

BRITISH COLUMBIA VOTES 2026

British Columbia will head to the polls by Oct. 24. During this election, the National Association of Federal Retirees calls on all candidates to prioritize the needs of older adults. Support for older adults is essential for the health of our communities and economy. The next government must invest in the dignity and well-being of older British Columbians.

Key messages

Reliable care that keeps up. Access to home support, community care and long-term care is not keeping pace with the needs of B.C.'s growing and aging population.

Healthy aging with dignity. Every British Columbian deserves to age with dignity and choice, with age-inclusive care, housing and social policies to make that possible.

Financial security in retirement. Rising costs for housing, groceries, transportation and other necessities are putting increasing pressure on older British Columbians and those living on fixed incomes.

Federal Retirees calls on all candidates to prioritize the dignity and well-being of older British Columbians this election.

Reliable health care

Access to timely, quality health care is a top concern for British Columbians, yet too many struggle to access the care they need, when they need it. Ensuring access to a reliable health-care system that meets the evolving needs of British Columbians as they age is fundamental to health and well-being and must be prioritized.

- British Columbians prefer to age at home and in their communities, but home and community care services are unable to meet current needs and demand. Over the last six years, the rate of home support clients per 1,000 seniors aged 75 and older decreased by seven per cent. ([Office of the B.C. Seniors Advocate.2025/264-25 Annual Report](#))
- Up to 13 per cent of new residents admitted into long-term care could have been cared for in the community through assisted living or home support. ([Office of B.C. Seniors Advocate. From Shortfall to Crisis: Growing Demand for Long-term Care Beds in B.C. July 2025](#))
- When it's needed, safe, quality long-term care must be available. In 2025, 7,029 people were waiting for a long-term care bed, a 9 per cent increase from last year and nearly 200 per cent more than six years ago. Average wait times have grown from 144 to 287 days over six years. An additional 16,000 beds will be needed over the next decade to meet demand. ([Office of the B.C. Seniors Advocate Monitoring Senior Services Report 2025](#))

Healthy aging with dignity

Every British Columbian deserves to age with dignity and choice, yet gaps in care, housing, community services and social policies undermine older people's independence and choice, and their contributions to vibrant, healthy communities and economies. Action and adequate, sustained

CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION

1-855-304-4700 | advocacyteam@federalretirees.ca
federalretirees.ca

investments are needed to meet the growing and evolving needs of aging British Columbians – and to support healthy aging, independence and meaningful community connection.

- B.C.'s population is aging. The number of British Columbians aged 75 and older is projected to increase by 49 per cent by 2035.
- While better than the national average, 39 per cent of British Columbians aged 50 and older are at risk of social isolation. ([National Institute on Ageing. Perspectives on Ageing in British Columbia. 2025 Aging in Canada Survey](#))
- The client fee for home care is a significant barrier for many B.C. older adults to remain at home. A single senior aged 75 and older with an annual income of approximately \$31,000 must pay just over \$10,000 a year for one hour of home support per day. ([Office of the B.C. Seniors Advocate. From Shortfall to Crisis. 2025](#)).
- 75 per cent of older adults in B.C. report experiencing at least one form of everyday ageism (vs. 70 per cent nationally). ([NIA.Perspectives on Ageing in British Columbia](#))
- Caregivers provide about five hours of care for every hour of home support provided by the health authority – unchanged since 2021/22. ([Office of the B.C. Seniors Advocate. From Shortfall to Crisis. 2025](#))
- 49 per cent of low-income senior homeowners report that they cannot afford needed major repairs for safety or accessibility. ([Office of the B.C. Seniors Advocate. Aging Matters: What We Heard from B.C. Seniors. June 2024](#))
- Calls to the Seniors Abuse and Information Line increased 39 per cent over six years, while calls specifically reporting abuse increased 71 per cent. ([Office of the B.C. Seniors Advocate. Monitoring Senior Services Report 2025](#))

Retirement income security

- British Columbians deserve dignity and financial stability in retirement. Yet rising costs are putting more pressure than ever on older adults and those living on fixed incomes. Retirement security shouldn't be uncertain.
- Retirement income security provides the stability people need to cover essential costs, from housing and health care to daily living. Strong pensions don't just support individuals; they also boost local economies and government revenues.
- 18 per cent of older adults in British Columbia are financially vulnerable, compared to 14 per cent across Canada. ([NIA.Perspectives on Ageing in British Columbia](#))
- SAFER recipients paid an average monthly rent of \$1,243, up seven per cent from the previous years and 20 per cent from 2019/20. Following changes to the program in 2024, the share of recipients paying rents above the SAFE rent ceiling fell from 80 per cent to 37 per cent. Even so, the average recipient still spent just over 50 per cent of their income on rent. ([Office of the B.C. Seniors Advocate. Monitoring Senior Services Report 2025](#))
- Subsidized housing for seniors has not kept pace with demand. In 2025, there were 13,216 approved applications – 50 per cent more than in 2019/20, 7 per cent of applicants (894) received a unit. ([Office of the B.C. Seniors Advocate. Monitoring Senior Services Report 2025](#))

Questions for candidates

1. Reliable health care

How will your party strengthen health care so that older British Columbians get the care they need, when they need it? Will it:

CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION

1-855-304-4700 | advocacyteam@federalretirees.ca
federalretirees.ca

- Invest in the continuum of care and enhance capacity to ensure all residents across the province have access to the right care in the right place, including family doctors, home care and personal support workers, nurses and nurse practitioners.
- Respect and enforce national long-term care standards to improve accountability, transparency, quality of care and outcomes in all long-term care facilities.

2. Healthy Aging with Dignity

British Columbians want to age in their homes and in their communities. What will your party do to help older British Columbians remain independent and live where they choose as they age? Will it:

- Provide sustained, adequate funding to strengthen home and community care.
- Enhanced access to home and community care will improve health outcomes, enhance choice and dignity, and reduce health-care costs.
- Invest in age-inclusive policies across health care, housing, transportation, income security and community services that address age-friendly environments, social inclusion, ageism and autonomy of older persons.
- Ensure caregivers have the resources, supports and services they need to maintain well-being.

3. Retirement income security

What will your party do to make retirement more financially secure for British Columbians? Will it:

- Protect public retirement benefits and ensure a legislative environment that encourages more employers to have good defined benefit pension plans.
- Address the housing crisis so older British Columbians can find suitable, affordable places to live.
- Invest in public transit, social programs and other measures that help make life more affordable, including in rural and remote areas.

How to use this tool kit

- ✓ Talk to candidates. Use the facts and questions in this toolkit when candidates come to your door, by phone or email, or at an all-candidates debate. Federal Retirees is a non-partisan organization, and we encourage members to engage with candidates from all parties.
- ✓ Focus on one or two issues, keeping in mind that personal stories can be powerful in showing candidates the real-life impact behind the facts and statistics.
- ✓ Ask follow-up questions. If an answer is unclear or too general, ask the candidate to explain further what they or their party would do to address the issue if elected.
- ✓ Remember to identify yourself as a member of the National Association of Federal Retirees. Every member who speaks up helps strengthen our collective voice.
- ✓ Report back. Let us know what you heard by writing to advocacyteam@federalretirees.ca

CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION

1-855-304-4700 | advocacyteam@federalretirees.ca
federalretirees.ca

Always identify yourself as a member of the National Association of Federal Retirees – there is strength in numbers!

ABOUT FEDERAL RETIREES

The National Association of Federal Retirees (Federal Retirees) is the largest national advocacy organization representing active and retired members of the federal public service, Canadian Armed Forces, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and retired federally appointed judges, as well as their partners and survivors. With more than 170,000 members from coast to coast to coast, including 23,747 members in British Columbia, Federal Retirees has advocated for improvements to the financial security, health and well-being of our members and all Canadians since 1963.

CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION

1-855-304-4700 | advocacyteam@federalretirees.ca
federalretirees.ca