

# A bad time to be poor: An analysis of British Columbia's new welfare policies <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

Available in print for order (see SOURCE) and online for download.

- Full report in pdf <sup>[2]</sup>

Excerpt:

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) and the Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC) joined with anti-poverty advocates at a news conference this morning to release A bad time to be poor: An analysis of British Columbia's new welfare policies. It is the first comprehensive review of the full package of policy changes.

## THE NEW POLICY [SELECTIONS]:

Employable single parents are now expected to work when their youngest child reaches age three, rather than age seven as was previously the case. As of April 2002, this change affected approximately 8,900 single-parent families whose status changed from 'temporarily excused from work' to 'expected to work.'

Maximum child care subsidy rates for the lowest income families remain unchanged, although the full subsidy already falls short of the actual cost of child care. However, the maximum monthly income a family may have in order to be eligible for the child care subsidy has been reduced by \$185. In addition, the government will now claw back more of the subsidy from modest income families. These changes mean that the value of the subsidy has been substantially reduced for many families.

## CRITIQUES [SELECTIONS]:

The two policy changes outlined above are contradictory. The government is requiring single parents to seek work sooner while simultaneously making it more difficult to access affordable child care a fundamental work support for single parents seeking to re-enter the labour force. Despite the government's stated aim of quickly moving people from welfare to work, the cut to child care subsidies actually discourages the pursuit of employment, particularly in combination with the loss of other employment supports and incentives discussed above.

These policy changes primarily negatively affect women. Almost all single parent families on social assistance are in fact single mother families, and thus it is these women and their children who will be disproportionately impacted by these new rules and the cuts to child care subsidy.

**Region:** Canada <sup>[3]</sup>

British Columbia <sup>[4]</sup>

**Tags:** subsidy <sup>[5]</sup>

economics <sup>[6]</sup>

poverty <sup>[7]</sup>

funding <sup>[8]</sup>

**Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/03/06/bad-time-be-poor-analysis-british-columbias-new-welfare>

**Links**

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/03/06/bad-time-be-poor-analysis-british-columbias-new-welfare> <sup>[2]</sup>

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