

Income Security

Anti-poverty

Anti-poverty activists in Waterloo Region work to bring awareness about and the rectification of 3 interrelated socio-economic deficiencies that impact the quality of life, health, and mental health of the poor: [1] woefully inadequate income, [2] massive shortage of safe, affordable housing, and [3] unaffordable fares for public transit. Improvements, modest or otherwise, to any one of these core deficiencies cannot compensate for the stress induced by struggling to survive against the crushing deficiencies in the other two areas. All three must be addressed by public policy that puts people first.

Basic Income

Many people working full-time make an income below the poverty line. Basic Income is an alternative income support program where governments pay unconditionally to individuals regularly to ensure no one's income drops below the minimum needed to meet basic needs and live with dignity. Economists have said that a basic income program could increase tax revenues and the province's productivity. The first phase to enroll participants for the pilot study has been completed in April 2018, involving direct participants and a control group to test whether (and how) a basic income can help those living on a low income to better meet their basic needs.

Living Wage

Minimum wage in Ontario will increase from the current \$14 to \$15 on January 1st, 2019. However, the rate calculated by Living Wage Waterloo Region is \$16.10. This means that while an increase in minimum wage is a positive move, it is not enough to ensure income security. The amount calculated as a Living Wage by Waterloo Region is also problematic, as its unit is a family with 2 full-time full-year working adults and 2 children. This means that those who do not fit into this category e.g. single adults, single parents, part-time workers etc. will require more than this amount.

Do you agree that a priority of the Ontario government should be to pass legislation to ensure all Ontarians have sufficient income to meet basic needs and to live with dignity?

Will you address all three socio-economic deficiencies through public policy?

Will you support the continuation of the Ontario Basic Income Pilot Study?



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PARTY PLATFORMS

Ontario Liberal Party

- 3% increase in rates in each of the next 3 years for OW/ODSP
- eligible Ontarians living with disabilities will receive \$5000 annually for services and supports

Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario

- 12% reduction in hydro bills
- No taxes for minimum wage earners

New Democratic Party of Ontario

- Reduce hydro bills by 30% for everyone.
- Endorse the Basic Income Pilot and evaluate its outcomes
- OW increases of 10%, 7% and 5%. ODSP annual increases of 5%.

Green Party of Ontario

- Provide a benefit rate at 100% of the Low Income Measure
- Immediately increase Ontario Disability Support Payment and Ontario Works payments

Communist Party

- raise minimum wage to \$20
- expand public pension plan and employment insurance
- eliminate taxes for income under \$40 000

Ontario Libertarian Party

- Promise to cut hydro bills in half

For more information, get in touch with Alliance Against Poverty and Basic Income WR

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