

TRANSPORTATION

HOUSING

INCOME

SUPPORT



This fact sheet is part of a series of five. Fact sheets available are **transportation, housing, income, support** and **overview**. Available for download at www.surreyprc.ca



Making Work Pay

The table below shows the median income reported across those who worked full year, full time and includes comparative information by gender.

	Total Population with Income from Employment	Median Income All Full-Time Workers	Median Income (Male)	Median Income (Female)
Metro Vancouver	631,975	\$50,016	\$55,401	\$44,641
Surrey	121,825	\$45,462	\$50,737	\$40,481

The importance of a strong social safety net

Information from the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation also shows that there were approximately 14,632 households and 20,610 individuals in Surrey relying on income assistance (April 2011). This represents approximately 23% of the 62,512 income assistance cases across Metro Vancouver. For a single person household, the assistance available is approximately \$610 per month, while the assistance available for a couple with two children is approximately \$1,101 per month. These translate into an annual income of \$7,320 for a single person and \$13,212 for a couple with two children; income levels significantly below the low income measure threshold for a single person household (\$19,460) and the low income measure threshold for a family of four (\$38,920).

The importance of a strong social safety net

There has been a patchwork of programs introduced to respond to emerging needs and pressures. Some have included enhancements to existing programs. Others have been in the form of one-time or time-limited funding. The federal government provided a list of programs and initiatives that address poverty in the *Government Response to the Final Report on the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology on Cities entitled "In from the Margins: A call to Action on Poverty, Housing and Homelessness"*. These programs include apprenticeship grants, Aboriginal skills and employment training strategies and funding, a variety of tax measures aimed at families with children and people with disabilities, employment insurance, student grants and summer jobs programs, and literacy programs.

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IS HOW WE END POVERTY IN SURREY

TRANSPORTATION

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THE FACTS ON POVERTY IN SURREY

income

Income is about economic security and access to opportunities. Too many families and individuals are living from pay cheque to pay cheque, earning too little to let them get ahead

Based on the current low-income measure (LIM), a single person is considered to be living in poverty if their income is below \$19,460 (after tax). Similarly, a two person household is considered to be living in poverty if their income is below \$27,211. For a family of four, the poverty line is \$38,920.

What we know from our research

An individual working full year, full time at the minimum wage lives on the cusp of poverty

In May 2012, the minimum wage in BC increased from \$9.50 per hour to \$10.25 per hour. A minimum wage of \$10.25 per hour translates into approximately \$384 per week assuming a 37.5 hour week. Annually this translates into an income of \$19, 988 which is marginally above the poverty line for single parents. A single-parent family with the parent working full time at the minimum wage would effectively be living in poverty.

Working poor couples earning minimum wage also face challenges

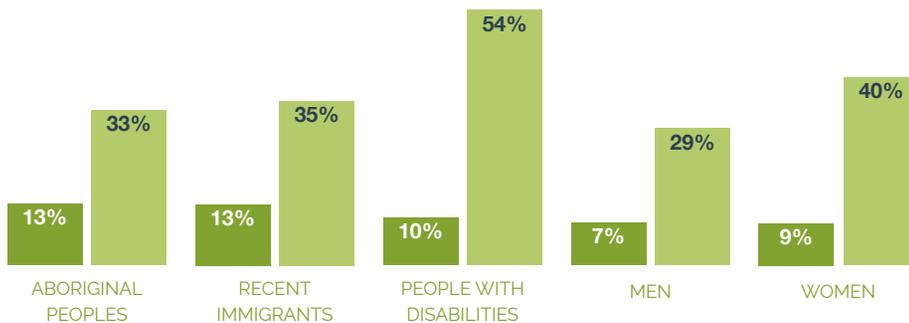
A family of four, where both of the heads of the household are working full-time and earning minimum wage will earn just enough to move them out of poverty based on the established income cut-offs. At the same time, even though their income has allowed them to move out of poverty, they would not be able to afford the average 3 bedroom rent in Surrey (\$1,080) without spending more than 30 per cent of their income on their housing costs. As well, these households remain among those who are considered to be the near poor and who face the risk of falling back into poverty.

The unemployment rate among people in Surrey ranged from 7% for men to 13% for recent immigrants and Aboriginal people.



Who's looking for work?

UNEMPLOYMENT VARIES FROM GROUP TO GROUP



Access to employment and opportunities

Through our research we observed that there is significant variation in the employment and economic opportunities available to different groups and sectors of the community. Among people who were in the labour force, the following general patterns and trends emerged.

WOMEN Approximately 28% of all women 15 and older living in Surrey worked part-time while 65% worked full year, full-time. Of those working full-time, the median hourly earnings were \$22.49 in 2011.

MEN Approximately 12% of all men 15 and older living in Surrey worked part-time while 83% worked full year, full-time. Of those working fulltime, the median hourly earnings were \$28.19.

ABORIGINAL PEOPLE Approximately 22% of all Aboriginal people 15 and older living in Surrey worked part-time while 69% worked full year, fulltime. Of those working full-time, the median hourly earnings were \$22.14.

RECENT IMMIGRANTS Approximately 18% of all recent immigrants 15 and older living in Surrey worked part-time while 70% worked full year, full-time. Of those working full-time, the median hourly earnings were \$18.70.

PEOPLE WITH HEALTH AND ACTIVITY LIMITATIONS Approximately 21% of all people with health and activity limitations in Surrey 15 and older worked part-time while 72% worked full year, full-time. Of those working full-time, the median hourly earnings were \$24.80.

Some populations earn significantly less than others. On average, men earned more than 1.5 times what recent immigrants earned.

What are people earning?

HOURLY WAGES VARY BETWEEN POPULATION GROUPS

