

Poverty reduction strategy survey

We want to hear from people in Ontario to help us assess Ontario's 2020–2025 poverty reduction strategy and inform the next strategy. Share your experience and perspectives.

Final date to respond: November 30, 2025

This survey should take around 20 minutes to complete.

Ready to do the survey?

By participating in this survey, you are saying that you:

- understand that your participation is voluntary, confidential and will not impact any access to services or supports
- understand that you can choose not to answer any question or stop the survey at any time
- agree to share your responses to inform the next poverty reduction strategy

If you would like to tell us more beyond what you can say in this survey, you can send us a written submission (for example, a paper or letter sharing your perspectives). We welcome a wide range of submissions — from personal stories to community observations and suggestions.

When you have finished with the survey or your written submission you may:

- drop it off at your local Ontario Disability Support Program or Ontario Works office
- scan it and email it to prs@ontario.ca
- mail it to: **Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
Strategic Policy Division
315 Front Street West, 3rd Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 0B8**

Please send us your responses by **November 30, 2025**.

Your information will be protected under our [privacy statement](#) (ontario.ca/privacy) and handled in accordance with the **notice of collection** included at the end of this document. If you have questions on how identifying information included with a submission will be used, please contact the survey team at prs@ontario.ca.

Section 1: Your profile

First, we want to learn more about you to better understand who we are hearing from and help us hear the diverse perspectives of Ontarians. This information will be kept confidential and will not be shared with anyone.

1. Where in Ontario do you live?

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| ☐ Algoma | ☐ Kenora | ☐ Peterborough |
| ☐ Brant | ☐ Lambton | ☐ Prescott and Russell |
| ☐ Bruce | ☐ Lanark | ☐ Prince Edward |
| ☐ Chatham-Kent | ☐ Leeds and Grenville | ☐ Rainy River |
| ☐ Cochrane | ☐ Lennox and Addington | ☐ Renfrew |
| ☐ Dufferin | ☐ Manitoulin | ☐ Simcoe |
| ☐ Durham | ☐ Middlesex | ☐ Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry |
| ☐ Elgin | ☐ Muskoka | ☐ Sudbury |
| ☐ Essex | ☐ Niagara | ☐ Greater Sudbury |
| ☐ Frontenac | ☐ Nipissing | ☐ Thunder Bay |
| ☐ Grey | ☐ Northumberland | ☐ Timiskaming |
| ☐ Haldimand-Norfolk | ☐ Ottawa | ☐ Toronto |
| ☐ Haliburton | ☐ Oxford | ☐ Waterloo |
| ☐ Halton | ☐ Parry Sound | ☐ Wellington |
| ☐ Hamilton | ☐ Peel | ☐ York |
| ☐ Hastings | ☐ Perth | |
| ☐ Huron | | |
| ☐ Kawartha Lakes | | |

2. What have been your sources of income in the past 2 years? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Income from my job
- ☐ Income from my business
- ☐ Employment insurance (EI)
- ☐ Severance payment from a previous employer
- ☐ Scholarship, grants and/or student loans
- ☐ Employer pension
- ☐ Gifts or loans from family and friends
- ☐ Personal savings and investments
- ☐ Rental income
- ☐ Ontario Works (OW)
- ☐ Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)
- ☐ Child support
- ☐ Spousal support (alimony)
- ☐ Worker's compensation
- ☐ Canada Pension Plan (CPP)
- ☐ Old Age Security (OAS)
- ☐ Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)
- ☐ Guaranteed Annual Income System (GAINS)
- ☐ Canada Child Benefit (CCB)
- ☐ Prefer not to answer
- ☐ Other: _____

3. What is your current employment status? Select the option(s) that best apply to you.

- ☐ Working full-time (work 30 hours or more at one job)
- ☐ Working part-time (work less than 30 hours at one job)
- ☐ Working multiple part-time or full-time jobs
- ☐ Working in casual, seasonal or short-term position (less than one year)
- ☐ Working in own business, farm or professional practice, alone or in partnership
- ☐ Working directly towards the operation of a family farm or business without formal pay arrangements
- ☐ App or platform-based work where you get paid per job/task
- ☐ On paid leave from employer (for example, parental or work injury leave)
- ☐ Recently unemployed (less than 6 months)
- ☐ Long-term unemployed (6 months or more)
- ☐ On strike or locked out
- ☐ Temporarily laid-off from a job with indication of being recalled within the next 6 months
- ☐ Actively looking for full-time work
- ☐ Actively looking for part-time work
- ☐ Not looking for work due to retirement
- ☐ Not looking for work because of illness or disability
- ☐ Not looking for work because of personal or family responsibilities
- ☐ Not looking for work because of full-time study or training
- ☐ Not looking for work because of part-time study or training
- ☐ Not looking for work for other reasons
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

4. Do you identify as having a disability? Choose all that apply:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ No | ☐ Learning disability |
| ☐ Visual disability | ☐ Intellectual or cognitive disability |
| ☐ Physical disability | ☐ Mental health disability |
| ☐ Hearing disability | |
| ☐ Other: _____ | |

5. Which best describes your current housing situation? Select all that apply.

- ☐ I live in housing owned by me or a member of my household
- ☐ I rent from a private company or individual that is not my relative or employer
- ☐ I rent from a housing co-operative/co-op
- ☐ I rent from a not-for-profit organization that is not a housing co-op
- ☐ I rent from a government (for example, municipal, provincial, territorial or federal government, or indigenous entity) and my rent is subsidized
- ☐ I rent from a government and my rent is not subsidized
- ☐ I rent from a relative
- ☐ I live with a relative but do not pay rent
- ☐ I rent from an employer
- ☐ I live in supportive or transitional housing
- ☐ I live in a retirement or long-term care (LTC) home
- ☐ I stay with friends and family for a few days at a time (also known as couchsurfing)
- ☐ I live in a shelter
- ☐ I live in a vehicle
- ☐ I live outdoors
- ☐ Prefer not to answer
- ☐ Other: _____

6. What is your age?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| ☐ Under 15 | ☐ 46 to 59 |
| ☐ 15 to 17 | ☐ 60 to 75 |
| ☐ 18 to 24 | ☐ Over 75 |
| ☐ 25 to 29 | ☐ Prefer not to answer |
| ☐ 30 to 45 | |

7. Which term best describes your gender identity?

- ☐ Man (or boy)
- ☐ Woman (or girl)
- ☐ Non-binary
- ☐ Prefer not to answer
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____

8. Which term best describes your ethnicity? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Indigenous/First Nations/Métis/Inuit
- ☐ African
- ☐ Caribbean
- ☐ East Asian
- ☐ European
- ☐ Middle Eastern
- ☐ South or Latin American
- ☐ South Asian
- ☐ Southeast Asian
- ☐ Prefer not to answer
- ☐ Other: _____

9. What is your Canadian citizenship or immigration status?

- ☐ Born a Canadian citizen
- ☐ Naturalized Canadian citizen (immigrated to Canada and now have Canadian citizenship)
- ☐ Permanent resident for less than 5 years
- ☐ Permanent resident for more than 5 years
- ☐ Refugee claimant (refugee in the process of claiming asylum)
- ☐ Protected person status (asylum claim accepted)
- ☐ Student visa
- ☐ Work visa
- ☐ I do not have immigration status in Canada
- ☐ Prefer not to answer
- ☐ Other: _____

10. What language(s) do you speak regularly at home?

- ☐ English
- ☐ French
- ☐ Prefer not to answer
- ☐ Other language(s): _____

11. Which best describes your household?

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Married couple with children | ☐ Living alone |
| ☐ Married couple without children | ☐ Living with parents |
| ☐ Unmarried couple with children | ☐ Living with other relatives |
| ☐ Unmarried couple without children | ☐ Living with non-relatives |
| ☐ Single parent | ☐ Prefer not to answer |
| | ☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____ |

12. What is the highest education level you have completed?

- ☐ No certificate, diploma or degree
- ☐ High school diploma or equivalency certificate
- ☐ Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma
- ☐ College, CEGEP, other non-university certificate or diploma
- ☐ University certificate or diploma (but not a bachelor's degree)
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Postgraduate diplomas, certificates and degrees
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Section 2: Your experiences with affordability

Thank you for your responses! Now, we want to hear about your experiences and challenges with affordability and supports that you would find helpful.

13. In the past year at any point, have you had trouble paying for necessities such as food, clothing, housing or transportation?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

14. What are the most important affordability issues in your life or in your community right now? [Share in 300 words or less.]

15. What kinds of supports would most help you or your community with affordability? Select up to 10.

- ☐ Help getting food
- ☐ Help getting income supports (for example, Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program)
- ☐ Help getting clothing and personal care items and services (for example, a shower)
- ☐ Help keeping safe from mistreatment, abuse, violence or harm
- ☐ Help finding housing or a safe place to stay
- ☐ Ongoing support to maintain housing
- ☐ Help to settle in Ontario after immigrating or seeking asylum
- ☐ Help with accessing government services (for example, getting a health card and applying for eligible benefits)
- ☐ Help with aging and/or accessibility needs (for example, independent living support and assistive devices)
- ☐ Health care (for example, physical health needs, long-term care supports, and others)
- ☐ Mental health supports and services
- ☐ Addictions support and services
- ☐ Help with financial tasks (for example, opening a bank account and filing taxes)
- ☐ Help with addressing financial abuse from intimate partner (for example, misuse of funds and assets without consent, theft, coercion or manipulation)
- ☐ Help with raising children (for example, parenting, child development, navigating the early years/child care and school system and making sure children are succeeding in school)
- ☐ Help taking care of family members (for example, caring for children, elderly relatives or parents)
- ☐ Access to transportation

See more options on next page

Continued from previous page

- ☐ Access to technology (for example, internet, phone, and computer)
- ☐ Legal supports
- ☐ Supports to learn English or French language skills
- ☐ Help getting culturally appropriate and/or gender-affirming supports and services
- ☐ Reducing impact of justice system involvement on employment and/or transitioning back to community
- ☐ Recognition of foreign credentials
- ☐ Employment services (for example, career counselling, help searching for a job and job matching)
- ☐ Support to pursue educational or skills training opportunities
- ☐ Co-op placements, internships or apprenticeships
- ☐ More and better jobs being available in my community
- ☐ I'm not sure
- ☐ Prefer not to answer
- ☐ Other: _____

16. If you could tell your, someone else's or your community's story about poverty to someone in government, what would you want them to know? [Share in 300 words or less.]

Section 3: Feedback and suggestions for the poverty reduction strategy

Thank you for sharing your experiences. Now, we want to ask for your thoughts on the 2020–2025 poverty reduction strategy and your suggestions for the next strategy.

Over the past few years, the 2020–2025 poverty reduction strategy has focused on:

- **Encouraging job creation and connecting people to employment:** making investments in schools, job training, and programs to help people learn new skills
- **Connecting people with the right supports and services:** making it easier for people to get help with their health, education and job training
- **Making life more affordable and building financial resiliency:** working to lower the cost of living and increasing support in times of need
- **Accelerating action and driving progress:** using facts and working with businesses, non-profits and other levels of government to enhance access to services

You can skip any of these questions if you prefer not to answer:

17. **In your opinion, has there been a program, service, policy or other government action that has worked best in helping achieve the poverty reduction goals listed above?**

18. What do you think should be the priorities for reducing poverty in Ontario?
[Share in 300 words or less.]

Section 4: Interest in a follow-up interview

Thank you for your suggestions!

We are interested in speaking with people in Ontario to learn more about their experiences with affordability.

19. Would you be interested in participating in a follow-up interview with a representative from the Ontario Public Service?

The conversation will be up to 45 minutes and confidential. Selected participants will be compensated for their time. Your survey response may be used to select interviewees. **Note:** We will only contact those selected for an interview.

☐ Yes

☐ No

If you answered yes, please provide your name and preferred contact. This information will be confidential and will not be shared with anyone outside of the survey analysis team.

19a. Preferred name:

19b. Preferred contact (email, phone or other method):

If you changed your mind about participating, please select “No” to question #19.

Your privacy matters

Thank you for sharing your feedback. Your perspective is important to us.

All input will be analyzed in non-identifying ways by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services for the purposes of assessing and developing the next poverty reduction strategy for Ontario. Everything you shared in the survey will be confidential and only accessed by ministry staff analyzing results.

If you chose to sign up for potential future engagement activities, your contact information will only be used by the survey analysis team to contact you for potential engagement and will not be shared with anyone else, except as authorized by law.

Notice of collection of personal information

Personal information that we receive through the poverty reduction strategy consultation may be used to:

- assess the 2020–2025 poverty reduction strategy and inform the next one
- contact you for follow-up if you share your contact information and wish to be contacted

If you share your personal information, it will be:

- protected under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and any other applicable legislation or directives
- kept confidential and not be shared with anyone beyond staff analyzing engagement results, unless required by law

In exceptional circumstance we may be required by law to disclose personal information. For example, the ministry may be required to disclose information to police or a children's aid society if you:

- make a direct threat to harm yourself or someone else
- tell us about criminal activity
- indicate there is reason to suspect that a young person has been abused and/or is in need of protection

Legal authority

We are authorized to collect personal information related to the poverty reduction strategy consultation under:

- subsection 38 (2) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*
- subsection 5 (1) and clause 6 (2) (b) of the *Poverty Reduction Act, 2009*.

Contact

Email prs@ontario.ca if you have questions about the poverty reduction strategy consultation or how we collect and use your personal information, or write to:

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
Strategic Policy Division
315 Front Street West, 3rd Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 0B8