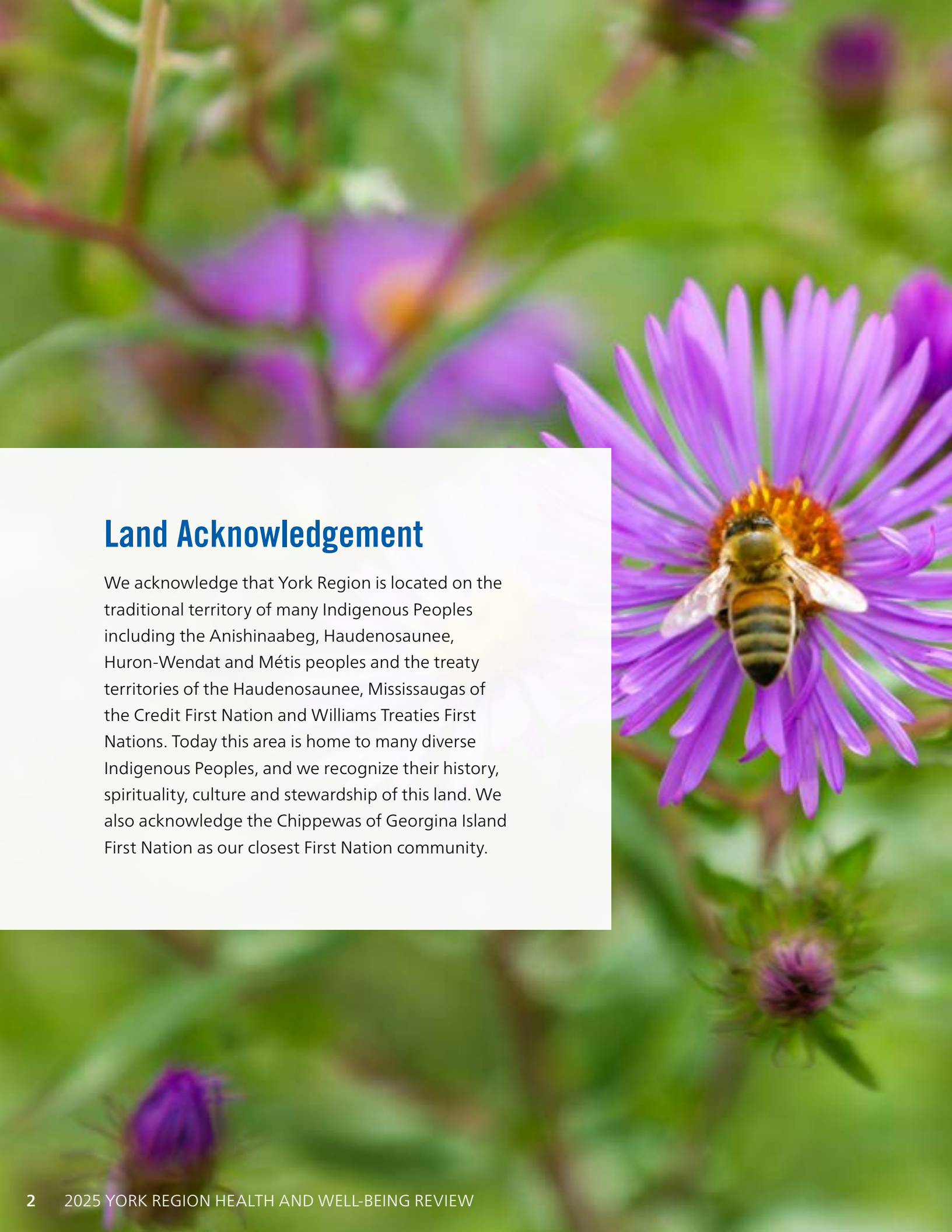
ATTACHMENT 1

2025 YORK REGION HEALTH AND WELL-BEING REVIEW



For the year ended December 31, 2025
Regional Municipality of York, Ontario, Canada
Prepared by Community and Health Services

York Region



Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that York Region is located on the traditional territory of many Indigenous Peoples including the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat and Métis peoples and the treaty territories of the Haudenosaunee, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and Williams Treaties First Nations. Today this area is home to many diverse Indigenous Peoples, and we recognize their history, spirituality, culture and stewardship of this land. We also acknowledge the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation as our closest First Nation community.



York Regional Forest

VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

We envision
strong, caring, safe communities

through our mission of
working together to serve our thriving communities — today and tomorrow

by relying on our values of
Integrity, Commitment, Accountability, Respect and **Excellence (ICARE)**



York Region

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Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request. Please contact: 1-877-464-9675



INTRODUCTION

The annual York Region Health and Well-Being Review (the Review) developed by the Community and Health Services Department (CHS) provides an overview of:

- **Demographic, socio-economic, health and well-being trends in York Region, including impact on residents and demand for human services**
- **CHS programs and services supporting resident needs**
- **Innovative, integrated partnerships and advocacy to address service pressures**

The way York Region's population grows and diversifies influences how communities evolve. In addition, resident experiences and impacts of external forces (e.g., pandemic, global conflict, economic downturn) affect residents' well-being and supports they may need.

While the Review focuses on community health and well-being more broadly, information related to the health of York Region population is available through Understanding the Health of People in York Region, including an interactive dashboard launched in 2025.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

York Region is growing and becoming more diverse with people from many different cultures, speaking a variety of languages contributing to York Region's strength. In addition, York Region consistently ranks among the healthiest communities in Ontario, due to its high life expectancy, strong social networks and access to quality services.

Initiatives are underway to support economic growth in Canada, Ontario and York Region. However, not all residents will experience benefits from these initiatives equally. In 2025, high cost of living, income insecurity and housing affordability pressures continued to make it harder for an increasing number of residents to thrive. As well, global economic uncertainty makes it challenging for residents, business and service providers to stabilize and plan for the future.

When residents face more than one of these challenges at the same time, the impact is more problematic and contributes to food insecurity, housing instability and mental health challenges in York Region. Supporting residents when they are most vulnerable with integrated wraparound supports increases opportunities for improved outcomes.

The Regional Municipality of York (the Region) works with other levels of government and various partners to provide support to residents when they need it most. In 2025, York Regional Council investments led to impactful actions, strengthened partnerships and supported residents. However, demand for human and health services provided by the Region continues to increase, driven by growing and changing community needs.

By proactively identifying trends, the Region continues to work with partners to ensure the system and funding are responsive to community needs. More help from senior levels of government is needed to enable municipalities and community partners to continue to support residents to thrive.

METHODOLOGY

The annual Review is grounded in the Social Determinants of Health framework. Social Determinants of Health are conditions in which people are born, work, live and age, and are shaped by economic, social, cultural and political forces beyond an individual's control[1]. Understanding Social Determinants of Health is key to recognizing inequalities that make it harder for some residents to access services and achieve better outcomes.

The Review uses the most up-to-date and reliable data available. Time periods reported vary because sources collect and release information at different times. The 2025 Review draws on over 60 sources, including Statistics Canada, public policy papers, Environics Analytics, York Region Community Opinion Survey, program data, and insights from community partners collected through recent engagement undertaken by the Strategies and Partnerships Branch.

Data often miss people who are hardest to reach. The Review aims to show the complexity of residents' needs, but cannot capture "hidden vulnerability", meaning people who do not access formal programs and services.



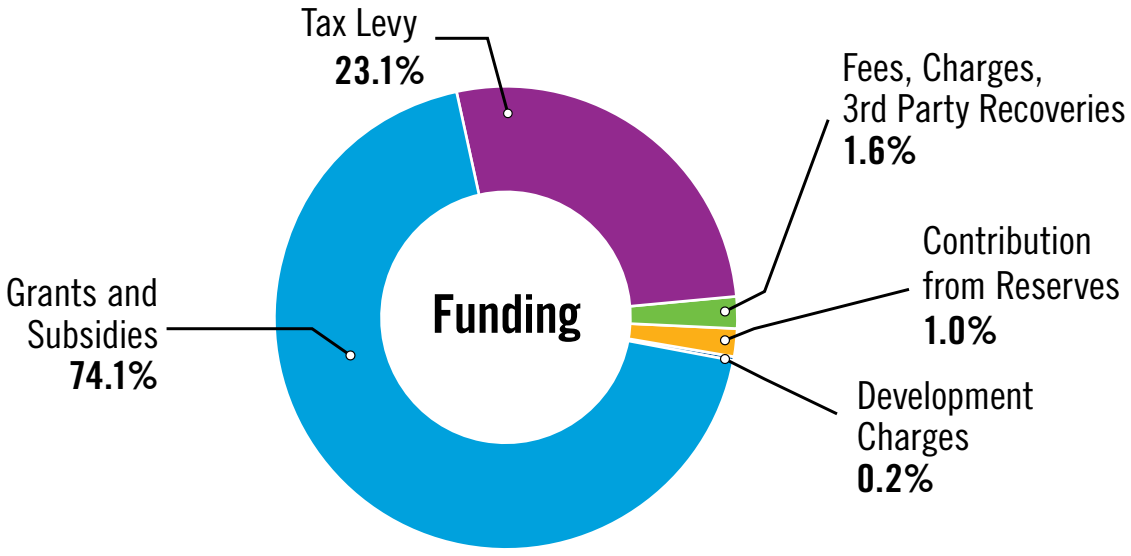
York Regional Forest

COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT FUNDING

CHS supports York Regional Council's Vision of strong, caring and safe communities and the 2023 to 2027 Strategic Plan: From Vision to Results, by providing six core services – Children's Services, Community Housing, Social Assistance, Paramedic Services, Public Health and Long-Term Care. CHS aims to make programs accessible and responsive to residents' needs.

In the approved 2026 Budget, CHS has a gross operating budget of $1.4 billion and a 10-year capital budget of $695.6 million. Senior government funding covers an estimated 74% of the total 2026 budgeted operating spending. However, funding has not kept pace with population growth, inflation onboarding of new programs, or changing community needs. This means the Region must supplement funding each year with additional tax levy to maintain services.

CHS OPERATING BUDGET 2026[2]



In April 2025, CHS reported a growing difference in the cost to deliver services and funding contribution from senior levels of government. Based on the 2026 approved operating budget, there was a provincial funding shortfall of $79.1 million for four provincially mandated services: Homelessness Community Programs ($26.2 million), Long-Term Care Homes ($30.8 million), Paramedic Emergency Services ($3.7 million) and Public Health ($18.4 million).

In response, the Region is strengthening advocacy, partnerships, knowledge mobilization, and exploring innovative solutions. The Region is just one part of a large human services system that includes federal and provincial governments, municipalities and community partners. This system provides services that address Social Determinants of Health and help communities thrive.



Community partners are also struggling with capacity. In 2024, 85% of non-profits in Ontario reported higher service demand compared to 2023. In addition, 22% of non-profits reported inability to meet this higher demand for services. Critical barriers for non-profits are fiscal pressures and the ongoing labour force and volunteer shortages.[3]

York Region Seniors

Building Awareness & Advocating for Community Needs

The Review is a foundational analysis of annual demographic, socio-economic, health and well-being trends enabling the Region to lead responsive service planning, budget development, collaborative partnerships and advocacy.

The Review draws attention to strengths, challenges and opportunities within the community to share knowledge between the Region, municipal and community partners. The shared understanding supports community engagement and helps to inform system planning, delivery, management and evaluation of programs to support community well-being.

The 2024 Review was approved by Regional Council in March 2025, and its findings informed meetings with Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs) and Members of Parliament (MPs), sector surveys, advocacy, and presentations to over 250 internal and external partners.

The Region's advocacy efforts are making a difference:

- $2.8 million annual increase in each of 2024-26 for Ontario's Dedicated Offload Nurse Program
- $11.4 million in annual provincial funding to improve Ontario Works delivery, being phased in between 2025 and 2027
- $4.0 million in 2024-2025 in time-limited Provincial Last Mile funding to support three community emergency and transitional housing projects
- $1.4 million in 2024-2025 for time-limited funding from Provincial Government Encampment Response Initiative
- $10.8 million across 2024-2026 in time-limited Federal Government Unsheltered Homelessness Encampment Initiative
- York Region received an additional 3,315 Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care spaces to make child care more affordable for families in the Region, in March 2025
- Long-term care providers in York Region have been allocated an estimated 3,622 new beds (27.8% of provincial total new beds) and 354 upgraded beds (3.2% of provincial total upgraded beds) as of April 2025

SECTION 1:
POPULATION CHANGE

Population growth and diversity make York Region strong. Understanding the way York Region's population is changing and how identity impacts what people experience, is key to creating services that are accessible, inclusive and meet everyone's needs.

Key York Region trends:

- **Population is growing supported by immigration**
- **Population is diverse, speaking over 120 languages and representing over 230 distinct ethnic origins**
- **Residents are living longer, contributing to an aging population**

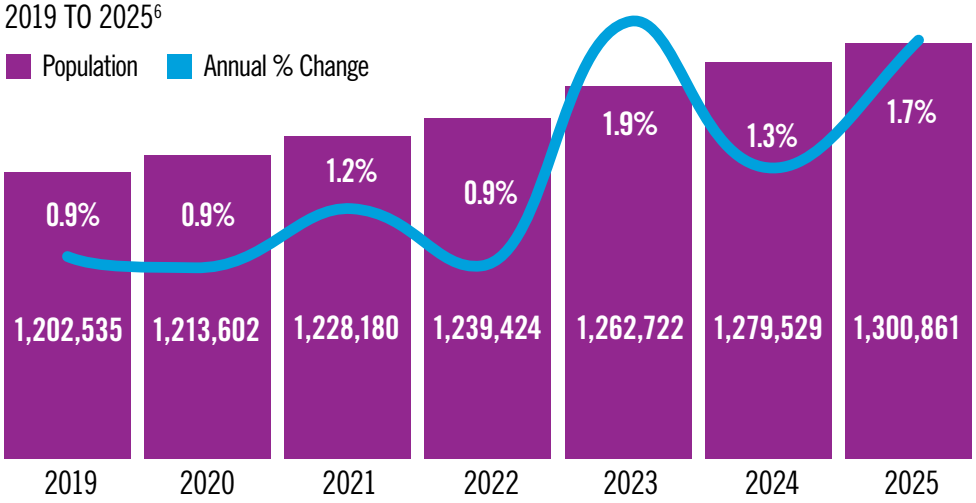


York Region's population continues to grow, reaching 1.3 million residents in 2025

In 2025, York Region's population increased by about 21,300 people (1.7%). This increase is significant at a time when the Ontario's growth slowed to 0.7% in 2025 and national growth slowed to 0.9%,[4] driven primarily by decreased immigration and low birth rates. At present, York Region's population is expected to reach 1.33 million in 2026 and over 2 million by 2051.[5]

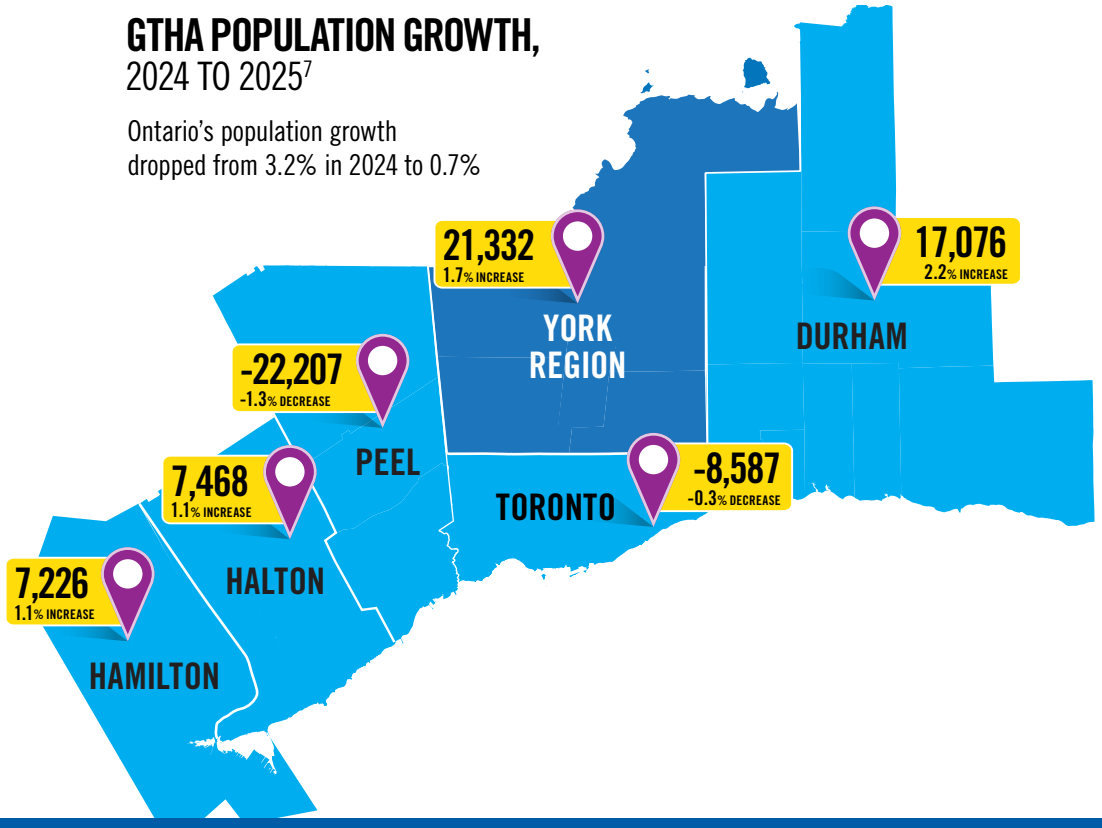
ANNUAL POPULATION GROWTH IN YORK REGION

2019 TO 2025[6]

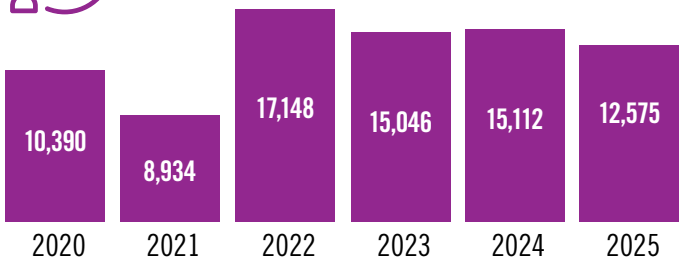


GTHA POPULATION GROWTH, 2024 TO 2025[7]

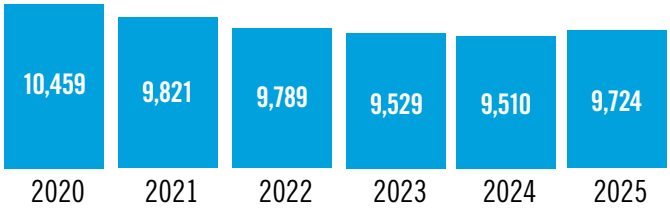
Ontario's population growth dropped from 3.2% in 2024 to 0.7%



NUMBER OF RECENT IMMIGRANTS ARRIVING IN YORK REGION 2020 TO 2025[8]



NUMBER OF CHILDREN BORN IN YORK REGION 2020 TO 2025[9]



Adding to population growth are new residents to York Region, including recent immigrants and babies born. Between 2024 and 2025, York Region added 12,600 recent immigrants and 9,700 newborns. Even with lower federal immigration targets and tightened eligibility criteria in 2025, recent immigrants still accounted for 59% of new residents.[10]

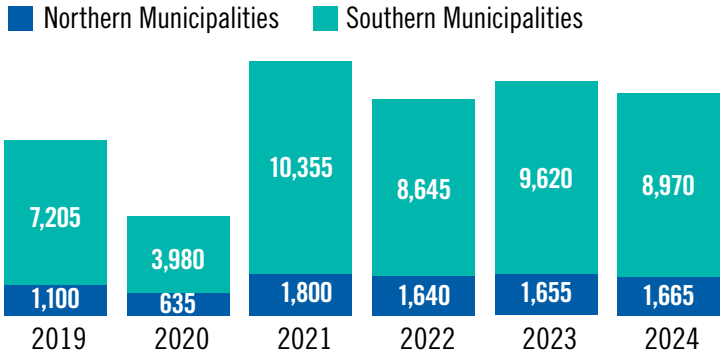
In 2025, more temporary residents (international students, Refugee Protection Claimants and foreign workers) left York Region than came in, reversing a recent settlement trend post pandemic.[11] This change is attributed to federal policy changes that balanced new arrivals with planned departures to reduce temporary resident volumes.



Settlement agencies report that federal funding will decrease starting in 2026, matching lower federal immigration targets. Cuts may lead to staff layoffs, reduced programs and services, longer wait times, and less capacity to reach most vulnerable clients[14]. The Local Immigration Partnership and Newcomer Inclusion Table will continue to work together to monitor impact on services and raise awareness of newcomer and community needs.



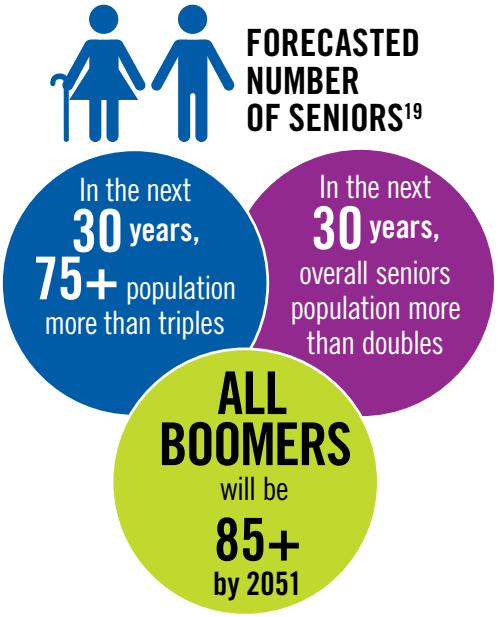
NEWCOMER ADMISSIONS TO YORK REGION
2019 TO 2024[12]



The federal Immigration Levels Plan for 2026-2028 continues to prioritize Economic Class immigration and most recent immigrants living in York Region fall into this group. However, in 2024, Family Class was the largest group of newcomers settling in York Region (4,060), followed by Economic Class (3,350) and Resettled Refugee Class (1,870) newcomers.[13]

The Economic Class includes immigrants selected for their ability to contribute to Canada's economy, while the Family Class often includes older individuals joining their families in Canada. The Resettled Refugee Class includes people who may be fleeing a crisis and have urgent needs like housing, food and trauma-informed care. This means service providers across York Region may be supporting more newcomers with lower language proficiency and more complex needs.

York Region's demographics are changing, shifting residents' needs

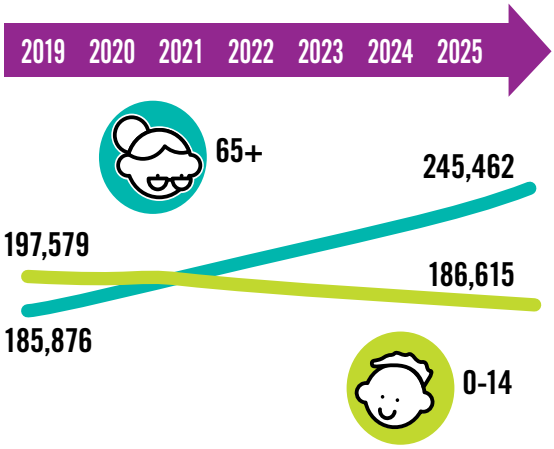


Better healthcare, living conditions and lifestyles are raising life expectancy, which means there are more older residents. In 2025, there were nearly 245,500 seniors over 65 (18.9%) in York Region, an increase of 11,100 (4.8%) since 2024.[15]

Over the next 30 years, York Region's population over 65 years of age will more than double, and over 75 will triple.[16] While many seniors remain healthy, active and connected to their communities, some may require more comprehensive health and social care supports.

More young adults are leaving York Region than moving in. Between 2019 and 2025, over 11,500 residents aged 15 to 35 moved to other parts of Ontario or Canada[17]. Rising cost of living, housing affordability, education and employment opportunities are part of the reason.[18] This trend also contributes to the increasing proportion of seniors.

NUMBER OF SENIORS AND CHILDREN IN YORK REGION
2019 TO 2025[21]



Over the last decade, the number of children under 14 living in York Region has been decreasing. This shift is partly due to outmigration and lower birth rates. Between 2024 and 2025, the number of children under 14 declined by 1.6%, or approximately 3,000 children. In 2025, York Region had 187,000 children in this age group, representing 14.4% of the total population.[20] However, programs and services supporting children, families and caregivers, delivered in partnership with local municipalities and community agencies, continue to be in high demand. In 2025, 12,809 children and 16,092 caregivers participated in EarlyON child and family programs.

As of December 2025, the Region also supported 1,888 children through recreation subsidies, an increase of 16.5% since 2024. In addition, Public Health Nurses with the Healthy Baby Healthy Children Program completed 5,007 home visits ensuring eligible families had support through pregnancy and the first two years of their child's life.

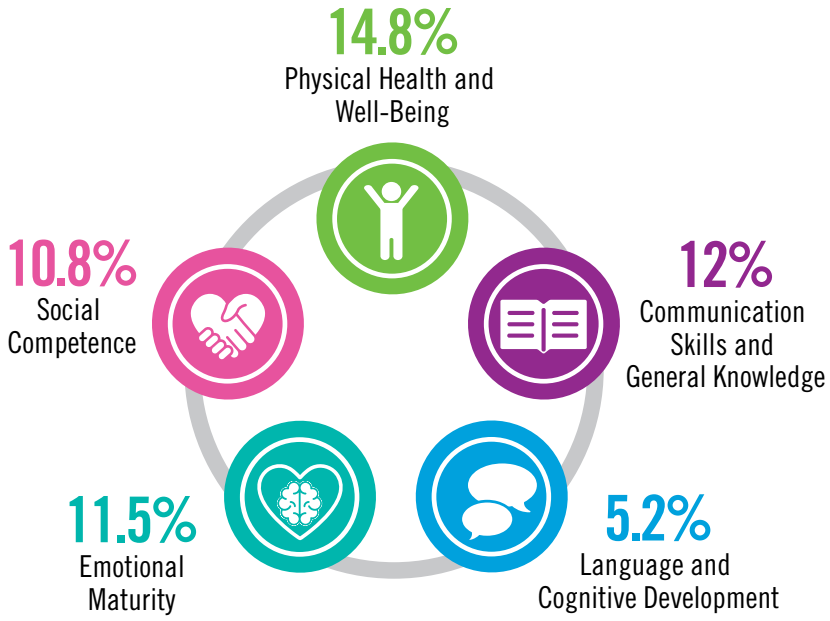
The Early Development Instrument is a community-based measure developed by the Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University that provides a snapshot on the overall developmental health of children. It offers a population measure that is based on developmental rather than curriculum benchmarks, by assessing five general areas of child development, known as domains. These are:

- Physical Health and Well-Being
- Social Competence
- Emotional Maturity
- Language and Cognitive Development
- Communication Skills and General Knowledge

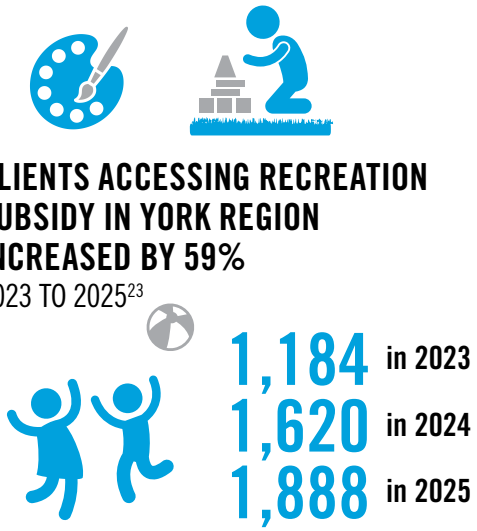
The Region also provides Early Intervention Services for children with special needs, ensuring each child can fully participate in the community. In 2025, Early Intervention Services supported more than 4,300 children and 3,600 families through this program.

Recent Early Development Instrument results indicated shifting developmental needs among children, including a growing percentage of children in York Region with early development vulnerabilities in one or more domains (from 26.4% in 2015 to 29.6% in 2023). These evolving needs may place increased demand on early years, child care, and community services, highlighting the importance of responsive planning and service delivery.

EARLY DEVELOPMENT INSTRUMENT 2023 CYCLE:
PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN VULNERABLE IN EACH DOMAIN[22]



CLIENTS ACCESSING RECREATION SUBSIDY IN YORK REGION INCREASED BY 59%
2023 TO 2025[23]

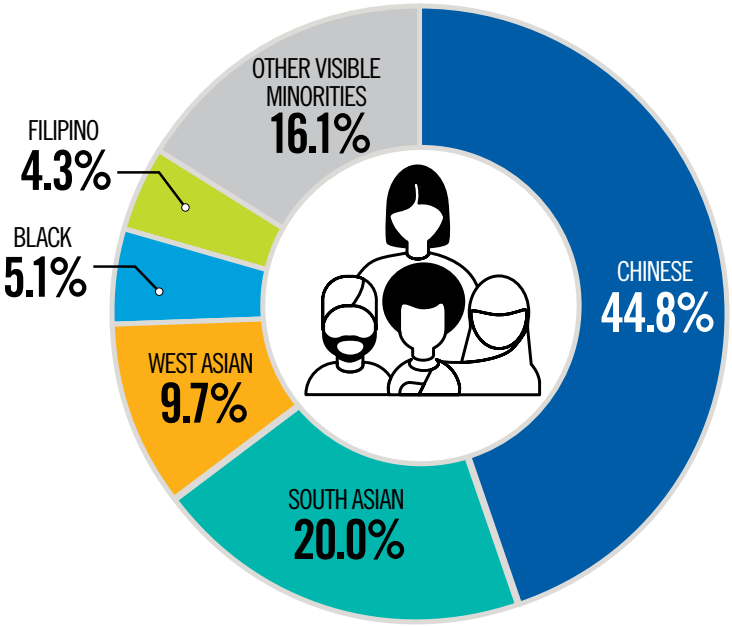


Currently, 90% of child care operators are participating in Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) program including not-for-profit and for-profit operators. CWELCC has reduced child care fees to a maximum of $22 per day.

York Region's diverse population includes people of all abilities and represents 230 distinct ethnic origins

In 2021, 47.8% (557,025) of York Region residents were born outside of Canada - the second highest proportion in Ontario, behind the Regional Municipality of Peel. In addition, 55% (641,195) of York Region residents self-identified as a visible minority.[24]

RACIALIZED GROUPS IN YORK REGION 2021[25]





88.5%

OF YORK REGION RESIDENTS ARE CANADIAN CITIZENS[26]

Between 2017 and 2022, the prevalence of disability in York Region rose from 17.5% (162,600 people) to 21.3% (206,250 people). Despite this increase, York Region retains the second-lowest prevalence of disability within the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) and remains below both provincial and national levels. The biggest increases were in learning, mental health-related, and vision disabilities.[27]

The increase since 2017 shows the need for continued attention on accessibility, especially as York Region's population ages and age-related disabilities grow. Disabilities often overlap with other challenges like mental health issues, chronic illness and low-income which contribute to the complexity of needs.

THE DISABILITY RATE WAS LOWER IN YORK REGION THAN IN ONTARIO[28]



YORK REGION 21.3%
206,250 people with disabilities



ONTARIO 28.0%
3,235,340 people with disabilities

The Region is committed to diversity and inclusion so all residents can thrive

The Inclusion Charter for York Region is a community initiative that brings together organizations with a common commitment to creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all. By endorsing the Inclusion Charter, organizations affirm their commitment to inclusion, whereby all people feel they belong and have access to the same opportunities.

Affirmed by the Inclusion Charter for York Region, York Region is committed to Indigenous inclusion and engagement. In 2021, 5,885 residents of the Region and the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation identified as having an Indigenous background, accounting for 0.5% of the total population.[29]

Indigenous engagement and inclusion is about creating environments that foster relationship-building and a space to explore, heal, communicate and learn from the wrongs of the past. In 2025, the Region engaged with Indigenous communities by sharing information with community partners and residents about programs and services, participating in Health Fairs, Powwows other community events; provided "hands-on learning" within the community that emphasizes traditional community roles unique to the Chippewas of Georgina Island.

York Region is proud to be a member and co-chair of the Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group (MDIG). MDIG includes 20 member organizations that are working together to enhance inclusion in York Region through collective actions like the #EndHateYR Campaign, an Inclusive Language Guide and a Diversity Calendar.

The collaborative approach used to develop the Inclusion Charter has been recognized by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) International Training Centre for Authorities and Leaders (CIFAL Atlanta), as a leading practice and innovative model that communities around the world could use to become more inclusive.

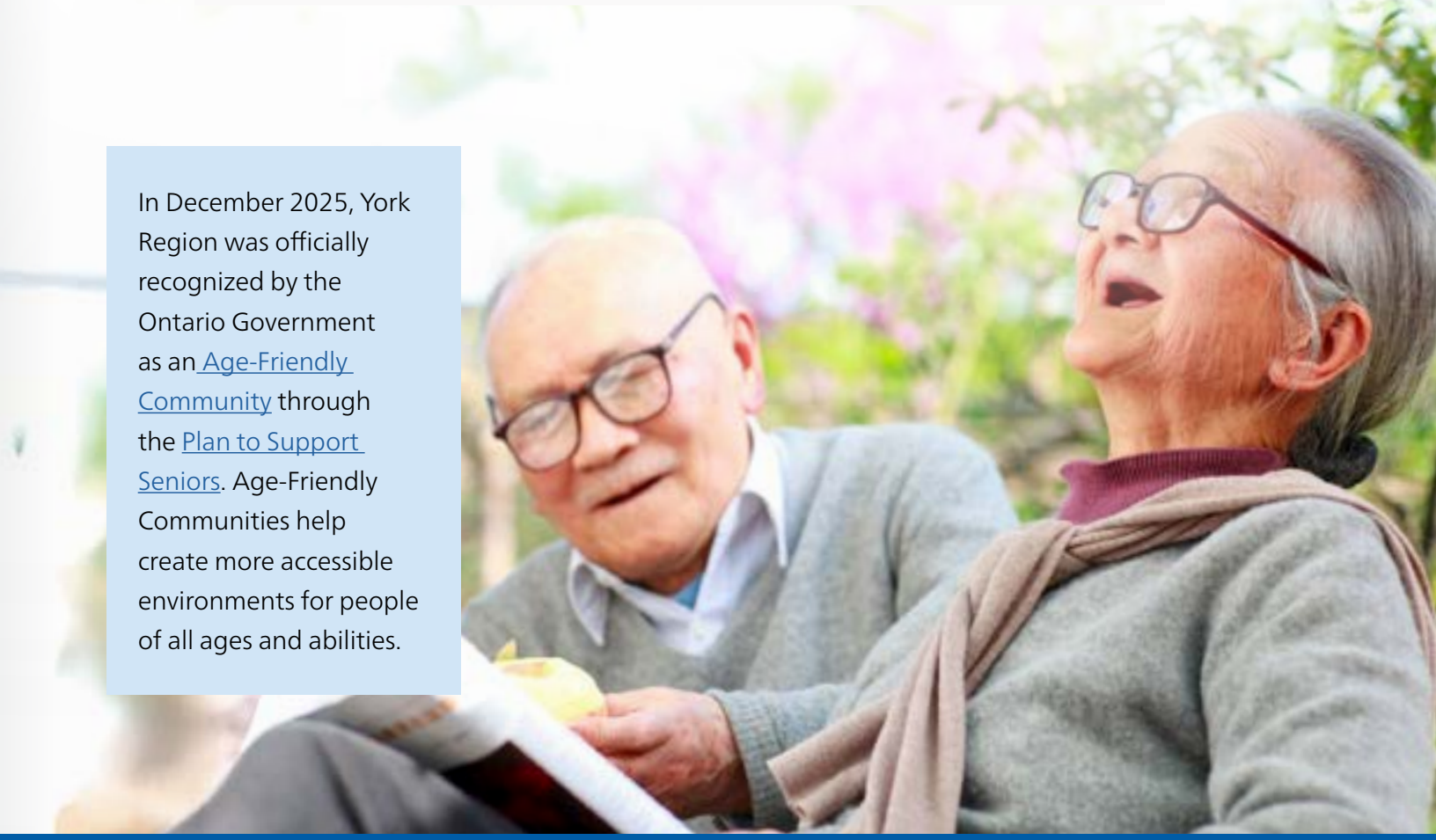
As York Region's senior population grows, services must adapt. The 2024 to 2027 York Region Plan to Support Seniors sets priorities, goals, actions, and advocacy to improve health and well-being for a diverse and growing senior population. The plan focuses on helping seniors "age in the right place" to support their preferences, circumstances, and care needs.

Since 2009, the federally funded Local Immigration Partnership supports newcomer settlement and inclusion in York Region. A Place to Thrive: York Region's 2024–2027 Plan for Newcomer Inclusion outlines actions for the Region and community partners to make York Region a welcoming place where everyone can thrive. In September 2025, the Region and community partners came together to host a series of events across York Region in celebration of Welcoming Week.

The York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (YRAAC) advises Regional Council and York Regional Police on how to make it easier for people with disabilities to use the Region's programs and services. The 2023 to 2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines how the Region and York Regional Police will meet the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) to remove barriers to accessibility in programs, services and facilities.

> **"Working with community partners is very important… because we hit different areas."**
>
> – Centre for Immigrant and Community Services

In December 2025, York Region was officially recognized by the Ontario Government as an Age-Friendly Community through the Plan to Support Seniors. Age-Friendly Communities help create more accessible environments for people of all ages and abilities.



The Region is planning for population growth across Service System Plans

Having a mix of housing options is important to support population growth and meet current housing needs. The Region's 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan provides a roadmap to address housing needs, create complete communities, and promote economic and social inclusion.

While the 10-year Plan ended in 2023, the Region continues to advance its goals. Key activities are included in the 2024 to 2027 Homelessness Service System Plan and the Region continued to take steps to increase affordable and community housing supply as reported to Regional Council on October 2024 and September 2025. An updated Housing and Homelessness Plan will be presented to the Housing and Homelessness Committee in May 2026.

In May 2025, Council established the Housing and Homelessness Committee as a Special Committee of Council to inform the development of the Region's next 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan. The Committee provides a dedicated forum for direct Council engagement on housing and homelessness issues and priorities, delivering reports and presentations proactively and responsively.

The Region is one of 47 Service System Managers in Ontario responsible for planning and managing child care and early years services for children aged 0 to 12 years. The 2024 to 2027 Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan, sets out the vision, priorities and actions to strengthen and integrate supports.

As an Ontario Works Delivery Partner, the Region is required to submit Service Plans. They are operational plans that are tied to Ontario Works program delivery funding implementation and inform the Province of how municipalities will meet Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services requirements.

With continued population growth, paramedics anticipate responding to more than 160,000 incidents by 2031. The Paramedic Services Master Plan 2021-2031 was developed to meet this growing demand. Growth pressures highlight the need for continued investment in system resources and service delivery models to ensure community needs are met.

SECTION 2:
ECONOMIC STABILITY

Understanding economic stability in York Region is key to supporting residents' needs before they become more acute or widespread.

Key York Region trends:

- **Global economic uncertainty impacts income security in York Region**
- **Housing costs add to financial pressure**
- **Financial struggles lead to hard choices and challenges including food insecurity and housing instability**
- **Greater proportion of residents in York Region are experiencing low income**

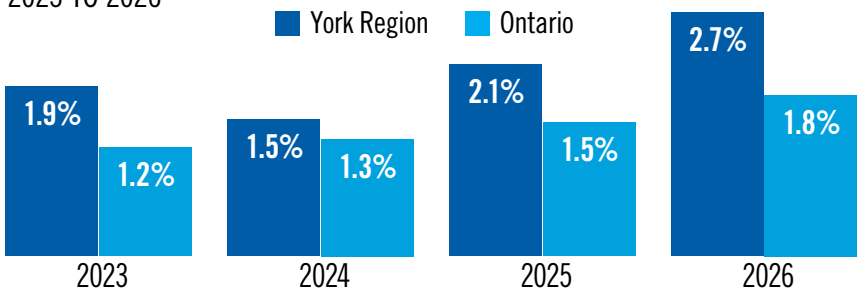


Growing global economic uncertainty impacts income security in York Region

Ongoing impacts from the economic downturn caused by the pandemic, supply chain issues, and U.S. tariff policies are driving unemployment, slow economic growth, and a rising cost of living. These pressures create a cycle of financial stress and uncertainty, making it harder for residents, businesses and service providers to stabilize and plan for the future.[30] [31]

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP), YORK REGION AND ONTARIO

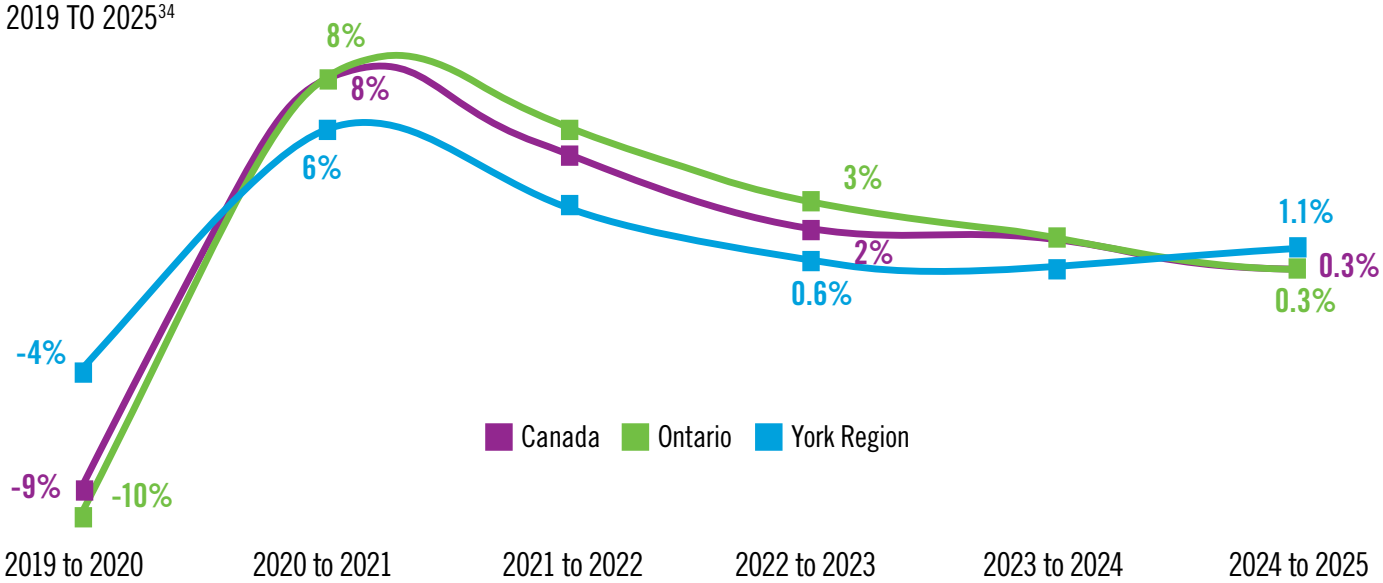
2023 TO 2026[32]



With an employment growth rate of 1.1% in 2025—surpassing both provincial and national levels—York Region demonstrated economic resilience. In 2025, employment growth supported York Region to reach 625,000 total jobs. However, unemployment remained outside the healthy range of 4% to 5%. Over the summer, York Region's unemployment rate peaked at 7.8%, slightly lower than Ontario's 8%. By December 2025, the unemployment rate in Ontario decreased to 7% and in York Region to 6.5%.[33]

ANNUAL EMPLOYMENT GROWTH RATE, CANADA, ONTARIO AND YORK REGION

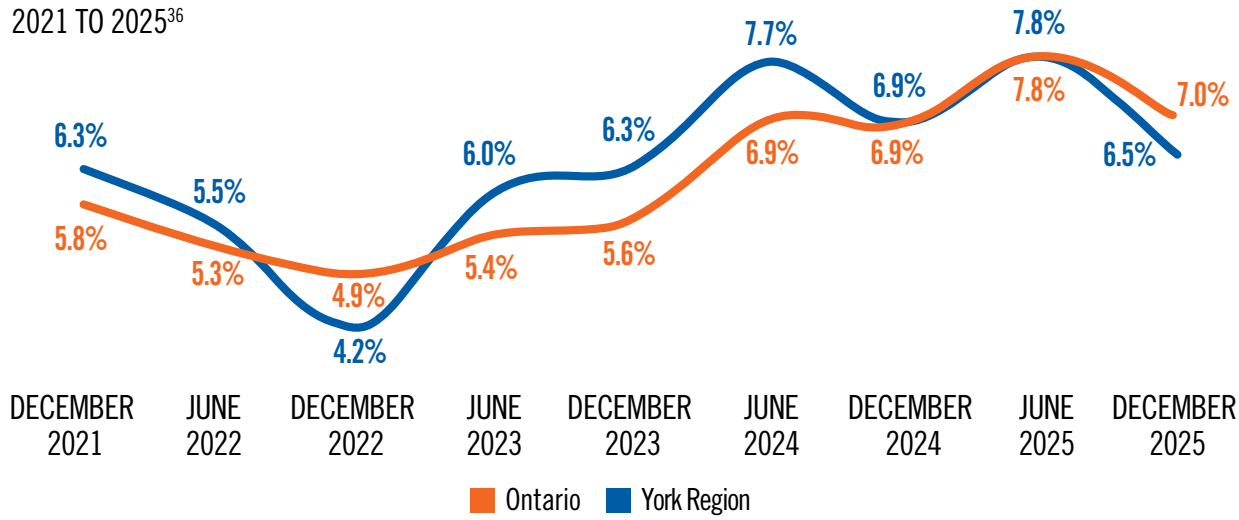
2019 TO 2025[34]



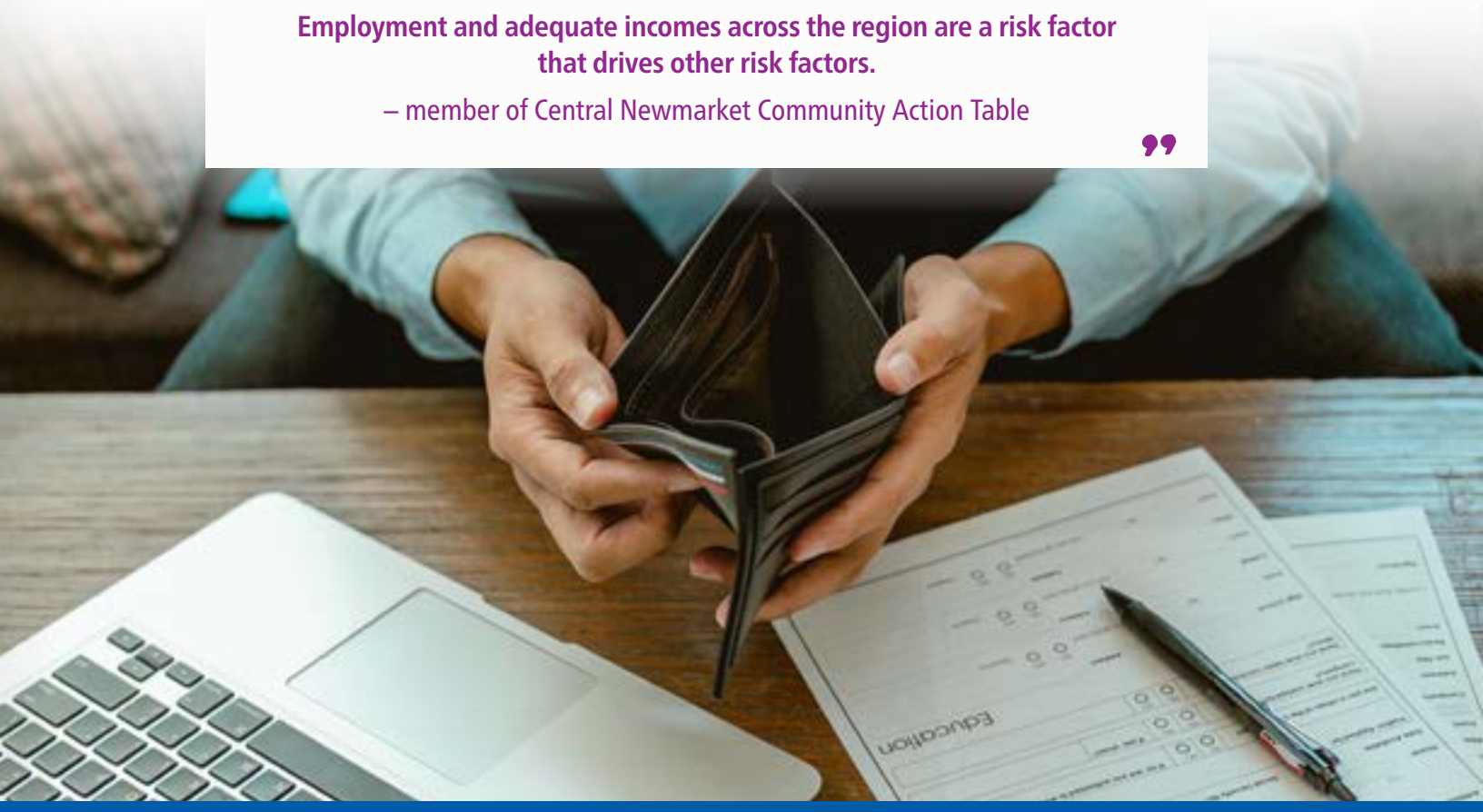
Note: Data is updated throughout the year. This may result in variation between data sources as new information becomes available.

Youth unemployment in 2025 was a particular concern. By September, the unemployment rate for people aged 15 to 25 reached 14.7%, marking the highest level in 14 years across Canada (not counting pandemic years). Labour market conditions showed slight improvement by the end of 2025, but the youth unemployment rate remained at 13.3% in December.[35]

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN YORK REGION AND ONTARIO
2021 TO 2025[36]



> **Employment and adequate incomes across the region are a risk factor that drives other risk factors.**
>
> – member of Central Newmarket Community Action Table

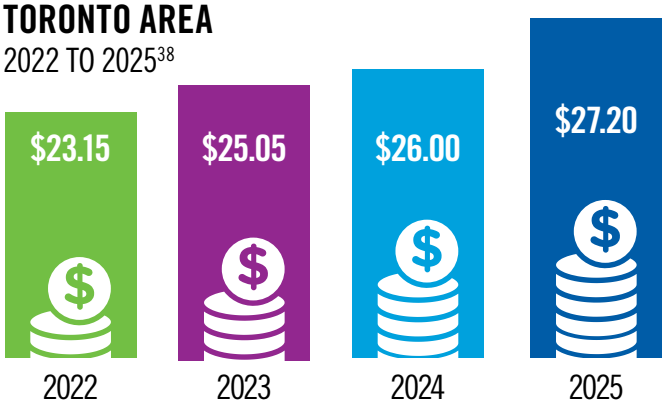


Between December 2024 and 2025, the number of new job postings in York Region grew from 3,700 to 6,200. However, the quality of jobs has changed as the number of full-time postings dropped from 84% to 75%, and the number of permanent job postings declined from 91% to 85%. The average wage offered across the 6,200 jobs was $28.05 per hour, slightly above the living wage of $27.20.[37]

In 2025, global economic uncertainty led more residents to emergency economic stability programs. The monthly average number of Employment Insurance beneficiaries in York Region increased by 56.4%, from 8,328 in 2023 to 13,030 in 2025.[39] Similarly, the monthly average number of people receiving Ontario Works in York Region increased by 27.1%, from 17,265 in 2023 to 21,947 in 2025. Demand is also increasing for subsidized housing, food banks and mental health services.

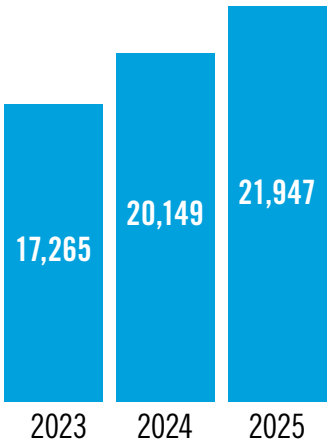
LIVING WAGE RATES IN GREATER TORONTO AREA

2022 TO 2025[38]



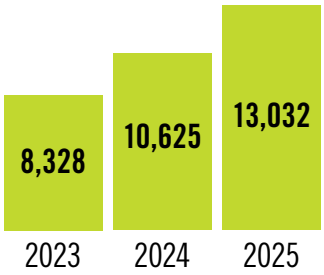
OW MONTHLY AVERAGES IN YORK REGION

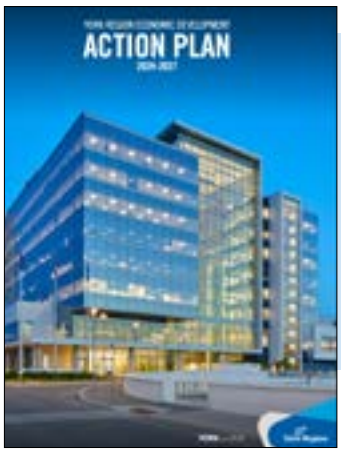
2023 TO 2025[40]



EI MONTHLY AVERAGES IN YORK REGION

2023 TO 2025[41]





York Region's Economic Development Action Plan (2024–2027) sets a strategy for economic growth and prosperity. Economic development also plays an integral role in promoting the growth of businesses owned by equity-deserving groups along with facilitating the integration of newcomers, youth, women and Indigenous people into the labour force.

Housing costs add to financial pressure

Over the past decade, housing prices and rents have grown much faster than household incomes, creating a widening affordability gap. In Canada, housing is considered "affordable" if it costs less than 30% of a household's before-tax income.[42] Fewer than 1% of new ownership units in York Region have been classified as affordable in alignment with this definition".[43]

While housing resale prices dropped slightly in 2025, home ownership remains out of reach for many. Even people with full-time jobs in essential roles—like nurses, teachers, skilled trades and first responders—struggle to afford and maintain homeownership in the GTHA.[44]

In 2024, 61% of homeowners in York Region had mortgages, and carried the highest average mortgage debt in GTHA ($779,660). York Region residents also had the highest average consumer debt ($83,737) in GTHA. Households in York Region owed an average of $3.04 for every dollar of disposable income.[45]

Despite nine Bank of Canada interest rate cuts between 2024 and 2025, on average homeowners renewing mortgages in 2025 saw a monthly payment increase of 10%, and those renewing in 2026 could see a 6% increase.[46] Higher interest payments mean less money for essentials like food, child care, transportation, prescription medication and other items.

Rental affordability has not improved either, increasing demand for affordable rentals and community housing programs. In 2025, the average rent for a purpose-built rental unit (most in demand) in York Region was $2,024 per month, while the average rent for a two-bedroom condominium apartment was $2,845. This represents increases of 6.1% and 0.3% since 2024, respectively.[47]



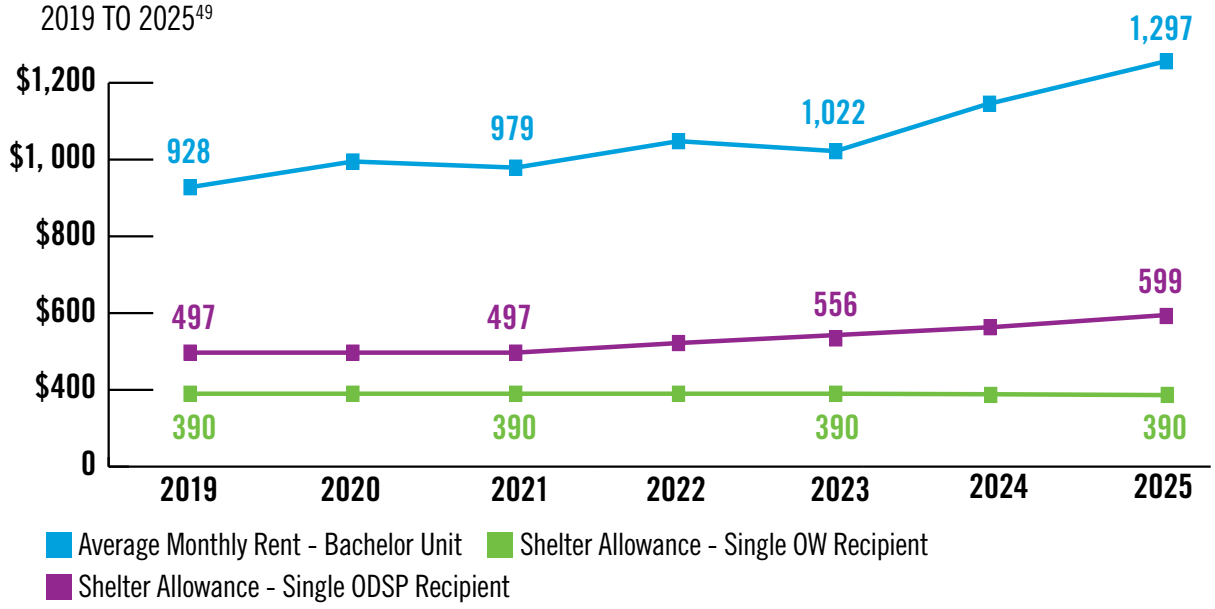
YORK REGION RENTAL MARKET
2025[48]

	PURPOSE-BUILT RENTAL	CONDOMINIUM APPARTMENT
VACANCY RATE	**3.7%**	**0.8%**
AVERAGE 2 BEDROOM RENT	**$2,024**	**$2,845**
INCREASE FROM 2024	**6.1%**	**0.3%**

Residents experiencing low-income, newcomers, youth, and residents receiving Ontario Works (OW) or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) face challenges finding affordable rental units. People that are unable to find affordable housing or who may be at risk of losing their housing may access the Region's homelessness prevention programs. In 2025, the Region supported approximately 2,150 applications, helping people keep their housing.

YORK REGION MONTHLY SHELTER RATES FOR SOCIAL ASSISTANCE COMPARED TO AVERAGE BACHELOR RENTS

2019 TO 2025[49]

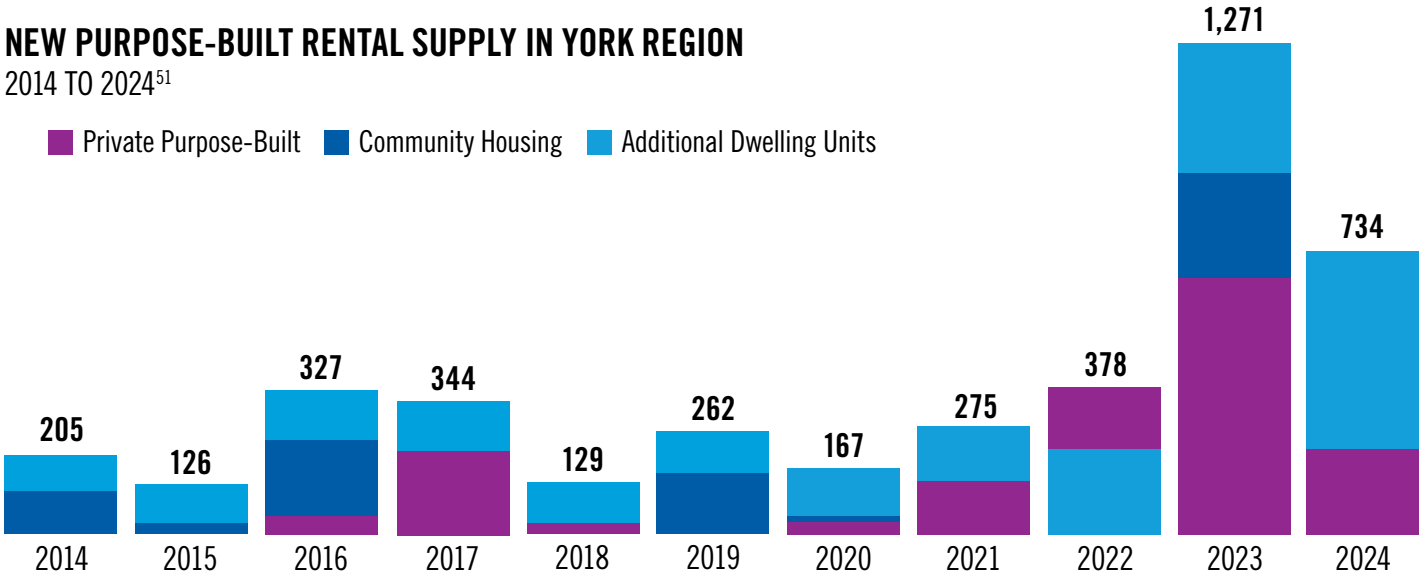


Prior to 2025 the average vacancy rate in York Region's purpose-built rental market remained below 3%, but increased to a healthy level of 3.7% in 2025. This change was driven by an increase in purpose-built rental supply and a sharp decline in temporary residents. York Region, which has the smallest rental stock in the GTHA, is expected to see rental supply growth due to more purpose-built rental apartments under construction in the next several years.[50]

Ontario Works (OW) benefit rates are set by the Ontario government and do not meet basic needs and shelter expenses. For example, a single individual receives $733 per month and a family of four receives $1,250 per month for basic needs and shelter. Rates have not increased since 2018. York Region is calling on the Provincial government to increase and then index OW rates with inflation to meet life's basic needs.

NEW PURPOSE-BUILT RENTAL SUPPLY IN YORK REGION

2014 TO 2024[51]



As residents age, they want to remain in their homes and communities. As identified in the Point-In-Time Count, the average age of individuals experiencing homelessness in York Region increased from 36 in 2021 to 41 years of age in 2024.[52] In 2025, most seniors referred to the Region's Vulnerable Seniors Network were identified to be experiencing housing instability. The Region's Vulnerable Seniors Network works to stabilize vulnerable seniors through needs-based solutions and harm reduction, mitigating avoidable 911 calls and emergency department visits.

Limited homecare, transition supports post crisis, and caregiver strain also create barriers for seniors to live safely and independently. Inadequate supply of homecare services also adds pressure on long-term care waitlists. In Ontario, 1 in 5 seniors over the age of 80 had complex care needs that require long-term care.[53]

Between July 2024 and October 2025, Newmarket Health Centre's waitlist grew by 11.3% (from 1,022 to 1,137 people) and Maple Health Centre's waitlist grew by 19.1% (from 792 to 943 people). York Region also delivers five adult day programs that promote health, well-being, safety and independence allowing clients to remain in their homes as long as possible, while providing relief for caregivers. In 2025, 193 adults were served through York Region's adult day programs.

The Unionville Seniors Hub has completed its design phase, with construction set to commence in 2026. In alignment with the 2024 to 2027 Plan to Support Seniors, the Seniors Hub will bring together community partners to deliver accessible, integrated programs and services that support healthy aging, social inclusion, preventive health and overall quality of life for seniors.

Financial struggles lead to hard choices and contribute to food insecurity

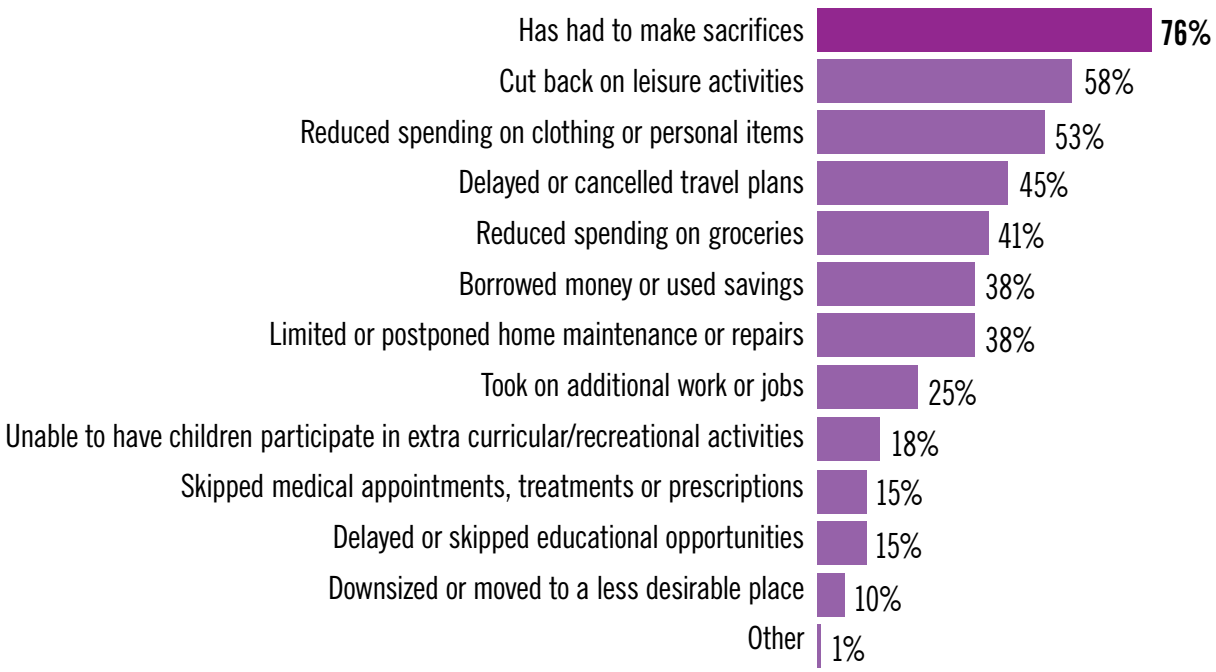
Between December 2024 and 2025, food prices across Canada increased by 5.0% year over year. It is estimated that the average Canadian family of four will pay over $900 more for food in 2026 than in 2025.[55]

The lower the household income is, the greater the chance of food insecurity.[56] In 2024, an estimated 22.1% of households in York Region experienced food insecurity—up from 19.4% since 2023 and 11.1% since 2019.[57] Food insecurity is not caused by a lack of food. Instead, it is caused by a lack of sufficient income to afford food.

In 2025, 76% of surveyed residents in York Region had to cut back on expenses due to cost of housing. Most commonly, residents are cutting back on leisure activities (58%) and 41% have had to reduce spending on groceries.[58]

RESIDENT REPORTED SACRIFICES DUE TO HOUSING COSTS

2025[59]



> **We are seeing more youth who are working part-time jobs to help cover rent or food at home—it's taking a toll on their mental health and school performance.**
>
> – 360°kids

> **Mental health and proper nutrition go hand in hand… you need healthy food to physically support your brain to be able to have mental health.**
>
> – Georgina Community Food Pantry

Each year York Region Public Health conducts the Nutritious Food Basket survey to monitor food affordability and raises awareness of food insecurity through education and knowledge-sharing events.

An accessible and affordable food security program delivered in partnership with the Food Network of York Region is now offered to subsidized housing residents living at four Housing York Inc. communities.



THE TOP THREE SUPPORT NEEDS IDENTIFIED BY PEOPLE RECEIVING ONTARIO WORKS[60]

were FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, FOOD and TRANSPORTATION SUPPORTS

FOOD BANK USAGE IN YORK REGION INCREASED[61]

52%

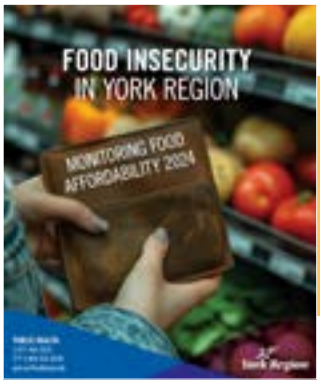
between **2021 and 2024**



2024:	33,893
2023:	31,742
2022:	30,442
2021:	22,295

> **Lack of affordable housing and economic affordability significantly affects all aspects of life.**
>
> – member of Healthy Communities working group of the Plan for Newcomer Inclusion

In 2025, the Region allocated over $36,000 to two community initiatives through the Community Investment Fund: the York Region Food Network's Good Food Markets and the Georgina Community Food Pantry's Recovery Efforts in Georgina, supporting food access for over 375 residents.

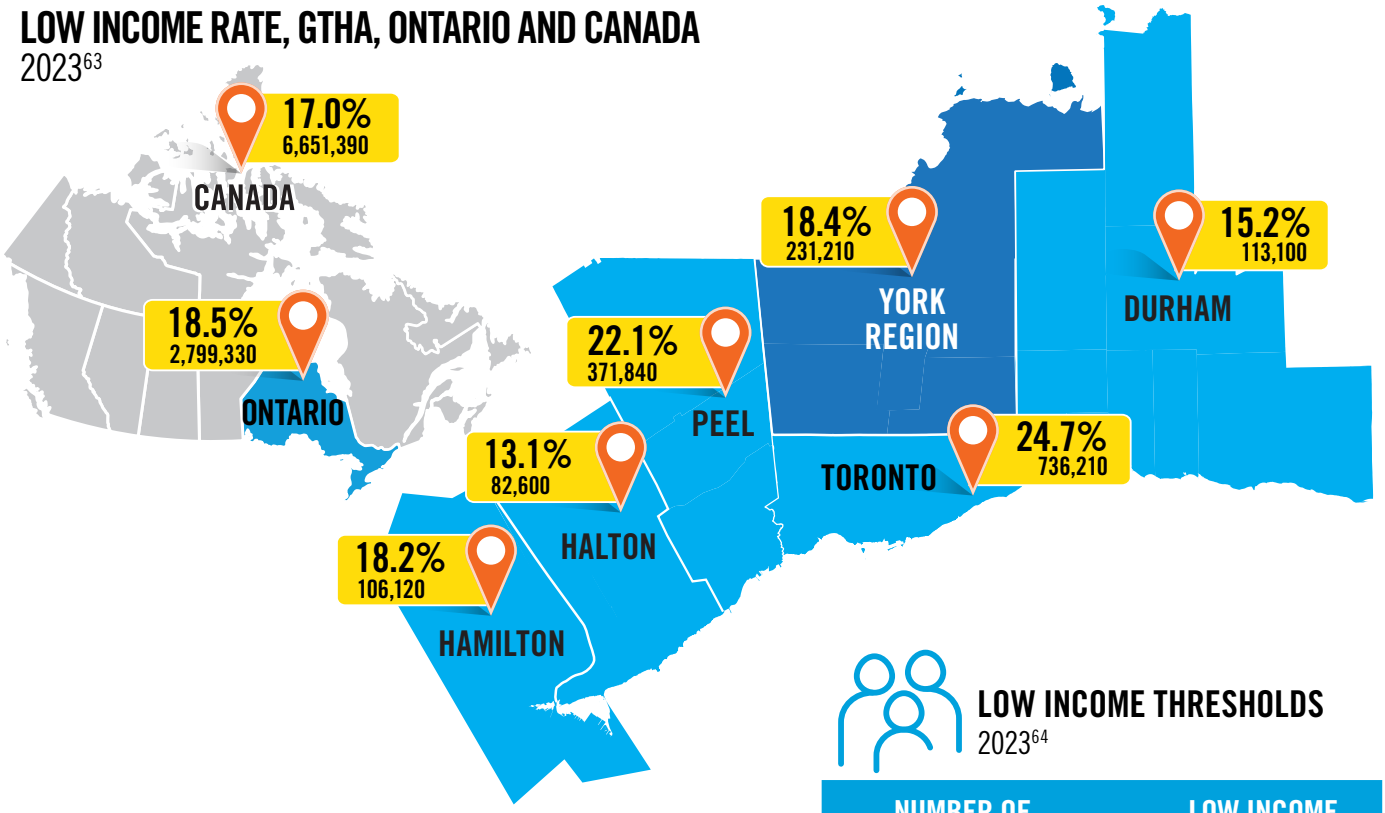


The Region is committed to supporting policies that address the root causes of food insecurity. Read the Food Insecurity in York Region: Monitoring Food Affordability 2024 to learn more about food affordability in York Region.

Many residents are experiencing low income

A person is experiencing low-income when their family income falls below a set threshold based on family size established by Statistics Canada. Before 2020, the number of residents in York Region living below this threshold was decreasing, reaching 158,690 (13.2%) by the end of that year. In 2021, the trend had reversed, and the number of residents experiencing low income started to grow, reaching 231,210 (18.4%) in 2023.[62]

LOW INCOME RATE, GTHA, ONTARIO AND CANADA
2023[63]



While the low-income rate dropped slightly (-0.2%) between 2022 and 2023 due to population growth, the actual number of people experiencing low-income grew by nearly 3,000.[65]

The low-income rate for children under 18 years of age has outpaced other age groups affecting about 44,400 children, increasing by 7 percentage points in just three years. Seniors were at lower risk of experiencing low income, compared to 2022.[66]

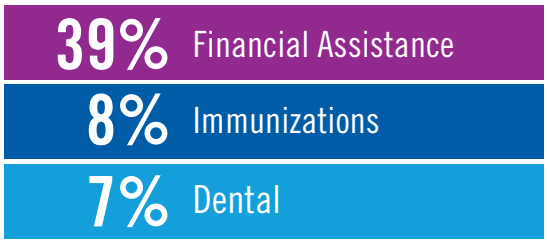
LOW INCOME THRESHOLDS
2023[64]

NUMBER OF FAMILY MEMBERS	LOW INCOME THRESHOLDS
1	$26,442
2	$37,395
3	$45,799
4	$52,884
5	$59,126
6	$64,769
7	$69,959
8	$74,789

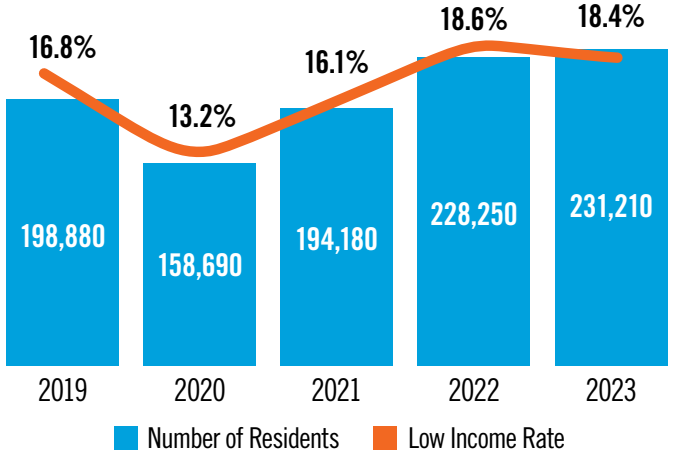
Income is one of the main drivers of health and well-being.[67] In 2021, people in the highest income group were 4.9 percentage points more likely to report health as "good", "very good" or "excellent," than people in the lowest income group. Similarly, people in the highest income group were 2.2 percentage points more likely to report mental health as "good", "very good" or "excellent," than people in the lowest income group.[68]



CORPPORATE CONTACT CENTRE TOP 3 CATEGORIES OF INQUIRY 2025[69]



LOW-INCOME TRENDS IN YORK REGION 2019 TO 2023[70]



> **One of the things that we've encountered is that rise in the number of grandparents that are supporting and raising their grandchildren.**
>
> – Georgina Community Food Pantry

In November 2025, the Region provided feedback to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services on Ontario's 2020–2025 Poverty Reduction Strategy and development of a new strategy, calling on the province to:

- **Strengthen income supports**
- **Provide increased and sustainable funding for programs and services**
- **Increase municipal financial resilience**
- **Invest in community partners**

Demand for affordable housing options in York Region continues to increase

As Service Manager, the Region administers 7,079 community housing units that offer subsidized and market units, delivered through partnerships with 43 housing providers, including Housing York Inc. (HYI). HYI is the largest community housing provider in York Region, fully owned by the Region. It manages 38 properties with 3,124 units and more than 4,500 tenants.

In 2025 there were 22,074 households on the Region's waitlist, compared to 18,418 in 2024. Not all applicants are from York Region. Many apply from across the province, particularly GTA. To potentially secure housing sooner, households may join multiple waitlists as wait times vary between Service Managers.

2025 MARKED THE HIGHEST YEAR-OVER-YEAR

20%

INCREASE IN SUBSIDIZED HOUSING WAITLIST APPLICATIONS[71]

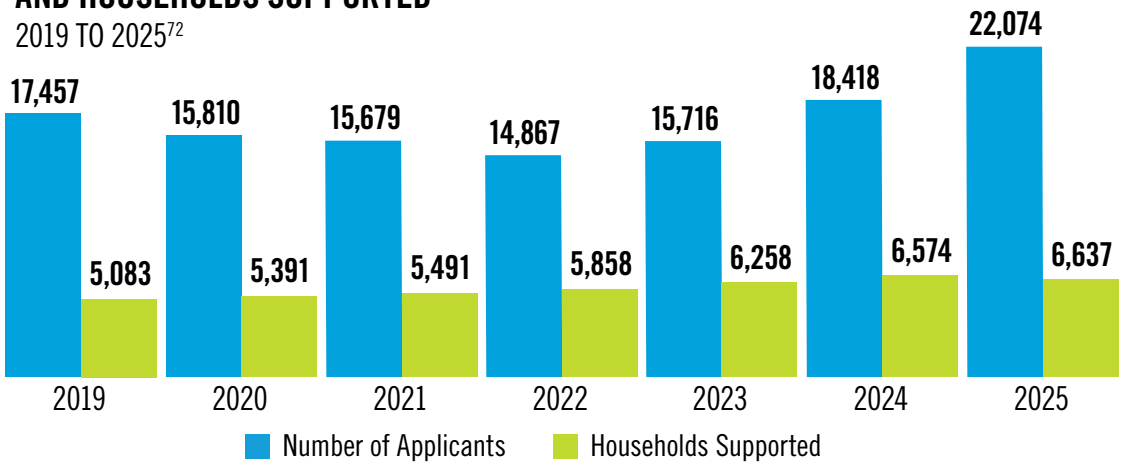
in York Region, since 2008

There are also 67% more non-senior households on the Region's waitlist than before. In 2025 there were 14,760 non-senior households on the Region's subsidized housing waitlist, compared to 8,855 in 2020. Comparatively, the number of seniors on the waitlist only increased by 5%, from 6,955 to 7,314 during this time period.

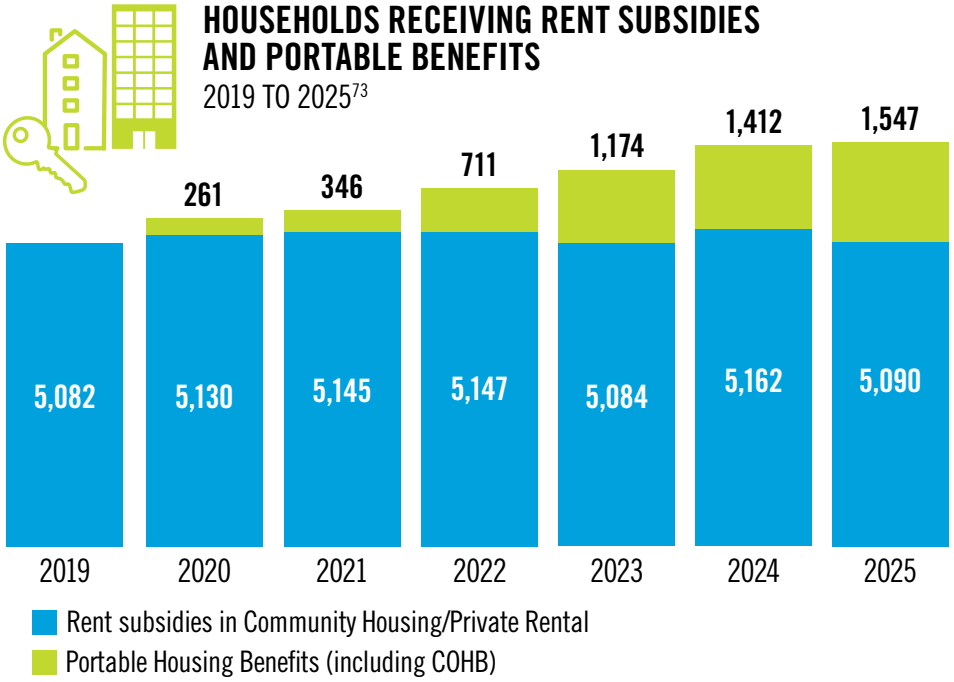
> **Housing…it's not just making sure folks are housed. We need to make sure that the rental is affordable.**
>
> – Housing Rights Canada

YORK REGION SUBSIDIZED HOUSING WAITLIST AND HOUSEHOLDS SUPPORTED

2019 TO 2025[72]



Even with new community housing units being added to York Region's portfolio, the high demand on the wait list means that applicants continue to face long wait times before they are offered a housing subsidy. In 2025, the average wait time for a subsidized unit was 8.6 years. This drops to 5.3 years when portable housing benefits—like the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) and York Region's Portable Housing Benefit —are included. For people who accept COHB, the wait time can be as short as 1.8 years. COHB is a time-limited program with funding due to end in 2029.



COHB is currently funded by the federal and provincial governments to March 2029. Due to the uncertainty of COHB funding beyond this date, many people who have been waiting for a unit for years are reluctant to accept the benefit at the risk of having to reapply to the waitlist after 2029. The Region continues to advocate for increased, permanent funding for this critical program.

Since its launch in 2020, COHB has dramatically reduced the average wait time for housing benefits, as many new applicants opted to accept the benefits rather than waiting years for a subsidized housing unit. The Region has supported over 1,500 households to access the benefit since the program launched.

Economic insecurity increases the risk of homelessness

The number of low-income households in core housing need in York Region is projected to reach 49,989 by 2035 and 58,973 by 2045.[74] Core housing need significantly contributes to homelessness by creating a cycle of inadequate housing, leading to the inability to afford alternative housing options. Provincial social assistance programs do not provide an adequate level of support for people, as benefits fall well below the amount required to afford shelter and meet basic needs. Without sufficient support, people may be at-risk of experiencing homelessness. As of July 2025, more than 30,000 people receiving Ontario Works (OW) and ODSP were experiencing homelessness across the province.[75]

Ontario is facing a homelessness crisis driven by economic vulnerability and challenges including evictions, lack of sufficient income, and limited timely interventions support people before they are at-risk of losing their housing. In 2025, nearly 85,000 Ontarians were experiencing homelessness. Forecasts indicate, that under a steady economic scenario, homelessness in Ontario will double over the next 10 years.[76]



IN 2025, YORK REGION HOMELESSNESS COMMUNITY PROGRAMS (HCP) SUPPORTED[77]

5,600 people who **are or at risk of homelessness**

Forecasting in 2023 showed that without more services and affordable housing, the number of people experiencing homelessness in York Region could rise to 2,300 by 2030. By 2025, York Region has already exceeded this projection. Additionally, research shows approximately 80% of homelessness is "hidden", making it hard to know the true number of people without stable housing.[78]

The 2025 Point-in-Time identified 1,176 people experiencing homelessness in York Region, an increase of 34% from 2024 (878 people). In the The 2024 Point-in-Time Count, most (86%) survey respondents indicated their most recent housing loss occurred within the last three years. 78% of people surveyed in the 2024 Point-in-Time Homelessness Count identified dealing with at least one health-related challenge – 56% reported a mental health challenge while 34% reported a substance use challenge.

Residents from Black and Indigenous groups make up 3% and 0.5% of York Region's total population. However, 26% of people experiencing homelessness in York Region identify as Black, and 9% from Indigenous backgrounds.[79]

> **"We see housing instability disproportionately impact racialized folks and also low-income tenants"**
>
> – Housing Rights Canada

In 2025, over 1,200 people accessed emergency or transitional housing in York Region. The average length of stay doubled between 2019 and 2025, rising from 26.5 to 56 days. The Region's emergency housing beds are regularly at or near full capacity.

85% **OF POINT-IN-TIME COUNT 2024 SURVEY RESPONDANTS[80]**

NOTED THAT INCOME CHALLENGES AND HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

made **finding housing difficult**

The number of known encampment sites grew from approximately 60 in 2021 to over 360 in 2025. In partnership with local municipalities, community agencies and service partners, over 50 encampment sites were remediated in 2025 through a human-rights based approach, ensuring encampment residents were provided with supports and alternative housing options.

The Region is working to make housing more affordable

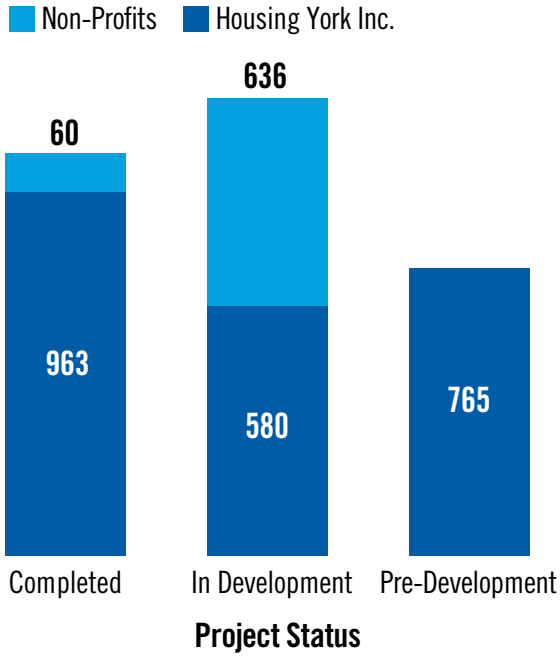
The Region continues to increase affordable and community housing supply by building directly and enabling non-profit development. In 2025, the Region completed construction of Housing York Inc's (HYI) Mosaic House in Whitchurch-Stouffville, adding 97 new units. Mosaic House will include community space to connect residents to services, with construction scheduled to begin in 2026. Construction of 400 more HYI units is underway, at 62 Bayview Parkway in the Town of Newmarket and the Box Grove neighborhood in the City of Markham. In June 2025, Council approved the Site Selection Framework for Regional Housing Development which provides a quantitative framework to assess land opportunities and guide investment.



Aspen Woods

The Region's Community Housing Supply Grant Program has been made permanent through the 2026 Budget and continues to enable non-profit development in York Region. Investment under this program includes supporting two non-profit projects (with 100 units) being developed by Richmond Hill Ecumenical Homes Corporation and Blue Door Support Services. It also includes five new projects that will add 536 new units, 288 of which will be affordable. York Region is also enabling a new development for Inn from the Cold, which will create 44 transitional and emergency housing beds.

HOUSING YORK INC. AND NON-PROFIT COMMUNITY HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS:
COMPLETIONS, DEVELOPMENT AND PRE-DEVELOPMENT 2013 TO 2025[81]



In September 2025, York Regional Council approved the development of a Housing Affordability Resource Program and Non-Profit Pre-Development Program. Together, these two programs will further enable non-profit development by helping organizations assess and pursue new construction opportunities, strengthen collaboration and access funding. As Regional funding represents one funding source to enable these projects, the Region continues to advocate to senior governments for increased and dedicated funding to ensure projects can progress.

York Region's Human Services Planning Board, advises Regional Council and staff on various human services matters. In 2025, Human Services Planning Board began the development of a multi-year action plan continuing the impactful work of previous campaigns such as Making Ends Meet in York Region and Make Rental Happen.

In 2025, Regional Council increased investment in the Community Housing Supply Grant Program for a total of $30.2 million in 2025 to bring much-needed affordable housing options across the Region.

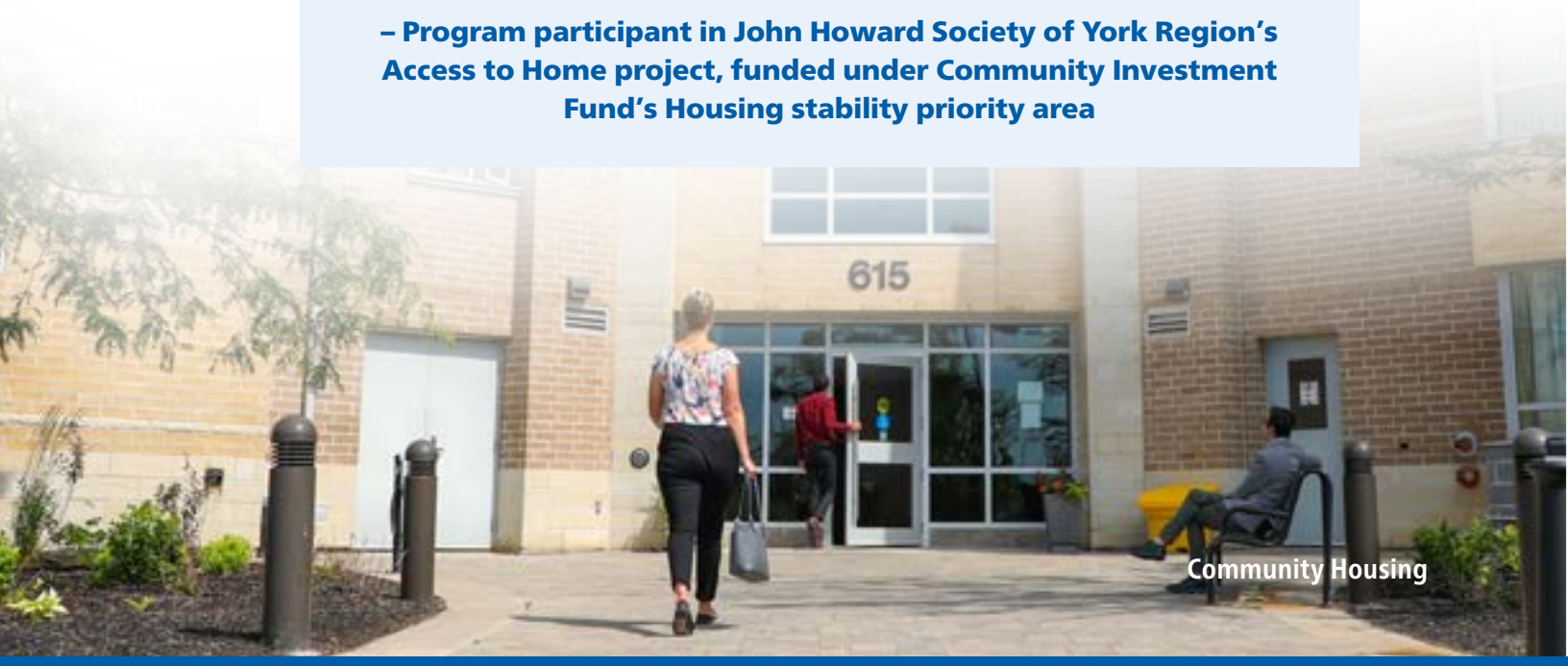
The Region is supporting rental housing development through its 2026 Development Charges Bylaw Update, approved in June 2025. This includes expanded development charge deferrals for non-luxury rental and high-rise residential buildings, which, coupled with the Region's new 35% property tax discount for purpose-built rental, could work together to make rental happen across the Region.

In October 2025, to accelerate additional development, Regional Council approved delivery of a Co-location Housing Project beginning construction in 2026, including emergency, transitional and community housing units. In January 2026, York Region announced the development of a new housing project in Georgina to meet growing need for affordable housing. The development will offer affordable housing options and community space, including 86 housing units comprised of community, transitional and emergency housing options.

York Region's Community Investment Fund supports local projects run by non-profit agencies and partners. These projects fill gaps in human services, complement Regional programs and advance Council's priorities. In 2025, the Region invested over $2.5 million in 15 community-based projects under the Community Investment Fund's Housing Stability priority area, supporting 5,320 residents. These community based projects included individualized case management, landlord engagement and mediation, housing rights education, hoarding intervention, housing search and placement, and stabilization services for residents at risk of homelessness.

"The project team helped me to find a new place to live that's safe and warm. They also helped guide me through getting my ODSP. Now I have money each month to pay rent and buy food, things I worried about before."

– Program participant in John Howard Society of York Region's Access to Home project, funded under Community Investment Fund's Housing stability priority area



Community Housing

Social assistance support residents in their time of need

The Region administers the provincial Ontario Works (OW) program, providing financial support for shelter and basic living costs along with wraparound support to help residents achieve stability and transition to employment. Between December 2018 and December 2025, the number of people receiving OW grew from 11,746 to 21,645 (84%). This increase was driven by rising cost of living, housing affordability challenges and rising unemployment. In the same time period, refugee claimants on the OW caseload increased by 283%, from 1,392 to 5,332 people and youth between the ages of 18 and 24 increased by 3,258%, from 70 to 2,281. In both demographic groups, significant growth was noted after 2022.

Caseworkers at the Region help people receiving OW identify and address barriers to moving towards employment or self-reliance. Demand for life stabilization supports requiring intensive case management continues to increase. In 2025, the most common life stabilization needs of people receiving OW included food (50%), transportation (40%), and physical and mental health (38%).

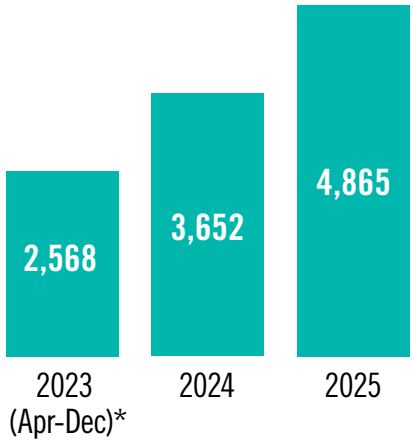
The Region works with internal and external partners to inform service planning and ensure people receiving OW can access the supports they need. An annual Pathways to Partnerships Event and regular Building Partnership Tables bring community organizations together to discuss and foster a deeper understanding of how to support people receiving OW. The 2025 Pathways to Partnerships Event attracted over 30 external partners, including community legal services, immigration and newcomer supports, language supports, children and family services, and mental health/addiction services.

Employment Ontario and Employment Service System Managers coordinate employment systems in municipalities and facilitate pathways for people receiving OW to employment. Once people receiving OW are ready to progress to employment, they are referred to the local Employment Service System Manager, WCG Canada, for employment supports. Some people may have complex barriers requiring more intensive supports and case management before being referred to employment services.

The Region provides financial empowerment services and income tax filing support to people receiving Ontario Works, including support with accessing other benefits to enhance financial stability, independence and resilience. Between 2018 and 2025, over 5,200 people were supported, generating over $18 million in combined tax refunds and benefits.

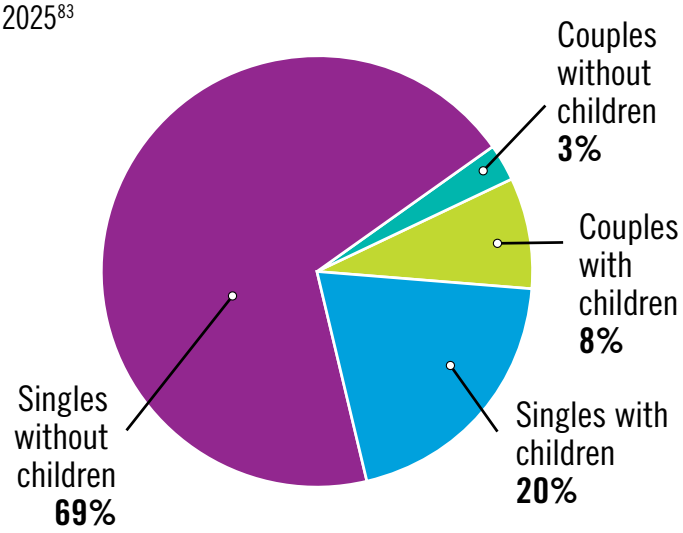
EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO REFERRALS IN YORK REGION

2023 TO 2025[82]



FAMILY COMPOSITION OF PEOPLE RECEIVING OW IN YORK REGION

2025[83]



The Region works closely with WCG Canada, the local Employment Ontario Service System Manager, to improve service navigation, provide effective referrals and case management to ensure people receiving OW can access and are ready to engage in employment services. Since April 2023, York Region's OW program referred 11,085 clients to Employment Ontario for employment-related services.

SECTION 3:
COMPLEXITY OF NEEDS

As our population grows and faces economic challenges, more people have complex needs. Investing in upstream preventive interventions and supporting residents when they are most vulnerable with integrated and wraparound supports reduces impact on emergency services.

Key York Region trends:

- **People struggle to access health care, leading to avoidable 911 calls**
- **While life feels good and safe for most in York Region, there are signs that this feeling is declining**
- **Mental health challenges persist among residents**

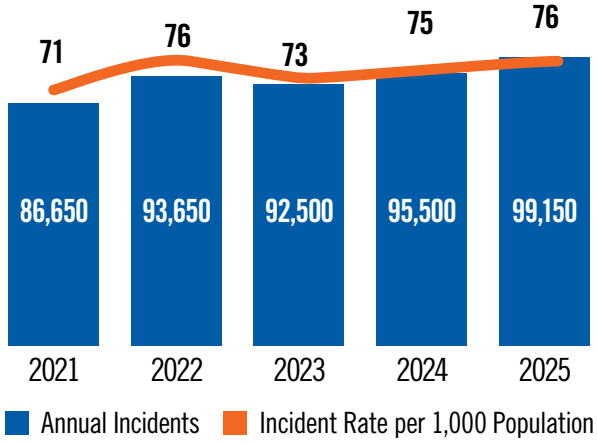


Many residents struggle to access health care, leading to avoidable 911 calls

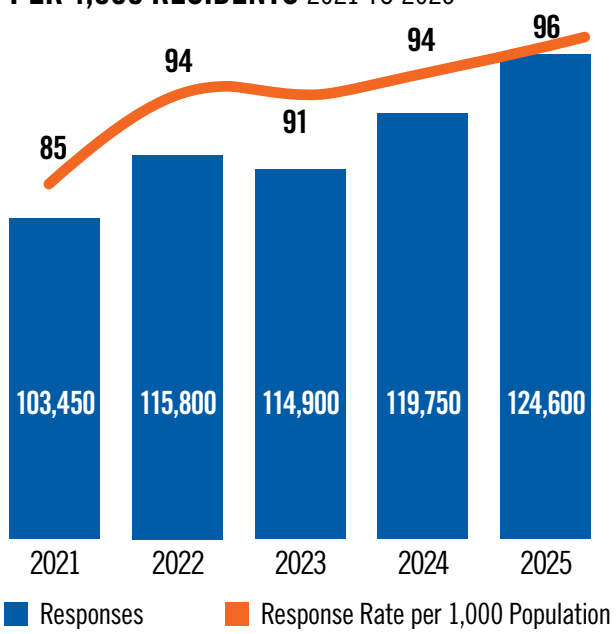
York Region consistently ranks among the healthiest communities in Ontario[84]. Ontario's health system is still recovering from the pandemic, and 2.2 million people do not have a family doctor.[85] In York Region, 80,400 (8.2%) adults 18 years of age and older do not have a regular health care provider.[86] This proportion is third highest in GTHA after City of Toronto and Peel Region. As a result, residents may face challenges like long wait times, difficulty getting referrals or appointments, and services not being available when needed.[87] Even when supports exist, lack of awareness can result in avoidable emergency calls and visits, hospital stays or long-term care placement.[88]

> **We have about 4,000 people on a waitlist looking for a family doctor—many are seniors who want someone who speaks their language.**
>
> – CareFirst Campus of Care

PARAMEDIC SERVICES INCIDENTS PER 1,000 RESIDENTS 2021 TO 2025[89]



PARAMEDIC SERVICES RESPONSES PER 1,000 RESIDENTS 2021 TO 2025[90]



The proportion of 911 calls from seniors increased from 42% in 2020 to 46% in 2025. With seniors using emergency paramedic services at a higher rate compared to other age groups. As the population of seniors in York Region increases it is expected to result in a higher call volume for emergency paramedic services. Falls remain the most significant health issue requiring emergency intervention among seniors. In 2023, there were 3,050 fall-related emergency department visits per 100,000 residents aged 65 to 74 and 8,245 per 100,000 residents over the age of 75.

The Healthy Aging program delivered by Public Health supports older adults to maintain independence, well-being, and quality of life through education and awareness, capacity building with community partners and policy development. Healthy aging and fall prevention are a key focus. In 2025, the program reached 408 older adults through healthy aging workshops and conducted 47 consultations on health aging and falls.

Alternative service delivery models are helping to mitigate impact on emergency services

The Region's Community Paramedicine program has an important role in supporting more efficient emergency operations, reducing 911 calls, preventing emergency department visits and increasing access to health care services for equity-deserving groups by providing clinical support to patients in their homes and in the community. For example, Community Paramedicine runs a weekly clinic on Georgina Island to support the Indigenous community.

The Region's Community Paramedicine and Outreach Team provides non-urgent medical support, assists with system navigation and helps people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness to find and/or maintain stable housing. In 2025, 581 individuals were supported through this program.

Clinics for seniors in subsidized housing, hosted by the Community Paramedicine program provide clients with primary health assessments, health coaching and education, health care system navigation, vaccination and human service referral where appropriate. In 2025, 57 senior clients were supported through this initiative.

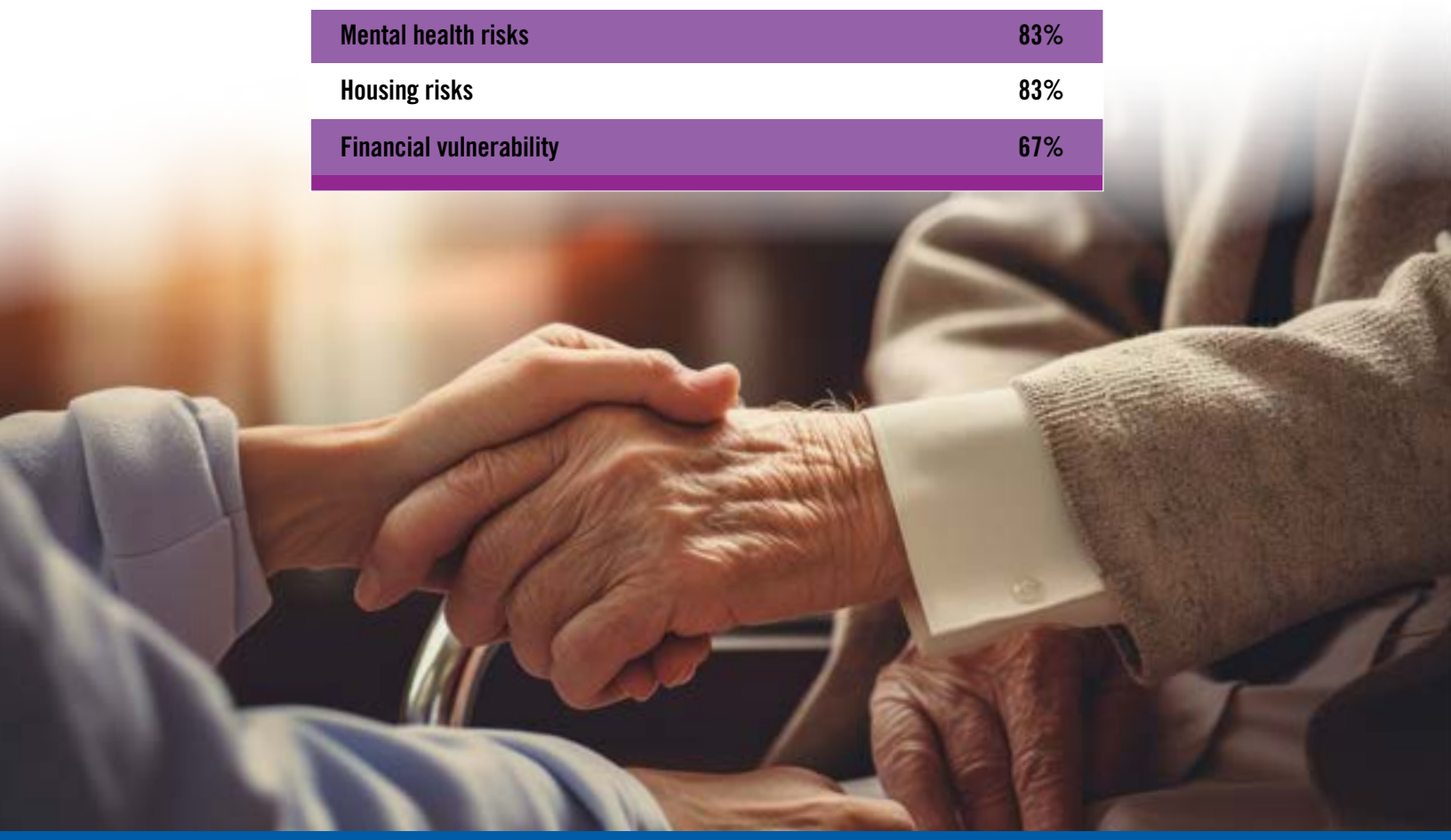
Between April 2024 and December 2025, only 4.0% (31 out of 777) of the patients who received paramedic care through Improving Patient Access to Care in the Community called back to 911 for any reason within 72 hours. Only 7 of the 31 who were initially transported to hospital, subsequently called 911 for paramedic care within 72 hours.

The Region is committed to supporting policies that provide stable, sustained funding for Paramedic Services to deliver innovative programs such as the Improving Patient Access to Care in the Community, helping more residents access community-based care while reducing pressure on 911 and hospitals.

Through the Vulnerable Seniors Network the Region works with York Regional Police and York Region Transit to stabilize vulnerable seniors through needs-based solutions and harm reduction, mitigating avoidable 911 calls and emergency department visits. In 2025, the Vulnerable Seniors Network received 60 inquiries about support for seniors in need. Thirty-eight seniors were supported through established service pathways and 22 seniors were provided referrals to service through the Vulnerable Seniors Network. Five clients were referred due to repeated 911 calls for paramedic assistance, and the program resulted in an 86% reduction in calls in the 6-months post-intervention. Another four clients were referred due to repeated 911 calls for police services, and there was an 71% reduction in recurring 911 calls for police assistance.

MOST COMMON CHALLENGES OF SENIORS REFERRED TO VSN[91]:

CHALLENGES OF SENIORS	
Managing activities of daily living	94%
Physical health risks	94%
Mental health risks	83%
Housing risks	83%
Financial vulnerability	67%



While life feels good and safe for most in York Region, there are signs this feeling is declining

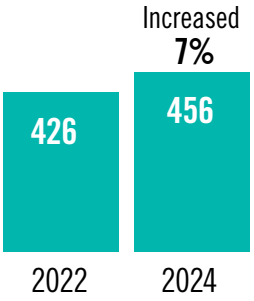
In 2025, the majority of residents (76%) reported the quality of life in York Region as "good" or "excellent". In addition, the majority of residents (83%) consider York Region as a safe place to live.However, residents reporting a "fair" or "poor quality of life" in York Region have increased over the last decade from 9% to 24%, and residents feeling unsafe increased from 3% to 17%.[92]



PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH AGES 12-17 EXPERIENCED AT LEAST ONE FORM OF BULLYING IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS 2023[93]

YOUTH 12-17 YEARS, YOUTH REPORTED	
Experienced at least one form of bullying in the past 12 months	59.9%
Experienced at least one form of cyberbullying in the past 12 months	24.8%

HATE INCIDENTS REPORTED TO YORK REGIONAL POLICE
2022 TO 2024[94]



Low feelings of safety and belonging may lead to emotional, social and behavioral challenges.[95] This may lead to more crisis-driven service use, difficulty achieving long-term stability and greater involvement from multiple agencies.

Some residents continue to experience hate in York Region. In 2024, 54% of hate incidents were motivated by race or ethnicity and 39% were motivated by religious affiliation. Among the 131 hate incidents that were motivated by race or ethnicity, 40% (52 incidents) targeted the Black community. Among the 107 hate crimes that were motivated by religious affiliation, 71% (76 incidents) targeted the Jewish community.[96]

Family violence is the abuse of power within a family or a relationship that threatens the survival, security or well-being of the dependent.[97] Any person in a family can be a victim of violence regardless of age and gender.

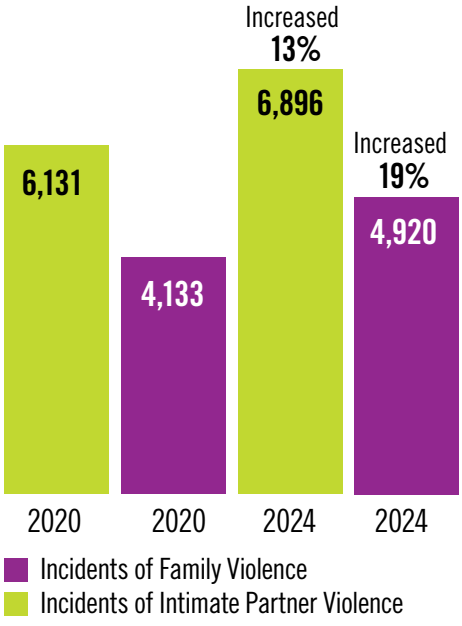
Intimate Partner Violence is a serious concern, as it can result in immediate and long-lasting health, social and economic consequences. Intimate Partner Violence impacts people of all genders, but women are most vulnerable. Intimate Partner Violence has serious impacts on children who are exposed. Child exposure to Intimate Partner Violence is considered child maltreatment.[98]

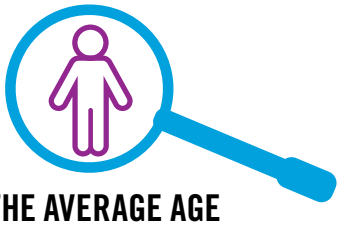
Human trafficking is the exploitation, manipulation or control of a person by violence or threats to provide a sexual service or forced labour.[99] Human trafficking is not the same as human smuggling. Most people who are trafficked for sex are women and girls, but boys, men and people who are 2SLGBTQ+ are also targeted. Indigenous women and girls are particularly at risk of experiencing this crime.[100]

In 2024, Ontario had the most incidents of human trafficking in Canada (64%). Incidents of human trafficking in York Region increased by 153% , growing from 15 to 38 incidents, between 2014 and 2024.[101]

FAMILY VIOLENCE AND INTIMATE PARTNER REPORTED TO YORK REGIONAL POLICE

2020 TO 2024[102]



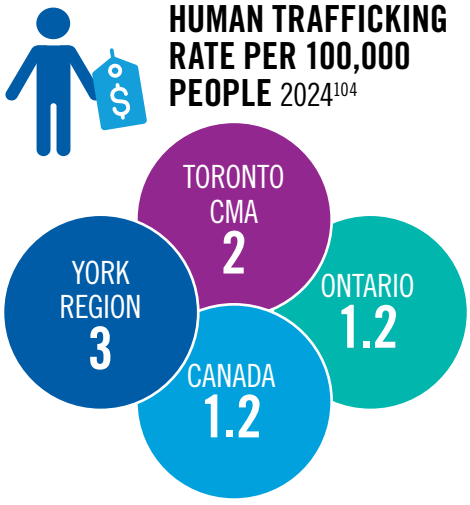


THE AVERAGE AGE OF RECRUITMENT INTO SEX TRAFFICKING IS

13

YEARS OLD[103]

HUMAN TRAFFICKING RATE PER 100,000 PEOPLE 2024[104]

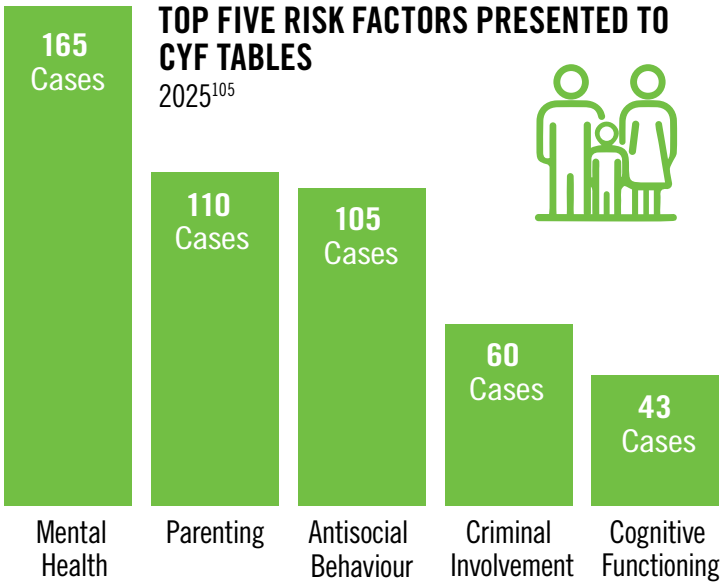


> **Stigma and shame are powerful barriers that prevent survivors from disclosing, accessing services, or even recognizing their own experience.**
>
> – administrative representative of Southlake Health

The Region is committed to supporting policies that enable safe communities and provide sustainable and adequate funding to respond to the needs of residents victimized by crime, tragic circumstance and human trafficking.

Taking steps to reduce risks to safety helps create stronger communities

The Community Safety and Well-Being Plan focuses on upstream social development and prevention activities that are proactive, targeted, and community-driven. Together the Region and York Regional Polices are stewards of Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. Although Community Safety and Well-Being Plan is mandated by the Province Ontario, there is no dedicated funding from Ontario to support it.



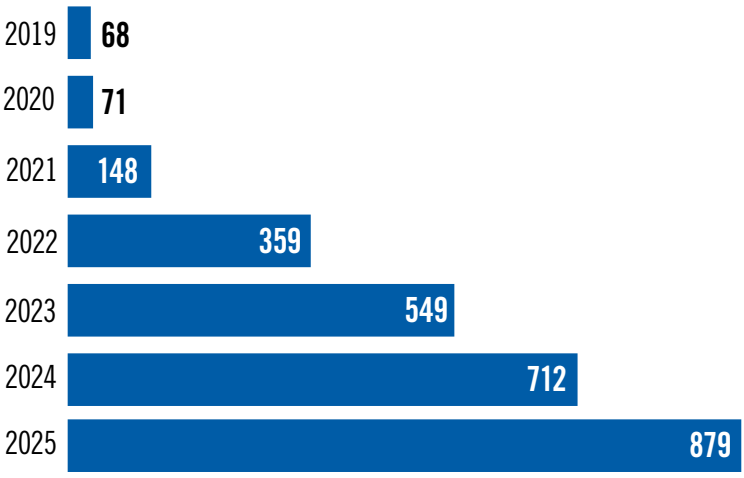
The York Region Children, Youth and Families (CYF) Situation Tables support the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan by taking steps to reduce crime and victimization, while improving community resilience, safety and well-being. CYF Situation Tables are presented with people in challenging circumstances, facing multiple risk factors that cannot be supported by any single agency on its own. Multi-agency partners (e.g., mental health, addictions, criminal justice, social services, school boards, hospital partners, etc.) collaboratively identify interventions and resolve situations.

The Region is calling on the Province of Ontario for dedicated and sustainable funding for the Provincially mandated York Region Community Safety and Well-Being Plan.

Through the Community Violence Prevention fund supported by federal government, the Region supports local efforts to reduce risk factors linked to youth crime, harm and victimization. Through two funding streams — Agency and Resident — initiatives focus on mental well-being, housing stability and economic stability. In 2025, over 3,000 residents were supported. Among the funded projects, Bridging the Gaps – An Interconnected Approach to Community Safety and Well Being addresses existing gaps in care models and enhances the delivery of trauma-informed, culturally specific, and inner-community led services unique to the Chippewas of Georgina Island.

SPECIAL PRIORITY APPLICANTS ON THE SUBSIDIZED HOUSING WAITLIST

2019 TO 2025[107]



As required by *Ontario's Housing Services Act,* 2011[106] the Region gives priority to survivors of domestic abuse and human trafficking on the subsidized housing waitlist. The Housing Access Unit, responsible for the administration of the wait list in York Region, works closely with community agencies to provide support and information about the application process. In recent years, the Region has seen a notable increase in requests for Special Priority from people on the wait list. This rise is linked to more people needing crisis services during and after the pandemic.

More than half of Special Priority applications are approved each year, but only a few applicants get housing due to low turnover in community housing. To help, the Region also prioritizes these applicants for the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB). Since 2019, the Region has housed an average of 78 Special Priority applicants each year.

In 2023, the Regional Council declared gender-based violence and intimate partner violence an epidemic. The Region continues to take action to address gender-based violence and intimate partner violence by supporting staff awareness and capacity to respond. In 2025, this included a public awareness campaign, policy and procedure for Public Health Nurses in the Child and Family Health Division and ongoing specialized training for paramedics.

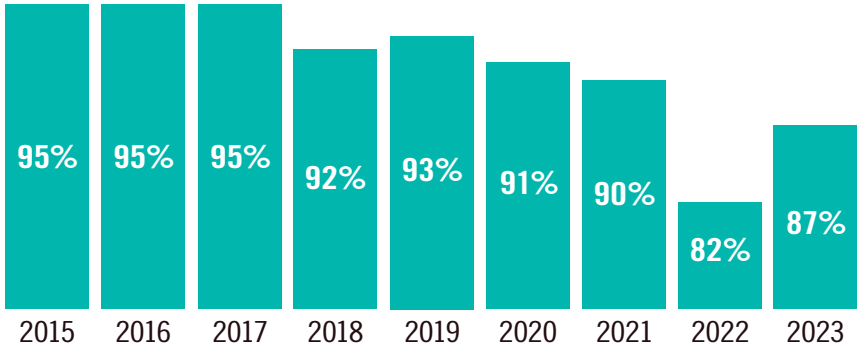
York Region's Community Investment Fund supports local projects run by non-profit agencies and partners. These projects fill gaps in human services, complement Regional programs and advance Council's priorities. In 2025, over $1 million was invested through Community Investment Fund in 7 community-based projects delivering services to residents experiencing intimate partner/gender-based violence and human trafficking, supporting 7,102 residents.

Mental health concerns increased among residents

Over the last decade, the proportion of York Region residents that report having "good", "very good" or "excellent" mental health has decreased from 95% in 2015 to 87% in 2023[108]. Mental health challenges rarely exist on their own; they are often linked to physical health, social circumstances, trauma and economic instability.[109] Stigma is still a major barrier to getting help[110]. Conditions like anxiety, depression, substance use disorders and other mental health issues are becoming more common.[113]

YORK REGION RESIDENT REPORTING "GOOD", "VERY GOOD" OR "EXCELLENT" MENTAL HEALTH

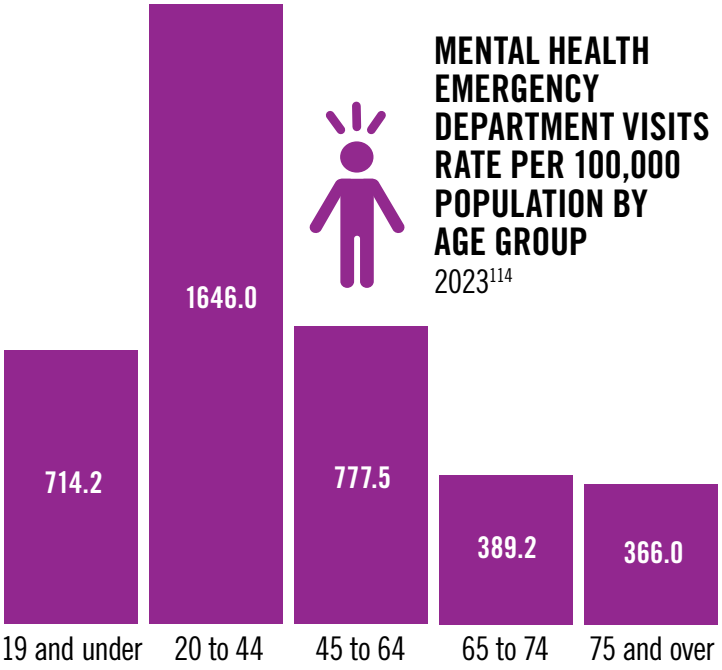
2015 TO 2023[111]



YORK REGION RESIDENTS SELF-REPORTED LIFE EXPERIENCE AS "A BIT STRESSFUL" OR "EXTREMELY STRESSFUL" 2023[112]

Adult 18+	23%
Youth 12-17	23%
Male youth 12-17	17%
Female youth 12-17	30%

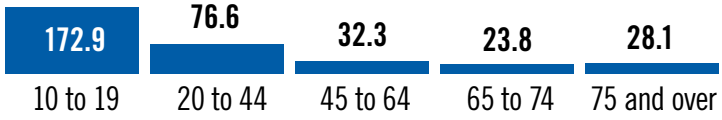
> **You go to the hospital emergency room… they ask the three key questions: 'Are you going to hurt yourself? Hurt somebody else? Do you have a safety plan?' As soon as you answer 'no, no, yes,' you're out the door.**
>
> – Jewish Family & Child Services



MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION BY AGE GROUP
2023[114]



INTENTIONAL SELF-HARM EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISIT RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION BY AGE GROUP
2023[115]



Opioid-related deaths are a significant health concern. Most opioid-related deaths involve opioids that were nonpharmaceutical in origin and often have other added or accidental impurities. Over the past several years, the unregulated drug supply has been an increasingly significant factor to opioid toxicity deaths in York Region and across the province. Risk of opioid-related harms remained high in 2024.[116]

Opioid-poisoning related deaths declined in 2024 and while there may be many contributing factors, increased naloxone availability, awareness and training have been noted as potential drivers that help prevent fatal poisonings. Since 2018, Public Health has led naloxone distribution efforts in York Region, partnering with 25 community agencies, internal partners and first responders to make this life-saving medication widely available. Naloxone distribution has increased, with 3,920 kits provided to partners in 2024 and 5,922 kits in 2025.



Residents experience different levels of health and well-being. In 2023, York Region Public Health began developing a point-in-time population health assessment, which is an evidence-informed process that monitors the health status and needs of a community. This information is available on an interactive Population Health Assessment Dashboard.

York Region's Opioid Action Plan 2024 was developed by the Community Opioid and Drug Response Collaborative, a collective made up of government and community organizations who work with and support people who use drugs in York Region. Co-chaired by York Region Public Health and York Regional Police, the collaborative works together to take action to monitor data related to substance use harms to support early response, reduce stigma, and ensure a focus on preventing harms of substance use (e.g. deaths from poisoning) before they begin.



YORK REGION PARAMEDIC SERVICES RESPONDED TO[117]:

just over 100 suspected opioid overdose occurrences in 2025

decreasing by 17% since 2024

Actions that support connected mental health and well-being services make it easier to find help

The Region supports residents to access supports through innovative and impactful programs and services. The York Region Service Navigator Pilot Program through the Region's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan provides a single, trusted contact person for vulnerable individuals and families to assist them in accessing whichever supports they need without judgement or criticism. The pilot program serves all residents, especially children, youth and young adults ages 6-26 years old who are Indigenous, Black, young women, LGBTQ2S+, immigrant and/or refugee youths. In 2025, the Service Navigator completed nearly 300 referrals to service providers across York Region.

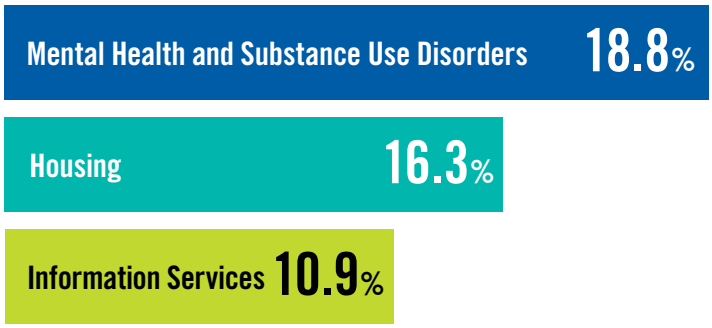
The York Region Mobile Youth Services Hub through the Region's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan supports service access and navigation for youth. Services include but are not limited to: food provision, nutrition education, pre-employment opportunities, mental health and addictions support, life skills workshops and recreation/drop-in programming. In 2025, the Hub connected over 600 youth to 805 services.

The Region is collaborating with Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) to support development of a Mental Health Community Care Hub in the Town of Newmarket. $5 million in capital support was approved by Regional Council in 2024. The CMHA Hub will focus on preventative addictions and mental health supports for adults, youth 12+ and families with service delivery expected to begin in 2026.

In partnership with SickKids, the Region is developing an Infant and Early Mental Health Care Pathway. It will guide practitioners and professionals in how to direct families with children from birth to six years of age, who have concerns about a child's social or emotional development and are unsure how to assist or seek support. The pathway will ensure all children have access to socio-emotional screening and are referred in a timely manner to appropriate services, leading to improved health outcomes.



TOP 3 NEEDS CATEGORIES OF YORK REGION RESIDENTS CONTACTING 211 ONTARIO[118]



Public Health also partners with School Boards in York Region to support student health and well-being, reaching nearly 1,900 students, student leaders and school staff through the Youth Empowered Choices peer-led program sessions in 2025, on substance use prevention and mental health promotion.

The Region also offers supports to residents in community housing to support successful tenancies and their overall wellbeing. In collaboration with over 18 community agencies and government partners, HYI supported residents navigating challenges related to food access, health needs and community participation. These supports also include the Accessible Food Markets as well as the Hope and Healing Mental Health Workshops.

In 2025, the Region also invested nearly $2 million in 26 community-based projects categorized under Community Investment Fund's Mental Well-being priority area, supporting over 5,400 residents.

"I am so grateful for all the help the [mobile] pop-up team has provided to me and my family. With my [parent] on long term disability and my [sibling] injured from work, all the financial responsibilities fell on me. The pop-up team gave us hope again."

– Resident served by Mobile Youth Hub

"Our counselor helped my son and I talk about things we've avoided for years. Now, we actually sit down as a family to check in with each other. It's changed how we understand each other."

– Program participant in Youth Assisting Youth's Lifeline Program, funded under Community Investment Fund's Mental Well-being priority area

Demand for social work and family support work services is increasing among community housing residents. The Community Partnerships and Supports Services team delivers programs for residents, including:

- **Family Support Program** that helps to improve financial literacy and income benefit system navigation.
- **Social Worker Program** that supports HYI residents, offering case management, counseling and referrals to services.

In 2025, a monthly average of 167 households received Social Worker or Family Support Worker supports, and over $100,000 of arrears were resolved.

Additionally, Homelessness Community Programs provides residents receiving Ontario Works with social work supports and services, helping them retain housing.

- **Integrated Support Program** provides residents receiving Ontario Works with case management, counseling and referrals to mental health supports, helping 1,291 people in 2025.



CONCLUSION

In partnership with federal and provincial governments, municipalities, and community partners, the Region continues to make a positive impact on residents and communities. However, rising service demand and costs have outpaced provincial funding, putting current service levels at risk.

Collaboration across governments and community partners is essential to building healthier, safe and more inclusive communities and supporting innovation. Partnerships are key for joint advocacy—speaking with one voice to call for action, share key messages, and advocating for more funding and support from senior governments.

This Review enables data empowered program planning, responsible budget development, and advocacy for critical funding and policy changes. It highlights the Region's efforts and CHS's role in supporting human services to create a thriving, healthy, and welcoming community for all residents at every stage of life.

CHS is a department of people serving people. Its strength is in the critical work performed by frontline staff to ensure residents receive the supports they need. Examples of how staff support residents are included on page 55.





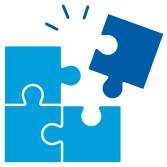
A personal support worker helps a resident of one of the Region's long-term care homes with daily living needs, while a paramedic provides the same person with more specialized help and advice through a community paramedicine program.



An Integrated Ontario Works Wraparound Caseworker uses a person-centred approach to understand the complex life circumstances of a person receiving Ontario Works to help them navigate and access supports in the community, reach their goals and continue on their journey to employment.



While addressing a parent's broader concerns, a Customer Experience Associate connects the family to additional supports, including booking a Public Health vaccination appointment for one child and making a referral to Early Intervention Services for the second child.



Early Intervention Services staff work in partnership with Early Learning and Child Care programs, families and broader community resources to support children with special needs and strengthen inclusive practices so that all children can fully participate in their community.



A Public Health Nurse creates a safe, non-judgmental space, whether in a feeding clinic, a community group, on the other side of a computer screen or in a home visit, to allow families to share their lived experiences—even the ones that are hardest to talk about, such as Intimate Partner Violence. Together, they explore appropriate interventions and connect with community resources that offer safety, hope and support.



People in households on the wait list for subsidized housing are provided with information on York Region by Housing Services and the external services and resources available to them.



Outreach workers help people experiencing homelessness find and access the supports that they need so that they can move to stable housing, while Community Paramedics provide low-barrier primary care, and mental health and addictions supports in those settings.



A Community Development Specialist coordinates a network of non-profit agencies that support social infrastructure in York Region, while a resident accessing supports through a non-profit joins a Community Action Table to share lived experience with the Region to improve services.

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