

Basic Income Guarantee Brief

We need a guaranteed income floor to eliminate poverty.

The Problem

Maytree [reports](#) that the 'working poor' make up the largest portion of people living in poverty in Canada. Feed Nova Scotia's data shows that the highest primary source of income for new food bank users is full-time employment (23%). When adding part-time and self-employment, this rises to 36%. Wages are not keeping up with the rising cost of living and lower-income earners urgently need support to be able to survive.

A basic income guarantee is an income supplement that would top-up household incomes to the cost of living. Anyone earning an income below the poverty line would receive extra income until they reach the poverty line. A basic income would replace income assistance programs and support employed people across Nova Scotia who are struggling to make ends meet.

Our Demand

Feed Nova Scotia is calling on the Government of Nova Scotia to implement a basic income guarantee program to bridge the affordability gap for lower income households.

Why?

- Nova Scotia's minimum wage – reaching \$17.00/hour in 2026 - is too low and forces thousands of working households to live in deep poverty.
- The living wage rate has grown to \$27.60 per hour, yet over 35% of Nova Scotia's working population earns \$20 or less per hour.
- A basic income program in Nova Scotia would address food insecurity and provide additional benefits to social wellbeing, health outcomes, and local economies.
- To implement this program, the Government of Nova Scotia must form an all-party committee in collaboration with the federal government and basic income experts to study how best to implement a basic income guarantee in Nova Scotia.

- A template for this work already exists: in 2025, the Government of Prince Edward Island developed a basic income pilot program backed by research and evidence.

Impact

How will this policy change make a difference?

Evidence shows that a basic income would drastically improve quality of life for all Nova Scotians, stimulate the local economy, and reduce costs driven by high poverty rates – in social services like health care, the justice system, and more – that would amount to over [\\$2 billion](#) in savings per year in Nova Scotia.

What will happen if the Government of Nova Scotia does not make this change?

Continued piecemeal social assistance programs and inadequate incomes will continue to push more Nova Scotians into poverty and food insecurity.

Have questions or want to learn more? Contact us at advocacy@feednovascotia.ca