

For post election:

- Premier - : premier@gov.bc.ca
- Social Development and Poverty Reduction Minister: SDPR.Minister@gov.bc.ca
- Finance Minister: FIN.Minister@gov.bc.ca
- Minister of Housing: HOUS.minister@gov.bc.ca
- Find the email of your MLA [here](#) - **Note: information available post election**

Subject: Urgent Reform Needed for BC Housing Rental Assistance Program and Shelter Rates

Dear [Politician's Name],

I trust this message finds you well. I, [Name], am writing to you as a concerned citizen and resident of [City/Constituency], passionately advocating to increase the monthly shelter allowance through the BC financial assistance program for individuals with varying abilities and include them as recipients of the BC Housing Rental Assistance Program. Current rental supports have left this vulnerable population without access to the support they desperately need to achieve housing security and lift themselves out of poverty.

(share personal story if applicable)

It is disheartening to note that most single adults with varying abilities are trapped in a cycle of lifelong poverty, dependent on the goodwill of friends and relatives for their basic living needs. Adults who rely on BC's Persons with Disability Benefits (PWD) often find themselves compelled to make agonizing choices between safe housing, adequate nutrition, and basic healthcare.

Consider the following distressing statistics, reflecting the urgency of addressing this issue:

- Single Canadians with a monthly income of \$2,104.33 are classified as living on the poverty line in Canada.
- For those with varying abilities on PWD assistance, the monthly support is capped at a maximum of \$1,483.50¹.
- Only a fraction of the monthly PWD supports can be allocated towards housing costs.
- As of August 2023, the maximum shelter allowance for a single person on PWD was increased to \$500 per month – the first increase in 16 years.
- Meanwhile, the cost of living continues to surge. Market-level rents in BC saw a 2% increase from August to September 2023, with the average studio apartment now commanding a staggering \$2,002 per month².

¹ BC Employment and Assistance Rate Tables: [[Disability Assistance Rate Table - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-assistance/rates-tables/)]

² Rentals.ca July 2023 Rent Report: [<https://rentals.ca/national-rent-report>]

- The Canada-BC Benefit (CBCHB), designed to provide financial assistance, remains out of reach for those residing in BC Housing's subsidized units.
- The inability of single Canadians with varying abilities to stack their benefits further exacerbates their struggle to secure market rental housing³.

5, 000 individuals with varying abilities are looking for housing in BC and are regrettably being overlooked when considering ways to improve access to affordable housing. The financial hardships faced by single individuals underscore the urgent need to address this inequity in accessing financial support for housing.

I implore you to champion this noble cause by:

1. Expanding the Rental Assistance Program criteria to include persons with varying abilities.
2. Institute changes that permit the stacking of benefits for all persons with disabilities, including singles, to facilitate their housing security.
3. Increase the shelter allowance rates to reflect the amount needed to rent in BC.

Your leadership and advocacy on this matter can make a profound difference in the lives of countless individuals who are currently marginalized by the system.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to serving our community and your consideration of this pressing issue.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Postal Code]

³ BC Housing Rental Assistance Programs:

[<https://www.bchousing.org/housing-assistance/rental-assistance-programs/CBCHB/eligibility>]