

vibrant
COMMUNITIES
CALGARY

WHAT IS POVERTY?

Canada does not have an official poverty line.

According to the Chief Statistician of Canada, Ivan Fellegi, "The underlying difficulty is due to the fact that poverty is intrinsically a question of social consensus, at a given point in time..." In the absence of a universally agreed upon definition and measure of poverty, the Government of Canada developed the Low Income Cut-Offs (LICO) and Market Basket Measures (MBM). LICO is a relative measure of poverty, while the MBM is an absolute measure. Vibrant Communities Calgary believes that no single indicator adequately provides a comprehensive portrait of poverty in Calgary.

The most recent LICO and MBM for Calgary are tabled below.

2006 Market Basket Measure Thresholds for a Family of Two Adults and Two Children		2008 Before-Tax Low Income Cut-Offs for Canadian Cities with 500,000+ Persons	
Food	\$7,302	1 Person	\$22,171
Clothing	\$2,233	2 Person	\$27,601
Shelter	\$11,321	3 Person	\$33,933
Transportation	\$1,924	4 Person	\$41,198
Other	\$6,799	5 Person	\$46,727
Total	\$29,579	6 Person	\$52,699
		7+ Person	\$58,673



POVERTY IS THE CONDITION OF A HUMAN BEING WHO DOES NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT ECONOMIC AND OTHER RESOURCES TO LIVE WITH THE DIGNITY, CHOICES AND POWER THAT SUPPORT FULL PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY.

"POVERTY IS A BONDAGE." — POVERTY TALKS, 2008

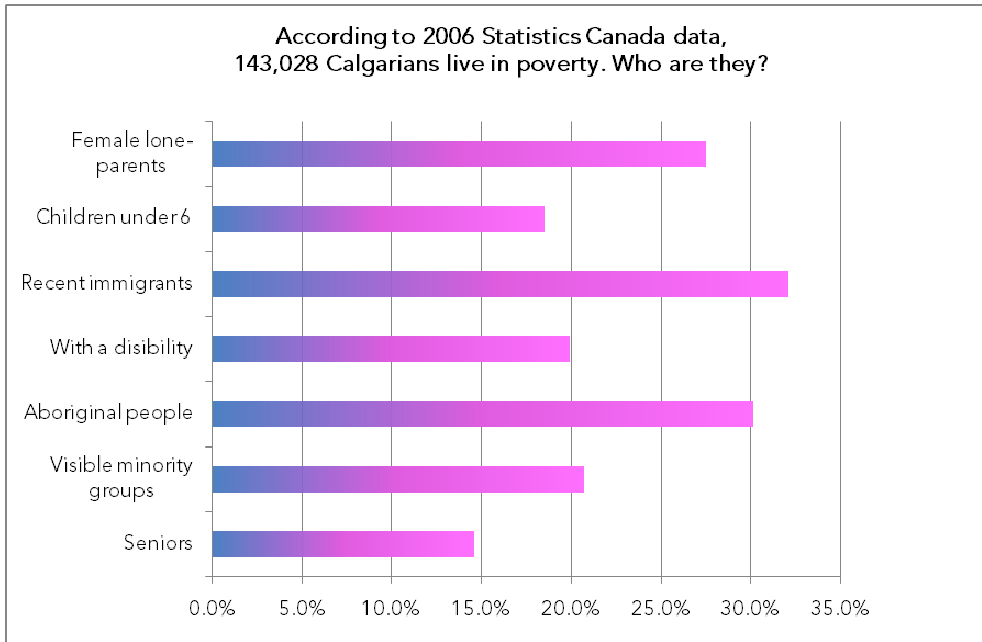
FAST FACTS: POVERTY IN CALGARY

Minimum Wage: A single individual employed at Alberta's minimum wage (\$8.80), working 35 hours per week, 52 weeks a year, would have an after-tax income (including holiday pay) of \$15,072. \$3,301 below the LICO

Alberta Works: A single individual receiving Alberta Works Income Support who is not able to work earns \$661 per month (including the Personal Needs Supplement), or 7,932 per year. \$14,239 below the LICO

Alberta Works: A two parent family, of three children under 12, receiving Alberta Works Income Support, looking for work, earns \$1,701 per month (including the federal National Child Benefit), or \$20,412 per year. \$26,315 below the LICO

Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH): A single individual with a disability that severely impairs their ability to earn a living can earn a maximum benefit of \$1,188 per month, or \$14,256 per year. \$7,915 below the LICO



DID YOU KNOW?

- 89,586 Calgarians received assistance from the Calgary Food Bank in 2008, an increase of 44,988 people since 2004
- During the first six months of 2009, 60,100 Calgarians held jobs paying less than \$12 per hour
- 670 City of Calgary staff and contract employees earn less than \$12 per hour
- On May 14, 4,060 Calgarians were believed to be absolutely homeless, including 100 children

ECONOMIC COSTS OF POVERTY

Health: Poverty is responsible for increased health care costs in Calgary of at least \$3.5 million per year and possibly as much as \$16.3 million

Other Costs: Poverty is responsible for increased other economic costs in Calgary that could amount to as much as \$32 million per year

Education: Poverty is responsible for increased school system costs in Calgary of at least \$4.9 million per year, and possibly as much as \$7.9 million

Source: United Way of Calgary and Area, 2004

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,
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