

Social Assistance and You

Developed by the Community Advocates Network

c/o North End Community Health Centre
2165 Gottingen Street Halifax, NS B3K 3B5

The Basic Needs Budget

This information sheet will explain how a social assistance budget for basic needs is done.

A basic needs budget has two parts: a personal allowance for food, clothing and personal care items; and a shelter allowance for rent or mortgage, lights, heat, water and taxes.



Advocacy Tip: You have a right to know how your budget is added up. Ask your worker for a copy of your “client financial summary sheet”.

The personal allowance for one adult is \$200 per month. There is no personal allowance for children unless the family is not getting the Child Tax Credit/National Child Benefit (family allowance). Then the personal allowance for a child is \$133 per month or \$200 if the child is 18-21 and still in school.

The shelter rate for one person is \$300 per month. If you are disabled or running from an abusive partner, the shelter allowance for one person goes up to \$535. The rate for two people is \$570 per month and \$620 for three or more people.

These amounts are the most people can get, even if your actual bills are higher. If your bills are less, you will get the amount of your rent, heat, lights, water added together.

Sample Basic Needs Budgets

Single Person (able-bodied)

Personal Allowance	\$ 200
Shelter	\$ 300 *
Total	\$ 500

Single Disabled Person

Personal Allowance	\$200
Shelter	\$535 *
Total	\$735

One adult and two children

Personal allowance	\$200
Shelter	\$620 *
Total	\$820

Basic Needs Rates:

Personal Allowance

Adult \$200
 Child \$133 (only if not getting CTC/NCB)

Shelter Maximums

One Person	\$300
One Person (disabled or abused)	\$535
Two People	\$570
Three +	\$620

*You will only get the maximum shelter allowance if your rent and utilities add up to at least these amounts or more

Our membership is made up of First Voice people, who are directly affected by social assistance reform, as well as groups, organizations and agencies. Together with first voice people, active members include

ADSUM COURT ADSUM HOUSE AIDS COALITION OF NOVA SCOTIA
 ALICE HOUSING CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSN.—DARTMOUTH BRANCH
 CANADIAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND
 COMMUNITY ACTION ON HOMELESSNESS CONNECTIONS CLUBHOUSE
 CORNERSTONE FAMILY CENTRE DALHOUSIE LEGAL AID SERVICE
 DARTMOUTH FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE
 DISABLED INDIVIDUALS ALLIANCE FEEDING OTHERS DARTMOUTH
 HALIFAX COALITION AGAINST POVERTY MENTAL HEALTH SOCIAL CLUB
 .METRO NON-PROFIT HOUSING
 METRO RESOURCE CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING
 NORTH END COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE NS ASSN OF SOCIAL WORKERS
 NS GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES UNION NS
 LEAGUE FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITY NS ASSN FOR COMMUNITY LIVING
 PEOPLE FIRST NOVA SCOTIA RESTORING DIGNITY
 ST. GEORGE'S ROUND CHURCH ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
 ST. VINCENT DE PAUL HAND IN HAND TEAMWORKS VEITH HOUSE