

PROVINCIAL ELECTION 2025: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM THE PARTIES

The Income Security Advocacy Centre (ISAC) developed the following 11 questions on important issues that affect people living on low incomes in Ontario. On February 14, these questions were sent to each of the four major political parties with sitting members in provincial parliament. You can read the original questionnaire [here](#), which includes some preamble and context with each question.

As of February 26, 2025, two of the four parties have responded. In the chart below, their responses are copied exactly as received, however party logos and colours were removed. ISAC is a non-partisan, non-profit organization and does not endorse any one candidate or party over another.

We hope this information will be helpful and informative to clients of the community legal clinic system and the Ontario public at large.

Question 1: Will your party raise Ontario Works rates and index the rates to inflation?

Progressive Conservative Party	No answer received as of February 26.
New Democratic Party of Ontario	The Ontario NDP has committed to doubling Ontario Works rates and then tying rates to inflation beyond the first year.
Liberal Party of Ontario	No answer received as of February 26.
Green Party of Ontario	Ontario Greens will at least double Ontario Works (OW) rates and tie future increases to inflation.

Question 2: What specifically will your party do to support people with disabilities to live a life without poverty? In addition to raising ODSP rates, what else will you do?

Progressive Conservative Party	No answer received as of February 26.
New Democratic Party of Ontario	In addition to our commitment to double ODSP, an NDP government will work to enact the standards as set out in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, now that the deadline has been missed by Liberal and Ford governments. Bringing forward standards and removing barriers for Ontarians with disabilities, to employment, housing, education will help move Ontarians with disabilities from poverty. Our Homes Ontario plan includes creating 60,000 new supportive housing units.
Liberal Party of Ontario	No answer received as of February 26.
Green Party of Ontario	Ontario Greens believe that people with disabilities shouldn't be forced to make the impossible choice between keeping a roof over their head or putting food on the table. In a province with as much wealth as Ontario, it is unconscionable that so many people are forced to live in deep poverty without the assistance they need. In addition to raising the rates of ODSP and OW, we'll take an urgent and comprehensive approach to tackling the housing affordability crisis and ending homelessness.

In addition to at least doubling the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) we will:

- Include meaningful consultation with people who have lived experience with poverty and existing social assistance programs in the design of all programs and services aimed at client-centred approaches for reducing poverty.
- Annually report disaggregated data on the proportion of the population that experiences chronic food insecurity.
- Prohibit “payday” lending that takes advantage of those facing financial hardship and work with credit unions to develop a low-cost, small loan alternative to help people get out of debt.

Question 3: Will your party commit to not clawing back social assistance for those who receive the Canada Disability Benefit once it is implemented?

Progressive Conservative Party	No answer received as of February 26.
New Democratic Party of Ontario	Yes.
Liberal Party of Ontario	No answer received as of February 26.
Green Party of Ontario	Ontario Greens will get rid of the aggressive and unfair clawbacks from social assistance payments, including clawbacks from the Canada Disability Benefit.

Question 4: What is your party’s position on providing an equitable flat-rate structure for social assistance income support?

Progressive Conservative Party	No answer received as of February 26.
New Democratic Party of Ontario	Ontario New Democrat MPPs have tabled motions to bring equitable rates for social assistance recipients, and we’ve pushed back against the tiering of the nominal increases to ODSP. We’re also opposed to punitive clawbacks that prevents recipients from ever getting out from behind deep poverty.
Liberal Party of Ontario	No answer received as of February 26.
Green Party of Ontario	Ontario Greens believe in treating everyone with dignity and fairness. In order to ensure no Ontarian is ever left behind, we will Phase in a Basic Income, with the first step being to at least double the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and Ontario Works (OW) rates.

Question 5: In your view, what is missing from current efforts to reduce poverty in Ontario? How will your party meaningfully and permanently reduce poverty?

Progressive Conservative Party	No answer received as of February 26.
New Democratic Party of Ontario	For Marit Stiles and New Democrats it’s clear that Doug Ford and the conservatives have abandoned the most vulnerable in the province.

Party of Ontario

One of the first acts of Doug Ford was to slash \$1 billion from social services. Under Ford rents have been allowed to soar, renovations have overburdened the LTB and contributed to the record numbers of unhoused Ontarians and encampments in every community. Over one million Ontarians, and growing, now rely on foodbanks each month. All of this is the result of both Liberal and Doug Ford government policies that have failed the most vulnerable in our province. An Ontario NDP government will provide wraparound services, in all-of-government approach that will link vulnerable Ontarians with the services they need, and as part of that commitment we've committed to end chronic homelessness by 2030.

Liberal Party of Ontario

No answer received as of February 26.

Green Party of Ontario

Poverty in Ontario is escalating. More than 80,000 Ontarians experienced homelessness in 2024, an alarming 25% increase since 2022. And 1 in 5 children in Ontario were living in poverty in 2022. Despite these deeply concerning statistics, limited action is being taken by the provincial government to address poverty in the province. The Ontario Disability Support Program has increased by only 4.5% since 2018 and Ontario Works rates have remained at 2018 levels. Both programs are wholly insufficient in providing people with disabilities and in poverty with the necessities given today's affordability challenges. People with disabilities shouldn't be forced to make the impossible choice between keeping a roof over their head or putting food on the table. In a province with as much wealth as Ontario, it is unconscionable that so many people are forced to live in deep poverty without the assistance they need. In addition to raising the rates of ODSP and OW, we'll take an urgent and comprehensive approach to tackling the housing affordability crisis and ending homelessness. For more details, please see our answer to question 11.

Ontario Greens are committed to ending poverty in the province. Here's how we'll do it:

- Phase in a Basic Income, with the first step being to at least double the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and Ontario Works (OW) rates and get rid of aggressive and unfair clawbacks, including clawbacks from the Canada Disability Benefit. .
 - Eliminate any unnecessary red tape, reporting requirements, and other barriers typically faced by those needing financial support.
 - Remove ODSP from the purview of Employment Ontario.
 - Ensure shelter allowances reflect the shelter costs where people live.
- Include meaningful consultation with people who have lived experience with poverty and existing social assistance programs in the design of all programs and services aimed at client-centred approaches for reducing poverty.
- Annually report disaggregated data on the proportion of the population that experiences chronic food insecurity.
- Prohibit "payday" lending that takes advantage of those facing financial hardship and work with credit unions to develop a low-cost, small loan alternative to help people get out of debt.

Question 6: Will your party provide comprehensive and adequately funded life stabilization services for current and future social assistance recipients?

Progressive Conservative Party

No answer received as of February 26.

New Democratic Party of Ontario

Yes. An NDP government is committed to provide wraparound services for recipients.

Liberal Party of Ontario No answer received as of February 26.

Green Party of Ontario Yes, Ontario Greens will provide comprehensive and adequately funded life stabilization services for current and future social assistance recipients

Question 7: How will your party ensure that vulnerable people looking for job support will not fall through the cracks? What will you do to ensure transparency and accountability of taxpayer funding for this newly privatized system?

Progressive Conservative Party No answer received as of February 26.

New Democratic Party of Ontario New Democrats have been clear that the Ford government's privatizing of employment services for social assistance recipients was at best ill conceived, and at worst just another way the Ford government can funnel public resources to preferred multinationals and insiders. We think Ontarians looking for work, or for retraining help deserve better, and we're committed to return to a transparent client-centred approach to employment services.

Liberal Party of Ontario No answer received as of February 26.

Green Party of Ontario Ontario Greens believe that when new programs are created, that stakeholders, including those with lived experience and others who will be impacted by the service should be consulted through the process. We will increase supports for businesses to ensure that they have the tools they need to ensure success of the placements.

Question 8: Will your party enact legislation to ensure equal pay for equal work and better enforcement of the Employment Standards Act, 2000? How else will your party ensure that Ontario workers will be treated fairly?

Progressive Conservative Party No answer received as of February 26.

New Democratic Party of Ontario Yes. Among our offers to reverse years of rollbacks of basic protections and Employment Standards enforcement in the province will be to introduce equal pay legislation that was scrapped by Doug Ford. We'll also crack down on wage theft and ensure that not only are there resources to protect workers from having their hard-earned incomes stolen by bad bosses there are also resources to strengthen enforcement against other workplace violations.

Liberal Party of Ontario No answer received as of February 26.

Green Party of Ontario Ontario Greens will legislate equal pay for equal work and put an end to wage theft.

Question 9: Will your party introduce 10 days of employer-provided paid emergency leave for all Ontario workers?

Progressive Conservative Party No answer received as of February 26.

New Democratic Party of Ontario

Yes.

Liberal Party of Ontario

No answer received as of February 26.

Green Party of Ontario

Yes, Ontario Greens will implement ten provincially-legislated paid sick days for all and ban employers from requiring a sick note from a medical practitioner when an employee is ill.

Question 10: Will your party increase the minimum wage and by how much?

Progressive Conservative Party

No answer received as of February 26.

New Democratic Party of Ontario

We would raise the minimum wage to \$20/hr in the first year and tie the minimum wage to inflation afterward.

Liberal Party of Ontario

No answer received as of February 26.

Green Party of Ontario

We would raise the minimum wage to \$20/hr in the first year and tie the minimum wage to inflation afterward.

Question 11: Will your party support widespread harm reduction services and repeal unconstitutional legislation that criminalizes houseless and street-involved people?

Progressive Conservative Party

No answer received as of February 26.

New Democratic Party of Ontario

Yes. Marit Stiles and the Ontario NDP will follow the advice of experts and use evidence-based strategies to address the opioid epidemic. New Democrats opposed the Ford governments recent unconstitutional and cruel measures to criminalize houseless and street-involved Ontarians, as we continue to oppose the conservative Safe Streets Act.

Liberal Party of Ontario

No answer received as of February 26.

Green Party of Ontario

We need to address addictions challenges with care, not with harsh penalties. Unfortunately we have a provincial government that sees addictions as something that should be politicized, policed and criminalized, which only makes things worse and less safe—both for those suffering and those in their community.

Here's how we'll support people with care and compassion:

- Address substance use through a health and human rights framework, not a criminal justice framework.
- Build 60,000 new supportive housing spaces with fully funded wrap-around services.
- Reopen the safe consumption and treatment sites closed by the Ford government and expand the number of sites across the province, prioritizing areas with high opioid deaths like the North.
- Integrate paid peer support workers with lived experience into the planning and organisation of all substance use programming.
- Invest in the creation and expansion of permanent 24/7 mobile crisis response teams where mental health care workers are deployed when

people are experiencing a mental health or substance related crisis, as well as rapid access addiction medicine clinics.

- Increase access to publicly funded treatment beds.

The worsening homelessness crisis in Ontario is an abject moral failure on the part of the provincial government. We know that the costs and impacts of the homelessness crisis are far-reaching, putting stress on hospitals, first responders and impacting local businesses.

People experiencing homelessness are at increased risk of health challenges, and can have difficulty accessing the care they need. The homelessness and housing affordability crisis has also intensified challenges for people in crisis and transition, making already precarious situations life threatening and dangerous. We need urgency and a Housing First approach.

Here's our plan to end homelessness:

- Immediately support people living in encampments with their housing and support needs until permanent housing solutions are built and resume the homelessness census cancelled by the Ford government to ensure we create sustainable, long-term solutions
- Work with nonprofits to build 250,000 new affordable non profit and co-op homes and 60,000 permanent supportive homes with guaranteed funding for mental health, addictions and other supports
- Utilise a Housing First model to ensure that stable, permanent housing solutions are the first priority when helping those in need.
- Engage people who have lived experience with homelessness in program development.
- Create an inter-ministerial working group to ensure government investments targeting homelessness are coordinated, appropriately funded and provide long-term solutions
- Build an adequate data system for housing indicators in Ontario that captures the underlying trends of people with unmet housing needs.
- Deploy temporary and permanent supportive modular housing projects on provincially owned land as quickly as possible. Create tax credits and investment funds to help advance these housing technologies
- Increase annual funding for women's shelters as well as safe and accessible transitional and supportive housing options for women and their families. Ensure transitional housing is culturally appropriate.

For more information about each party's election platforms:

[Click here for the Green Party of Ontario platform](#)

[Click here for the Ontario Liberals platform](#)

[Click here for the Ontario New Democrats platform](#)

[Click here for the Progressive Conservative Party platform](#)