax deduction for low income individuals and families.
 - The Pre-natal Infant Nutrition Supplement assists low income parents with the extra cost of food during pregnancy and infancy.

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- Provincial health-related benefits to support low income individuals, including:
 - The Newfoundland and Labrador Drug Prescription Program covers 100 per cent of eligible prescription drugs for Income Support clients and subsidized clients of the Long-Term Care and Community Support Services System. In addition, financial assistance is available for the purchase of prescription medications for individuals in low income and those with high drug costs relative to income.
 - The Provincial Dental Health Plan provides access to eligible dental services for children, as well as individuals and families in low income.
 - The Income Support Medical Transportation Assistance Program covers 100 per cent of eligible expenses for Income Support clients to access medical services.
 - Provincial programs aimed at removing barriers and improving incentives for employment, including:
 - The Labour Market Partnership Program provides funding for labour market strategies and activities.
 - The JobsNL Wage Subsidy Program is designed to connect employers and employees by providing funding to employers to create long-term employment or seasonal/short term employment.
 - The Job Creation Partnerships Program provides support to community-based, not-for-profit projects to provide eligible participants with opportunities to gain work experience to improve their employment options.
 - The Employment Enhancement Program provides funding to employers to create long-term or seasonal employment. A training allowance is provided to support new employees.
 - The School Transitions to Work Program supports high school students with intellectual disabilities in supported employment during evenings, weekends, or during the summer.
 - The Provincial Government requires Women's Employment Plans for outside resource development projects, infrastructure projects and proponents of mid-size commercial projects in order to ensure that women benefit from all project employment opportunities.



Food Security:

- The Provincial Government provides funding for:
 - Food First NL, an organization that works with communities to ensure everyone has access to affordable, healthy, and culturally appropriate food.
 - School Lunch Association, an organization that provides hot, nutritious lunches to school students.
 - Kids Eat Smart, an organization that operates the Breakfast Club program in schools.
 - A Community Garden Support Program that provides funding for the creation and improvement of community gardens.

Housing:

- Provincial programs to address housing and homelessness needs along the full continuum, including:
 - The Rental Housing Program for low income households.
 - The Home Energy Savings Program assists low income households in making energy efficient retrofits to their home.
 - The Home Modification Program provides funding to low income homeowners who require accessibility changes to their homes.
 - The Provincial Home Repair Program assists low income households in improving privately-owned households.
 - Partner-Managed Housing Program supports social housing actions in partnership with non-profit housing groups.
 - The Supportive Living Program that provides core funding to non-profit organizations to prevent and end homelessness.
 - Emergency shelter services for individuals experiencing homelessness.
 - The Transition House program for women and children fleeing intimate partner violence.
- The 2022 Federal Budget outlined \$300 million over five years, beginning in 2022-23, to launch an urban, rural and northern Indigenous housing strategy, along with \$845 million over seven years to further support housing across Inuit Nunangat (the homeland of the Inuit people in Canada).



Community:

- The Provincial Government provides approximately \$70 million in core funding to community-based organizations annually. Additionally, various project grants are available, such as:
 - The Age-Friendly Newfoundland and Labrador Communities Program assists communities with the development of policies, plans and projects that enable us to age in place, and supporting the creation of age-friendly communities.
 - The Accessible Vehicle Funding Program aims to reduce costs associated with disability and provide an accessible transportation option to individuals and families.
 - The Accessible Taxi Funding Program seeks to expand the availability of accessible transportation.
 - The Capacity Grant Program aims to enable persons with disabilities to become fully engaged in their community.
 - The Inclusion Grants Funding Program provides grants to eligible community-based and non-profit organizations to help them create more accessible and inclusive facilities and events.
 - The Indigenous Violence Prevention Grants Program supports Newfoundland and Labrador's Indigenous governments and organizations in their efforts to prevent violence against Indigenous women and children and to engage Indigenous men and boys in the prevention of violence.
 - The Newfoundland and Labrador Community Transportation Program supports alternate transportation services for individuals who experience barriers to accessible, affordable and inclusive transportation.
 - The Seniors' Social Inclusion Initiative supports seniors organizations across Newfoundland and Labrador to organize and promote activities and programs that support social inclusion, healthy aging, mental wellness, and overall well-being.
 - The Newfoundland and Labrador Multiculturalism Grant Program helps communities celebrate the cultural diversity that exists throughout the province.
- The Ministerial Committee on Anti-Racism consults with the public, community and private sectors, labour, academia and other areas regarding longstanding and emerging issues related to racism, and opportunities to address them.
- The Premier's Roundtable on Gender Equity provides an opportunity to identify gender equity issues, provide context and help shape solutions that create and foster inclusion and respect.



Other ways to contribute

Website: EngageNL (www.engagenl.ca)

E-mail: wellbeing@gov.nl.ca

Telephone: 1.866.883.6600 (toll-free)
(leave a message and someone will get back to you within two business days)

Text: 1.709.725.8133

Video Relay Service calls are welcome

Mail: **Social and Economic Well-Being Division**
Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL
A1B 4J6

Alternate formats available on request.

