



What is rental assistance?

In a housing co-op, rental assistance covers the gap between the co-op housing charge and what the household can afford to pay, typically no more than 30% of income.

The federal government provides rental assistance through the Federal Community Housing Initiative (FCHI) for low- and moderate-income households living in non-profit and co-op housing. FCHI is available for co-ops in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Quebec and Prince Edward Island. In FCHI-supported co-ops, on average, 20% of households receive FCHI rental assistance.¹

The federal government also supports rental assistance through the Canada Community Housing Initiative (CCHI), as part of housing agreements between the federal government and provincial/territorial governments. This support enables provinces/territories to offer rental assistance. Co-ops in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and the territories are located where provincial/territorial governments have received CCHI.

Why does this approach work?

Rental assistance has an **immediate impact** – it helps households keep their home, even if their income goes down, preventing displacement and the risk of homelessness.

It's an **efficient use of public funds**, since co-op housing charges are lower than rents in similar market rentals.

It is a **modest investment with an outsized impact**; the median monthly rental assistance is \$515/month per household.

It preserves existing affordable housing, enables **mixed-income communities** and supports **social and economic inclusion**.

What is at risk?

FCHI is currently scheduled to end in March 2028. Unless FCHI is renewed, low- and moderate-income households will be at risk. Demand on an already strained housing system will increase. The agreements between the federal government and provinces/territories, which includes CCHI, are also ending in March 2028. This may also put households at risk.

What does the federal government need to do?

- Renew rental assistance for housing co-ops and non-profits, for at least ten years;
- Ensure rental assistance provides affordability and certainty in all provinces and territories; and
- Make rental assistance a permanent pillar of housing policy.

¹ Based on data available in BC, Alberta, Ontario and PEI