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## SOCIAL SERVICES BUDGET SUPPORTS GROWING NEEDS OF SASKATCHEWAN PEOPLE, FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

The 2024-25 Budget for the Ministry of Social Services is \$1.5 billion, which is an increase of \$112.4 million, or 7.8 per cent, over 2023-24.

"The 2024-25 Social Services budget provides targeted investments to meet the evolving needs of vulnerable clients," Social Services Minister Gene Makowsky said. "This record budget will increase income assistance benefits, rejuvenate social housing and address vacancies, continue to implement integrated approaches to respond to homelessness, enhance services for people with disabilities and increase supports for at-risk individuals, families, children and youth."

The ministry is increasing its investment to help low-income individuals, families and seniors provide for their basic needs, as they work to become more self-sufficient and independent to the best of their abilities.

- A \$17.0 million investment will deliver the first full year of the Saskatchewan Employment Incentive program, making life more affordable for working families with lower incomes.
- Monthly income assistance benefits will rise by three per cent for Saskatchewan Income Support (SIS) and Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) clients.
- The Personal Care Home Benefit monthly income threshold will increase by \$100 to \$2,500 to help make the cost of living in a licensed personal care home more affordable for seniors.

The ministry continues to implement new approaches with community partners to enhance services to individuals experiencing homelessness and those at risk of homelessness.

- The implementation of the Provincial Approach to Homelessness will continue, supported by an increase of \$16.7 million. This includes a \$7.2 million increase to support ongoing emergency shelter operations across the province and a \$9.5 million capital investment to continue to develop supportive housing spaces in Regina and Saskatoon.
- The Income Assistance Mobile Workforce will place up to 10 more ministry employees on-site at select community-based organizations to support clients where they are.

- Approximately 150 more clients will receive trusteeship and money management services to help them pay their rent and other bills each month.

In 2024-25, community-based organizations across government will receive a \$18.1 million increase in funding. The ministry will provide an additional \$13.7 million to the third-party service providers it contracts with to effectively meet the needs of the people we jointly serve.

"Overall in the coming year, the ministry will provide nearly \$500.0 million in funding to community-based service providers across the province to help us deliver services that enable Saskatchewan people to achieve a better quality of life," Makowsky said. "This represents over 30 per cent of the ministry's budget, and is a significant contribution to supporting the growing needs of Saskatchewan families and local communities."

Saskatchewan Housing Corporation (SHC) provides affordable rental options to people and families in 280 communities across the province who could not otherwise afford adequate, safe and secure shelter. In 2024-25, SHC will invest \$83.4 million in the repair and maintenance of provincially-owned housing units. This includes an additional \$9.6 million in provincial funding to prevent and reduce vacancies and respond to the increasing demand for social housing. In the coming year investments will be focused where there is ongoing demand for those in greatest need, such as major urban centres and northern Saskatchewan.

The 2024-25 Budget provides additional funding to support people with disabilities.

- The ministry is increasing funding to better support adults with intellectual disabilities. Additional funding of \$10.4 million will support the changing service needs of current clients, and the delivery of residential and day programs to new clients. A \$7.6 million investment will plan and construct 10 new group homes and one assessment and stabilization home. The ministry will also develop a new quality assurance team to strengthen relationships and oversight of homes supporting adults with intellectual disabilities.
- The Autism Spectrum Disorder Individualized Funding program will receive a \$4.0 million increase to continue to meet the needs of children and their families.
- The Saskatchewan Accessibility Office will partner with the Rick Hansen Foundation to raise awareness about barriers to accessibility.

The ministry is committed to improving services and supports for at-risk families, children and youth.

- Investments include an additional \$2.7 million to support additional residential care options for children and youth with complex needs, \$500,000 in new funding to increase supports for youth transitioning from care, and a \$375,000 increase to bring intensive in-home support programs to communities where they do not currently exist.
- The ministry is also providing increased funding to partners in providing care, increasing foster care and extended family care allowance rates, and increasing funding to the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Network and Mobile Crisis Services in Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert.



# News Release

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