



## Manitoba's Poverty Reduction Strategy Must Prioritize Social Housing

Reducing poverty requires access to safe, affordable, good quality housing. Housing is not just a basic human need, essential to survival, health, and well-being. It provides a foundation from which we can improve education and employment outcomes, reduce crime, address substance use, improve physical and mental health, and reunite families involved with Child and Family Services.

### The facts

- Market rental housing is unaffordable - Manitoba households in the lowest quartile of incomes spend 51% of their income on housing.
- There is a shortage of non-market social housing, which is targeted for those experiencing poverty - Over 6,000 households are on the waitlist for social housing.
- With nowhere else to go more than 1,200 people experience homelessness on any given night in Winnipeg alone. Another 4,000 more are conservatively estimated to be experiencing hidden homelessness.

**What can be done right now** - Manitoba's Poverty Reduction Strategy must set a goal to ensure all low-income Manitobans can access safe, affordable, good quality housing. To achieve that goal the Strategy must include the following actions:

- 1) **Add 5,000 social housing units over 5 years** owned by public, non-profit, and co-op housing providers with rents set at social assistance levels or capped at 30% of household income.
- 2) **Preserve the existing supply of social housing by investing \$750M in capital repairs and maintenance over 5 years** and by ensuring no social housing units are lost due to a lack of operating subsidies.
- 3) **Ensure all social housing tenants have access to support workers** with a minimum ratio of 1 worker per 100 units.
- 4) **Enhance security of tenure** by limiting exemptions to rent regulations, limiting above-guideline rent increases, disallowing rent discounts, enhancing compensation for no-fault evictions, and ensuring evictions occur as a last resort.
- 5) **Support and partner with social enterprises** to provide people facing barriers to employment with training and employment in the construction and maintenance of social housing.

These actions are rooted in Right to Housing's [social housing action plan](#) for Manitoba which was released in October 2023. The plan is based on decades of research and consultation. Its [5 pillars](#) have been endorsed by [more than 90 organizations](#).