

Rent Assistance Benefit (RAB) Program Overview

What is RAB?

Rent Assistance Benefit (RAB) is a provincial program designed for households in core housing need who have low incomes and ongoing need. Rent Assistance Benefit (RAB) are benefits paid directly to subsidy recipients to help make their rent with a private landlord more affordable. Heartland Housing Foundation is the local delivery agent (Strathcona County, Fort Saskatchewan, and Beaver County) for the program and is not the landlord in this program.

All RAB recipients must sign an agreement with Heartland Housing Foundation before receiving the benefit.

How much is RAB?

The benefit amount is the difference between what would be affordable rent (e.g. 30% of the recipient's total household income) and the market rent for the unit, up to the maximum supplement amount of \$500 per month.

Who is eligible?

You must meet all eligibility criteria under the Social Housing Accommodation Regulation. This means you must:

- Be in core housing need.
- Have a total asset value of \$25,000 or less.
- Be a Canadian citizen, permanent resident (except for those who are under a private sponsorship arrangement), convention refugee, an individual who has applied for refugee or immigration status and private sponsorship has broken down.
- For more details on these criteria, please [visit our website](https://www.heartlandhousing.ca).

Recipients must also live in eligible housing to receive the benefit. Eligible housing is a self-contained, rented home. This means the home has its own kitchen and bathroom and is not shared with the landlord. A recipient could live in:

- A basement suite or secondary suite if it has been approved by the municipality in which it is located.
- Co-operatives with a written co-operative agreement.

- Mobile home where the tenant is renting both the mobile home and the pad with a written tenancy agreement.
- Detached housing, row/townhouse, duplex or triplex, or apartments or condos with a written tenancy agreement.

Who is not eligible?

Anyone is eligible if they meet the above criteria, however, the below types of housing are not suitable for the rent assistance benefit:

- Hotels, motels, and vacation rental by owner (VRBO) arrangements.
- Illegal basement/secondary suites.
- Owned mobile homes requesting supplement for the rent of the pad.
- Shared living accommodations with the landlord (your landlord is your roommate).
- Housing owned by the applicant.
- You are not eligible for RAB if you are living in subsidized housing (e.g. rent-geared-to-income housing).

How do I apply?

You can download the application form on [Heartland Housing Foundation's website](#).

How are applications evaluated?

Applications are evaluated first by eligibility (see previous question) and then prioritized based on factors such as:

- Number of dependents.
- Rent to income ratio and utility responsibility.
- Impacts to personal wellbeing.
- Health & safety risk.
- Identification as a member of a [target population](#).

When will I get the benefit?

RAB will be offered on a priority-scored system. Heartland Housing Foundation will offer benefits to applicants with the highest priority score as funding is available. You must give Heartland Housing Foundation your banking information so direct deposit payments can be set up.

What does receiving RAB mean?

Your eligibility will be assessed every year. If you remain eligible and funding is available, you will continue to receive the benefit. There is no limit to the number of times your RAB agreement can be renewed, subject to funding availability.

Who is my landlord?

Your landlord will be the individual or organization with whom you have a tenancy agreement. Heartland Housing Foundation is not the landlord. Your agreement with Heartland Housing Foundation is just for the rental assistance benefit.

I have more questions!

Please contact our office if you have any more questions about RAB.

Email: applications@heartlandhousing.ca

Phone: (780) 400-3500

