

Healthy Beginnings
Stronger Tomorrows

BABIES
FAMILIES
STRONGER
COMMUNITIES

Addressing infant food insecurity today builds a healthier, more equitable Durham Region for tomorrow

29%

of Durham households experienced food insecurity in 2026.

(Canadian Income Survey, 2018-2024) Statistics Canada

38.6%

of children under 18 in Durham Region experienced food insecurity (3-year average, 2023-2025) Statistics Canada.

$553.71
per month

Estimated food cost for a family of two on Ontario Works including a formula-fed infant from birth to 6 months in Durham Region in 2026.

$469.78
per month

Estimated food cost for a family of two on Ontario Works including a breast-fed infant from birth to 6 months in Durham Region in 2026.

Even with income, rent and food, both families are in deficit.

Ontario Works family with an infant (0-6 months), 2026

Formula-fed infant (Scenario 11a)

-$297.71
per month

Durham Region Health Department, 2026

Breast-fed infant (Scenario 11b)

-$173.78
per month

Durham Region Health Department, 2026

These deficits occur before other basic needs such as transportation, telephone, child-care, household and personal care items, clothing and other expenses are considered.

Why it matters

- Good nutrition in infancy supports healthy growth, brain development and long-term health.
- Food insecure infants and young children face higher risks of poor health and hospitalization.
- Food insecurity effects parental well-being and is associated with depression, anxiety and stress.
- Income is not sufficient to meet basic needs for families breastfeeding or formula feeding.

Opportunities for action

A coordinated regional and provincial response can reduce infant nutrition inequities.

1. Address the root cause

Advocate for income-based federal and provincial policies to reduce household food insecurity.

2. Strengthen coordinated supports

Align Public Health and Social Services to connect families to income supports and a comprehensive infant services resource.

3. Protect infant feeding

Optimize breastfeeding support services and improve access to infant formula when required.

4. Improve surveillance

Monitor infant food insecurity feeding outcomes, formula affordability and regularly assess local infant feeding practices.

DURHAM REGION HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Durham Health Connection Line | 905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729

durham.ca/foodinsecurity

Dial 311 (within regional limits)

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.

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