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SOCIAL SERVICES BUDGET INCREASES BENEFITS AND SUPPORTS FOR SASKATCHEWAN'S MOST VULNERABLE

The 2026-27 Ministry of Social Services budget invests \$1.69 billion, an increase of \$71.9 million or 4.4 per cent over 2025-26, to continue to deliver critical programs and services that support and protect Saskatchewan's most vulnerable people.

"This year's Social Services budget provides targeted investments to help people in need achieve a better quality of life, protect individuals, families and children in crisis, and focus on prevention to provide timely support before a crisis occurs," Social Services Minister Terry Jenson said. "Together with Indigenous organizations and community partners, the ministry will continue its important work to make a positive difference in the lives of clients every day."

Seniors, individuals, people with disabilities and families with low incomes will benefit from targeted increases in the 2026-27 Budget that help make the costs of daily life more affordable.

An \$11.7 million investment will raise core income assistance benefits by two per cent, starting in May 2026. Saskatchewan Income Support (SIS) clients will receive higher monthly benefits for the fifth year in a row, and this is the fourth consecutive year monthly benefits will increase for Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) clients.

An \$8 million increase will support over 500 more seniors who are already accessing the Personal Care Home Benefit since the monthly income threshold rose 40 per cent in 2025-26, from \$2,500 to \$3,500 a month. This increase helps to make the cost of living in a licensed personal care home more affordable.

A \$3.2 million investment will increase monthly Saskatchewan Housing Benefit (SHB) rates to help eligible renters better afford their rent and utility costs and expand the program to over 300 new clients. Core monthly benefits will increase by 20 per cent, renters who receive services to help them maintain stable housing will receive a 40 per cent increase in monthly benefits through the Supportive Housing stream, and monthly support for individuals fleeing interpersonal violence will double through the Seeking Safety stream.

SAID residential support benefits for families that care for their loved ones at home will receive a 30 per cent increase over the next three years. This is a \$2 million investment in 2026-27.

In 2026-27, community-based organizations across government ministries will receive a two per cent increase in funding. For Social Services, this represents a \$10.8 million increase to the service providers we contract with to help deliver a wide range of services and supports that enable Saskatchewan people to achieve a better quality of life. Family-based caregivers, including foster families and extended-family care providers, will also receive a two per cent increase in basic maintenance.

"The complex issue of homelessness continues to be a high priority for our government," Jenson said. "In the coming year, we will continue to partner with service providers, with our municipal and federal counterparts, and with Indigenous and community organizations across the province to help people in need transition to stable housing, remain successfully housed, and achieve a better quality of life."

2026-27 initiatives to support and protect people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness include new and continued funding.

Continued implementation of the additional \$20 million investment over three years announced in November 2025 will support expanded homelessness services and enhanced support for individuals experiencing homelessness. Priorities include multi-year funding for municipalities to support community-led priorities, expansion of emergency shelter spaces, and new supportive housing spaces with expanded trusteeship services to support income assistance clients.

\$5.4 million as part of a multi-year capital investment to design and build enhanced emergency shelters at sites chosen by municipalities in Saskatoon and Prince Albert.

A \$400,000 investment will help SIS clients remain successfully housed by providing a new \$1,000 one-time per household utility arrears recoverable benefit to prevent evictions. Since 2021, direct pay of rent and utilities has also been available for SIS clients who need it.

This year's budget continues to invest in increasing the availability of safe and appropriate housing for families and for individuals. New and continuing projects totalling \$17.6 million in 2026-27 will support repairs in provincially owned housing units to be rent-ready, and new affordable housing units created through the Rental Development Program.

Almost eight years after closing to new applications, benefits provided under the Saskatchewan Rental Housing Supplement (SRHS) that help clients with the cost of rent will transition to other ministry programs. As program administration winds down by August 31, 2026, the ministry will support SRHS clients to transition to other active programs that meet their needs, including SIS, SAID, SHB and the Saskatchewan Employment Incentive.

The 2026-27 Budget will continue to support people with disabilities to access safe and secure supports across the province, including residential services and day programming. Targeted funding is being provided to support the following outcomes:

- An additional \$11.8 million will provide increased services to new and existing clients with intellectual disabilities and increase the level of support for clients with changing needs.
- An additional \$7 million will support the growing number of families accessing the Autism Spectrum Disorder Individualized Funding program.
- \$11 million in capital investments will support the continued development of 10 new group homes and a new group home in Saskatoon for clients with intellectual disabilities and higher medical support needs.

The ministry is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children and youth, with continued focus on services and supports for at-risk families, children and youth.

An additional \$19.1 million in funding to deliver programs and services that meet the needs of a growing number of children and youth with significant and complex needs placed in out of home care.

The ministry is providing an additional \$1.8 million investment to support 24/7 intensive family preservation services, enhance support for youth to help them successfully transition from care to adult independent life, and funding to support at-risk youth in the community.

"The Government of Saskatchewan deeply values the voices of youth as experts in their own lived experiences," Jenson said. "We will continue to work closely with Youth Advisory Teams - made up of youth who have lived experience in care - to help shape and design services that empower and engage them as they move forward from care."

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