

Excerpts from the BC NDP Platform

[Read the full platform here.](#)

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Investing in jobs, communities, local economies and families

- Accelerate overdue infrastructure upgrades of our schools, universities and other public buildings.
- Expand and accelerate the seismic upgrading of BC schools. Upgrade post-secondary infrastructure to meet enrollment demands.

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Supporting your community recreational facilities

- Carole James and the NDP are committed to major capital investments that would support community proposals for new and upgraded recreational facilities.

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Carole James and the NDP will create more affordable and accessible child care spaces for families by:

- Capping fees.
- Improving recruitment and retention, and enhancing training of teachers and early childhood education professionals.
- As finances permit, introducing all-day kindergarten for 5-year-olds and the accompanying after school care. This will free up 10,000 spaces within existing group child care centres and family child care providers.
- Creating targets and timelines to build an affordable, accessible, quality child care system.

Carole James and the NDP will increase housing availability and affordability by:

- Encouraging new market rental and co-op housing through the Market Housing Partnership Program in concert with the private, non-profit and cooperative housing sectors.
- Pushing the federal government to change federal tax laws to encourage the development of market rental housing.

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Better opportunities and protection for working people

- Raising the minimum wage to \$10 an hour, and linking it to inflation.

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Carole James and the NDP will fight gang violence and improve safety by:

- Improving programs to help keep young people out of gangs.

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Reducing homelessness and poverty in British Columbia

- Implementing housing construction assistance improvements and a poverty reduction plan.

- Ending the crisis in homelessness in 5 years. The NDP will set firm targets for social housing, and report progress to the Legislature annually. First year commitments are for 2,400 social housing units, with 1,200 units in each of the next 4 years.
- Making life more affordable for the most vulnerable British Columbians by increasing the earnings exemption to \$100 per month for individuals and \$200 per month for families.
- Increasing Income Assistance-to-Work supports, such as allowances for work clothing, bus fares to job interviews, etc.
- Developing a poverty reduction plan with targets and timelines that build on our initiatives that will raise the minimum wage, support jobs and skills training, increase affordable housing, improve child protection and change income assistance.
- Linking Income Assistance rates to inflation and reviewing overall rates as part of the process to develop a poverty reduction plan.

Protecting children and improving opportunities for British Columbians

Carole James and the NDP will expand on that success protecting children-at-risk through:

- Immediate investments in child protection services.
- Following 'Jordan's Principle' to ensure the health and safety of Aboriginal children comes first, ahead of any jurisdictional disputes.
- Extending the term of BC's Child and Youth Representative past November 2011 to make sure there is ongoing and vigilant public oversight of BC's child protection system.
- Enhancing support for the transition to First Nations' governance of aboriginal child welfare.
- Reducing Community Living waitlists, to help some of BC's most vulnerable adults and their families get adequate care.

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Protecting education: Reducing class size to help students

- Keep schools open. Carole James and the NDP will work with boards of education, local communities, educational professionals, parents and others to keep schools open – including flexibility in the per-pupil funding formula for rural areas. And she will ensure local boards of education do not have to sell valuable school properties that can be used for alternative community purposes and future education needs.
- Meet existing class size and composition requirements, including for those classes with special needs students.
- Increase the number of special education teachers and teacher assistants.
- Improve student assessments and individual learning plans.
- Provide stronger support for schools that have difficulty in meeting academic standards.
- Provide multi-year funding to help boards of education plan with security.
- Make school buildings safer by fast-tracking seismic upgrades.

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Making College and University Education More Accessible and Affordable

- Freeze tuition rates and compensate post-secondary institutions for lower tuition revenues.
- Restore needs-based student grants.

- Expand post-graduate student grants to improve research and teaching activities.
- Cut interest rates on student loans making loans more affordable and reducing debt.
- Simplify grant and loan applications and provide more repayment options and establish an Independent Financial Aid Review Office to improve student service.

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Restore the BC Parks system

- Establish an Environmental Youth Corps, to renew campground and park infrastructure.

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Community Investments

- Our capital plan provides \$100 million per year for recreation, sports and related infrastructure to build arenas, rec centres, sports fields and community centres in communities across BC.