

Saskatchewan Needs Rent Control

Let’s Prevent Outrageous Rent Increases Against Residential Tenants

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LAW REFORM GOALS & BACKGROUND INFO

GOAL #1

To improve affordable housing for residents in Saskatchewan.

What is “affordable housing”?
Housing is affordable when only 30% of a household’s income before tax is used towards acceptable, appropriate-sized housing.¹

What is the reality?
In Saskatoon, renters represent about one-third of the population.²

- 65% of renters pay more than 30% of their income on housing costs.³
- 11% of renters experience overcrowded conditions.⁴



Why is this having affordable housing important?
Without affordable homes, the province contributes to homelessness.

- In 2022, unaffordability was the major reason for why Saskatoon citizens lost their homes.⁵

GOAL #2

To improve security of tenure of rental homes and reduce the risk of Saskatchewan residents suddenly experiencing housing unaffordability.

The Percentage Increase of Average Rent in Saskatchewan				
	Oct 2021	Oct 2022	Oct 2023	Oct 2024
Average rent for a bachelor unit ⁶	\$714	\$747	\$791	\$878
% change compared to previous year	-	4.6%	5.9%	11.0%
Average rent for a 1 bedroom unit ⁶	\$928	\$968	\$1,048	\$1,143
% change compared to previous year	-	4.3%	9.4%	9.1%
Average rent for a 2 bedroom unit ⁶	\$1,117	\$1,162	\$1,276	\$1,380
% change compared to previous year	-	4.0%	9.8%	8.2%
Average rent for a 3+ bedroom unit ⁶	\$1,236	\$1,279	\$1,396	\$1,601
% change compared to previous year	-	3.5%	9.2%	14.7%

We recommend viewing the percentage from 2021 to 2022 with some caution due to residual effects from the pandemic where various government programs and economic circumstances created an outlier event.⁷

	Oct 2021	Oct 2022	Oct 2023	Oct 2024
Consumer Price Index in Canada ⁸	-	6.9% ⁹	3.1% ¹⁰	2.0% ¹¹

GOALS & INFO...CONTINUED

GOAL #3

To use rent regulation to disincentivize investors in-part from using homes – a basic need and right – as investment assets to slow down financialization of real estate and provide more affordable homes in Saskatchewan.

The market will likely not correct itself because of the financialization of the housing market.
Financialization of the housing market means homes are being used by investors to make money rather than treating homes as a basic need for shelter.¹² If the government does not interfere with residential rentals, the rental scheme would be at the mercy of a rental market cornered by landlords who care more about profit over a household’s welfare.



Building more homes is necessary but not sufficient.
The housing crisis is not just about having insufficient numbers of homes. It is also how the wealth is being transferred from low-income earners to high-income earners to access a basic need.¹⁴ (See Appendix A.) Having rent regulations can mitigate wealth inequality between low income-earning tenants and higher income-earning landlords.¹⁵



Housing and income assistance programs already exist and cost more money.

- Providing social housing and affordable homes¹⁶
- Rent allowances and income support¹⁷
- Raising minimum wage¹⁸ (see Appendix B)
- Other social services and protective government legislation¹⁹

Compared to the existing programs above, rent regulation is a cost-effective and sustainable way for the government to compliment and improve affordability in the rental market.

RENT CONTROL ELSEWHERE

Province	Max % allowance
British Columbia ²⁰	3.5% for 2024
Manitoba ²¹	1.7% for 2025 for all regulated units
Ontario ²²	2.5% but excludes new buildings, additions to existing buildings, and new tenants after 2018
Quebec ²³	N/A - Uses a specified rental increase calculator
New Brunswick ²⁴	3.8% since 2022
Prince Edward Island ²⁵	3.0% for 2024

LAW REFORM PROPOSAL

We recommend Saskatchewan to adopt rent control regulation with **rent increases based on the Consumer Price Index**.

- It is a **fair policy** for both tenants and landlords.
- It will assist with housing affordability through **security of tenure**.
- It will **counteract against the financialization of the housing market**, thus contribute to housing affordability.

In particular, we recommend adopting the **rent percentage calculation from Manitoba**.²⁶ The formula involves averaging the consumer price index across the past two years. Additionally, Manitoba ensures that the rent increase cannot be higher than the inflation-control target range adopted by the Bank of Canada.

Further, we recommend requesting the Office of Residential Tenancies to calculate each year’s maximum rent percentage and post it on their website.

Lastly, we recommend **incorporating aspects from BC** where landlords can apply to the Office of Residential Tenancies to request a greater rent increase.²⁷ This gives reasonable consideration to landlords if they need to cover high, capital costs related to ensuring acceptable livability of the dwelling.

REFERENCES & APPENDICES

Please scan the QR code for references and appendices. Images are sourced from Canva.

