

# 2024

## Rent Supplement Portfolio Review



THE AGENCY FOR  
CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING  
L'AGENCE DES  
COOPÉRATIVES D'HABITATION





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# Introduction

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC's) Rent Supplement Program was established after the lapse of the provincially funded rent supplement programs in Ontario and PEI. These programs enabled co-operatives developed under the legacy co-operative housing programs to house needy households unable to pay the market housing charges.<sup>1</sup> More specifically, this unilateral rent-geared-to-income (RGI) program was paired with Section 27/61 (S27/61), Federal Co-operative Housing Program (index-linked mortgage/ILM) and a select group of Section 95 (S95) co-ops. The program funds the difference between the co-operative's market housing charge and the geared-to-income charge for these qualified households.

The Agency for Co-operative Housing assumed responsibility for administering the Rent Supplement Program on CMHC's behalf in June 2017.

Additional information on the program can be found on the [Agency's website](#).

The Agency for Co-operative Housing has developed the Rent Supplement Portfolio Report to serve three purposes:

- To assemble meaningful information on client co-operatives in CMHC's Rent Supplement Program
- To analyze clients' rent-supplement spending over time
- To learn more about the households that benefit from rent supplement

<sup>1</sup> While housing co-operatives in Alberta and B.C. also receive rent supplements, the programs are provincially administered. This study deals only with federally funded rent supplement co-operatives in Ontario and PEI.





The dataset on which this study is based includes 84 housing co-operatives with a federal rent supplement agreement, comprising 12 per cent of the Agency's portfolio as of 31 December 2024.<sup>2</sup> While the Agency assumed responsibility for administering the Rent Supplement Program in 2017, the following analyses have treated 2018 as the base year from which we drew the 2018 dataset. We made this choice because 2018 reflects the year during which co-operatives with CMHC rent supplement filed their first complete Annual Information Return (AIR) and rent-supplement claim under Agency administration. For more information on the dataset, go to [Appendix A](#).

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<sup>2</sup> See the [2024 Biannual Portfolio Performance Review](#) for our report on the performance of the Agency's full portfolio over the last 17 years. An additional review focused on the [Agency's CMHC Rental Assistance Portfolio](#) is also available.



## Geographic Distribution

Since 2018, the rent supplement portfolio has decreased by 34 per cent (2018: 128 co-ops, 2024: 84 co-ops) and is expected to drop even more by 2030, with only a small handful of agreements continuing into early 2031. As the original CMHC rent supplement agreements were generally aligned with legacy-program agreement terms and/or mortgage dates, this decrease is predictable. When their agreements end, most co-operatives sign up for CMHC's new Rental Assistance (FCHI-2) Program, while it is still available.

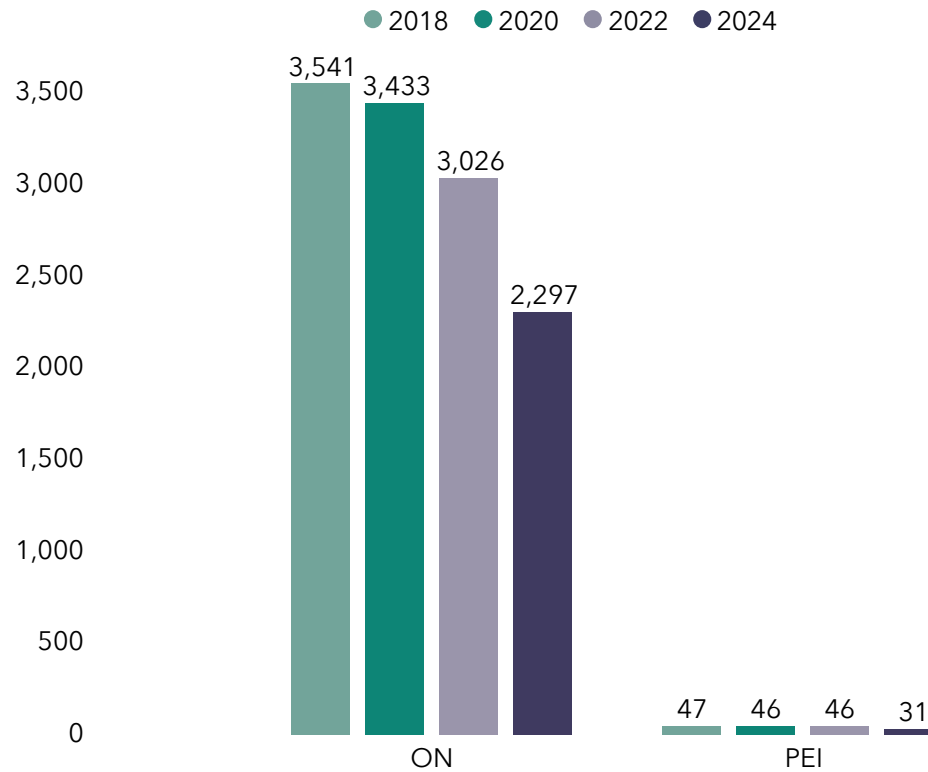
Rent Supplement by Province

	ON	PEI	All
Number of Co-ops	81	3	<b>84</b>
Proportion of Portfolio	96%	4%	<b>100%</b>

The slow decline in co-operatives in the program is also reflected in the number of individual households in receipt of rent supplement at some point in the year (ON: 35% decrease since 2018; PEI: 34% decrease). These numbers will continue to slide as more housing co-operatives reach the end of their rent supplement agreement.



### Rent Supplement Households by Province



Despite the approaching end of rent supplement agreements, the average number of assisted units per rent-supplement co-operative has declined only slightly, suggesting that co-ops intend to continue providing rent-geared-to-income assistance once their rent supplement agreements have come to term, likely through the federal rental assistance program (FCHI-2). As the PEI dataset is very small (2018: 5 co-ops; 2024: 3 co-ops), the average number of assisted units tends to fluctuate considerably.





### Average Assisted Units per Co-operative

	ON	PEI	All
2018	37%	50%	<b>38%</b>
2020	33%	48%	<b>33%</b>
2022	37%	44%	<b>38%</b>
2024	35%	40%	<b>35%</b>

While recent utilization rates have declined slightly, over time Ontario co-operatives in particular have not used all the rent supplement available to them under the program. This may be due to the distribution of the legacy programs under which co-operatives offer rent supplements. In PEI, most co-operatives have ILM legacy agreements, whereas in Ontario we see a larger share of S27/61 agreements (2024: 27%). Historically, S27/61 co-operatives have kept their housing charges low, while ILM co-operatives must move their housing charges closer to market to continue qualifying for federal assistance. These higher housing charges would increase the demand for rent supplements.



## Rent Supplement Utilization Rates

	ON	PEI	All
2018	88%	100%	<b>89%</b>
2020	86%	94%	<b>86%</b>
2022	83%	91%	<b>83%</b>
2024	80%	96%	<b>81%</b>

Speculatively, the underuse of rent supplements could also be due to households that remain in the co-op community after their economic circumstances have improved such that they no longer qualify for assistance. As they remain in the unit, no vacancy is created for a new household requiring assistance.

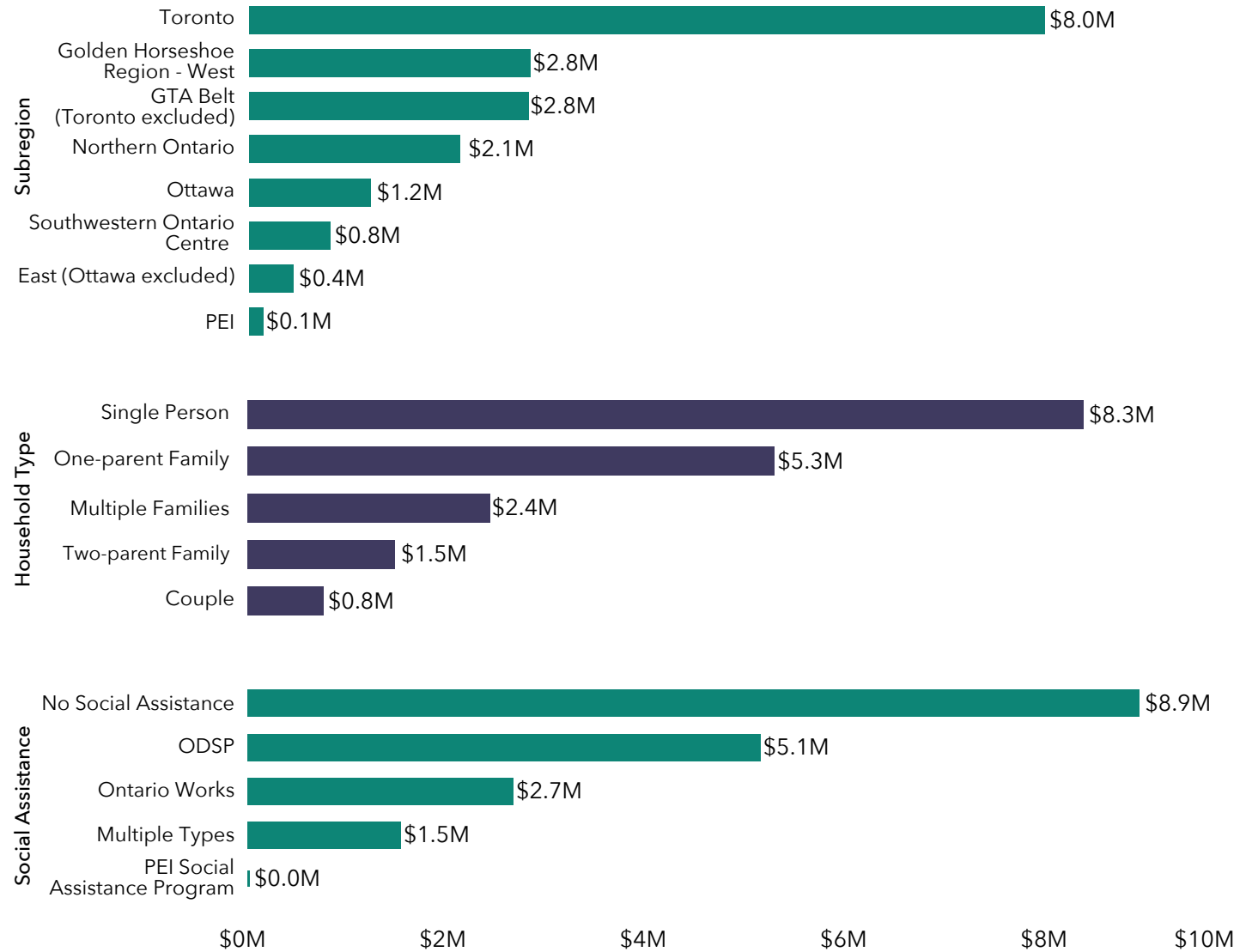
## Distribution of Rent Supplement Dollars

In 2024, approximately \$18.27 million in rent supplement was allocated to the Agency's rent-supplement portfolio (2022: \$23.01 million; 2020: \$25.39 million; 2018: \$25.48 million). The following graph shows the distribution by subregion, family type and receipt of social assistance. Unsurprisingly, when viewed through these lenses, we find that most rent supplements go to Toronto (2024: 44%; 2018: 43%) and to single-person households and one-parent families (2024: 75%; 2018: 77%). The high cost of housing, especially in major urban centres, and the financial pressures experienced by a single-income household, make affording adequate housing particularly challenging. For additional details on the composition of the subregions, see [Appendix A](#).





## Distribution of Rent Supplement

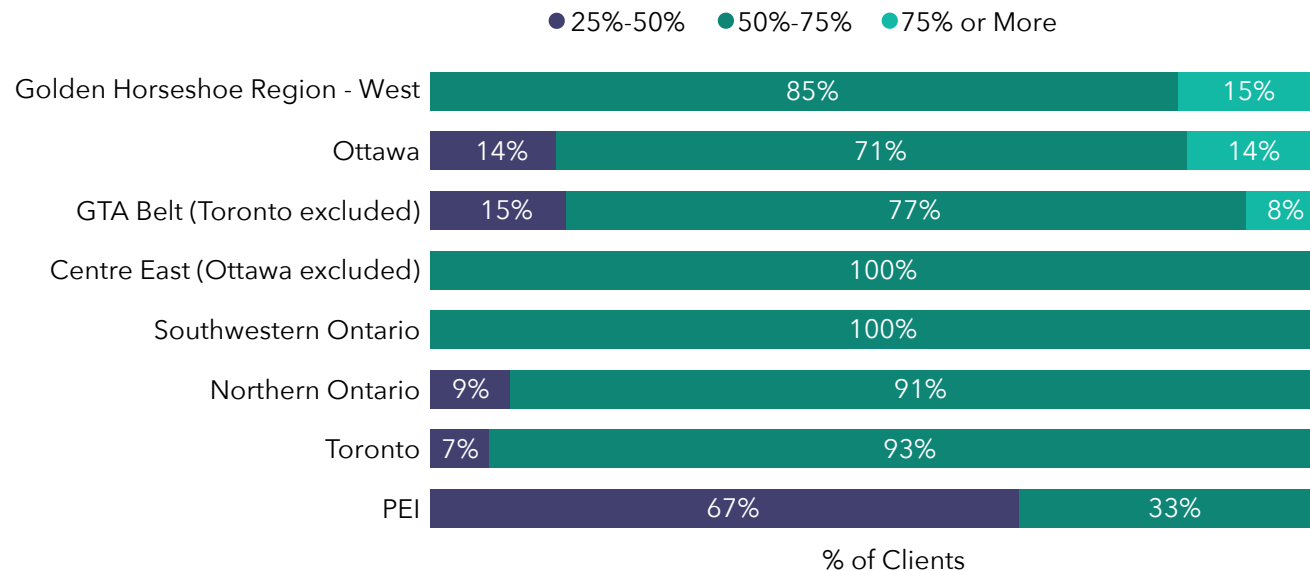




The Agency collects limited demographic information on households receiving a rent supplement but does record details about those in receipt of social assistance, as their status affects calculations of assistance. While approximately \$9 million went toward households with no social assistance, slightly more—\$9.3 million (51%)—went to households in receipt of some form of social assistance. In 2024, out of the 599 households that reported \$0 total household income, 91 per cent were also recipients of social assistance.<sup>3</sup> This meant that they did not report any additional income for the period.

The value of the rent supplement program in ensuring housing is affordable for low, modest and moderate-income households can also be seen in the following graph. Most recipients in the rent supplement portfolio— 86 per cent—received assistance equal to 50 to 75 per cent of their housing charge, with the highest percentages (75% or more) found in the Golden Horseshoe Region, Ottawa and the GTA Belt.

### Average Rent Supplement as Percentage of Full Housing Charge

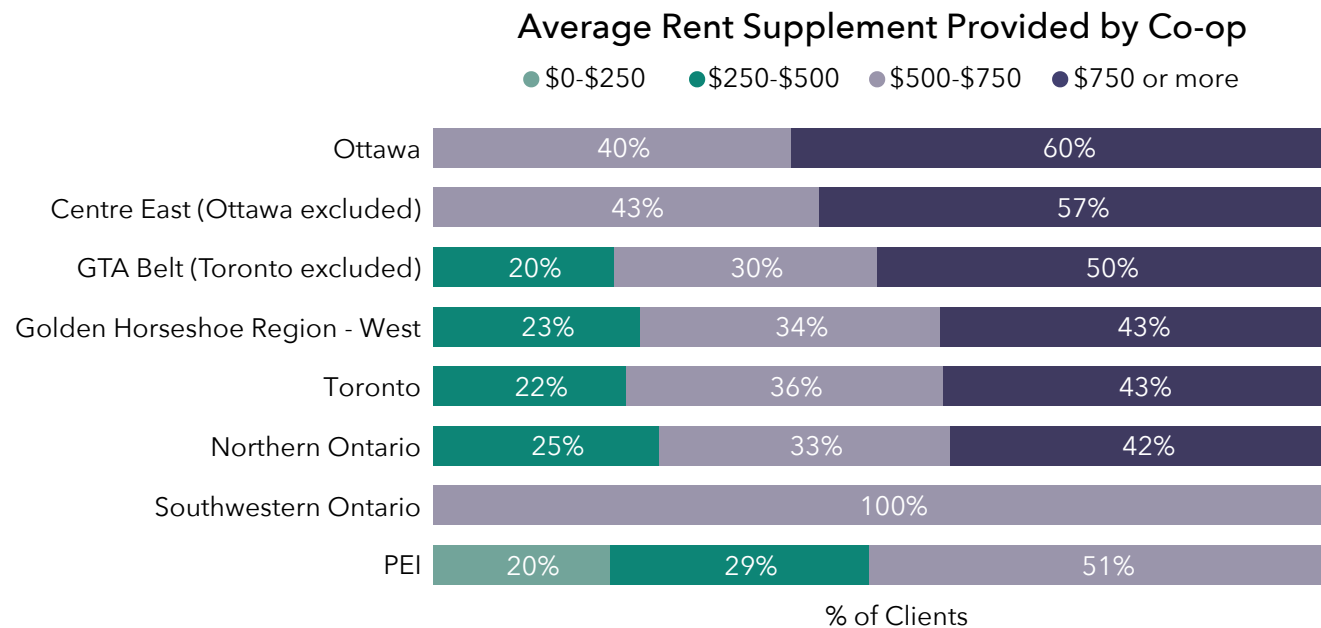


<sup>3</sup> In this circumstance, total household income was drawn from month 12 of the co-operative's fiscal year. As monthly incomes can vary throughout the year, this number may fluctuate slightly depending on the month selected.



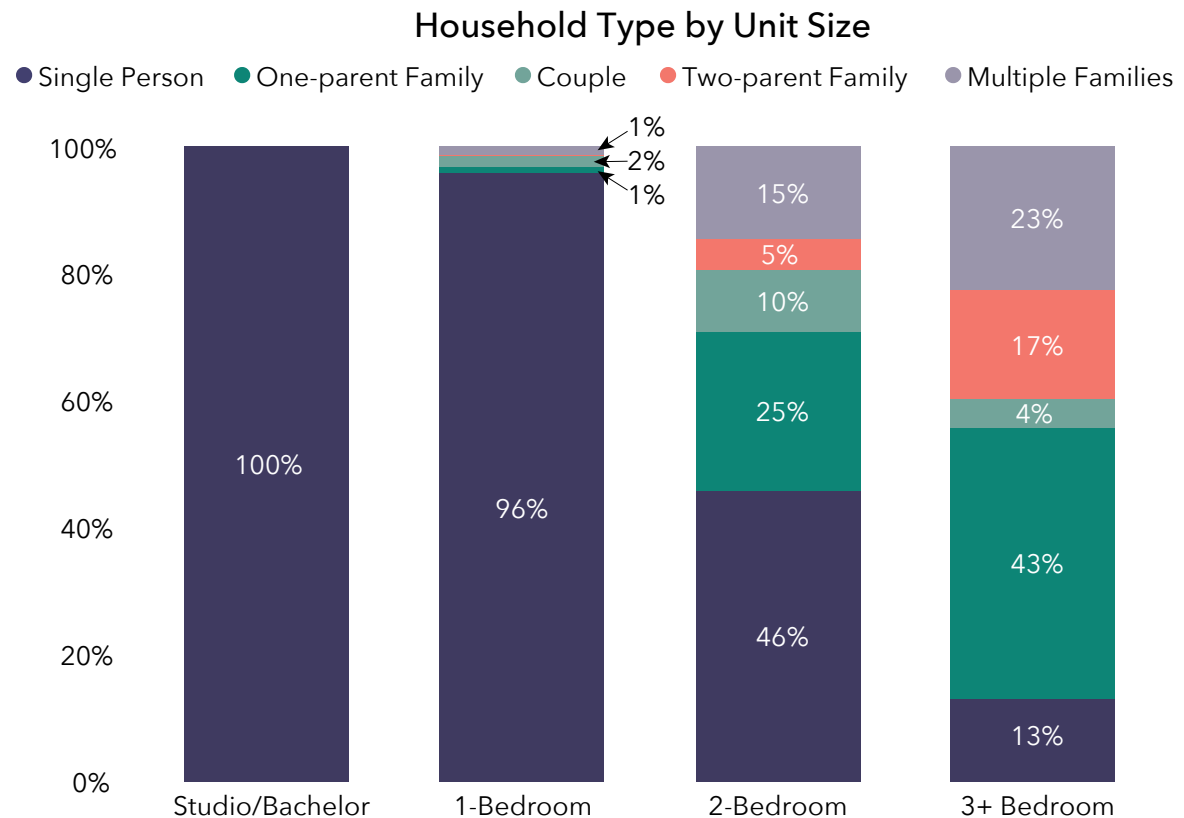


Similarly, Ottawa and central eastern Ontario had the highest proportion of co-ops providing deeper subsidies of \$750 or more on average, followed by the GTA Belt and then the Golden Horseshoe Region. The graph below shows the distribution by subregion of rent supplement per unit, per month, by the amount of assistance given. When analyzed at the household level, the highest average monthly rental assistance provided in 2024 was \$1,165 (\$1,089 in 2018), and the lowest was \$209 (\$196 in 2018). The median of the average monthly rent supplement benefiting assisted households (half were higher and half lower) was \$695 in 2024 (\$624 in 2018).





The distribution of households receiving a rent supplement across unit types or sizes is relatively even outside of a small percentage of those housed in a studio/bachelor unit (2%). In 2024, 39 per cent of recipient households lived in two-bedroom units, followed by three-bedroom or more (33% of households) and finally one-bedroom (26% of households). However, the primary recipients of rental assistance—single persons—primarily reside in studio/bachelor or one-bedroom units, with one-parent families living in units with three or more bedrooms (43%), followed by two-bedroom units (25%).

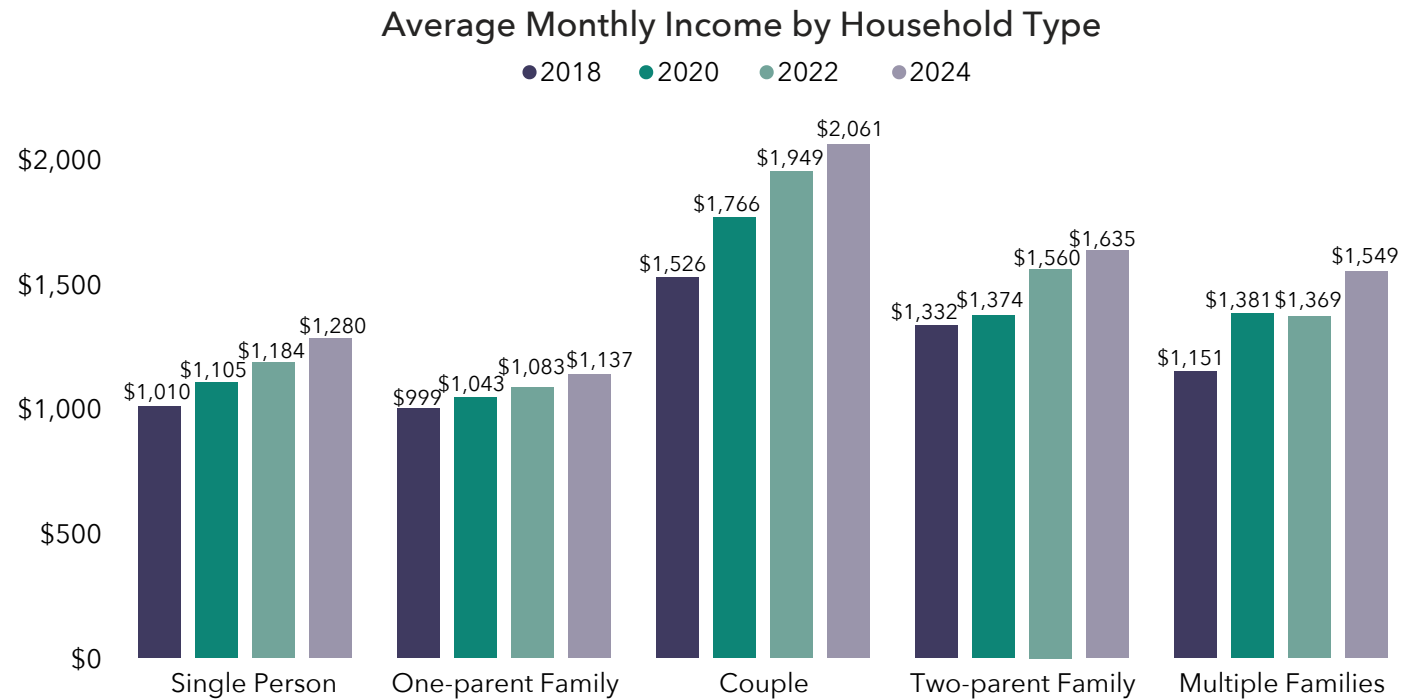







## Household Income

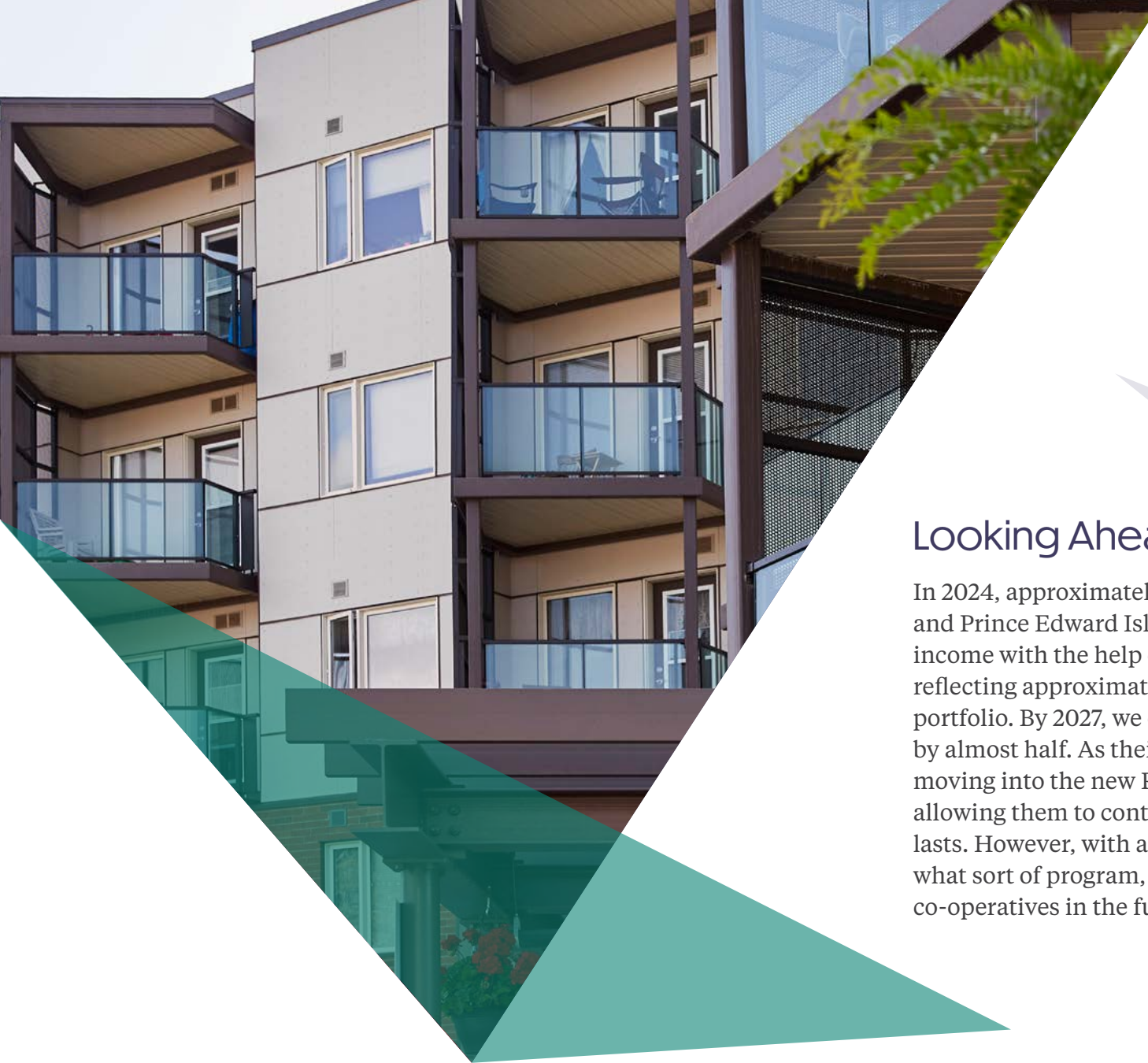
While incomes are verified annually, changes to household incomes can occur between annual reviews, affecting a household's eligibility. In light of this, the Agency's income data are shown in monthly amounts, rather than annual amounts. Examining average monthly incomes by household type reveals that couples and multiple-family households experienced the largest increase (35%), followed by single-person and two-parent family households. One-parent families saw the lowest increase in monthly income since 2018 (the base year).





About 86 per cent of households report a monthly income of \$1,500 or more, and 13 per cent report incomes between \$500 and \$1,500. Only one per cent report a monthly income below \$500, with 88 per cent of those households reporting no income at all. When viewed through the lens of household type, we see a similar distribution, with single-person and one-parent households making up the majority (78%) of those with no income.





## Looking Ahead

In 2024, approximately 4,400 households in Ontario and Prince Edward Island were paying according to their income with the help of CMHC's Rent Supplement Program, reflecting approximately 12 per cent of the Agency's portfolio. By 2027, we expect to see that percentage drop by almost half. As their agreements end, many co-ops are moving into the new Rental Assistance (FCHI-2) program, allowing them to continue providing assistance while it lasts. However, with an end date of March 2028, it is unclear what sort of program, if any, will be available to housing co-operatives in the future.

# Appendix A

## The 2024 Dataset

The data in this report were drawn from clients' AIRs and rent supplement claims received and validated by the Agency by 15 January 2025 for fiscal years ending between August 2023 and July 2024 (the study year).

Datasets for prior years are for equivalent periods. However, datasets for previous study years have been adjusted to include late-arriving claims for all co-operatives in the Rent Supplement Program during the period in question. This increases the numbers available for trend analyses.

### Composition of Datasets for Prior Year Comparisons

Year	Total Co-op Clients
2018	128
2019	128
2020	128
2021	127
2022	111
2023	108
2024	84

## Ontario Geographical Distribution Details

<b>Southwestern Ontario</b>	Amherstburg, Chatham, Essex, London, Sarnia, St. Mary's, St. Thomas, Strathroy, Tillsonburg, Windsor, Woodstock
<b>Golden Horseshoe Region - West</b>	Brantford, Burlington, Cambridge, Dundas, Guelph, Hamilton, Kitchener, Niagara Falls, St. Catharines, Stony Creek, Waterloo, Welland
<b>Toronto</b>	Downsview, Etobicoke, North York, Rexdale, Scarborough, Toronto, West Hill, Weston, York
<b>GTA Belt (Toronto excluded)</b>	Ajax, Aurora, Brampton, Concord, Georgetown, Markham, Mississauga, Newmarket, Oakville, Oshawa, Richmond Hill, Thornhill, Whitby
<b>Ottawa</b>	Gloucester, Kanata, Nepean, Orleans, Ottawa, Vanier
<b>Ontario Centre East (Ottawa excluded)</b>	Angus, Barrie, Belleville, Brockville, Collingwood, Jackson's Point, Keswick, Kingston, Midland, Orangeville, Orillia, Owen Sound, Peterborough, Rockland
<b>Northern Ontario</b>	Chelmsford, North Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Timmins
<b>Ontario Centre East (Ottawa excluded)</b>	Angus, Barrie, Belleville, Brockville, Collingwood, Jackson's Point, Keswick, Kingston, Midland, Orangeville, Orillia, Owen Sound, Peterborough, Rockland
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