

Warm Welcome Coalition Provincial Election Questions

Preamble

The **Warm Welcome Coalition** is a group of committed Churches, Agencies and Community activists coming together to support our houseless community, address food insecurity, and collaboratively strive towards a more equitable world for everyone. We are committed to encouraging governments to develop a real strategy to end houselessness. As we approach the Provincial Election, we invite you to answer to following questions as a resource to voters discerning during this election. **Please send responses to:** warmwelcomeregina@gmail.com

Poverty

1. Saskatchewan has the lowest minimum wage in the country. Do you support an increase?
2. The poverty line in Saskatchewan for a single person is \$1868 per month. Do you support an increase in social assistance rates to raise people out of deep poverty to the poverty line?
3. Do you support universal basic income, a guaranteed liveable income that will sustain every person's basic needs?

Housing.

The number of unhoused people in Saskatchewan cities is increasing at an alarming rate. Below are the figures for 2021-23 Point-in-Time or PiT-Counts carried out in Saskatchewan's three largest cities. As emphasized in each PiT-Count report, because PiT-Counts "occur on only one date and for a short time frame, it is important to understand they greatly under count homelessness in a city."

Regina: 488 people were unhoused, according to the 2021 PiT-Count, a 71% increase over the 2018 count. 79% of the unhoused people in the Regina count identified as Indigenous.

3,200 VACANT SASK HOUSING UNITS

In the midst of a houselessness crisis, there are about 3,200 vacant Sask Housing units—that is units owned by the province—across the province: 700 in Regina, 282 in Saskatoon, and 120 in Prince Albert.

Rent for a Sask Housing unit is 30% of your income. For a single person on the SIS program, that would be \$293 per month.

1. What would your plan be for developing a cold weather strategy for winter 2024/25? Do you support access to housing for all Saskatchewan residents and a strategy to end houselessness?
2. We have over 3000 vacant social housing properties. What is your plan to address these vacancies?

3. 80% of Canadians live in areas with rent control? Do you support rent control policy for Saskatchewan?

Education

1. Five provinces in Canada, including the three largest; have language in collective agreements related to class size and complexity. Do you support the same agreement in Saskatchewan?
2. How does your party propose we meet the diverse needs of students?

Health

1. What does a healthy Saskatchewan look like?
 - Access to a family doctor
 - Accessible health care in rural areas.
 - Address overcrowding and staff shortages in urban centres.
2. Harm reduction approaches are supported by the World Health Organization and the Canadian Mental Health Association. Do you support a harm reduction strategy as well as a recovery approach?

Environment

1. What can Saskatchewan do to address climate change?
2. Do you support ending fossil fuel subsidies and redirecting those funds to a just transition and developing sustainable green energy? How can we together be responsible caretakers of the environment?
3. Are you committed to decarbonizing rapidly and not waiting for nuclear (SMR)? What decisions must be made to protect this land for the next generations?
4. Do you support initiatives to support transition to green energy (Wind, solar, electric, heat pumps) with subsidies and infrastructure?

Reconciliation

1. How can Saskatchewan work cooperatively with First Nations to ensure robust consultation, revenue sharing and land claims?
2. Do you support joint stewardship of Crown lands by the province and First Nations?

Gender Based Violence

1. Saskatchewan has the highest rates of domestic violence and sexual assault in Canada. In fact, the province's rates are almost double the national rates. What is your plan to reduce these rates?
2. Saskatchewan also has some of the highest rates of Sexually Transmitted Infections and teen pregnancies. How will your party address these concerns?

Sexuality and Gender Identity

1. What will you do to stop the hate and limiting of rights of those in the 2SLGBTQ community?
2. Do you support repealing, Bill 137, the Pronoun Policy which limits the rights of children and youth?
3. A disproportionate amount of youth on the street are 2SLGBTQ. What will you do to provide supports, shelter, and housing for these youth.