



# Basic Income Canada Network Réseau canadien pour le revenu garanti



## Basic Income as Anti-Racist Policy

The [Basic Income Canada Network](#) and [Basic Income Canada Youth Network](#) are unequivocally committed to working for deliberately anti-racist policy. We join with Black, Indigenous and other People of Colour (BIPOC) who call for a basic income as a matter of racial justice.

We aspire to the same vision as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who called for a basic income guarantee in the 1960s. We ally with those who have continued since, including Black Lives Matter. We want a basic income that answers the recent calls for justice in the report on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada.

Our organizations include Black, Indigenous and other People of Colour, as does the wider national and international basic income movement. We actively strive to encourage, support and welcome diversity within the movement and to advocate for a basic income that works alongside and in support of racial justice activism. We are also committed to working with organizations that have mandates related to poverty, gender equity, health, democracy and other important issues to help them understand the importance of a basic income in the struggle *for* their goals and *against* racism.

The basic income we want is grounded in human rights and the common good, based on fair taxation so we all contribute our fair share. The roots and intersections of racism, colonialism, sexism and paternalism run deep in our current income security programs. The result is wide income, wealth and health disparities. COVID-19 has collided with this *systemic racism* and magnified the problems of inequality, insecurity and poverty that plagued society long before this virus hit.

Programs that provide income support primarily tied to employment replicate the systems of racial capitalism that privilege some of us in the labour market and in life, and disadvantage others. By ignoring racism, they perpetuate its effects. These programs do not protect us in this insecure economy and polluted environment that disproportionately harm racialized people.

Social assistance, for its part, is actively damaging—a public policy vestige of slavery, colonialism and paternalism. It is built on constraining and punitive conditions, denial of dignity, grossly inadequate income, powerlessness and policing.

A basic income, in contrast, ensures income security for all, not by ignoring racism but by empowering and by preventing disadvantage from becoming desperation. It is a foundation for better health, wellbeing, education and income opportunities for everyone. Basic income is a key part of social, economic and racial justice. The evidence supports it.

A basic income cannot fix everything, but it puts *freedom* in the hands of people to make decisions about how they use their money and their time for themselves and their communities. That can support other needed changes.

Some people claim a basic income is too expensive. But racism, inequality and poverty cost us even more. Some say it will cause laziness but this is privilege talking in stereotypes and is discriminatory. It is especially heinous in light of the work and exhaustion that comes from daily struggles with racism, xenophobia and poverty.

In Canada, seniors and children's benefits are like a basic income already. These programs succeed because they respect people's choices and don't pre-judge. Trust and respect is anti-racism in action. Basic income is a public policy choice that we urgently need our governments to make to uphold basic human rights for all.

See more at [basicincomecanada.org](http://basicincomecanada.org)