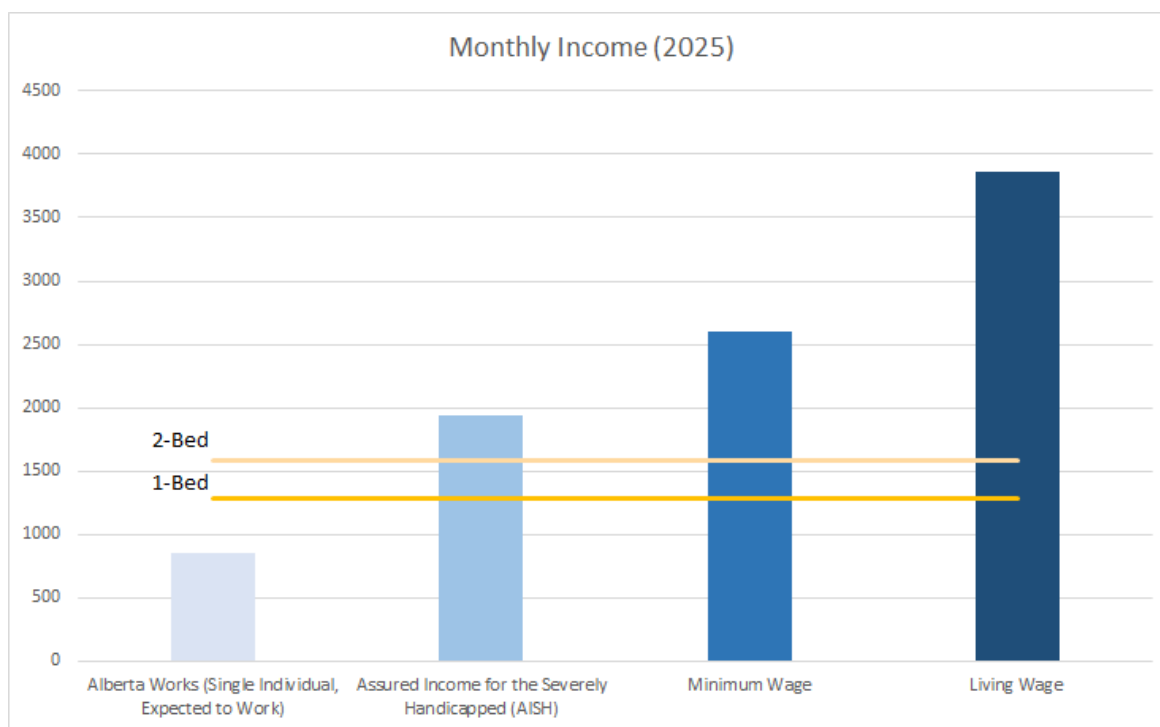


Budget Submission 2026

Poverty is worsening in Alberta and housing costs are a driving factor¹. Alberta has the lowest minimum wage in Canada and led the country in the percentage change (2019-2024) in total food bank visits². Rising housing costs in Edmonton are eating up the incomes of low-income households: rents have risen steadily and low-cost market housing is becoming increasingly scarce. The average cost of a 1-bedroom apartment³ represents 66% of the AISH income benefit and 50% of the before-tax minimum wage (see figure below).

After four years, the government is woefully behind in meeting its own goal of creating 13,000 new community housing units. Waitlists for subsidized housing and rent supplements have grown. Relatedly, utilization of emergency shelters has increased 60% over the past three years⁴. Inadequate shelter conditions, such as overcrowding, has encouraged sleeping outdoors, which is linked to alarming rates of frostbite injury and amputations. Clearly, the Government of Alberta's housing strategy has failed to uphold the human right to adequate housing.



¹ Danielese, P.K and Halladay, A. (2025) [Provisional Poverty Estimates for 2024](#). Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada.

² Food Banks Canada. (2025) [Hunger Count 2025](#). Mississauga, ON: Food Banks Canada.

³ CMHC (2025) [2025 Rental Market Report](#) Ottawa, ON: CMHC.

⁴ Government of Alberta (2026) [Emergency Shelter Daily Occupancy](#). Edmonton, AB: Government of Alberta



The Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness (ECOHH) is asking the Alberta government to make the following commitments in Budget 2026-2027:

1. Increase annual investment in social and affordable housing (new construction & upgrades of existing stock) to 1% of government spending.
2. Introduce a rent stabilization policy to ensure that private market rental housing remains affordable for Albertans;
3. Create an Alberta Rental Housing Acquisition Fund that can be accessed by community housing providers to acquire already-existing, affordable market housing;
4. Reform the Rental Supplement Benefit Program to ensure all eligible Albertans have access to these benefits, including tenants of affordable housing providers;
5. Increase funding for homelessness services and facilities to respond to actual need and enforce emergency shelter standards to ensure Albertans have access to safe, barrier-free 24/7 shelters that affords service users with diverse needs dignity and respect;
6. Provide recipients of all provincial income support programs with increases that support their access to modest market rental housing.

Sincerely,

Quinn Strikwerda, ECOHH Co-Chair

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