

# Manitoba's Poverty Reduction Strategy

Annual Report

2023 – 2024



Pursuant to The Poverty Reduction Strategy Act, this document reports on the status of indicators of poverty reduction and social inclusion in the 2023/24 fiscal year.

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**This publication can also be found online at:**

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/povertyreduction/>

# Letter of Transmittal from the Committee Co-Chairs

Her Honour, the Honourable Anita R. Neville, P.C., O.M.  
Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba  
Room 235, Legislative Building  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R3C 0V8

May It Please Your Honour:

We have the pleasure of presenting Manitoba's Poverty Reduction Strategy Annual Report for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024.

This report fulfills the obligation set out in Section 5 of The Poverty Reduction Act.

Respectfully submitted,

Honourable Nahanni Fontaine  
Minister of Families  
Minister responsible for Accessibility  
Minister responsible for Women and  
Gender Equity



Honourable Bernadette Smith  
Minister of Housing, Addictions and  
Homelessness  
Minister responsible for Mental Health



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## Progress in 2023/24

The year 2023/24 marked another year of high inflation around the world as economies continued to recover from the pandemic. While inflation decreased from a 40-year high in 2022, Manitobans continued to struggle with the high cost of living. Food prices remained high and rent prices increased across the country as the national vacancy rate hit an all-time low. Throughout these economic challenges, the Manitoba government worked to tackle the affordability crisis, helping Manitobans make ends meet and supporting the province's most vulnerable.

The Manitoba government acted swiftly to make historic investments in the year 2023/24, including:

- investing \$2.6 million in shelters across the province to provide 24/7 services during the winter months
- providing \$1 million in annual funding to support the first Indigenous-led and culturally informed Rapid Access to Addictions Medicine clinic at the Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre Inc. in Winnipeg
- pausing the provincial tax on gasoline, natural gas, marked fuel and diesel fuel, making Manitoba gas the cheapest in Canada and contributing to Manitoba having the lowest inflation rate in the country in the final three months of 2023/24

The Manitoba government was successful in sustaining the progress that has been made in reducing poverty. Based on the most recent data using the Market Basket Measure, Canada's official poverty measure, Manitoba's child poverty rate in 2022 was 13.3 per cent, approximately 31 per cent lower compared to the 2015 baseline rate of 19.3 per cent.

This annual report highlights the actions that contributed to improving the lives of Manitobans in 2023/24 and presents data on 13 poverty indicators to measure progress in reducing poverty and social exclusion in Manitoba.

## Poverty Reduction Committee

As required by The Poverty Reduction Strategy Act, the Poverty Reduction Committee is made up of community members and provincial ministers responsible for leading provincial efforts to take tangible and meaning steps to end poverty across Manitoba. The committee is the primary decision-making body on matters related to the development and implementation of Manitoba's poverty reduction strategy that oversees poverty-related policies, programs and services.

As of March 31, 2024, members of the Poverty Reduction Committee were:

- Honourable Nahanni Fontaine, Families (co-chair)
- Honourable Bernadette Smith, Housing, Addictions and Homelessness (co-chair)
- Honourable Uzoma Asagwara, Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care
- Honourable Nello Altomare, Education and Early Childhood Learning
- Honourable Malaya Marcelino, Labour and Immigration
- Honourable Ian Bushie, Indigenous Economic Development
- Dilly Knol
- Ashling Sweeny
- Bonnie Emerson

# **Pathways to a Better Future: Manitoba's Poverty Reduction Strategy**

Pathways to a Better Future: Manitoba's Poverty Reduction Strategy was released in March 2019. The strategy aims to break the cycle of poverty, with a vision that "All Manitobans have resources, opportunities and access to a better quality of life."

Pathways to a Better Future identifies six priority areas of focus to reduce poverty and social exclusion:

1. Investing in Manitoba's future prosperity through supports to children and youth
2. Working together to improve health outcomes and standard of living
3. Promoting economic inclusion through employment, education and training
4. Facilitating partnerships and supporting community-based organizations
5. Strengthening client-centred service delivery
6. Making positive change through social innovation

This annual report highlights the key initiatives put into action by the government in the six priority areas of the strategy.

## **Highlights of Actions in 2023/24**

This section shares some of the key initiatives that the Manitoba government undertook in the six priority areas to reduce poverty and support Manitobans.

### **1. Investing in Manitoba's future prosperity through supports to children and youth**

#### **Supporting Children and Families**

##### **Parent-Child Centres**

The Manitoba government provided a total of up to \$361,800 to the Manitoba Association of Friendship Centres which administered funding to Ma-Mow-We-Tak Inc. and ten parent-child centres across the province.

Ma-Mow-We-Tak Inc. received up to \$54,300 to deliver programming to approximately 200 youth in Thompson, including workshops, presentations and a variety of activities such as the Baby Think it Over Program, the Empathy Belt Program and Youth Councils.

Ten parent-child centres across the province received up to \$307,500 to support the health and development of children aged five to 12 years old. Programs focused on nutrition, parenting, and literacy which enhanced educational, social, cultural and recreational engagement.

##### **Turnabout Program**

The Manitoba Justice Turnabout program continued to support children under the age of 12, and their families, to access community-based prevention supports with the objective of intervening early to promote positive development and prevent future involvement with the criminal justice system.

##### **Youth Resources Centre**

The Youth Resource Centre, administered by The Link, provides access to eight short-term, overnight emergency shelter beds for youth 12 to 24 years of age that can be accessed on a first-come basis, 24 hours per day. Crisis intervention counselling, food, hygiene needs, shower facilities, clothing and case management are all services offered to youth accessing a shelter bed.

##### **Lighthouses Program**

Lighthouses is a youth crime prevention program that increases the pro-social factors of children and youth by providing opportunities for recreation, art programs and homework clubs. Through the Lighthouses Program, the Manitoba government continued to fund agencies, organizations, schools and community groups to deliver after-school and out-of-school programming at 34 locations in Winnipeg, 20 rural locations and 10 in First Nations.



### **Family Resolution Service**

The Manitoba government's Family Resolution Service began developing a public-private community partnership to expand free and affordable services for families navigating separation, divorce and intimate partner and family violence. These piloted supports include healthy relating supports and family coaching, comprehensive mediation, family mediation-arbitration and free independent legal advice (non-representation) and legal information.

### **Child and Spousal Support**

The Family Maintenance Act was repealed and replaced by The Family Law Act and The Family Support Enforcement Act. The acts enhance enforcement of child and spousal support obligations through the Maintenance Enforcement Program and provide for additional administrative options for the program to consider support payors' financial circumstances.

Through the Maintenance Enforcement Program, the Early Monitoring Unit was piloted to support voluntary and regular payments to prevent enforcement actions. This unit provides timely information to families about their file and increases outreach to payors about program support and financial options available to them if they experience a reduction of income due to circumstances such as medical crises or job loss.

### **Refocusing Child Welfare**

Manitoba passed legislation that supports the implementation of a federal act affirming the right of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples to exercise jurisdiction in relation to child and family services and sets out a framework for coordinated service provision. Work is underway to enable new kinship and customary care agreements. Customary care provides Indigenous children with care in a way that recognizes and reflects the unique customs of the child's Indigenous community. These agreements will support parents retaining guardianship, children remaining with family and community, and reduce the number of children living in stranger-based foster care.

### **Supports for Young Adults Grant**

The Supports for Young Adults Grant was established, formalizing measures used through the COVID-19 pandemic, to expand eligibility for CFS supports for young adults who would otherwise have been ineligible for supports when leaving care. This enabled CFS Authorities and agencies to offer additional supports to any young adult when they turned 18 and after they reached 21 years old. CFS agencies were able to continue supporting these young adults through a provision of supports and services (financial assistance, housing and specialized services) for a successful transition to adulthood.

### **Integrated Youth Services (Huddle)**

The Manitoba government provided \$2.135 million in funding to six Integrated Youth Services sites, known as Huddle sites, in Manitoba, to offer mental health, addictions services, primary care, peer support and other social services into a single, youth-friendly, easy to access location.

## **Futures Forward**

The Manitoba government provided \$665,000 to provide wrap-around services to youth in or from Child and Family Services care in the areas of mental health, housing, employment, education, identification, and financial counselling.

## **Enhancing Opportunities for Early Learning and Child Care**

### **Affordable Child Care**

The Manitoba government achieved its commitment of reducing parent fees for child care to an average of \$10 per day, three years ahead of the target date. As of April 2023, parents with children enrolled in regular full-time hours (four to 10 hours of care) for infant, preschool and nursery school spaces or school-age children attending for three periods per day (before school, lunch and after school), in non-profit centres and child care homes that receive operating grant funding, are eligible for the new rates. Additional funding is provided to child care facilities to off-set the reduction in parent fees. The Child Care Subsidy Program continues to be available for eligible families to ensure that cost is not a barrier to quality early learning and child care.

### **Creating More Child Care Space**

Across all child care capital streams, over \$215.9 million was committed to 70 child care capital projects including 36 projects in partnership with school divisions, ten projects with public post-secondary institutions, two projects with rural municipalities, and 22 projects with non-profit child care providers. Eleven child care centre capital projects were completed, licensed and opened across all child care capital funding streams, including a project funded through the Early Learning and Child Care Building Fund and ten projects funded through the Rural Municipalities and Indigenous Government Ready-To-Move Child Care Initiative.

### **Quality Enhancement - Abecedarian Model Expansion**

The Manitoba government expanded the Abecedarian model to an additional three child care centres. The Abecedarian model is an evidence-based early childhood intervention that is proven to improve developmental and learning outcomes for children in high-risk communities. The approach is centred on relationships as a foundation for strong language skills, greater cognitive and social per emotional development and focusing on increasing literacy and numeracy skills of young preschool children.

### **Supporting the Francophone Child Care Sector**

The Francophone Governance and Inclusion Grant provided funding to support sustainability of Francophone facilities and to ensure the Francophone child care community has access to resources and professional development opportunities. Funding of \$300,000 for the 2023/24 fiscal year was provided to La Fédération des parents de la francophonie manitobaine (FPFM) to support several projects, including:

- The Governance Model, which provides oversight and support for child care facilities through a shared-services model, in which the FPFM is the license holder

- Parcours d'ouverture d'une garderie familiale (Pathway to Opening a Home Child Care Facility)
- Francophone training and supports, including the annual Francophone directors conference and child care sector workshops

### **Early Learning and Child Care Training Program Expansion**

The governments of Canada and Manitoba invested more than \$24 million to develop and expand Early Childhood Educator (ECE) and Child Care Assistant (CCA) training programs at Manitoba's post-secondary institutions over the next three years. This funding will add an estimated 998 seats in the province over a three-year period and will support approximately 2,000 total new student admissions.

## **Improving Education Outcomes (K-12)**

### **Building Student Success with Indigenous Parents**

The Manitoba government provided \$1 million in funding to increase the involvement of Indigenous parents in education. The funding assisted schools in developing partnerships and programs with parents and the community which will contribute to the educational success of Indigenous students.

### **Family Outreach Coordinator**

The Manitoba government provided \$160,000 to fund two family outreach coordinators. Coordinators support families and help coordinate and establish a menu of resources, learning opportunities, and workshops intended to support family well-being, educational engagement, and success.

### **Community Schools Program**

The Manitoba government provided \$3.84 million to the Community Schools Program to support key educational goals such as student-school readiness, attendance, family-student-community engagement in learning, well-being and academic success.

### **Parent Child Programs in Community Schools**

The Manitoba government provided \$80,000 in funding to support early childhood development programs and services in the school setting for families with children aged zero to six years with opportunities for culturally-appropriate, quality early learning experiences within their home communities.

### **William Whyte Winnipeg School Division**

The Manitoba government provided \$120,000 to employ community workers in the William Whyte School to support school readiness skills of pre-school students in the community through the Literacy Program, to address food insecurity through provision of hampers and the creation of a community garden and connect families to other needed resources.

## 2. Working together to improve health outcomes and standard of living

### **Increasing Income**

#### **Tax Measures**

Manitoba instituted tax measures to provide financial relief to Manitobans. These measures included:

- maintaining the increase in the Basic Personal Amount at \$15,000 for the 2023 taxation year, an increase of nearly 40 per cent, and further increasing it to \$15,780 for the 2024 taxation year
- continuing to send out School Tax Rebate cheques to provide school tax relief to property owners
- pausing the provincial tax on gasoline, natural gas, marked fuel and diesel fuel as of January 1, 2024

#### **Increase to Minimum Wage**

The Manitoba government increased minimum wage twice in 2023. On April 1, minimum wage increased by 65 cents to \$14.15 per hour, and a further increase on October 1 raised minimum wage to \$15.30 per hour.

#### **Prenatal Benefit**

This benefit provides financial support to expectant mothers living on a low income. The Manitoba government worked to redesign the program by engaging with community organizations and parent focus groups to collect feedback, identify challenges and provide recommendations to improve the program. The evaluation of the program resulted in a number of recommendations, including an increase to the prenatal benefit amount.

### **Improving Health Care**

#### **Targeted Health Supports**

Public health officials in Manitoba have identified HIV and other sexually transmitted and blood borne infections as a provincial priority due to the significant increase in infection rates over the past decade. The Manitoba government took the following actions to improve health services and client-centered care:

- invested more than \$527,000 for the Manitoba HIV Program to develop the infrastructure required to launch the Program to Access Treatment for HIV and Support
- invested more than \$271,000 for the Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre mobile care service to provide Indigenous-led HIV and sexually transmitted and blood borne infection care to individuals who are unhoused or precariously housed, in addition to other wrap-around supports

- continued to support Ka Ni Kanichihk's Mino Pimatisiwin Sexual Wellness Lodge, which provides culturally safe access to care and sexually transmitted and blood borne infection services
- approved a program to expand coverage of HIV medication for those without access or full coverage through another program and initiated work to implement the new program

### **Manitoba Seniors Hearing Aid Program**

The Manitoba Seniors Hearing Aid Program was launched with an investment of \$12 million to provide eligible Manitoba seniors with financial support up to \$2,000 towards the purchase of hearing aids. Hearing aids provide valuable benefits to improve quality of life, and the program helps to ensure more Manitoba seniors have the financial means to access them.

### **Manitoba Diabetes Action Plan**

Prevalence of diabetes is higher among people living in poverty. The Manitoba Diabetes Action Plan was released with a focus on four pillars: prevention, detection, management and surveillance. The Manitoba government invested \$6 million to expand coverage of insulin pumps and advanced glucose monitors for all eligible Manitobans with diabetes, and \$300,000 for the delivery of land-based youth camps in partnership with Kinonjeoshtegon First Nation.

### **Expanding Health Care Training**

The Manitoba government invested in program expansions in undergraduate medical education, respiratory therapy, advanced care paramedic, clinical psychology and x-ray technology. Further, Manitoba supported the introduction of a one-time, 70-seat nursing cohort in Winnipeg. These initiatives will contribute to increasing capacity in the health care system and supporting health outcomes.

## **Expanding Mental Health and Addictions Support**

### **Better Outcomes for Female Offenders**

This initiative aims to improve health and social outcomes for women and girls involved in the justice system. An interdepartmental advisory group works to identify and remove barriers for women and girls involved with the criminal justice system related to health, mental health, substance use, cultural reclamation, education, skills training, family reunification, employment and housing. For example, the initiative is working to reduce some of the barriers in accessing health cards for female offenders recently released from custody.

### **Manitoba Farmer Wellness Program**

The Manitoba government, through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, is funding \$450,000 over three years to expand professional counselling services to serve the needs of farm employees and agriculture support services. This program is different from other mental health services available, as it is rooted in agriculture and the counsellors are familiar with the unique stressors of managing an agri-business such as seasonality of operations, impact of extreme climate events, global and market fluctuations and the dynamics of rural living.

### **Compensation for Victims of Crime**

The Manitoba government amended the Victims' Bill of Rights and Victims' Rights Regulations, creating important changes to the Compensation for Victims of Crime Program. This included some benefit rate increases such as an increase in counselling benefits from \$2,000 to \$4,000, and an increase in wage-loss benefits to up to \$638 per week, for eligible applicants.

### **Community Addiction Treatment Expansion**

The Manitoba government invested \$8.7 million to fund 1,648 addictions treatment spaces to enhance recovery opportunities for Manitobans. This included \$2.9 million for 513 spaces in Winnipeg. Partnerships with community and Indigenous organizations will provide additional services, including withdrawal management, bed-based treatment, and supportive recovery housing.

### **Telepsychiatry Expansion**

The Manitoba government committed \$2.4 million to expand Shared Health's rural/remote telepsychiatry service and virtual crisis stabilization beds. This expansion increased access to services and decreased the need for waitlists.

### **Alternative Response to Citizens in Crisis**

An investment of \$414,000 was made to expand the Alternative Response to Citizens in Crisis initiative that provides on-site support to individuals experiencing a mental health crisis in Winnipeg. The initiative is a partnership between Shared Health and the Winnipeg Police Service that pairs a police officer with a mental health crisis clinician to bring mental health services into the community to provide safe, on-scene access to mental health crisis services.

### **Indigenous-led RAAM Clinic**

The first Indigenous-led and culturally informed Rapid Access to Addictions Medicine (RAAM) clinic at the Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre Inc. in Winnipeg opened in December 2023, with \$1 million in annual funding. This is the seventh specialized RAAM clinic operating throughout the province. The centre also partnered with the Manitoba Mobile Addiction Team to Increase Community Capacity and Access program to provide ongoing virtual support to Indigenous people residing in rural and northern areas.

### **Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes in Manitoba**

The Manitoba government invested \$481,000 to support the expansion of the Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) in Manitoba program, which aims to increase the mental health and wellness knowledge and skills of community-based primary health-care providers across the province.

### **Psychiatry Recruitment**

Manitoba provided \$600,000 to support a two-year program designed to recruit psychiatrists to practice in acute care facilities and underserved areas of the province. Fourteen psychiatrists were successfully recruited under this new agreement.

### **Clinical Psychologist Recruitment**

Nearly \$3 million in ongoing funding for 17 additional clinical psychologists was part of continuing efforts to ensure access to specialized mental health services. The investment enhances specialized psychologist services available to children, youth, and adults in Winnipeg and rural communities.

## **Expanding Food Security**

### **Northern Healthy Foods Initiative**

The Manitoba government invested \$1.297 million in the Northern Healthy Foods Initiative to partner on northern food security projects that contribute to the development of culturally-relevant and healthy food systems, while improving health and well-being. The role of the Northern Healthy Food Initiative is to increase access to food by working with communities and coordinating efforts aligned with the program's goals, objectives, and priorities to:

- strengthen strategic partnerships and collaborative efforts to support local food production and access. Partnerships are intended to increase community access to resources and opportunities, build on community development efforts, facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experiences and reflect the uniqueness of communities.
- enhance support for local efforts, including strengthening community-led approaches that reflect cultural values.

### **Farm to School Manitoba Program**

Farm to School Manitoba educates and encourages healthy food choices among children and their families, supports community members experiencing food insecurity and builds awareness among Manitobans on the importance of a sustainable, local food systems. Farm to School Manitoba works closely with other organizations that also have an interest and commitment to providing healthy foods to schools, child care centres and families in communities.

## **Manitoba Food Currency Program**

The Manitoba government, through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, is investing \$1.08 million in funding over three years to the Direct Farm Marketing Association of Manitoba Co-op Inc. to develop the Manitoba Food Currency Program to:

- increase access to locally-produced, whole and healthy food for Manitobans struggling with food insecurity
- grow the local food economy by supporting local producers and strengthening farmers' markets
- build communities by making neighbourhood markets more accessible, vibrant and inclusive spaces

## **Indigenous Peoples Food Sovereignty**

The Manitoba government allocated \$1 million towards a new priority area under Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership: Indigenous Agriculture and Relationship Development. This new area focuses on providing technical and financial support to initiatives that enhance relationships with Indigenous Peoples and increase Indigenous participation and opportunities in Manitoba's agriculture and agri-food economy; including the development and growth of local food systems to empower food sovereignty.

## **School Meal and Snack Programs**

The Child Nutrition Council of Manitoba received a \$1.37 million funding increase to expand its grant program for Manitoba schools.

## **Supporting Affordable Housing**

### **Canada-Manitoba Housing Benefit**

The Manitoba government continues to support the Canada-Manitoba Housing Benefit. The benefit is a portable rental assistance program intended to improve housing affordability including for youth leaving or who have left the care of Child and Family Services, people who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness, and people living with mental health and addiction issues residing in designated supportive housing buildings. The benefit is cost matched between Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and Manitoba and delivered by the province. The benefit provides affordability support up to \$350 in addition to EIA and non-EIA Rent Assist benefits. An additional \$72 top-up is available for individuals whose rent does not include utilities.

In March 2024, a new stream of the benefit was introduced to support survivors of gender-based violence. This stream, designed in collaboration with Women and Gender Equity Manitoba, offers benefit levels that vary with number of bedrooms needed, providing housing stability for single parent survivors of gender-based violence with children.



## **Rent Assist**

Rent Assist provides financial help with shelter-related costs for Manitobans living in eligible accommodations. For income assistance participants, this assistance is included in the household total monthly income assistance. Rent Assist is also available to households not in receipt of income assistance who live in eligible rental accommodations. Rent Assist is indexed each year in July, based on 77 per cent of median market rent for recipients of income assistance and 80 per cent of median market rent for other low-income Manitobans renting in the private market.

In 2023/24, income assistance recipients were eligible for an average maximum increase of approximately \$22 per month for their shelter amount due to the Rent Assist indexation, and non-income assistance recipients were eligible for an average maximum increase of approximately \$23 to their monthly Rent Assist benefit.

## **Housing First Teams**

The Manitoba government is investing more than \$5 million annually to develop Housing First teams in partnership with community agencies. These teams support people exiting homelessness to access housing, connect with health and social services and maintain their tenancies.

## **Winter Response to Homelessness**

The Manitoba government invested \$3.16 million to implement the first-ever provincial winter response to homelessness. Key initiatives from the response included: providing interim housing, developing new units of supportive housing, extending safe spaces' hours of operation, restarting a safe ride service for women and expanding women-focused outreach teams. The response helped more than 280 people across the province, including supporting 91 individuals to secure permanent housing.

## **24/7 Shelter Services and Supports**

The Manitoba government provided \$2.6 million to homeless shelters across the province to operate as 24/7 service hubs from October 1 to March 31. This initiative ensured that fewer Manitobans suffered from extreme weather conditions during the winter months, as well as provided safe, supportive environments for people to connect with housing services, access medical care and build positive relationships.

## **Social and Affordable Housing**

Manitoba Housing worked in partnership with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to cost match and effectively deliver over \$38.4 million in federal funding to Manitobans through the Canada Community Housing Initiative, Manitoba Priorities, and the Canada-Manitoba Housing Benefit funding streams of the National Housing Strategy.

Manitoba Housing allocated \$32 million to non-profit housing partners \$9.1 million in federal funding under the National Housing Strategy, to create up to 560 social housing units and 310 affordable housing units.

### 3. Promoting economic inclusion through employment, education and training

#### **Expanding Employment Supports and Opportunities**

##### **Sector Council Program Enhancement**

The Sector Council Program supports organizations in key Manitoba sectors to develop and deliver workforce training for new and existing employees to support business growth and prosperity. The Manitoba government entered into four-year agreements with 21 organizations representing 11 key economic sectors, including a newly added sector council to support Manitoba's growing film industry. The program served 62,065 individuals. This investment is supporting economic growth and addressing labour shortages, which will help government achieve its commitment to create 10,000 new jobs in the skilled trades over the next eight years.

##### **Workforce Development Programs**

The Manitoba government made investments in various workforce development programs to support employee training, including new employees:

- **Industry Expansion Program:** the Manitoba government invested \$664,855 to support nine Manitoba companies in training 973 workers, including 684 net-new employees, through the Industry Expansion Program. The cost-shared program leveraged \$9.1 million in employer contributions to workforce training to help meet business needs.
- **Workforce Development Program:** the Manitoba government invested \$231,000 to support eight Manitoba companies to train 202 workers, including 17 net new employees, through the Workforce Development Program.
- **Canada-Manitoba Job Grant:** Provided funding through the Canada-Manitoba Job Grant to support 483 companies to help train 10,029 employees. This program helps cover training costs of new and existing employees to meet business needs, support the development of a highly skilled workforce, boost economic growth, and increase employment opportunities across Manitoba.

##### **Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities Program and Supported Employment Program**

Manitoba provided more than \$2.5 million to 31 organizations to deliver services to almost 3,000 individuals with disabilities to help them overcome barriers to employment.

##### **Programming for Indigenous Peoples, Newcomers, and Persons with Disabilities**

In partnership with community-based organizations, employment and training services were provided to over 7,800 Indigenous Manitobans and 12,000 newcomers with unique challenges to finding and accessing employment.

### **Increased Wages for Early Learning and Child Care Professionals**

On July 1, 2023, Manitoba increased the starting point wages on the wage grid to enhance child care employee wages. Funded facilities received an increase to the Wage Grid Supplement in operating grant payments to support implementation of increased wages.

### **New Early Childhood Education High School Curriculum**

The Manitoba government worked with four schools to pilot a new high school curriculum that offers grade 10 to 12 students a well-structured pathway to becoming an early childhood educator. The curriculum includes 1,000 hours and encompasses theory and practical application. At the end of the program, graduates will be eligible for classification as child care assistants.

### **Early Childhood Educator Tuition Reimbursement Program**

The Early Childhood Educator Tuition Reimbursement initiative provides eligible applicants attending recognized post-secondary early childhood education programs with a reimbursement of up to \$5,000 per academic year. More than \$1.8 million was provided to 529 eligible students in 2023/24.

## **Transforming Employment and Income Assistance**

### **Educational and Training Opportunities**

The Manitoba government invested in education and training programs delivered by 23 community organizations to increase access to employment opportunities for Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) recipients. The programs offer a variety of educational and training opportunities ranging from classes in financial and computer literacy and resume development and interview-skills, to programs tailored to assisting recipients in finding permanent jobs through offering on-the-job training and one-on-one mentoring.

## **Promoting Success in Education and Training**

### **Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development**

Through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development and the Manitoba Government, 35 Indigenous clients were supported to attend education and training in pursuit of greater self-sufficiency, independence and long-term sustainable employment.

### **Investing in Skills Development**

The Manitoba government provided more than \$24 million in funding through the Skills Development program to support skills training for over 5,000 program participants including 3,160 females, 996 Indigenous peoples, 242 persons with disabilities, and 798 newcomers. A decrease of 374 in Skills Development participants, was offset by an increase of 240 clients in the Employment Assistance Services program. This shift reflects evolving client needs in a strong labour market where some individuals were able to transition directly into jobs without the need for upskilling.

## **Employment and Skills Training**

The Manitoba government delivered a range of employment services to more than 14,500 clients through 12 Manitoba Jobs and Skills Development Centres and partnerships with community organizations to support Manitobans in obtaining the skills and knowledge needed to find good jobs. Clients served included 2,192 Indigenous Manitobans, 4,973 youth under 30, 6,022 females, 2,186 persons with disabilities, and 1,355 newcomers.

## **Advancing Futures Bursary Program**

The Manitoba government provided \$496,000 to support 76 individuals through the Advancing Futures Bursary Program. The program provides annual bursaries of up to \$10,000 for students currently or previously in the care of a Manitoba Child and Family Services agency and who are pursuing post-secondary education at a recognized institution in Manitoba.

## **Tuition Waiver Program for Youth**

Manitoba is helping to remove financial barriers and improve access for youth transitioning from the child welfare system to independence by supporting individuals accepted into the Tuition Waiver Program. Manitoba invested \$1 million to provide living and other financial supports to 82 individuals in receipt of a tuition waiver from post secondary institutions in the province.

## **Adult Learning and Literacy**

There are 59 Adult Learning Centres and Adult Literacy Programs operating at 130 sites throughout Manitoba, which supported 8,624 adult learners to gain the foundational skills and credentials needed to meet their personal, educational, and career goals. Manitoba committed to strengthen the adult education system and brought it to the forefront as a key pillar in Manitoba's educational system by introducing the new Adult Literacy Act in the fall of 2023. The act supports increased flexibility for eligible service providers to offer literacy programming and mandates the development of a collaborative Adult Literacy Strategy that includes reporting practices that ensure learner success and strengthen literacy outcomes. Initial workshops with service providers occurred in spring 2023 to identify challenges and opportunities within the adult education system.

The Manitoba government also announced it would adopt the Canadian Adult Education Credential (CAEC) as a replacement for the General Education Diploma (GED), which was set to be discontinued early May 2024. The CAEC provides a high-quality, made-in-Canada education credential as a replacement for the GED. This ensures that adult learners have a reliable credential that demonstrates their education achievement and supports their transition to employment or further education and training.

## **Manitoba Student Aid**

The Manitoba Student Aid Program administers two student financial assistance programs to support students pursuing post-secondary education. Students with lower-incomes and additional barriers to post-secondary studies may be eligible to receive increased non-repayable financial supports.

Manitoba increased financial support for students for the 2023/24 program year by increasing the maximum Manitoba student loan to \$200 per week of study, up from \$140 per week. The Manitoba Student Aid program assisted 20,428 Manitobans with access to funding for post-secondary education, providing \$332.8 million through federal and provincial student loans, grants, and bursaries in the 2023/24 program year.

For the 2022/23 program year (August 1 to July 31), Manitoba Student Aid expanded access and support from students with permanent disabilities to also include students with persistent or prolonged disabilities. Students and borrowers with disabilities generally have lower income and face some of the highest costs and most significant barriers to long-term academic and career success. The enhanced changes support students and borrowers through enhanced grants, in-study benefits, and specific repayment assistance. In the 2023/24 program year, Manitoba Student Aid assisted 1,909 full and part-time students with permanent, persistent, or prolonged disabilities, providing \$5.7 million through Canada Student Grant.

## **Manitoba Bursary**

The Manitoba Bursary provides non-repayable up-front grants of up to \$2,000 to eligible lower-income students and an additional top-up of up to \$1,500 is available for Indigenous students. The Manitoba Bursary received an additional \$1.4 million investment for a total budget of \$23.7 million. For the program year August 1, 2023 to July 31, 2024, Manitoba Student Aid disbursed \$23.8 million through the Manitoba Bursary Fund to 13,297 lower-income students.

## **The ACCESS Program**

The ACCESS Program is a unique Manitoba initiative with the mandate of increasing access to, and success in, post-secondary education for students facing academic, financial, cultural, language and geographic barriers. The Manitoba government provides funding to a number of universities and colleges for their individual ACCESS programs. Students apply to the university or college for programs in Health, Nursing, Engineering, Business Administration, Social Work, and Education. The programs feature tutoring, systems navigation, cultural and language supports, counselling, life skills training and career development to help students succeed and meet their career goals.

### **Manitoba Scholarship and Bursary Initiative**

Participating post-secondary institutions, University of Manitoba Students Union and the Business Council of Manitoba administer the Manitoba Scholarship and Bursary Initiative. Government matches funds raised by these organizations. The organizations assess, determine and award scholarships and bursaries to students. The Manitoba government provided approximately \$10 million to 12 post-secondary institutions and organizations leveraging philanthropic support for scholarships and bursaries that provided an estimated \$19.8 million to Manitoba students during the 2023/24 program year. The bursaries and scholarships helped many students to overcome barriers to accessing post-secondary education.

### **Ndinawe Child and Youth Care Practitioner Program**

The Manitoba government provided \$30,000 to the Ndinawe Child and Youth Care Practitioner Program. The program is an accredited training program where individuals with a history of sexual exploitation can receive a Child and Youth Care Practitioner certificate or a two-year diploma from Red River College Polytechnic.

## **4. Facilitating partnerships and supporting community-based organizations**

### **Supporting Community Organizations**

#### **Manitoba Association of Friendship Centres**

The Manitoba government provided up to \$1.2 million to the Manitoba Association of Friendship Centres which administered funding to 11 friendship centres across the province that provided culturally appropriate services for Indigenous peoples living in urban centers. Friendship centres provide a variety of programs and services, including but not limited to:

- employment services
- cultural activities and initiatives
- student and youth programs
- Elders gathering and mentorship programs
- scholarships

#### **Building Sustainable Communities Program**

The Building Sustainable Communities Program provided project-based funding to support community-based organizations and municipalities in building thriving and sustainable communities across the province. In 2023/24, the Manitoba government provided a total commitment of up to \$25.37 million, including up to \$13.11 million for large capital projects and up to \$12.26 million for regular stream projects to support community development projects that foster thriving, sustainable neighbourhoods and improve residents' quality of life. This enabled provincial support for 431 community projects by non-profit and charitable organizations, municipalities and Northern Affairs community councils.

### **Urban/Hometown Green Team Program**

The Urban/Hometown Green Team Program created summer employment opportunities for youth aged 15 to 29 years through support to a variety of community development projects that improve neighbourhoods, promote community involvement and help develop young leaders. In 2023/24, the program's budget was \$9.6 million to respond to high demand and support Manitoba's COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. A total of 744 projects were approved to support approximately 2,499 youth employment opportunities across Manitoba. This included approximately \$1.3 million in funding to municipal governments to hire youth to work on 138 community projects throughout rural Manitoba.

### **Community Development Partnerships and Strategic Initiatives**

The Manitoba government provided funding assistance to more than 34 community partners through Community Development Partnerships and Strategic Initiatives totaling over \$9.6 million, including the following highlights:

- more than \$5.22 million to support five United Ways/United Appeal of Manitoba, including United Way Winnipeg with core operating funding to enhance annual giving campaigns
- up to \$1.03 million to support 12 Neighbourhood Renewal Corporations to deliver 29 community renewal projects
- up to \$1.7 million to support 12 Neighbourhood Renewal Corporations in 13 designated areas with core operating funding
- up to \$776,800 to eight community recreation organizations to support initiatives that encourage increased participation in recreation for all Manitobans, including summer camps, recreational sport events, community clubs, and recreation programs for children and youth
- up to \$540,000 to the Winnipeg Metropolitan Region to support the core operations of the organization and to help advance its mandate. The organization aims to foster regional coordination and collaboration and to increase and facilitate strategic economic, social, and physical development opportunities
- \$120,000 to support the growth of community foundations across Manitoba in collaboration with The Winnipeg Foundation. This included provincial participation in the 2023 Endow Manitoba Giving Challenge, which resulted in more than \$1.54 million being raised in Community Foundations unrestricted funds by 2,852 contributions. All of Manitoba's 56 community foundations received a gift during the campaign.

### **Downtown Community Safety Partnership**

The Manitoba government provided \$3.95 million to support the Downtown Community Safety Partnership, which has three frontline teams that provide a welcoming and friendly downtown presence while serving the complex needs of the downtown community 24/7. The Downtown Community Safety Partnership also operates the Clean Slate program, an employment program for multi-barriered community members focused on the cleaning and maintenance of downtown Winnipeg.

### **Manitoba Citizens on Patrol**

The Manitoba government continued to support the Manitoba Citizens on Patrol Program to provide funding for the delivery of the program that mobilizes citizens throughout Manitoba to participate in a community-based crime prevention initiative in cooperation with local law enforcement agencies.

### **Community Mobilization**

Community mobilization is a community-driven, multi-sectoral approach to crime prevention and public safety that supports at-risk individuals, so they remain out of the criminal justice system. Continued investments increased the number of at-risk individuals and families supported through the following community partnerships:

- \$65,000 to enhance the Swan Valley Community Mobilization initiative
- \$65,000 to enhance the Morden Community Care Program

### **Victims of Crime Call for Proposals**

Under the Victims of Crime Call for Proposals, Mount Carmel Clinic's Sage House Program continued to support participants who do not have the resources and access to services to find permanent housing and/or stay housed through 2023/24. The department also partners with the program annually (\$45K) to support every day programming offered through Sage House, which offers basic services such as food, a warm shower, primary health needs, and opportunities for cultural supports, skill building, and support groups.

Additionally, Resource Assistance for Youth (RaY) received \$300,000 for 2021/22 to 2023/24 from the Manitoba government for RaY's Justice Program to support youth experiencing marginalization, street entrenchment, and/or homelessness to access low barrier mental health services. The program targets participants who are youth between the ages of zero to 29. This includes individuals who are victims and/or perpetrators of crime.

### **Wheelchair Repair Program**

On February 23, 2024 the Manitoba government announced \$288,000 in funding for Manitoba Possible's wheelchair repair program to fund the hiring of one additional in-house technician and one additional field technician, with the goal of meeting increasing demand for wheelchair repairs and laying the foundation for improved rural and northern service.

### **Newcomer Community Integration Support**

The Newcomer Community Integration Support Program funds settlement, employment, and community supports to facilitate and improve the social and economic integration of newcomers to Manitoba. The Manitoba government allocated \$7.87 million through the Newcomer Community Integration Support Program for 29 projects.



## **Preventing Family Violence**

### **National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence**

Manitoba, in partnership with the Government of Canada, provided more than \$12 million in joint federal and provincial funding to nineteen initiatives across Manitoba. These programs support the prevention and intervention of gender-based violence across the province through the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence bilateral agreement.

### **Gender-Based Violence Program**

Women and Gender Equity Manitoba continues to support individuals and their children that are experiencing gender-based violence by providing support and annualized funding to 32 community-based organizations across the province that promote the elimination of gender-based violence and offer a continuum of services across Manitoba.

### **Domestic Violence Intervention Unit**

The Manitoba government and the Winnipeg Police Service implemented the Domestic Violence Intervention Unit, a service that co-locates specialized Victim Services staff at WPS headquarters. This service enhances supports to families experiencing intimate partner violence by facilitating a co-ordinated response.

## **5. Strengthening client-centered service delivery**

### **Expanding Accessibility for Manitobans**

#### **Manitoba Accessibility Fund: Supporting Inclusive Partnerships Across the Province**

Launched in February 2022, the Manitoba Accessibility Fund (MAF) is a \$20 million endowment fund in collaboration with the Winnipeg Foundation. It provides annual sustainable grants to promote the principles of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act and assists Manitoba organizations to remove accessibility barriers and improve compliance with accessibility standard requirements.

In its second year (2023/24), MAF provided project grants totaling \$890,000 to 42 organizations across the province. Each project could request a maximum amount of \$50,000 to implement accessibility-focused projects. Inclusion of persons with disabilities in the development and implementation of projects, as well as partnerships with disability-serving organizations across Manitoba, are an essential component of all MAF projects.

## **Access to Services**

### **Newcomer Immunization Records**

To improve the immunization coverage rates for the newcomer population, the Manitoba government introduced a new process to allow those who received immunizations outside of Manitoba to submit their immunization records to be validated and recorded into the provincial immunization registry. Individuals receive a copy of their new Manitoba immunization record that identifies any immunizations they may require.

### **Supporting Adults with Disabilities**

A joint pilot program between the Manitoba government and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority began to provide Integrated Adult Services for 30 adults living with complex disabilities in the Winnipeg health region. The pilot program includes a person-centred needs assessment, and service planning process for each participant to provide integrated services and to explore creative opportunities and solutions for complex medical and physical needs.

### **Women and Gender Equity Manitoba Mandate Expansion**

Women and Gender Equity Manitoba expanded its mandate to facilitate cross-departmental coordination and support of community organizations to address the needs of the 2SLGBTQQIA+ community in Manitoba.

### **Changes to Service Delivery Model at Central Intake**

Employment and Income Assistance implemented a new intake model to provide faster services for persons applying for benefits, which resulted in reduced wait times to access an appointment and obtain benefits.

### **Manitoba Supports for Persons with Disabilities**

Manitoba Supports for Persons with Disabilities, a new income assistance program separate from Employment and Income Assistance, provides financial, health and community navigation supports to Manitobans with severe and prolonged disabilities. The program is more responsive to the unique needs of persons with enduring disabilities, with enhanced benefits and supports and reduced administrative barriers to access.

In July 2023, basic needs benefit amounts were indexed to inflation for the first time and households received an average increase of approximately \$28 per month. Key features of the program include:

- eligibility based on both medical and functional factors of disability
- higher benefits compared to EIA, in recognition of the unique expenses of persons with disabilities
- annual indexation of basic needs benefits to the rate of inflation to ensure that as the cost of living increases benefits will also increase
- enhanced health benefits, with basic and essential coverage available for two years following file closure

- ability to earn up to \$12,000 annually from employment before benefits are impacted
- reduced red tape and reporting requirements

## 6. Making positive change through social innovation

### **Delivering Social Impact Innovation**

#### **Quit Smoking with Your Manitoba Pharmacist**

The Quit Smoking with your Manitoba Pharmacist initiative is a three-year social impact bond smoking cessation program that aims to help Manitobans who are ready to quit smoking. The \$2.12 million program is funded through an outcomes contract with Pharmacists Manitoba and Shoppers Drug Mart. More than 2,000 participants completed their initial assessment and over 2,500 follow-up sessions occurred with more than 150 pharmacists across Manitoba.

#### **Kakiskinawtahitonan- Reducing Youth Justice Involvement**

Through a social impact bond, the program aims to reduce recidivism in youth, aged 12 to 17 years old, currently involved in the criminal justice system. The project was designed to deliver a holistic program grounded in Indigenous traditions and knowledge that would address underlying causes of Indigenous youth justice involvement and support youth connecting to their culture. The Social Innovation Office acts as an intermediary on this project, providing project delivery oversight, expertise and guidance. This work expands upon the development of the Youth Healing Lodge to provide culturally based and justice resources in northern Manitoba. The Manitoba government provided up to \$460,000 for a site in Winnipeg, and up to \$230,000 for a site in Thompson.

#### **Indigenous Student Success**

The Manitoba government worked alongside Red River College Polytechnic (RRC Polytech) and two independent consultant firms hired by RRC Polytech to identify strategies for Indigenous student success at RRC Polytech that will have a positive impact both on Indigenous learners and Manitoba communities. In order to assist RRC Polytech in their project goals, the Social Innovation Office acted as an intermediary to connect RRC Polytech with appropriate community partners and government departments and divisions and hosted the project kick-off event, providing a safe space for sharing and discussion of root factors for Indigenous student success. This initiative promotes economic inclusion and the development of strong relationships with Indigenous government, organizations and communities by promoting cross-sector collaboration and problem-solving to increase post-secondary enrolment for Indigenous people.

### **Access to Menstrual Products Initiative**

The Manitoba government, in partnership with Shoppers Drug Mart, has been providing free menstrual products to the gender-based violence and education sectors through the Access to Menstrual Products Initiative. More than 32 agencies within the gender-based violence sector, including women’s resource centres, shelters and other community organizations, were included in this initiative ensuring free menstrual products on a bi-monthly basis.

Through the initiative, 2.8 million tampons and pads were distributed to schools and gender-based violence agencies. The three-year pilot program is designed to remove barriers for Manitobans with little or no access to regular menstrual products and reduce period poverty across the province. Evaluation results showed that barrier-free access to menstrual products was successful in reducing cost burden, which subsequently increased participation in community programs, social engagements and attendance at school or work.

### **Her Heart Her Way**

The Manitoba government continued to provide support for the Her Heart Her Way Outcomes Contract. This initiative aims to reduce heart disease for women in Manitoba by improving behavioural and biometric measures identified in research as major contributors to increasing the risk of heart disease. As of August 2023, participants involved in the Her Heart program saw a 14 per cent reduction in their risk of stroke or heart attack at the six-month mark of the 12-month program.

## **Poverty Reduction Indicators**

An integral part of Pathways to a Better Future is its measurement framework that ensures accountability to Manitobans and provides an evidence-based structure for measuring the outcomes of its initiatives.

The strategy’s measurement framework includes a primary target of reducing the child poverty rate by 25 per cent by 2025, compared to the baseline year of 2015, and a set of 13 indicators, including Canada’s official poverty measure, to track the overall progress of the strategy. These indicators describe the various facets of poverty in areas strongly correlated with poverty: income, education, child care, child welfare, employment, health, income inequality and housing.

This section presents the data on the strategy’s 13 indicators. Where available, disaggregated data are also presented to provide a more detailed view of poverty in Manitoba.

## Market Basket Measure

Canada's Poverty Reduction Act (2019) establishes the Market Basket Measure (MBM) as Canada's official poverty measure.

Aligned with Canada's measurement framework, Pathways to a Better Future uses the MBM to measure the progress made in meeting the strategy's primary target. The MBM forms part of the 13 indicators to track the progress of poverty reduction efforts under the strategy.

The MBM poverty threshold reflects the cost of a basket of goods and services that individuals and families require to meet their basic needs and achieve a modest standard of living. The basket components are food, clothing and footwear, transportation, shelter and other expenses such as personal care, household supplies and other goods and services that permit engagement in the community. Individuals or families who cannot afford the MBM basket are deemed to be living in low income or in poverty.

Statistics Canada produces and releases the MBM data with a two-year lag. For the 2023/24 poverty reduction annual report, the most recent MBM data available is for the year 2022.

## Manitoba Poverty Reduction Indicators

The most recent MBM data (2022 data) shows that Manitoba exceeded its target of reducing the child poverty rate by 25 per cent by 2025, compared to the 2015 baseline. In 2022, the child poverty rate in Manitoba was 13.3 per cent, reflecting a 31 per cent improvement from the 2015 rate of 19.3 per cent. There were 14,000 fewer Manitoba children living in poverty in 2022 compared to 2015.

The discontinuation of federal benefits relating to the COVID-19 pandemic and the removal of pandemic-related modifications to the Employment Insurance program, as well as the increased inflation rate in 2022 contributed to the increase in Manitoba's child poverty rate in 2022 compared to 2021, which was 9.5 per cent.

Similarly, Manitoba's overall poverty rate (rate for All Persons) in 2022 was 11.5 per cent, lower by approximately 18 per cent than the 2015 rate of 14.1 per cent. While the 2022 rate was higher than the 2021 rate of 8.8 per cent, it was equal to the pre-pandemic rate of 11.5 per cent in 2019.

Table 1 provides information on the 13 indicators of the poverty reduction strategy. There is progress or stability in eight of the indicators.

**Table 1: Manitoba Poverty Reduction Indicators**

Indicator	Baseline	Most recent data	Percentage change	Trend
<p><b>Market Basket Measure (Canada’s Official Poverty Line)<sup>1</sup></b>            The cost of a basket of goods and services that individuals and families need in order to meet their basic needs and achieve a modest standard of living in communities across Canada. Source – Statistics Canada (Canadian Income Survey)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Poverty rate for All Persons</li> <li>- Child poverty rate</li> </ul>	<p>14.1 per cent (2015)</p> <p>19.3 per cent (2015)</p>	<p>11.5 per cent (2022)</p> <p>13.3 per cent (2022)</p>	<p>18 per cent decrease</p> <p>31 per cent decrease</p>	<p>progress</p> <p>progress</p>
<p><b>Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)<sup>2</sup></b>            The percentage of youth aged 15 to 24 years who are not in employment, education or training. Source – Statistics Canada (Labour Force Survey)</p>	<p>10.4 per cent (1Q2015)</p>	<p>9.1 per cent (1Q2024)</p>	<p>12.5 per cent decrease</p>	<p>progress</p>
<p><b>Availability of licensed child care</b>            The percentage of children (ages 12 and under) for whom there is a regulated child care space.</p> <p>Source – Government of Manitoba (Education and Early Childhood Learning)</p>	<p>18.2 per cent (March 31, 2015)</p>	<p>20.1 per cent (March 31, 2024)</p>	<p>10.4 per cent increase</p>	<p>progress</p>

Indicator	Baseline	Most recent data	Percentage change	Trend
<p><b>Children in Care</b> The percentage of children who are in the care of a child and family services agency.</p> <p>Source – Government of Manitoba (Families)</p>	<p>10,714 children</p> <p>3.5 per cent of Manitoba children</p> <p>(March 31, 2017)</p>	<p>8,919 children</p> <p>2.8 per cent of Manitoba children</p> <p>(March 31, 2023)</p>	<p>16.8 per cent decrease</p> <p>20.0 per cent decrease</p>	progress
<p><b>Premature mortality<sup>3</sup></b> Deaths occurring before the age of 75 measured by number of years of life lost per 1,000 population aged 1 to 74 years.</p> <p>Source – Government of Manitoba (Health)</p>	<p>53.2 years of life lost</p> <p>(2014/2015)</p>	<p>61.2 years of life lost</p> <p>(2021/2022)</p>	<p>15 per cent increase</p>	regress
<p><b>Poverty entry rate</b> The proportion of Manitobans who entered low income in the second year who were not in low income in the first year</p> <p>Source – Statistics Canada</p>	<p>3.9 per cent</p> <p>(2014/2015)</p>	<p>6.1 per cent</p> <p>(2020/2021)</p>	<p>56.4 per cent increase</p>	regress
<p><b>Poverty exit rate</b> The proportion of Manitobans who exited low income in the second year who were in low income in the first year</p> <p>Source – Statistics Canada</p>	<p>25.3 per cent</p> <p>(2014/2015)</p>	<p>26.8 per cent</p> <p>(2020/2021)</p>	<p>5.9 per cent increase</p>	progress
<p><b>Core Housing Need<sup>4</sup></b> The proportion of households in housing that is below one or more of the adequacy, suitability, and affordability standards.</p>	<p>11.3 per cent</p> <p>(2006)</p>	<p>10.1 per cent</p> <p>(2021)</p>	<p>10.6 per cent decrease</p>	progress

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Most recent data</b>	<b>Percentage change</b>	<b>Trend</b>
Source – Statistics Canada				
<p><b>Employment</b> The percentage of people aged 15 and over who are employed</p> <p>Source – Statistics Canada (Labour Force Survey)</p>	64.9 per cent (2015)	63.8 per cent (2023)	1.7 per cent decrease	regress
<p><b>High school graduation</b> Manitoba’s student-tracked high school graduation rate that follows individual students in public and funded independent schools from Grade 9 and calculates the percentage who graduate on time.</p> <p>Source – Government of Manitoba (Education and Early Childhood Learning)</p>	77.3 per cent (June 2015)	82.6 per cent (June 2023)	7.1 per cent increase	progress
<p><b>Income inequality (Palma ratio)<sup>5</sup></b> The ratio of the richest 10 per cent of the population’s share of after-tax income divided by the share of the poorest 40 per cent.</p> <p>Source – Statistics Canada</p>	1.08 (2015)	0.98 (2022)	10 per cent decrease	progress
<p><b>Literacy (reading skills)<sup>6</sup></b> Average scores of 15-year old Manitobans in Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in Reading</p> <p>Source – Program for International Student Assessment</p>	498 (2015)	486 (2022)	2.4 per cent decrease	regress



Indicator	Baseline	Most recent data	Percentage change	Trend
<p><b>Numeracy (math skills)<sup>6</sup></b>  Average scores of 15-year old Manitobans in Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in Mathematics.</p> <p>Source – Program for International Student Assessment</p>	<p>489 (2015)</p>	<p>470 (2022)</p>	<p>3.9 per cent decrease</p>	<p>regress</p>

<sup>1</sup>Data based on 2018-base Market Basket Measure (MBM) series and Canadian Income Survey.

<sup>2</sup>Percentage of youth aged 15 to 24 years who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) during the first quarter of years presented.

<sup>3</sup>Deaths occurring before the age of 75 measured by the number of years lost per 1,000 population aged 1 to 74 years. The number of years lost is the difference between the age at time of death and age 75. The data was adjusted to allow for fair comparisons among areas with different population characteristics.

<sup>4</sup>Data on core housing need is from census and available every five years. The 2011 core housing need data is not comparable with the census data. The 2011 data was based on National Household Survey. Therefore, the 2006 data is used as the baseline.

<sup>5</sup>Ratio is derived from data from Statistics Canada’s “Table 11-10-0193-01 Upper income limit, income share and average of adjusted market, total and after-tax income by income decile.” (accessed: August 14, 2024).

<sup>6</sup>Data on literacy (reading skills) and numeracy (math skills) are available every three years from Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member countries and associates decided to postpone the PISA 2021 assessment to 2022 because of COVID-19 pandemic difficulties.

## Disaggregated Indicator Data

Certain demographic populations are more vulnerable to experiencing poverty in Manitoba. For better understanding of how poverty disproportionately affects population groups in Manitoba, this section presents disaggregated data on some indicators where data is available.

### Low Income Rate

Despite the overall progress in reducing poverty, some demographic groups have remained more vulnerable to situations of poverty. The Manitoba government is committed to breaking the cycle of poverty for vulnerable Manitobans who are in most need of support.

Table 2 shows Manitoba's poverty rates for select demographic groups for 2015 to 2022. Except for seniors, the poverty rates in 2022 for all demographic groups were better compared to their 2015 rates.

**Table 2: Market Basket Measure Poverty Rates (Per Cent), Manitoba, Select groups, 2015 - 2022<sup>1</sup>**

Population Group	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
All Manitobans	14.1	12.4	11.2	11.1	11.5	6.8	8.8	11.5
Children	19.3	15.5	12.8	13.1	13.5	6.0	9.5	13.3
Seniors	5.9	4.9	5.4	6.1	5.6	2.3	5.8	6.3
Persons in Lone Parent Families	44.5	38.4	28.6	30.3	33.5	15.2	30.8	33.0
Women	13.7	12.2	11.5	11.1	11.0	6.5	9.1	11.8
Men	14.5	12.5	10.9	11.2	12.0	7.0	8.6	11.2
Indigenous (off-reserve)	23.9	26.3	20.7	27.4	21.7	12.6	11.4	21.9
Persons with Disabilities	19.2	17.3	15.9	13.8	14.0	7.5	10.9	11.8
Persons in Youth-led Families <sup>2</sup>	36.7	45.1	39.0	39.0	39.3	31.1	37.4	35.6
Single Individuals (45- 64 years)	31.9	33.5	30.6	31.0	34.3	23.4	29.9	31.6

<sup>1</sup>Source – Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey, 2018-base Market Basket Measure series

<sup>2</sup>Age of primary income earner is 24 years or less.

## Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)

The proportion of youth who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) is an important measure that will indicate problems in the educational system, the labour market, or in social services system that affect the well-being of youth. NEET youth may experience difficulties making the transition from school to the labour market, and could also be at a higher risk of social exclusion and depression. Understanding and monitoring this indicator is critical to developing the appropriate services and supports that will help young Manitobans achieve a successful adult life.

Manitoba's NEET rate is aligned with Canada's poverty indicator for youth engagement, and is a well-established indicator used by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Table 3 shows that Manitoba's NEET rate in the first quarter of 2024 (1Q2024) improved by 1.1 percentage points to 9.1 per cent from 10.2 per cent in first quarter of 2023. The 1Q2024 rate was better than the 2015 baseline of 10.4 per cent and 2.6 percentage point better than the pre-pandemic rate of 11.7 per cent.

**Table 3: Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) for Youth Aged 15 – 24 Years, Canada and Manitoba, 1Q2015 to 1Q2024<sup>1</sup>**

	1Q2015	1Q2016	1Q2017	1Q2018	1Q2019	1Q2020	1Q2021	1Q2022	1Q2023	1Q2024
Canada NEET rate (per cent)	10.5	10.5	9.4	9.8	9.3	11.8	11.3	9.6	9.0	9.8
Manitoba NEET rate (per cent)	10.4	11.4	11.5	10.9	11.7	11.1	11.2	8.4	10.2	9.1
- Number of persons (000)	17.0	18.7	19.1	18.4	19.8	18.9	18.9	14.0	17.2	16.4
- Rank (1 is best)	3	6	6	6	8	1	2	2	4	2

<sup>1</sup>Data on Not in Employment, Education and Training (NEET) are provided by Statistics Canada based on Labour Force Survey (LFS).

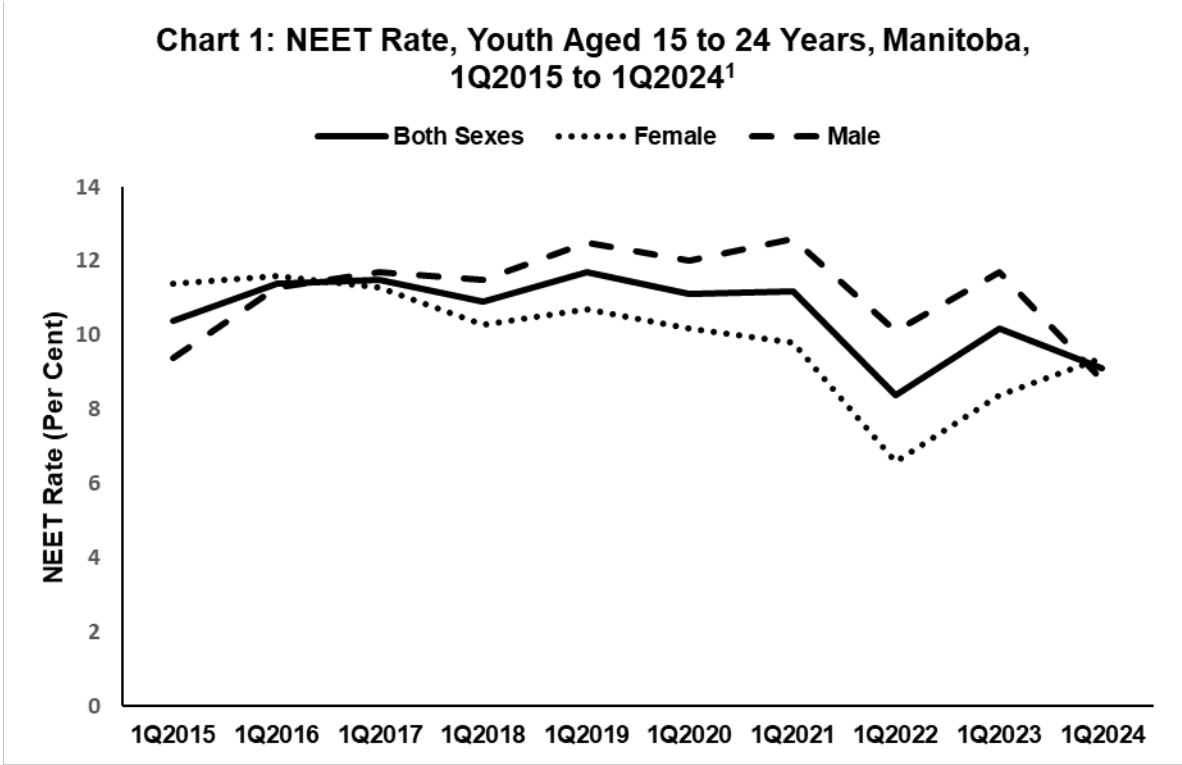
Table 4 compares the NEET rates across Canada. Manitoba's NEET rate registered the second best in first quarter of 2024, tied with Quebec's.

**Table 4: Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) Rate (per cent), Youth Aged 15 – 24 Years, Canada and Provinces, 1Q2015 to 1Q2024<sup>1</sup>**

	1Q2015	1Q2016	1Q2017	1Q2018	1Q2019	1Q2020	1Q2021	1Q2022	1Q2023	1Q2024
<b>Canada</b>	10.5	10.5	9.4	9.8	9.3	11.8	11.3	9.6	9.0	9.8
<b>AB</b>	9.4	10.7	10.4	10.7	9.9	11.9	11.3	8.8	10.5	12.2
<b>BC</b>	11.2	9.9	8.8	9.2	8.5	13.0	12.6	9.6	9.3	7.9
<b>MB</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>11.2</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>9.1</b>
<b>NB</b>	13.9	15.3	14.1	13.4	11.7	13.0	12.5	12.4	11.0	12.1
<b>NFL</b>	14.5	14.4	17.0	12.0	13.5	15.9	15.6	15.0	11.8	11.8
<b>NS</b>	11.2	11.3	11.4	11.6	11.0	13.4	11.4	9.6	10.4	10.2
<b>ON</b>	10.0	9.9	9.0	9.8	9.7	11.4	11.4	9.9	8.6	9.8
<b>PEI</b>	12.4	13.0	16.0	9.6	9.6	11.2	13.0	7.4	13.2	10.2
<b>QC</b>	10.9	10.9	8.0	8.5	7.7	11.2	9.4	8.8	7.8	9.1
<b>SK</b>	11.1	11.4	11.8	11.3	9.3	13.5	13.4	9.7	10.2	10.5

<sup>1</sup>Data on Not in Employment, Education and Training (NEET) are provided by Statistics Canada based on Labour Force Survey (LFS).

The Manitoba NEET rate for Females increased slightly in the first quarter of 2024 to 9.4 per cent from 8.4 in 2023. The Male NEET rate was 8.8 per cent, the lowest it has been since 2015. The Male NEET rate has also not been lower than the Female NEET since 2016.



<sup>1</sup> Source - Statistics Canada, custom data, first quarter of 2015 to first quarter of 2024.

### Availability of Licensed Child Care

Availability of licensed child care measures the percentage of children (ages 12 and under) in Manitoba for whom there is a regulated child care space.

With the strong partnership between the provincial and federal governments in supporting the child care sector, the availability of licensed child care at March 31, 2024 increased by 10.4 per cent compared to the baseline at March 31, 2015.

Table 5 shows the breakdown of availability of child care spaces by age group.

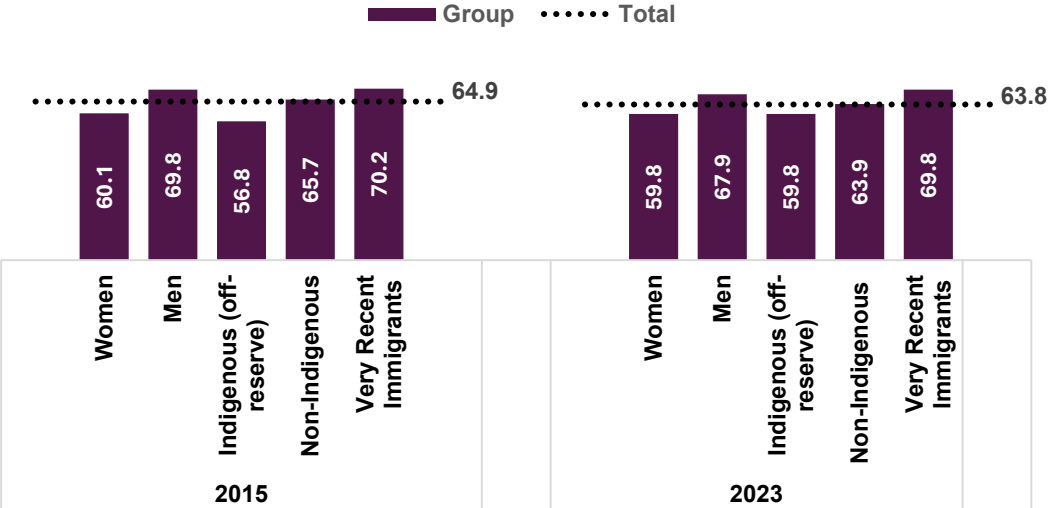
**Table 5: Percentage of Children for Whom There is a Regulated Child Care Space**

Age Group	At March 31, 2015	At March 31, 2024	Per Cent Increase
0 to 5 years	26.1%	30.7%	17.6%
6 to 12 years	11.3%	12.0%	6.2%
Total 0 to 12 years	18.2%	20.1%	10.4%

# Employment

In 2023, the employment rates of women and Indigenous (off-reserve) groups remained lower than the overall Manitoba employment rate; while the employment rates for men, and the very recent immigrants (landed within five years prior) were higher than the provincial rate. The employment rates for Indigenous (off-reserve) and very recent immigrant demographic groups improved in 2023 compared to 2015.

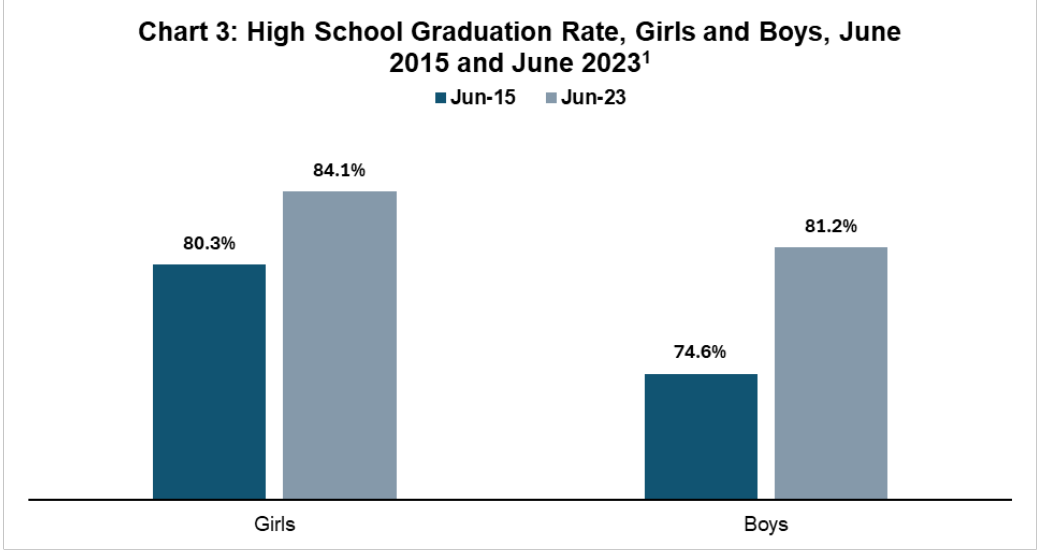
**Chart 2: Employment Rate (%) by Select Group, Manitoba, 2015 and 2023<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup>Data on employment rates are collected by Statistics Canada through the Labour Force Survey (LFS)

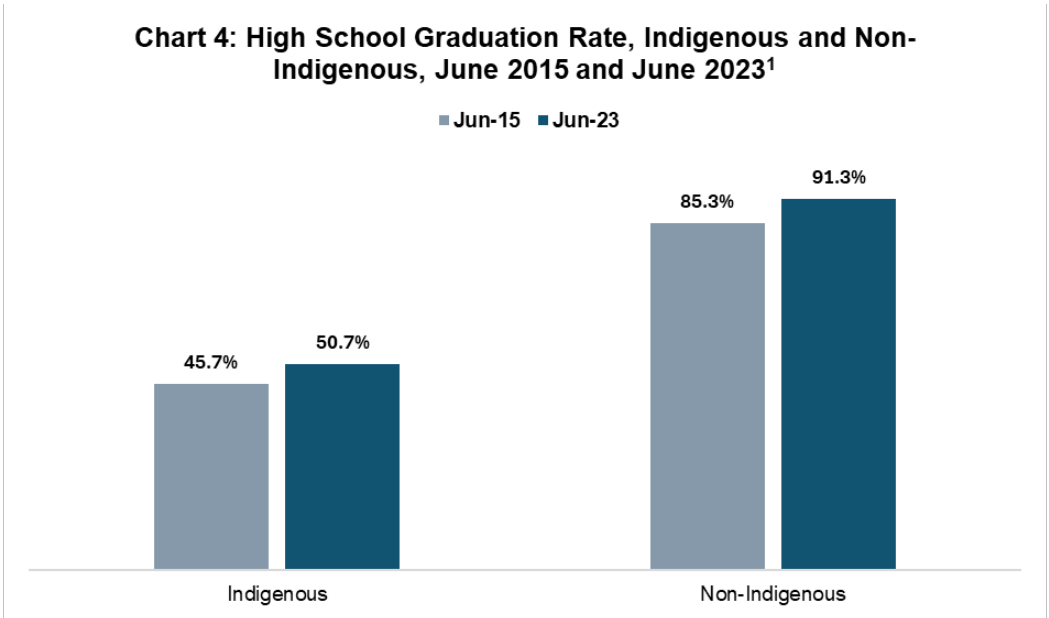
### High School Graduation Rate

High school graduation rate is higher among girls than boys. Both groups experienced an increase in graduation rate from June 2015 to June 2023.



<sup>1</sup>Student-tracked high school graduation rate that follows individual students in public and funded independent schools from Grade 9 and calculates the percentage who graduate within four years of beginning Grade 9, adjusted for attrition. Source- Government of Manitoba

The high school graduation rate among Indigenous children is lower than the rate for non-Indigenous children. The graduation rate for Indigenous children improved from 45.7 per cent in June 2015 to 50.7 per cent in June 2023.



<sup>1</sup>Student-tracked high school graduation rate that follows individual students in public and funded independent schools from Grade 9 and calculates the percentage who graduate within four years of beginning Grade 9, adjusted for attrition. Source- Government of Manitoba



## Core Housing Need

Except for Thompson, Manitoba's core housing need improved in 2021 across key densely populated areas compared to 2016, based on census data as shown in Table 6. Among these communities, only Winnipeg exhibited a higher core housing need than the overall provincial rate.

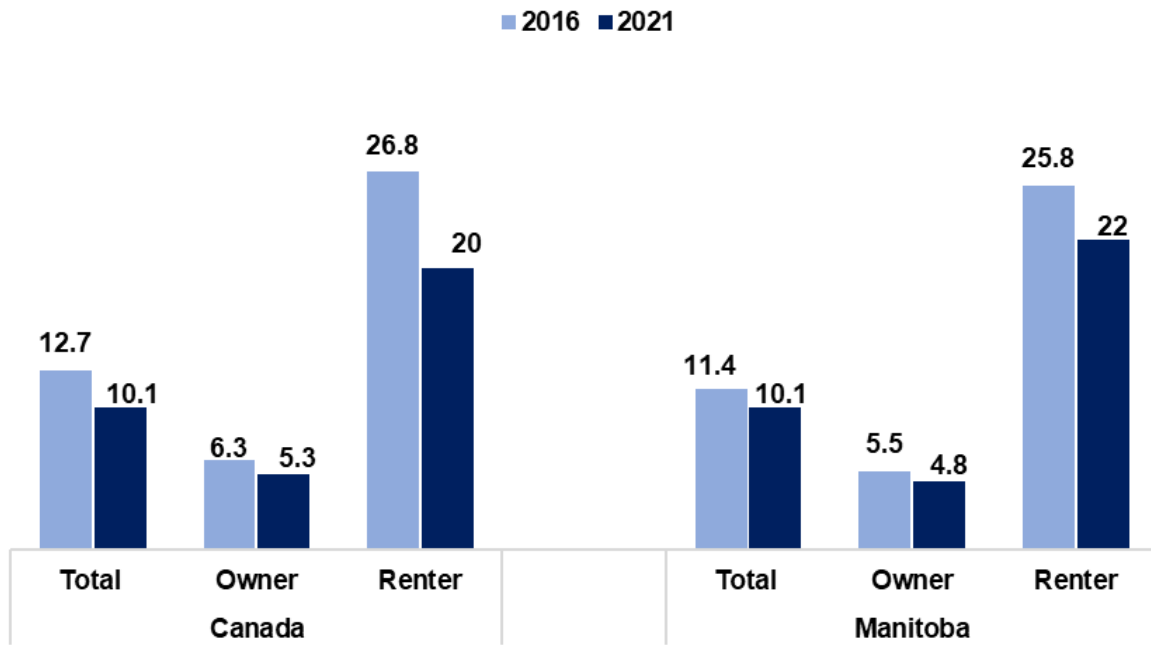
**Table 6: Per Cent Households in Core Housing Need, Canada, Manitoba and Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) and Census Agglomeration (CA) Areas<sup>1</sup>**

	<b>2006</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2021</b>
Canada	12.7	12.7	10.1
Manitoba	11.3	11.4	10.1
Winnipeg (CMA)	10.4	12.1	11.1
Brandon (CA)	8.4	7.7	6.5
Winkler (CA)	9.6	6.7	6.0
Steinbach (CA)	5.0	11.7	8.4
Portage la Prairie (CA)	9.1	8.9	7.9
Thompson (CA)	9.8	9.1	9.5

<sup>1</sup>Source: Statistics Canada's census data. According to Statistics Canada's definition, CMAs and CAs are formed of one or more adjacent municipalities that are centered on and have a high degree of integration with a large population centre, known as the core.

Census data for 2016 and 2021 indicate that the percentage of households in core housing need was higher among renter households than households with owned housing with or without mortgage (owner households). In 2021, Manitoba's core housing need among renter households was higher than Canada's overall core housing need for this type of household as shown in Chart 5. On the other hand, Manitoba's core housing need for owner households was lower than the national overall owner household core housing need.

**Chart 5: Per Cent of Household in Core Housing Need, Owner and Renter Households, Canada and Manitoba**



<sup>1</sup>Source - Statistics Canada, census data.

## Premature Mortality

The premature mortality indicator refers to deaths occurring before age 75 measured by the number of years of life lost per 1,000 population aged 1 to 74 years. The number of years lost is the difference between age at time of death and 75. This measure is higher among Manitobans in lower income quintiles.

Table 7 shows the number of years of life lost per 1,000 population, by income quintile in 2014/2015 and 2021/2022. Using 2014/15 as a baseline for comparison with recent 2021/22 records, the general trend indicates where the lower the income quintile, the higher the increase in premature mortality. Notably, the situation has relatively worsened for the second-lowest quintile in rural areas and the lowest quintile in urban areas.

**Table 7: Premature Mortality, Manitoba, by Income Quintile, Rural and Urban, 2014/2015 and 2021/2022<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Income Quintile</b>	<b>2014/2015</b>	<b>2021/2022</b>	<b>Difference (2021/2022 less 2014/2015)</b>
Lowest - Rural	95.2	89.7	-5.5
Second - Rural	68.6	102.7	34.1
Third - Rural	53.6	68.5	14.9
Fourth - Rural	47.1	47.6	0.5
Highest - Rural	38.9	46.1	7.2
Lowest - Urban	91.5	121.6	30.1
Second - Urban	54.8	54.8	0
Third - Urban	43.8	45.9	2.1
Fourth - Urban	35.8	34.4	-1.4
Highest - Urban	28.2	24.7	-3.5
<b>Manitoba overall</b>	<b>53.2</b>	<b>61.2</b>	<b>8</b>

<sup>1</sup>Deaths occurring before age 75 measured by the number of years of life lost per 1,000 population aged 1 to 74 years. The number of years lost is the difference between age at time of death and age 75. The data were adjusted for age and sex to allow for fair comparisons among areas with different population characteristics. Source – Government of Manitoba (Health)