

ALL ABOUT THE SENIORS LODGE PROGRAM

Supporting Seniors in Communities Across Alberta

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Alberta Seniors Lodge Program is essential to communities across the province, offering affordable community-based housing that enables seniors to age with dignity and security.

This vital program supports **over 10,000 seniors in 148 lodges** across the province, delivering not only housing but a holistic approach to well-being that is bolstered by community supports. By addressing the **physical, social, and emotional needs of residents**, lodges **empower seniors** to stay active and engaged within their communities, **fostering wellness** and **preventative health outcomes**.

RESIDENT PROFILE: AGING IN COMMUNITY, TOGETHER

Seniors choose lodges not just as a place to live, but to be part of a community where they can lead fulfilling lives. The **choice to leave the lodge** often reflects **a need for higher levels of support, relocation, or end-of-life considerations**, underscoring the lodge as a critical support system within the housing continuum.

Application Criteria

Applicants to the lodge must be functionally independent, with or without the support of community-based services (e.g., many lodge residents receive home care).

Average Resident Age

82.9 years

Age Threshold

Applicants to the lodge are typically **65 years and older** (although exceptions are made according to provider policies).

TOP REASONS FOR RESIDENCY

- 1 Access to meals & housekeeping (30%)
- 2 Social opportunities & life enhancement (23%)
- 3 Affordability (19.3%)



LODGES ACROSS ALBERTA: REACHING ALL CORNERS OF THE PROVINCE



Lodges are located in communities of every size, enabling seniors to remain close to family, friends, and familiar settings. Lodges are a desirable housing option, providing supports to ensure Albertans can remain in their chosen community as they age. **The Lodge Program is the only option of its kind in Canada.**

In rural Alberta, lodges play a vital role in providing direct services to residents, but because there is often a limited staffing pool, and less supports and infrastructure available in smaller communities, lodge providers experience additional strains and challenges.


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FUNDING AND COSTS: BRIDGING THE GAP TO SUSTAIN QUALITY CARE

Operating lodges to meet high standards of safety, comfort, and care requires ongoing funding. The **average monthly operating cost per unit is currently \$2,612 (based on data from 100 lodges)** but ranges dramatically as most rates are based on income - **from \$1,253 to \$5,800** - with an average monthly loss per unit of \$835 (based on data from 3,700 lodge units from 42.4% of the total lodge units operated by respondents of ASCHA's Lodge Program Review Survey). The range is below \$6/unit per month to over \$2,500/unit per month. This highlights **that accommodation rates do not cover the full cost of operating lodges.**

Average Accommodation Rate

 **\$1,798**
for singles

Regardless of the lodge rate, each resident must be left with **at least \$365 in monthly disposable income.**

 **\$2,574**
for couples

Municipal Contribution



Averages **\$828** per unit monthly

This commitment, while vital, varies based on the **capacity** of municipalities to requisition support to the Lodge Program, due to a variety of factors.

Reserve Shortfalls

While some lodges maintain modest operating and capital reserves, **the average reserves per unit remain inadequate** to meet growing demands, upkeep, and replacement.



The Alberta Seniors Lodge Program Matters

By supporting the Seniors Lodge Program, we are investing in not only the buildings but in the people - their **dignity, health, and happiness.** Addressing current gaps secures a future where more seniors have a safe, caring place to call home.

CURRENT CHALLENGES: PRESERVING OUR SAFETY NET FOR ALBERTA'S SENIORS

The Lodge Program faces rising costs - **a 66.8% projected increase is needed in funding for new lodge units and repairs by 2046.** Without strategic investments in infrastructure, more lodges will fall into disrepair, limiting seniors' options.



Infrastructure Investment Needed



New and renovated buildings, along with technology enhancements, are critical to improving resident experience and to meeting diverse needs and expectations.

- **Average unit size: 334 sq ft**
- **Average age of lodge building: 36 years old** - the range being from 2 to 66 years old

Expanded Services



Enhanced food services, diverse recreational activities, and reliable 24/7 care are essential to meeting residents' evolving needs, yet these services require additional funding and policy approaches (e.g., home care).

Policy Support for Local Challenges



Communities of different sizes can face unique challenges - smaller ones may struggle with vacancies, while larger ones may have significant waitlists. Targeted policy support will help lodges meet the needs of current and future residents.

A Call to Action: Ensuring Alberta's Seniors Live with Dignity

Increased Funding

It's imperative to secure consistent, sustainable funding that meets the needs of operating and capital costs. The Lodge Program is not just housing but a hub of support that deserves public investment.

Investment in Infrastructure

Immediate action is needed to update aging lodges, build new ones, and integrate technologies that enhance residents' lives.

Policy Support

Tailored policies to support lodges, especially those in rural areas, will ensure more seniors have access to safe, supportive housing that is close to home.

Enhanced Service Offerings

Funding to expand personalized care, improve nutrition, and add social programs is essential to honour the Lodge Program's mission of holistic support.