

qathet Homelessness Prevention Program – October 2024

The qathet Homelessness Prevention Program makes rent more affordable for at-risk households, with a goal of preventing homelessness and rapidly re-housing people who find themselves unhoused due to crisis situations.

Through the Canada-British Columbia Housing Benefit (CBCHB), a total of 49 rent supplements are available, with priority given to households experiencing or at risk of homelessness who do not qualify for other provincial subsidies such as SAFER and RAP.

This document outlines eligibility criteria and program processes for the qathet Homelessness Prevention Program including guidelines for referrals, intake, and program participation. The referral form for referral agencies to complete and submit with applicants is enclosed on pages 6-8, and a checklist for all supporting documents is included on Page 9.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the qathet Homelessness Prevention Program, applicants must meet the following criteria:

<p>Income</p>	<p>Gross household income must not exceed the CBCHB income limit, as established by BC Housing from time to time.</p> <p>Household Income Limits as of August 2024 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Singles or couples without dependents: Monthly \$2,666; Annual \$31,992 ● Family* of 4 or less: Monthly \$3,333, Annual \$40,000 ● Family of 5 or more: Monthly \$3,700.00, Annual \$44,400.00 <p>*Family is defined as a household with at least one dependent child.</p> <p>Yes, individuals who receive Income Assistance or Disability Assistance from the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction are eligible.</p> <p>Individuals who receive a rent subsidy through SAFER or RAP are not eligible to apply for CBCHB.</p>
<p>Priority Populations</p>	<p>The qathet Homelessness Prevent Program will prioritize applicants who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness. For the purpose of this application, we will use the Canadian Definition of Homelessness.¹ Applicants must be either:</p> <p>(a) Currently experiencing homelessness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Unsheltered</i> (Living on the streets or in places not intended for human accommodation, e.g. cars, other vehicles, garages, attics, closets, makeshift shelters, tents, etc.) ○ <i>Emergency sheltered</i> (Emergency Shelter, Grace House, etc.)

¹ Gaetz, S.; Barr, C.; Friesen, A.; Harris, B.; Hill, C.; Kovacs-Burns, K.; Pauly, B.; Pearce, B.; Turner, A.; Marsolais, A. (2012) Canadian Definition of Homelessness. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Provisionally accommodated</i> (Temporary accommodation incl. couch surfing, temporary institutional care e.g. hospital, penal institutions, residential treatment, etc.) <p>(b) At risk of homelessness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>At “imminent risk”</i> (often crisis related due to household violence, separation, lost income, eviction, etc.) ○ <i>Precariously housed</i> (Severe affordability challenges and trouble meeting basic needs)
Residency	<p>The applicant must be established in the qathet Regional District in order to apply. Each member of the core household must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Canadian citizen; or • A permanent resident of Canada; or • A refugee sponsored by the Government of Canada; or • An individual who has applied for refugee status. • Neither the recipient nor their spouse can be under private sponsorship.
Type of Residence	<p>The person must have a place to pay monthly rent that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is in the qathet Regional District; • Is the recipient’s primary address; and • Costs more than 30% of their gross monthly income. <p>The following residences are eligible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any self-contained unit or suite where the RTA applies; • Shared rental situations including co-tenants and tenants in common where RTA applies; • Community housing where the development or unit is not receiving ongoing subsidy; • Manufactured homes where the recipient pays rent for the home or the pad (site), or both; • Co-ops where the recipient is not a shareholder and has signed a tenancy agreement. <p>The following residences may be eligible if it is a primary residence and rent is paid monthly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational vehicles; • Floating homes; • Longer term hotel and motel accommodations; • A room rented from the owner of the accommodation where the owner also resides in the home. <p>The following property types are not eligible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any residence where the rent is subsidized or paid by the government at any level; • Units that are part of a development that receives government housing assistance; • Co-op housing where any individual living in the residence is a shareholder;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A home owned by the recipient, other than a manufactured home where the recipient pays rent for the pad (site); • Private assisted living or any residence where the recipient pays room and board.
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Benefit Amounts – UPDATED AUGUST, 2024

The qathet Homelessness Prevention Program will pay the difference between the “minimum shelter contribution” (see table below) and the cost of rent, within a local rent ceiling set by BC Housing. The rent ceiling for qathet Regional District as of August 2024 is:

- \$1,025.00/month for single or couple without dependents;
- \$1,383.00/month for family of 4 or less;
- \$1,509.00/month for family of 5 or more

The minimum shelter contribution is calculated as follows:

<i>For clients in receipt of Income Assistance or Disability Assistance (including top-up)</i>	The Housing Benefit is calculated by subtracting the Income Assistance shelter portion based on household size from the rent amount or the rent ceiling, whichever is lower.
<i>For clients with no income from Income Assistance or Disability Assistance (employment, pensions, etc.)</i>	The Housing benefit is calculated by subtracting the higher of 30% of the gross monthly household income or the minimum shelter contribution from the rent amount or the rent ceiling, whichever is lower. The minimum shelter contribution is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Single or couple w/o dependents: \$500 - Family of 4 or less: \$840 - Family of 5 or more: \$890

An additional \$50/month may be available for heating costs if heating is not included in the rent.

NOTE: Official subsidy amounts are determined for each recipient using the calculator function in the BC Housing database and cannot be calculated manually before an application is approved. The minimum rent subsidy is \$25/month.

Benefit Details

Benefits are paid monthly via direct deposit (last week of the month) from Lift Community Services. It is preferred to pay the subsidy direction to the renter, but arrangements can be made for the landlord to be paid directly in some cases.

A renewal form must be submitted every year to determine ongoing eligibility and ensure the benefit amount is calculated with current information. Lift will mail the renewal form 3 months before it is due and invite a renewal meeting at the CRC. If applicable, recipients will receive 30 days notice

before any changes are made to their eligibility or benefit amount. Benefits are portable to any community in BC, as long as eligibility is maintained.

Recipients must report changes to Lift within 30 days if:

- They move to a different address
- Their rent increases
- The number of people in the household changes including roommate changes
- Their bank deposit info changes

Applicants should be aware that, under the Income Tax Act, Housing Benefits paid under CBCHB are Social Assistance. Recipients who receive more than \$500 in a tax year will receive a T5007 Statement of Benefits from Lift.

Referral Agencies

Lift Community Services is welcoming referrals from eligible partners in the qathet Regional District. Referrals are welcome from local agencies that:

- Are registered non-profit societies, health authorities, schools, or government agencies;
- Provide direct (“front-line”) services to qathet residents who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Referral Processes

Referrals will open on June 17, 2024. To make a referral, agencies are invited to fill out the attached application form, ensuring all supporting documents are enclosed. Agencies are welcome but not required to make an appointment with staff at the Lift Community Resource Centre (Mon-Fri, 12-4pm) for assistance with this process. Community members seeking support through the qathet Homelessness Prevention Program who are not attached to another referral agency are also welcome to seek a referral through staff at the Lift Community Resource Centre or Family Place.

Referral agencies can submit completed applications in one of three ways:

1. **Via Email:** Send to housingservices@liftcommunityservices.org with “CBCHB Application” in the Subject line.
2. **By Mail to:**
Lift Community Services – Housing Services
218-6975 Alberni St.
Powell River, BC V8A 2B8
3. **In Person:** Drop off completed applications in a letter-sized envelope at Lift Community Resource Centre, 4752 Joyce Ave. (Mon-Thurs, 12-4pm). Staff at the Community Resource Centre are also available to assist with applications by appointment.

The CBC-HB program in qathet is subject to available funding. Housing benefits will be distributed to eligible renters where the households meet eligibility criteria until all benefits are exhausted. Once all benefits have been allocated, Lift will maintain a referral list of eligible applicants.

Intake Process

Lift will review all incoming applications on a first come, first served basis to determine eligibility. If an application meets eligibility criteria, Lift will enter the applicant's information into the BC Housing database to determine the official subsidy amount and generate an official CBCHB application form.

Once approved, the referral agent will be provided with the official CBCHB form for the applicant to complete and sign to finalize their intake. Once the form is completed and returned, direct deposit will be set up and the housing benefit year will commence.

If no housing benefits are available at the time of application (all have been allocated at that time), the individual will be added to the referral list for future consideration. If a rent subsidy becomes available at a future time, eligible applicants on the referral list will be contacted according to criteria determined collaboratively with service partners.

Individuals on the waitlist and/or their referral agency are asked to contact us every **January** if they wish to stay on the waitlist for the coming year, and to confirm that their circumstances are the same

Referral Form - qathet Homelessness Prevention Program

Date: _____

PART I: Referral Source

Referral Agency: _____

Full Name: _____

Role/Title: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Client Approval of Referral? Yes No If No, please explain: _____

PART II: Applicant Information

Applicant Name: _____

Legal Name (if different): _____

Date of Birth (DD/MM/YYYY): ____/____/____

SIN Number: _____

Gender: _____ Pronouns: _____

Mailing Address:

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Other method of contact (if applicable):

Part III: Applicant Eligibility

How long have you lived in qathet? _____

What is your household income? \$_____ Monthly Annually

What is your residency status in Canada?

Canadian Citizen

Permanent Resident

Refugee sponsored by the Canadian Government

Refugee status application in progress

How would you describe your current housing situation?

I am currently experiencing homelessness

- **Unsheltered** (Living on the streets or in places not intended for human accommodation, e.g. cars, other vehicles, garages, attics, closets, makeshift shelters, tents, etc.)
- **At a shelter** (Staying at the Lift Emergency Shelter, Grace House, etc.)
- **Temporary accommodation** (For example, couch surfing with a friend/family member, staying in the hospital, in a penal institution, in detox or residential treatment, etc.)

I am currently at risk of homelessness

- **At “imminent risk”** (Often this means you are facing a crisis that might leave you without housing. For example, separation or divorce, sudden loss of income, sudden unemployment, you’ve received an eviction notice, fleeing family/household violence, etc.)
- **Precariously housed** (You are having severe affordability challenges and trouble meeting your basic needs, buying groceries, etc. due to the high cost of your rent)

Please briefly provide details of your housing situation and how a rent subsidy will help:

Part IV: Residence Eligibility

Rental address:

Rent amount (monthly): \$ _____ # of bedrooms: _____

Rental type:

- Self-contained apartment/house/suite
- Apartment/house/suite shared with roommates
- Long-term hotel paid monthly
- Manufactured home, railer or RV on a pad/property where monthly rent is paid
- Other (Please explain: _____)

Rental status:

- Currently live here
- Moving in on this date: _____
- Plans to move but no set move-in date (Explain: _____)
- Other: _____

Is the rent at this address subsidized through any other government program? Yes No

Who do you live with or will you live with at this address? (Select all that apply)

My spouse/partner (Name: _____)

My children (Please provide # of children and ages):

Other dependents (please explain):

Roommates / landlord / other family or friends (please explain):

Part V: Demographic Information

The following information may be used to prioritize applications in the event that we receive more applications than subsidies available. This information may also be used to report *general, anonymous* statistics about the program to our funders and the wider public.

Do you identify as Indigenous? Y / N Nation/Affiliation: _____

Do you identify as Black? Y / N

Do you identify as a Person of Colour? Y / N

Do you identify as LGBTQ2s+? Y / N

Do you live with a disability? Y / N

Do you use substances or have a substance use disorder? Y / N

Do you have any mental health concerns? Y / N

When was the last time you had a long-term rental? _____

Please submit this completed form with all supporting documents (see checklist on next page) via email to housingservices@liftcommunityservices.org or mail to Lift Community Services at 218-6975 Alberni St., Powell River BC V8A 5P4. Completed applications can also be dropped off in person at the Community Resource Centre, 4752 Joyce Ave, Mon-Thurs.

Supporting Documents Checklist

Before submitting this application, please review the checklist below. Missing documentation can result in processing delays. **Please do not submit original documents.**

[] Referral form completed?

[] Identification for each household member 19 and over enclosed (photocopies only):

- Copy of one of the following: birth certificate, passport, Canadian citizenship certificate/card, confirmation of permanent residence or refugee protection claimant document. BC identification card, other pieces of ID can also be considered; and
- Copy of full-time student proof for dependents 19-24 (if applicable)

[] Proof of Income enclosed?

- Notification of Assessment from most recent tax year; or
- Confirmation of Income Assistance or Disability Assistance from the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction; or
- Proof of current income from all sources such as entitlement letter from Service Canada for Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement and Canada Pension Plan or pension cheque stub; letter from employer or copy of 3 pay stubs showing gross income before tax.

[] Proof of Rent enclosed?

- Rent receipt showing tenant name, address, rent amount, date and landlord signature (recommended); or
- Copy of Rent Increase Notice; or
- Copy of Lease or Tenancy Agreement (if signed in past 12 months or for a pending move-in)

[] Bank Information for Direct Deposit enclosed?

- Blank cheque marked void; or
- Preauthorized Debit Form provided by your financial institution