

# Frequently Asked Questions

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## Background

We want youth transitioning to adulthood to have the supports, tools and relationship-based networks they need to thrive. MCFD is continuing to listen to the voices of youth and young adults, Indigenous organizations and communities, youth-supporting agencies and advocates like the Representative for Children and Youth who have all told us that transition supports for youth in care need to be better, relationship-focused, more inclusive, and provided past the age of 19.

To transform the system of services and supports for youth and young adults with care experience, we are introducing new and expanded housing supports, including the new Rent Supplement Program.

### Why are enhanced housing supports needed?

Through engagement with youth and young adults from care and those who support them, we know that finding and maintaining safe housing is a significant challenge for young people across B.C. These new and enhanced housing programs support individuals transitioning to independence to remain stably housed and will help prevent the experience of homelessness.

### How will young adults be made aware of the new Rent Supplement Program?

Information on rent supplements will be available through updates to the Abilities and Journeys of Empowerment (SAJE) web pages and AgedOut.com.

Communications material including infographics and FAQs will also be sent to community and Indigenous partners to share with young adults who may be able to benefit from the new rent supplements.

Additionally, MCFD and ICFSA staff will be sent information on this program to share with youth and young adults from care, answer any questions they may have and assist them with the application process.

## MCFD Rent Supplement Program

### What are rent supplements?

The new MCFD Rent Supplement Program supports eligible young adults who live in the private rental market.

Each eligible young person will receive \$600-a-month for two years or until the month of their 27th birthday, whichever comes first, so long as they continue to meet the eligibility criteria.

### Why are we introducing this new program?

The MCFD Rent Supplement Program is intended to enhance stable housing and prevent the experience of homelessness for young adults from government care. The program is intended to reach the most vulnerable young adults with care experience to live independently in the private rental market.

### How are applications being assessed?

50% of the rent supplements are available to Indigenous young adults. The rent supplement aims to prioritize the most vulnerable young adults and applications are assessed based on income criteria. Once Indigeneity and income criteria are applied, applications are assessed on a first-come-first-served basis.

### Where can rent supplements be used?

Recipients must be renting or [intending to rent](#) in the private rental market in B.C. and cannot be living in supported or subsidized housing arrangements.

### When will rent supplements be available?

Applications will be accepted online. Please check the [SAJE Housing Supports](#) web page regularly for more information.

### Is the rent supplement considered income? Is it necessary to declare the amount received when filing taxes?

The rent supplement counts as a social benefit and must be included in my income tax filing. A T5007 form will be mailed to a young adult annually at the last address

they received their rent supplement at or the mailing address provided on their application, if different.

## Eligibility

### Who can apply?

Young adults can apply for the Rent Supplement program if:

1. They are between the ages of 19 to 26 (up until their 27<sup>th</sup> birthday); and
2. They meet at least **ONE** of the following criteria:
  - a. Are eligible for the Agreements with Young Adults program; **OR**
  - b. Spent 24 cumulative months in **any** care status between ages 12 to 19; **OR**
  - c. Were adopted or had their custody permanently transferred to someone other than their parent between ages 12 to 19; **and**
3. Are renting in the private rental market within B.C.

### How do you define private rental market?

“Private rental market” is defined as housing owned by an entity other than the applicant that is rented to tenants. Rental housing can refer to any type of housing available on the market, and could include but is not limited to apartments, condos, duplexes, townhouses, single-detached dwellings etc.

Housing that is not in the private rental market includes: subsidized housing or a shareholder living in co-operative housing.

### Am I eligible if I live on a reserve?

Young adults living on a B.C. First Nation reserve and paying rent for housing are eligible to apply for a rent supplement.

B.C. First Nation young adults may also be eligible for other financial supports through their First Nation.

## Am I eligible if I have a Temporary Housing Agreement (THA), Temporary Support Agreement (TSA), or an Agreement with Young Adults (AYA)?

A young adult on a Temporary Support Agreement (TSA) or Agreement with Youth Adults (AYA) is eligible to apply for a rent supplement. TSA and AYA funding are an income support program and not a housing program.

- If a young adult is on a TSA or an AYA and applying for a rent supplement, they will need to declare their TSA or AYA funding as income on the rent application form and meet all other eligibility criteria to receive the rent supplement.

However, a young adult on a Temporary Housing Agreement (THA) is **not** eligible to apply for a rent supplement. They do not meet the criteria of renting in the private rental market, as a THA is an agreement with a service provider (e.g., former foster family) to provide a young person with a supported living arrangement.

## What happens if I move while on a rent supplement?

As long as a young adult is still living in the private rental market when they move (within B.C.), they can still receive the rent supplement. However, as noted in the declaration in the application form, young adults on a rent supplement agree to provide notice to MCFD of their updated address within 30 days of the change.

## Applying

### How can I apply?

Young adults can apply themselves and do not require social worker approval. Some young adults may need assistance to complete the application and can reach out to trusted adults including former social workers to assist them with the application and the required documents.

## Where can I find the application?

The application can be found at [www.gov.bc.ca/youthtransitions](http://www.gov.bc.ca/youthtransitions) or it can be requested by emailing [MCFRentSupplements@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MCFRentSupplements@gov.bc.ca). See [www.gov.bc.ca/youthtransitions](http://www.gov.bc.ca/youthtransitions) for more information.

## If my application is successful, will I need to reapply?

Young adults receiving a rent supplement do not have to reapply within the 2-year period. Social workers or transition workers will follow up at least annually to check in to ensure they still meet eligibility criteria (i.e., live in a private market rental unit in B.C.).

## Preparing an Application

### How can I prepare or help someone prepare for the application period?

This information will be requested in your application:

1. Personal information:
  - Birthdate, Social Insurance Number (SIN), contact information.
2. Demographic information:
  - Racial or ethno-cultural self-identity (50% available to Indigenous applicants).
  - **Optional information** on gender identity, sexual orientation, abilities, dependent children (i.e., yes/no); this is optional and will not be used to make any decisions, information is asked to help understand service access and needs.
3. Income Information: approximate monthly or annual range, no proof of income is required. Income includes:
  - any salary, wages, commissions and other remuneration, including gratuities, allowances, and bonuses received by the young adult in exchange for the provision of goods or services. This is inclusive of, but not limited to, income earned through self-employment opportunities or wage replacements, such as Employment Insurance or Worker's Compensation Benefits; and

- any forms of social assistance, pensions, interest, assets and other earnings (e.g., Agreements with Young Adults (AYA), Temporary Support Agreement (TSA), Income Assistance, Disability Assistance (DA).
4. Rental Information:
- Rental Address.
5. Supporting documentation:
- Proof of Rent:
    - One of the following: Tenancy/Lease Agreement, Notice of Rent Increase, Rent Receipts, Confirmation of Electronic Funds Transfer from applicant to landlord, SDPR Shelter Information form, or [Intent to Rent Form](#).
    - Documents must include the applicant's legal name.
    - Supporting documents can be uploaded online along with the application form or emailed after the fact.
  - Completed [Direct Deposit Application](#)
    - A young adult does not need to submit this information with their application to the Rent Supplement Program. A young adult will only be asked to submit a completed Direct Deposit Application if they have been notified that they will be receiving a rent supplement.
    - If the young adult would like payments to go directly to their landlord, they may include a Direct Deposit Application completed by their landlord.
    - Direct Deposit Applications must be mailed in hard copy.