

# The Groceries and Essentials Benefit

## Policy primer | Dec 2024



Food insecurity is at a historic high in Canada: 8.7 million people can't afford nourishing food.<sup>1</sup> As rent, inflation, and food prices soar, the federal government must take action to address food insecurity's root cause: insufficient income.

**That's why Community Food Centres Canada is calling for the federal government to create a [Groceries and Essentials Benefit \(GEB\)](#).**

Evidence has shown that only policies that enhance people's incomes can effectively reduce food insecurity.<sup>2</sup> The GEB would be a consistent and crucial monthly means to afford nourishing food.

**Nearly 1 in 4 people  
in Canada now experience  
food insecurity.<sup>1</sup>**

**The time to  
act is now!**

## What is the GEB?

In 2023, as inflation continued to rise, the federal government used the GST/HST credit to provide a one-time [Grocery Rebate](#). The rebate provided much-needed relief quickly and directly—but temporarily. The GEB builds on this model to more meaningfully address food insecurity.

Developed by the [Affordability Action Council](#) in consultation with food security and poverty reduction organizations, the GEB would:

- be provided to individuals and families earning less than \$60,000 per year to offset the rising cost of groceries and everyday necessities
- provide a monthly benefit of:
  - \$50 per child (\$600 annually per child) to families with children
  - up to \$150 depending on income (capped at \$1800 per year) to people aged 18 to 64.
- be income tested and administered through the tax system, similar to the existing GST/HST credit.

A growing coalition of food security and anti-poverty organizations, including Community Food Centres Canada, is advocating for the GEB.

## How the GEB would help

- No federal program exists that meaningfully helps single people aged 18 to 64. Yet this group is among those most affected by poverty and food insecurity.
- By design, the GEB would provide immediate and much-needed income support to single people aged 18 to 64 and families with children.
- Providing a predictable, monthly benefit helps people address monthly budget pressures and increases the likelihood of the benefit being used for its intended purpose: buying food and other essentials.<sup>3</sup>
- **The GEB would target the people most affected by food insecurity, including the 5.1 million people living on less than \$25,000 per year.**

**The GEB would support close to 9.7 million families from coast to coast to coast.**

Learn about our [Poverty Action Unit](#) or contact us at [pau@cfccanada.ca](mailto:pau@cfccanada.ca).



## References

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CANADA good food is just the beginning