

## 2.3 How are provincial shelters funded?

Most of the provinces and territories use one or a combination of the following models in funding their shelters:

1. Fund a set number of staff positions within a given salary range.
2. Base some or all of the shelter budget on historical figures, not allowing for new programming or changes in circumstances.
3. Base some or all of the shelter budget on previous years' expenditures, which is a simple method of accommodating for differences in cost of living.
4. Fund fixed costs at 100%.
5. Fund occupancy-based costs through a per diem rate.
6. Use a community grants model, where shelters apply for funding each year, and requests are granted based on merit and availability of funds.

The provinces that have moved away from historical funding practices have spent at least two-years researching and developing a revised funding methodology. These provinces will be discussed below.

Most provinces have a list of core items or allowable expenses that they are willing to fund. For the most part, occupancy rates do not affect funding, although some provinces fund in part based on occupancy (e.g., Saskatchewan).

The provinces have different standards for funding staff, but there are some commonalities. For example:

- ◆ Newfoundland begins with a base of 4.2 staff units to fund one person per shift, plus an administrator and administrative support. They have a formula that they use to cover relief staff, sick leave, and so on. On request, they also fund: an extra staff person to work with the children.
- ◆ Alberta funds between 9.5 and 18.5 positions, depending on the size of the shelter (9.5 for 11 beds, 18.5 for 32). Staffing includes a director, an administrative assistant, one or more child care workers, between 5.5 and 11 counsellors, an outreach worker, and up to 2.5 housekeepers or cooks.
- ◆ BC recommends a core staff of 3.75 full time equivalents (FTEs), with an additional 0.3 FTE per bed, in addition to the director, outreach worker, and child support worker.

Quebec funds shelters slightly differently. It provides a certain amount per bed, based on a 10-12-bed shelter. Shelters with fewer than 10 beds or more than 12 beds are pro-rated accordingly. Quebec provides a 10% cost of living increase for shelters in remote locations.

Manitoba is a unique case in that it sets the wages at the provincial level and determines the staff compliment by geographic location and size of local community. Shelters are classified as small (10,000), medium (200,000), and large (700,000). The recent front-line worker salary was \$39,383.00. In addition to base salaries being covered, the maintenance and repairs, as well as security needs are handled under separate contracts, and a per diem is paid at \$27.00 per night. This model has experienced significant difficulties with surplus issues.

In most provinces and territories, funds are distributed to shelters on a quarterly basis, and there are no opportunities to adjust funding amounts within the quarter. Some provinces distribute funding monthly. In Nunavut, a larger portion of the funds is delivered up front to allow shelters to order bulk dry goods through C-lift.

In many provinces and territories, there is an expectation that shelters will submit annual, semi-annual, or quarterly reports of their activities, as well as audited financial statements. In some provinces, shelters are expected to adhere to standards, provide data to support provincial performance measures, and/or to maintain records at the client level. Some provinces make monitoring visits to the shelters once or twice a year.

Most provinces encourage fundraising. Some expect shelters to use fundraising to cover 25% of their budget. Others expect that shelters will use fundraising to enhance the services they provide. If shelters have a surplus, they are typically expected to use it for additional services. In Alberta, shelters are required to bank their surplus and use it for future projects that are government-approved.

## **2.4 What are the costs of providing off-reserve shelter services to First Nations people ordinarily resident on reserve?**

While a few provinces reported that they were able to track the number of shelter beds occupied by First Nations people ordinarily resident on reserve, the little information collected was insufficient to report appropriately.

A shelter day is defined as an overnight stay and may include the same person for any number of consecutive days. Saskatchewan reported 8,343 shelter days used by women and children normally resident on reserve last year. The current per diem in Saskatchewan is \$57, but that does not cover the full cost of services. Based on the current per diems, the annual cost of providing off-reserve shelter services to First Nations people ordinarily resident on reserve in Saskatchewan is \$475,551.

While current per-diem rates were not available, Alberta estimated that 31,260 shelter days were used by women and children normally resident on reserve last year.