

HOUSING MATTERS BC

Housing Investments in British Columbia

The B.C. government has invested **\$4.8 billion** since 2001 to provide affordable housing for low-income individuals, seniors and families in communities across the province. More than **104,000 B.C. households** benefit from a range of provincial housing services.

Creating Affordable Homes for Low-income Households

Since 2001, we have added more than **26,470 new units of affordable housing**. Close to 23,950 are now complete. The remainder are in development or under construction.

- Funding for emergency shelters, outreach and supportive housing to help homeless people get off the street, stabilize and begin to rebuild their lives;
- Transitional housing to support women leaving abusive relationship;
- Supportive housing for individuals living with addictions and mental health challenges;
- Rent assistance to keep private market rentals affordable for low-income seniors and working families;
- Assisted living and accessible apartments for seniors and people with disabilities;
- Subsidized rental units for individuals and families; and
- Affordable housing that meets the cultural needs of Aboriginal people.

Rental Assistance

Working families and seniors' households living in private market rentals can receive monthly financial assistance to help keep their rent more affordable.

Introduced in 2006, the [Rental Assistance Program \(RAP\)](#) currently helps close to 10,800 families with the cost of private market rental housing. The program provides eligible low-income, working families with a household income of less than \$35,000 a year, with cash assistance to help with their monthly rent payments in the private market. The average monthly payment is approximately \$400.

[Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters \(SAFER\)](#) provides cash assistance to eligible B.C. residents age 60 or over, who pay rent for their home. Nearly 19,900 seniors' households receive benefits through the program. The average monthly payment is approximately \$175.

These monthly benefits give low-income households more options, allowing them more flexibility to choose the neighbourhood they want to live in, while helping to keep their housing costs within their budgets.

Renovations and Upgrades

We have improved existing properties - **renovating more than 100 developments** through a joint federal-provincial investment of \$177 million.

For Seniors

- Close to 52,800 seniors' households across British Columbia receive support for housing, including nearly 21,300 households in independent social housing.
- Since 2001, nearly 12,950 new units for seniors and people with special needs have been created across the province.
- The Home Adaptations for Independence program provides financial assistance of up to \$20,000 per home to help low-income seniors and people with disabilities finance home modifications for accessible, safe and independent living. Since its inception, nearly 1,640 households have received assistance.

For Families

- Approximately 20,120 B.C. families live in provincially subsidized housing.
- A further 10,330 families receive rental assistance to help keep the cost of private market rent more affordable.

For the Homeless

- Since 2001, the number of provincially subsidized apartments and shelter spaces available for the homeless and those at risk of homelessness has significantly increased 14,000. This includes close to 1,990 permanent year-round shelter beds in 34 communities – more than double the approximately 880 that existed in 2001.
- We have partnerships with eight B.C. communities – committing close to \$500 million to build more than 2,000 new supportive housing units for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. About 1,400 of the new units are in Vancouver.
- Homeless outreach teams provide support to approximately 65 communities across B.C. helping to connect homeless people to stable housing and community supports such as health care.
- Last year, provincially funded outreach workers connected more than 7,100 homeless people to permanent stable housing.

For Aboriginal People

- More than 200 off-reserve units were built under the Aboriginal Housing Initiative to provide safe, secure and culturally appropriate housing for youth, women, elders and those struggling with addictions. In June 2012, an additional \$5 million investment was announced to create new affordable housing for Aboriginal households in need in partnership with the Aboriginal Housing Management Association.
- To support Aboriginal self-management, the Province has transferred administration of Aboriginal social housing to the Aboriginal Housing Management Association. The transfer includes more than 4,400 Aboriginal housing units, emergency shelters and the Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program.
- Since 2001, more than 1,150 housing units specifically designated for Aboriginal people have been created.
- Aboriginal outreach teams provide culturally appropriate support in 17 communities.
- Last year, provincially funded shelter and outreach workers helped more than 3,000 Aboriginal people who were homeless or at risk to find stable housing.

For Women

- Last year, more than 12,300 women and children stayed in transition houses, second stage and safe homes funded by the B.C. government. The Province invests \$32 million annually to support more than 830 spaces in transition houses, second stage and safe homes for women and their children who are fleeing violence through the Women's Transition House and Supports program. Funds for 24/7 staffing have been provided to all transition houses since 2009.
 - There are women-only developments providing long-term transitional housing. In Vancouver there are more than 380 units of safe, affordable transitional housing in eight developments. Seven of these developments are located within Vancouver's Downtown Eastside neighbourhood.
 - In addition to long-term transitional housing, the Province funds around 250 emergency shelter spaces for women or women with children across the province, including more than 130 women-only shelter spaces in Vancouver.
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