

Canada-Manitoba Housing Benefit – Homelessness Frequently Asked Questions

This document is available in alternate formats upon request.

Q: Who is eligible for the homelessness stream of the Canada-Manitoba Housing Benefit (CMHB)?

A: To be eligible for the homelessness stream of the CMHB, you must:

- complete a program application;
- be receiving Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) or non-EIA Rent Assist, or have an earned annual net income below the non-EIA Disability Program Income Limits (currently \$30,520 annually);
- need assistance to cover rental costs;
- be a Canadian Citizen, permanent resident of Canada or refugee claimant;
- live in private rental accommodation; and
- have a tenancy agreement prior to receiving the benefit.

Q: Do I need to have a signed lease or EIA Rent Form to apply for the benefit?

A: No. Applications will not require a signed lease or EIA Rent Form, as approvals prior to securing a tenancy are conditional. However, a signed lease or EIA Rent Form is still required to receive the benefit, and payment will not be issued until housing is secured.

Q: I'm 65 years old and no longer eligible to receive EIA. Can I still apply for the CMHB?

A: Individuals over the age of 65 and no longer receiving EIA, can still apply for the CMHB. Applicant's net income will be used and must be below the non-EIA Disability Program Income Limits (currently \$30,520 annually), to determine program eligibility and benefit amount.

Q: I have a job and I'm a refugee claimant and therefore I'm not eligible for EIA or non-EIA Rent Assist. Can I still apply for the CMHB?

A: Yes. Working refugee claimants can still apply for the CMHB. Applicant's net income will be used and must be below the non-EIA Disability Program Income Limits (currently \$30,520 annually), to determine program eligibility and benefit amount.

Some refugee claimants receive the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) while waiting on EIA enrollment. Refugee claimants waiting for enrollment on EIA and receiving income support from RAP will have their benefit calculated as Rent – RAP shelter allowance = CMHB, up to a maximum of \$350 per month.

Q: What happens after I apply?

A: You will get a letter in the mail or an e-mail informing you that your application is conditionally approved, approved, denied, or if more information is needed.

Q: Once I submit an application, how long will it take to hear if I've been approved?

A: It will take approximately six to eight weeks to process your application. After that, you will receive a letter in the mail or an email informing you of your application status.

Q: Does my landlord need to know that I am receiving the CMHB?

A: No. You have the choice to receive the monthly benefit directly; your landlord does not need to know you are receiving this benefit.

Q: How is the CMHB paid? Can I request that the benefit go directly to my landlord, trustee, or power of attorney?

A: You can decide how you want to receive the benefit. You can request that the benefit is paid directly to you via direct deposit, or a cheque sent to you by mail. You can also choose to have the benefit sent to your landlord, trustee, or power of attorney. **Please note that direct deposit is the preferred method of payment.**

Q: How is my benefit amount calculated?

A: Unless otherwise stated, the CMHB will be calculated as follows for eligible applicants:

For applicants receiving EIA Rent Assist, the benefit will be calculated as:
CMHB = Rent – Rent Assist, up to \$350 per month

For applicants receiving Non-EIA Rent Assist, the benefit will be calculated as:
CMHB = Rent – (30% of income + Non-EIA Rent Assist), up to \$350 per month

If you are paying for your utilities out of pocket (i.e., a cold rent), you are eligible to receive an additional \$72 on top of your monthly benefit amount to help with your utility costs.

Q: When will I receive my benefit?

A: Applicants will begin receiving the benefit the month after an individual's application has been approved. For example, if your application received final approval in October, you will receive your first benefit payment in November.

Q: Is the CMHB taxable income?

A: The CMHB is not taxable income. However, you will receive a T5007 at tax time as the benefit must be claimed as a social assistance payment (the same as Rent Assist, for example).

Q: What happens if I move, am evicted, or my income changes?

A: You must report any changes in your personal information, such as change of address, rent amount, or income as soon as possible. To do this, [download the Change in Information Form](#) and provide it to the organization that issues your payment (Provincial Services, End Homelessness Winnipeg, Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation, or CMHA Thompson).

Q: How long can I receive the benefit?

A: There is no time limit attached to the benefit. You may receive the benefit as long as you are eligible.

However, the CMHB is funded under the National Housing Strategy Canada-Manitoba Bilateral Agreement, which ends March 31, 2028. You will be informed of next steps closer to this date.

Q: Am I still eligible if I live with a family member or friend's house but am paying rent?

A: Yes, you are still eligible as long as you meet the eligibility criteria, pay rent and have a written rent agreement with the person from which you are renting. If you do not have a written rent agreement, your landlord or the person from which you are renting can [download a form](#) and provide with your application.

Q: Do I need to reapply every year?

A: You must renew your application each year to continue receiving the benefit. You will receive a renewal notice 90 days before the expiry of your benefit. The notice will include the renewal form for you to complete.

Q: I do not receive the CMHB but need help with my utilities payment. Can I receive the \$72 utilities payment?

A: No, you must be receiving the CMHB to receive the \$72 utilities payment in addition to paying for your utilities out of pocket (i.e., cold rent).

Manitoba Housing offers a [variety of other programs and supports](#) that may help you.

Q: If I live with a roommate and pay a "cold rent", do both of us receive the utilities payment?

A: Yes, as long as you both qualify for the CMHB, and are paying for utilities out of pocket, you both would receive the utilities payment.

Q: Do I need to have filed my income tax to receive the benefit?

A: No, eligibility for CMHB is dependent on being in receipt of EIA or non-EIA Rent Assist or your working income based on 3 most recent paystubs.

Q: Do I need a referral from a support service agency to be eligible for the CMHB?

A: No, please see the following for directions on how to apply.

Q. How can I apply?

A. To apply for the CMHB, [download an application form](#).

To have an application form mailed to you, please e-mail the following:
CMHBSI@gov.mb.ca

Send by mail or in person:

Department of Families Provincial Services
100-114 Garry Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 4V4