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ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTES FISCAL 2013/14

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MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION

The mission of the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation is to make a difference in the lives of British Columbians trying to overcome social and economic barriers by believing in their ability to realize their potential and make meaningful contributions to their community; and by providing access to the services and resources to help them build the resilience and personal accountability necessary to achieve those goals.

MINISTRY SUMMARY

(\$000)

	Estimates 2012/13 ¹	Estimates 2013/14
VOTED APPROPRIATION		
Vote 41 — Ministry Operations.....	2,456,780	2,487,215
OPERATING EXPENSES	<u>2,456,780</u>	<u>2,487,215</u>
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES ²	32,538	39,621
LOANS, INVESTMENTS AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS ³	—	—
REVENUE COLLECTED FOR, AND TRANSFERRED TO, OTHER ENTITIES ⁴	—	—

NOTES

¹ For comparative purposes, figures shown for the 2012/13 operating expenses; capital expenditures; loans, investments and other requirements; and revenue collected for, and transferred to, other entities are related to be consistent with the presentation of 2013/14 Estimates. Schedule A presents a detailed reconciliation of the restatement of operating expenses and capital expenditures.

² Details of capital expenditures are presented in Schedule C.

³ Details of loans, investments and other requirements are presented in Schedule D.

⁴ Details of revenue collected for, and transferred to, other entities are presented in Schedule E.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION

CORE BUSINESS SUMMARY

(\$000)

	2012/13	2013/14 ESTIMATES		
OPERATING EXPENSES	Net	Gross	External Recoveries	Net
Core Business				
Income Assistance.....	1,663,883	1,694,318	(10,080)	1,684,238
Employment.....	55,488	358,686	(301,198)	55,488
Community Living British Columbia.....	718,777	728,777	—	728,777
Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal.....	1,751	1,751	—	1,751
Executive and Support Services.....	16,881	17,001	(40)	16,961
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	2,456,780	2,798,533	(311,318)	2,487,215
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	Net	Disbursements	Receipts	Net
Core Business				
Executive and Support Services.....	32,538	39,621	—	39,621
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	32,538	39,621	—	39,621

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION

VOTE DESCRIPTIONS
(\$000)

Estimates 2012/13	Estimates 2013/14
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VOTE 41 — MINISTRY OPERATIONS

This vote provides for ministry programs and operations described in the voted appropriations under the following five core businesses: Income Assistance, Employment, Community Living British Columbia, Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal, and Executive and Support Services.

INCOME ASSISTANCE

Voted Appropriations		
Income Assistance - Program Management.....	115,529	115,529
Temporary Assistance.....	429,985	383,639
Disability Assistance.....	847,075	913,576
Supplementary Assistance.....	271,294	271,494
	<u>1,663,883</u>	<u>1,684,238</u>

Voted Appropriations Description: This sub-vote provides for temporary assistance, disability assistance, and health and other supports for family units of eligible individuals in accordance with the *Employment and Assistance Act* and the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*, and other supports consistent with the intent of the legislation. This sub-vote also provides for the operations and administration of employment-related programs to support individuals with multiple barriers and disabilities. This sub-vote also provides for support services and direct operating costs. Costs may be recovered from ministries, other levels of government, Bus Pass Program user fees, assignments authorized by the *Employment and Assistance Act* and the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*, and from repayable assistance and overpayments for services described within this sub-vote.

EMPLOYMENT

Voted Appropriations		
Employment Programs.....	55,487	55,487
Labour Market Development Agreement.....	1	1
	<u>55,488</u>	<u>55,488</u>

Voted Appropriations Description: This sub-vote provides for the operation and administration of programs to assist eligible individuals to find sustainable employment. This sub-vote also provides for the operations and administration of employment-related programs to support individuals with multiple barriers and disabilities. In addition, this sub-vote supports organizations that provide employment services to unemployed persons and provides for developing and implementing strategies for dealing with labour force adjustments and meeting human resource requirements. Costs may be recovered from ministries and parties external to government under cost-sharing agreements for services described within this sub-vote.

COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA

Voted Appropriation		
Community Living British Columbia.....	718,777	728,777

Voted Appropriation Description: This sub-vote provides for general support and advice to the minister regarding Adult Community Living Services and includes transfer payments to Community Living British Columbia for the governance, management, operations, and delivery of services and support to adults with developmental disabilities. Payments for the provision of these services are in accordance with the *Community Living Authority Act*.

EMPLOYMENT AND ASSISTANCE APPEAL TRIBUNAL

Voted Appropriation		
Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal.....	1,751	1,751

Voted Appropriation Description: This sub-vote provides for salaries, benefits, allowances, operating, and related expenses of the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal, which provides for an independent and impartial appeal of the ministry's reconsideration decisions. The Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal is a single-level, community-based appeal system established under the *Employment and Assistance Act*. Ministry clients that are dissatisfied with the outcome of the ministry's reconsideration decisions may appeal to the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal. Costs may be recovered from ministries for services described within this sub-vote.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION

VOTE DESCRIPTIONS

(\$000)

	Estimates 2012/13	Estimates 2013/14
EXECUTIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICES		
Voted Appropriations		
Minister's Office.....	475	555
Corporate Services.....	16,406	16,406
	<u>16,881</u>	<u>16,961</u>
Voted Appropriations Description: This sub-vote provides for the office of the Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation and for executive direction of the ministry and administrative services for the operating programs of the ministry. This includes strategic and business planning, financial administration and budget coordination, human resources, asset and risk management, information technology, and records management. This sub-vote also provides for corporate and community-based service delivery, including services provided by ministries and agencies on behalf of the ministry. Costs may be recovered from ministries and parties external to government for services described within this sub-vote.		
VOTE 41 — MINISTRY OPERATIONS	2,456,780	2,487,215

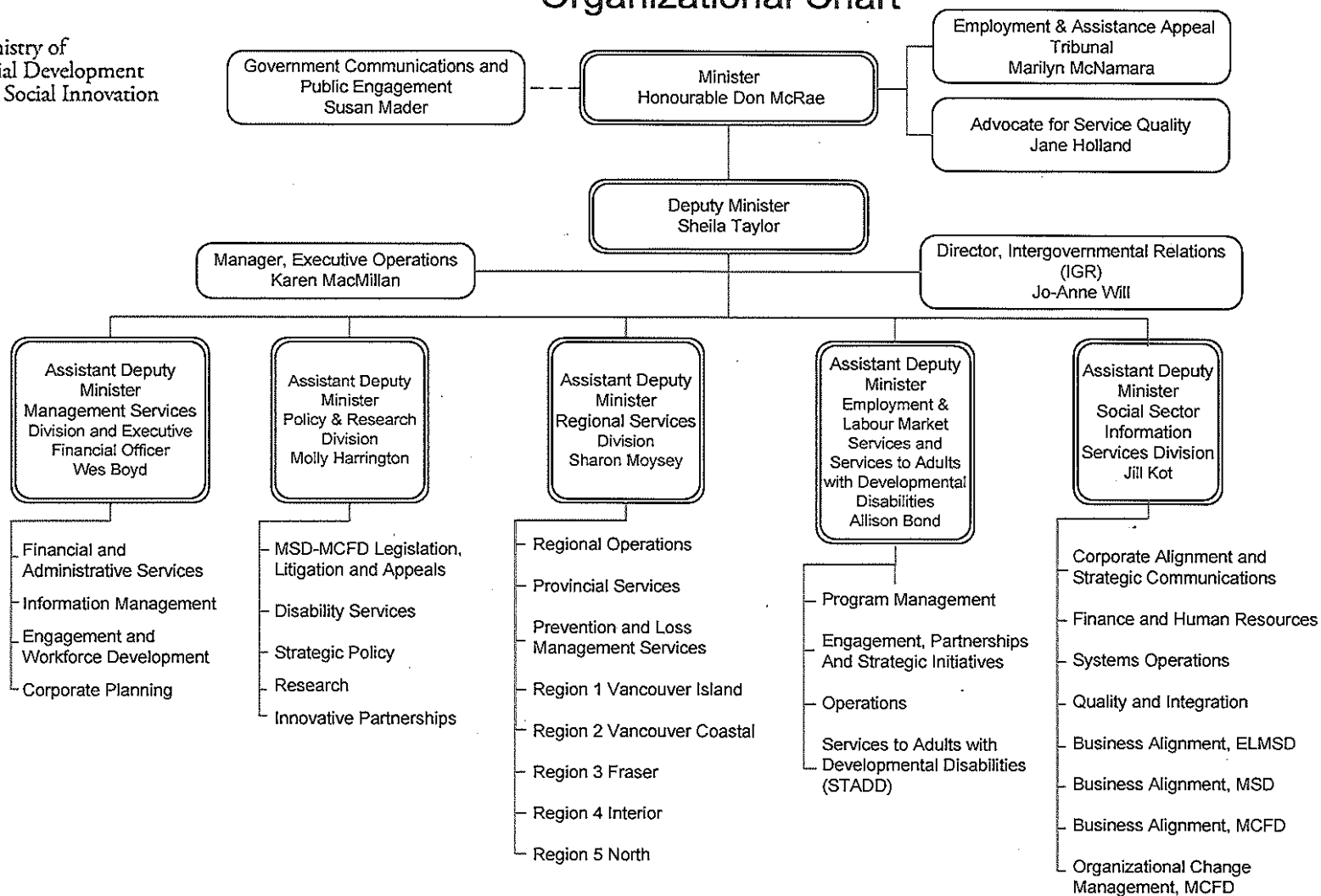
MINISTRY GROUP ACCOUNT CLASSIFICATION SUMMARY

GROUP ACCOUNT CLASSIFICATION

Salaries and Benefits	122,174	127,515
Operating Costs	31,017	32,806
Government Transfers	2,610,017	2,633,506
Other Expenses	6,798	20,345
Internal Recoveries	(138)	(15,639)
External Recoveries	<u>(313,088)</u>	<u>(311,318)</u>
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES.....	<u>2,456,780</u>	<u>2,487,215</u>



Organizational Chart



June 2013

**Ministry of
Social Development and Social Innovation**

**REVISED 2013/14 – 2015/16
SERVICE PLAN**



For more information on the British Columbia
Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation,
see Ministry Contact Information on Page 22 or contact:

Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation:

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VICTORIA, BC
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www.gov.bc.ca/sd

Published by the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement



It is my pleasure to present the *Revised 2013/14 - 2015/16 Service Plan* for the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation. We will be facing many exciting challenges and opportunities in the months ahead as we continue to focus on creating a strong economy and a progressive, accessible province. We will ensure fiscal responsibility with both our budget, and the Community Living BC budget, to make certain that we are able to maximize our services while respecting our financial commitment to lower our debt for the youth of tomorrow.

The ministry is committed to helping British Columbians in their greatest time of need and challenge. Our goal is to help individuals and families become more self-sufficient by focusing on supporting our most vulnerable citizens, giving families the support to participate more fully in their communities, and providing people with the tools and ability to be independent. We are also committed to delivering on the platform commitment to create a white paper on how to improve the lives of those living with disabilities in British Columbia.

The three core programs of the ministry are income and disability assistance, the Employment Program of BC (EPBC) and Community Living BC (CLBC). The ministry is also responsible for driving social innovation in B.C.

British Columbia has a solid income and disability assistance system. Although we believe our income assistance system is one of the best in Canada, we also understand that we can make improvements. After listening to concerns from job seekers, families and advocates, we implemented some modest changes to income assistance policies last fall to ensure that we are providing the supports people need to get back into the workforce, while helping to improve household finances for vulnerable individuals and families. These changes have made immediate improvements to the income and disability assistance system, and we will continue to work with job seekers and stakeholders to look for other innovative, progressive ways to improve the system. Moving forward, the ministry will be implementing the next phase of our social assistance reform.

We believe that people who are able to work want to be self-sufficient, support their families and contribute to their communities. By providing temporary help to those who can work, and longer-term aid to those who, through disability or other barriers, have a more difficult time working or who cannot work, our government is ensuring that the needs of all British Columbians are being respected. A good paying, stable and secure job in a safe and supportive community is one of the most important contributions to a healthy, happy and strong family. The EPBC, launched in April 2012, offers a full suite of employment services to help unemployed British Columbians, including specialized populations – such as Aboriginal peoples, francophones, individuals with disabilities and people who

live in remote or rural areas – find and keep a job. The EPBC is offered through 85 WorkBC Employment Services Centres, and more than 100 satellite centres, mobile offices or outreach services, across the province.

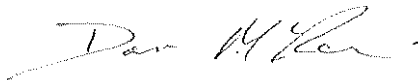
The Integrated Case Management system, a large, complex, multi-phase project involving a wide range of critical social programs in both this ministry and the Ministry of Children and Family Development, is scheduled for completion on budget in December 2014. This crucial computer system upgrade is replacing a 30-year old information system that can no longer meet today's standards and the public's service quality expectations. This system will enable staff to provide better, faster services to citizens, while improving information sharing between ministries.

As the minister responsible for CLBC, I am committed to completing and monitoring the improvements to the way government delivers services and supports to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Since the release of the comprehensive 12-point plan in January 2012, an inter-ministry team – including the ministries of Social Development and Social Innovation, Children and Family Development, Education and Health, along with CLBC – have been working together to develop an integrated service delivery system to improve supports for people with developmental disabilities and their families. I am pleased to say that we are making progress, and we will be moving forward with an integrated service delivery model in select sites in the fall 2013.

Regarding social innovation, we intend to raise awareness of its potential to make a difference in the lives of British Columbians by leveraging resources from business, government and non-profits to achieve a common purpose in almost any area of society where there is an interest to do so. To help position B.C. as a North American leader in social innovation, our government supported BC Ideas, an online competition that resulted in more than 460 innovative solutions to social issues submitted by British Columbians. Our government is also looking at how we can implement the recommendations made in the BC Social Innovation Council's Action Plan to maximize social innovation in B.C., and continue to provide ongoing support for social innovation and entrepreneurship in B.C. through collaborative partnerships with other sectors.

The *Ministry of Social Development Revised 2013/14 - 2015/16 Service Plan* was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared.

Minister's Signature



Honourable Don McRae
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

June 14, 2013

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Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation focuses on delivering responsive, innovative and integrated services to individuals and families by providing a strong system of supports to British Columbians. The Ministry provides support and assistance to people with disabilities and offers unemployed and underemployed British Columbians access to programs and services that allow them to find work, attach to the labour market and secure their future.

Key accountabilities include:

- Provision of income assistance to those in need;
- Support for community living services that help adults with developmental disabilities and their families achieve their goals such as employment and connect to their communities; and,
- Delivery of employment programming and services to unemployed and underemployed individuals, employers and communities, including employment supports for British Columbians with disabilities.

The Ministry provides a broad range of supports to those in need and funds a diverse mixture of employment services for unemployed and underemployed citizens with a wide range of abilities. The Ministry continues to assist those who receive our services by using outcome-based practices and working in collaboration with other ministries and levels of government, businesses, communities and service organizations. The Ministry also funds community services that are delivered by third party service providers throughout the province.

The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation leads the provision of core programs and services for persons with disabilities and their families. The Ministry continues to support Canada's commitment to the UN Convention on the rights of people with disabilities, a joint effort between governments, community organizations, clients and their families. The Ministry focuses on integrated, citizen-centered service delivery, disability supports and services, and supporting community led innovations that increase employment and inclusion opportunities for persons with disabilities. This includes working with counterparts to improve the transition for youth with disabilities and continuing the work of the Minister's Council on Employment and Accessibility, formed in 2012. The Council engages business, community, families and other disability stakeholders to increase employment gains, inclusion and independence for persons with disabilities.

Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) is a provincial Crown agency that delivers supports and services to adults with developmental disabilities and their families in the province. The agency works to support adults and their families, and helps to create communities where people with developmental disabilities have more choices about how they live, work and contribute.

Citizens at the centre is key to the Ministry's service delivery model which provides a number of channels through which British Columbians can access programs and services. Our commitment to cross-Ministry integration and cooperation is demonstrated in our support of Integrated Case Management and other technological initiatives. The Ministry conducts business in accordance with

the core values of the British Columbia Public Service: integrity, courage, teamwork, passion, service, accountability, and curiosity.

The Ministry leads the cross-ministry work to construct a made-in B.C. model for social innovation partnerships; encouraging and developing new partnerships and new ways of working with non-profits, businesses and governments. Social innovation is about utilizing existing social and financial resources to find new ways to achieve large-scale change to take on difficult social, financial and environmental challenges. To advance social innovation in British Columbia, the Ministry will play a key role in supporting the implementation of the recommendations made by the Advisory Council for Social Entrepreneurship; this will involve bringing together people and resources from across government, the private sector and the greater community.

For individuals who disagree with a Ministry decision regarding their eligibility to receive assistance, the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal is a quasi-judicial body that provides an independent and accessible appeal process. Its mandate is to deliver timely and fair decisions while reviewing Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation determinations related to employment programs and income assistance, and Ministry of Children and Family Development determinations related to the child care subsidy program.

Strategic Context

The Ministry provides support and assistance to people with disabilities and offers unemployed and underemployed British Columbians access to programs and services that allow them to find work in the labour market and secure their future.

Economic Outlook

The Economic Forecast Council expects British Columbia's real GDP will grow by 1.6 per cent in 2013 and 2.5 per cent in 2014. Risks to British Columbia's economic outlook include the following: further slowing of domestic economic activity; renewed weakness in the US economy; the ongoing European sovereign debt crisis threatening the stability of global financial markets; exchange rate volatility; and slower than anticipated economic growth in Asia dampening demand for BC's exports.

The Ministry continues to focus on and ensure effective and efficient use of all its resources especially during a period of slower economic growth and fiscal constraint. This includes the use of innovative initiatives like Lean to improve upon service design and processes, financial management, and human resource management to continue to deliver consistent programs and services across the province.

The temporary assistance caseload has declined since the start of fiscal 2010/11. Based on research from the 1980s recession, the caseload declines following a downturn and it occurs more slowly than the increases during a downturn. Therefore, it is expected that the reduction of the Ministry's temporary assistance caseload will continue to lag behind improvements in the economy.

Changing Demographic Characteristics

As in other jurisdictions, British Columbia continues to experience demographic shifts as a result of longer life expectancies, low birth rates and the aging baby boomer generation. Population distributions indicate that in 2013 the number of people aged 65 years or over in the province will surpass the number of children aged 14 years or under. By 2036, projections indicate there will be half as many school age children as seniors.

Those individuals that have significant health issues enjoy a longer life expectancy as medical and technological advances continue. As a result, the number of individuals with disabilities or who require accommodation to take part in employment and inclusion is projected to increase as the population ages.

Citizen-Centred Service Delivery

The Ministry delivers a wide range of services through a diverse variety of channels including office based visits, phone systems and an expanding capacity to perform some functions through computer based self-service. The Ministry continues to seek service delivery improvement opportunities in all service channels by working with other ministries, service providers, community groups and clients. Improvements will also be sought through the use of a Lean organizational approach that focuses on maximizing existing resources to ensure services are effective and client-centred. The Ministry will also focus on developing effective performance reports across all services lines.

Increased community inclusion for persons with disabilities creates challenges that cannot be solved by a single organization. These challenges require an integrated response from all levels of government, the business sector, non-profit groups, community organizations and citizens. Many individuals with disabilities and their families look for increased employment opportunities.

The Ministry continues to work with families and groups to increase inclusion and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities through a revitalized volunteer program and other initiatives. The Ministry will also continue to support the innovative, joint government and community led Equipment and Assistive Technology Initiative which provides equipment and assistive technology for persons with disabilities to achieve their employment goals.

In January 2012, Government announced service enhancements for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. The Ministry continues to work closely with Community Living British Columbia, the ministries of Children and Family Development, Education and Health, and other individuals and groups to deliver on the 12 point plan for improving services for people with developmental disabilities and their families. The inter-ministry team is working towards having an integrated service delivery model implementation plan ready by spring, 2013.

Building our Workforce

Ministry employees are among the most engaged and productive in the entire British Columbia Public Service. The Ministry continues to foster a positive work environment for staff by supporting personal development programs, exploring innovative workplace designs and continuing to build engagement through communication, strong supervision and respectful work environments. These initiatives will ensure the Ministry remains resilient and well positioned to face any future challenges and support service delivery enhancements.

Integrated Case Management

Integrated Case Management is a partnership between the Ministries of Social Development and Children and Family Development to replace outdated and inflexible information systems used to deliver critical social programs, such as the BC Employment and Assistance Program, the Employment Program of British Columbia, the Child Care Subsidy Program and Child and Family Services. When fully implemented, Integrated Case Management will replace a number of separate computer systems that deliver services across the two ministries. The main system being replaced is more than 30 years old and obsolete and can no longer be updated, modified or adapted.

Phase 1 of the Integrated Case Management system was implemented in November 2010. Phase 2 was implemented on April 2, 2012. Ongoing enhancements are made based on feedback from staff and contractors, as well as modifications required to support Ministry policy changes as they occur. Phase 3 will be implemented in the spring of 2013, and the system will be fully implemented by December 2014.

The Changing Nature of Social Welfare

The Ministry recognizes and monitors the important changes in the evolution of social welfare programs in other Canadian and international jurisdictions. This is done to learn about the latest technology and best practices in program delivery, design and their impacts on employment and social development. The Ministry recognizes that social welfare programs must contribute to self-sufficiency and improved labour skills leading to better labour market outcomes. For those citizens who are not able to be self-sufficient, the Ministry will continue to work with partners to ensure they have the greatest possible opportunities for a high quality of life and community engagement.

Protecting Vulnerable Populations during Emergencies and Catastrophic Events

The potential for a catastrophic event, such as an earthquake, tsunami or influenza pandemic, poses significant risk to the continued delivery of ministry services and programs. Recent events such as the earthquakes off the coast of northern British Columbia, Fukushima, Japan and Christchurch, New Zealand have shown the necessity of being prepared to address the needs of clients in times of emergency.

In the event of any emergency/disaster, the Ministry will provide assistance to impacted individuals. If warranted, Emergency Social Services Provincial Emergency Program will be involved, providing immediate assistance generally for up to 72 hours or longer depending on the circumstances. Ministry staff in the field would work with their community partners to assess the needs of citizens.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

Goal 1: British Columbians in need have access to income assistance and receive the appropriate supports to meet their changing needs.

Objective 1.1 **Basic income assistance is available to British Columbians to assist with shelter and support costs.**

Strategies

- Provide clients with supports for which they are eligible.
- Assist clients to access other potential income sources to improve their independence and self-reliance, including Employment Insurance benefits, family maintenance payments and Canada Pension Plan early retirement and disability benefits.
- Ensure administrative fairness through the provision of an effective and efficient reconsideration and appeal system.



Objective 1.2: **Supplementary supports are available and delivered through accessible channels to assist the changing and individual needs of British Columbians.**

Strategies

- Provide supplemental assistance to eligible clients including subsidized bus passes and dental and optical assistance.
- Provide eligible low income seniors with the Senior's Supplement.
- Provide eligible low and moderate income families that have children with dental and optical assistance through the Healthy Kids Program.

Performance Measure 1: Per cent of reconsideration decisions that are made within time frames.

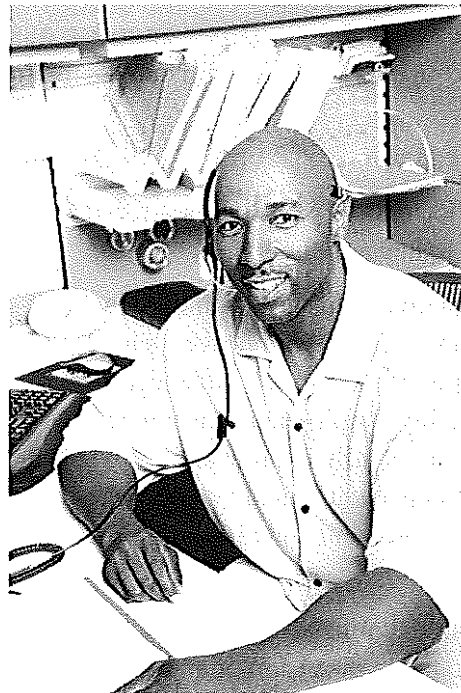
Performance Measure	2001/02 Baseline	2012/13 Forecast	2013/14 Target	2014/15 Target	2015/16 Target
Per cent of reconsideration decisions that are made within time frames.	82%	90%	100%	100%	100%

Data Source: Reconsideration and Appeal System Database, Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

Discussion

The Ministry has a two stage appeal process for clients who are unsatisfied with a ministry decision regarding eligibility. Clients have a right to request a reconsideration, an internal ministry process. The Legislation, Litigation and Appeals Branch reviews all requests and makes a new and final Ministry decision. If unsatisfied with this decision, a client may request an appeal to the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal. This second step of the appeal process is external to the Ministry.

A higher percentage for this measure indicates the Ministry is doing a better job of meeting time frames and providing efficient service to clients. Adjudication of health decisions represents a large and growing proportion of the reconsideration requests that the Ministry undertakes annually. Health reconsiderations assess issues specific to individuals, such as their eligibility for a persons with disability designation or requirements for tailored medical equipment, supplies and supports. As a result, health reconsiderations are often complex, requiring additional medical evidence to be submitted by professionals and detailed examination of all supporting materials.



Goal 2: Accessible services that support increased independence and sustainable employment for those British Columbians in need.

Objective 2.1: The resilience of families and youth in B.C. is enhanced so that they can achieve increasingly positive economic outcomes and greater well-being.

Strategies

- Reduce unnecessary dependency on income assistance by ensuring that the Ministry's programs and initiatives support people to work.
- Engage relevant government and community partnerships in discussions on reducing intergenerational dependency.
- Youth and Family Partnership clients are provided with integrated services and supports to increase employment and independence.
- Use client needs assessment to align employment services with individual client needs.

Performance Measure 2: Expected to Work caseload as a percentage of the population aged 19-64.

Performance Measure	Baseline (2001/02)	2012/13 Forecast	2013/14 Target	2014/15 Target	2015/16 Target
Expected to Work caseload as a percentage of the population aged 19-64.	3.4%	1.3%	1.3%	1.2%	1.2%

Data Source: Research Branch, Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

Discussion

Clients who are considered employable and are deemed expected to work must participate in employment related activities for the purpose of achieving financial independence.

This measure tracks the percentage of B.C.'s working age population receiving temporary assistance with employment related obligations and assisting clients to find employment is an integral part of the Ministry's mandate. This performance measure is sensitive to the state of the economy.

Performance Measure 3: Median length of time clients who have employment obligations receive Income Assistance.

Performance Measure	Baseline (2001/02)	2012/13 Forecast	2013/14 Target	2014/15 Target	2015/16 Target
Median length of time clients with employment obligations receive assistance (months).	4.2	5.8	5.7	5.7	5.6

Data Source: Research Branch, Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

Discussion

The Ministry closely monitors the length of time clients receive assistance. This measure indicates the median length of time clients who have obligations to seek employment receive assistance. Median durations measure the number of months it takes for half of new starting employment obligated clients to stop receiving assistance. The economic downturn has impacted B.C. especially hard relative to other parts of Canada. With employment opportunities declining over the recession, the median duration on assistance has increased to 5.8 months in 2011/12, up from 5.6 months the year before. Despite signs that the labour market is beginning to slowly recover, unemployment remains over 75 per cent higher than pre-recession levels. The increase in durations has largely been driven by single men, who have been hit especially hard by the recession.

As the economy continues to recover, the expected to work client caseload will continue to decline as more employable clients find jobs and the number of employable starting cases falls. A decline in employable starting cases and an increase in more employable expected to work clients exiting assistance results in a higher proportion of the caseload consisting of clients who have barriers to employment. Limited job opportunities and a higher proportion of less employable clients will continue to keep durations up.

Objective 2.2: Ensure effectiveness of the new Employment Program of BC.

Strategies

- Ensure access to Employment Program of BC services via a network of WorkBC Employment Service Centres operated by service providers located across the province.
- Reduce access barriers for all clients of employment and labour market services, including persons with disabilities, immigrants, youth and other specialized populations, by engaging experts through advisory panels.
- Create opportunities for partnerships and innovation at the community and employer partnership level.
- Assist vulnerable youth and adults to move towards independence and self-reliance by providing employment services and supports to assist them to lead more meaningful and productive lives.

Performance Measure 4: Per centage of Active Claimants Served with the employment program of BC.

Performance Measure	2012/13 Baseline	2013/14 Target	2014/15 Target
Per centage of active claimants of employment program of BC that receive case management services	Develop Baseline	Baseline + 2 %	Baseline + 4 %

Data Source: Employment and Labour Market Services Division, Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

Performance Measure 5: Per cent of employment program of BC clients obtaining outcomes (employment and/or community attachment).

Performance Measure	2012/13 Baseline	2013/14 Target	2014/15 Target
Per cent of employment program of BC case managed clients who receive employment and/or community attachment	Develop Baseline	30%	35%

Data Source: Employment and Labour Market Services Division, Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

Discussion

In April 2012, the new Employment Program of British Columbia was implemented. It integrates services from 10 different legacy programs into one program available to any unemployed British



Columbian. The Ministry has developed a comprehensive performance measurement framework, which includes measures on service delivery, service quality, and outcomes.

Last year, the Ministry established two performance measures to ensure that client's needs were assessed in a reasonable time frame and that a client's employment action plan was also fully developed within an established time frame following a needs assessment.

Since program launch, the Ministry has been working closely with stakeholders in reviewing several program components. As a result of reviews, these two performance measures have been removed. They dealt specifically with service level agreements contractually set at 80 per cent for all WorkBC Employment Service Centres. The Ministry will be collecting data and monitoring performance trends to establish and refine baseline measures and appropriate targets as the Employment Program of BC evolves.

Two new measures have been developed in relation to the Employment Programs of BC. Performance Measure 4 and Performance Measure 5 assess the effectiveness of the program in light of serving clients and achieving employment outcomes. Reporting these measures informs citizens, stakeholders and the Ministry of the efficacy of services to clients and identifies areas where further improvement can be made. It is expected that the performance measure targets will increase in coming years as the Ministry continues to collect program data and monitor performance trends.

Goal 3: Support British Columbians in need who have disabilities by providing an effective system of support to gain and maintain meaningful independence and inclusion in their community.

Objective 3.1: Support a comprehensive and integrated system of supports and services for Persons with Disabilities.

Strategies

- Provide adults with disabilities access to high quality, responsive supports and services that enable them to meet their needs, participate as full citizens and have improved outcomes.
- Facilitate access to all supports outside of income assistance for families who provide support to family members with a disability.
- Work collaboratively with other ministries and local, regional and provincial partners to continue the integration and alignment of innovative and inclusive disability supports and services to improve outcomes for Persons with Disabilities and their families.
- Improve the transition from youth services for children with special needs by identifying and assisting eligible youth to begin the application process at age 17 and a half to come on at age 18 to access the Ministry's disability assistance program and adult community living services offered through Community Living BC.

Performance Measure 6: Meeting timelines for processing Persons with Disabilities applications.

Performance Measure	2012/13 Forecast	2013/14 Target	2014/15 Target	2015/16 Target
Per cent of applications for Persons with Disabilities designation completed within Ministry timelines.	99%	100%	TBD	TBD

Data Source: Provincial Service Branch, Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation



Discussion

While the process for determining application eligibility is complex, the Ministry is committed to delivering timely and efficient service. The Ministry has set a goal to decrease the average time to process Persons with Disabilities applications by 50 per cent over the next three years. The Ministry anticipates there will be challenges achieving these targets and will be closely monitoring this measure in 2012/13.

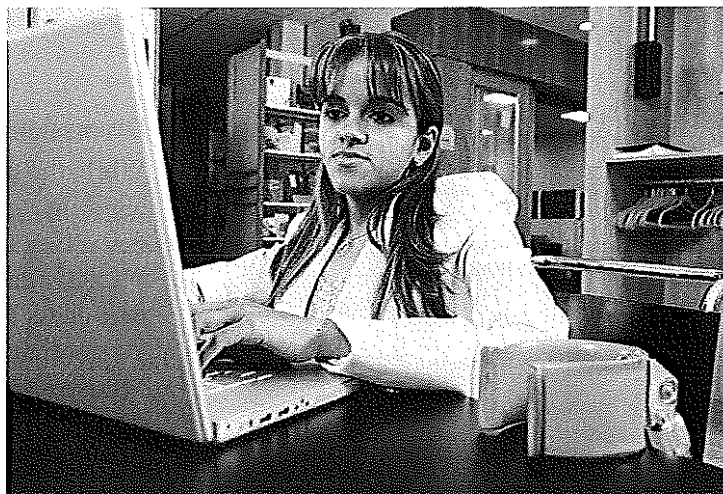
This measure evaluates the Ministry's performance in the review and adjudication of applications for designation as a person with a disability. Determining eligibility for designation as a person with a disability is a complex and often time intensive process, requiring the review of detailed medical evidence and a close examination of all

case materials. The Persons with Disabilities Designation Application includes detailed information from the applicant's physician and other health professionals on diagnosis, health history, the degree of impairment and its impact on the applicant's daily living activities. The length of the adjudication process reflects the commitment to reaching fair and consistent decisions that comply with legislative requirements and the principles of administrative fairness. A triage process allows the Ministry to identify cases involving urgent medical situations or children with disabilities, requiring expedited adjudication.

Objective 3.2: Engage British Columbians across sectors to promote programs and services that enhance community inclusion for Persons with Disabilities.

Strategies

- Continue working with sector partners to develop and implement initiatives to enhance community inclusion for Person with Disabilities.
- Support the mandate of the Minister's Council on Employment and Accessibility develop solutions and strategies to improve the lives of British Columbians with disabilities and their families, particularly through partnership with business, community organizations citizens with disabilities and their families.
- Continue to develop and identify opportunities for inclusion for increasing persons with disabilities' employment outcomes by engaging with stakeholders and the public to identify barriers and solutions to improving employment outcomes.
- Continue to seek an understanding of different perspectives by building awareness through the partnerships within the business and community sectors to create opportunities for solutions.



Performance Measure 7: Per cent of Persons with Disabilities cases with declared earnings.

Performance Measure	Baseline (2002/03)	2012/13 Forecast	2013/14 Target	2014/15 Target	2015/16 Target
Per cent of Persons with Disabilities cases with declared earnings.	11.4%	14.0%	14.2%	14.4%	14.5%

Data Source: Research Branch, Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

Discussion

The Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities provides a range of specialized services to help individuals with disabilities participate in their communities; pursue their employment goals as they are able, increase their self-reliance, and build skills and experience that may lead to further

employment, self-employment, or volunteer opportunities. This is intended to assist persons with disabilities to achieve their economic and social potential to the fullest extent possible.

This measure tracks the percentage of Persons with Disabilities cases declaring earnings. The Ministry provides supports and programs to Persons with Disabilities to work, including earnings exemptions and employment programs. This measure is very sensitive to the state of the economy, as the percentage of Persons with Disabilities cases declaring earnings declined from 15.9 per cent in 2007/08 to 14.4 per cent in 2011/12. As the labour market improves over the next few years, the percentage declaring earnings is expected to increase.

Goal 4: The Ministry will develop and implement innovative, flexible and client-centred service delivery initiatives.

Objective 4.1: Maintain robust financial accountabilities for all Ministry programs.

Strategies

- Protect taxpayers by ensuring a balance between service delivery and financial accountability.
- Maintain fiscal discipline through careful monitoring, controlling and forecasting of ministry spending.

Objective 4.2: Promote a culture of social innovation in B.C.

Strategies

- Foster social innovation and integration by utilizing the expertise and resources of government, non-profit, community and business sectors and other public partnerships to achieve large-scale social change and impact.
- The BC Ideas competition will work on developing new online engagement mechanisms to increase awareness and involvement in a range of social innovation activity in British Columbia.
- The BC Partners for Social Impact will implement the recommendations that came from the BC Ideas competition.
- Support the Government Non-Profit Initiative Action Plan which addresses non-profit concerns, capacity and sustainability.

Objective 4.3: Continue to support innovative workplace initiatives that engage workers and provide excellent service to clients.

Strategies

- Develop and implement service delivery plans to ensure staffing levels, business practices and technological supports are appropriate to support effective service delivery.
- Improve the integration of effective service delivery while ensuring British Columbians critical personal case information remains safe and secure.
- Continue to improve communication channels to support and promote dialogue within the Ministry.
- Provide tools and resources to supervisors and staff that facilitate professional development, access to mentoring programs, and the development of new skills.



Objective 4.4: Implement Lean across the Ministry.

Strategies

- Develop and implement a Lean engagement program for ministry staff.
- Collect, prioritize and implement potential Lean project identified by staff.
- Continue to work with cross-government partners to identify and support an implementation of Lean processes for projects with high value.

Resource Summary

Core Business Area	2012/13 Restated Estimates ¹	2013/14 Estimates ²	2014/15 Plan	2015/16 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Income Assistance	1,663,883	1,684,238	1,690,838	1,690,838
Employment	55,488	55,488	55,488	55,488
Community Living British Columbia	718,777	728,777	738,777	738,777
Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal	1,751	1,751	1,751	1,751
Executive and Support Services	16,881	16,961	16,965	16,967
Total	2,456,780	2,487,215	2,503,819	2,503,821

Core Business Area	2012/13 Restated Estimates	2013/14 Estimates	2014/15 Plan	2015/16 Plan
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)				
Executive and Support Services ³	32,538	39,621	18,165	1,320
Total	32,538	39,621	18,165	1,320

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for the 2012/13 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2013/14 Estimates.

² Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates.

³ Ministry Capital Expenditures includes budgeted funding of \$30.96M in 2012/13 and \$38.24M in 2013/14 and \$14.209M in 2014/15 for the Integrated Case Management (ICM). 2013/14 ICM estimates have been adjusted to include \$6.56M deferred from 2012/13. Total ICM project cost estimates are \$181.7 million.

Appendices

Ministry Contact Information

Service BC refers members of the public to the appropriate Ministry office, and transfers calls and forwards e-mails free of charge. Hours of operation for Service BC are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding statutory holidays.

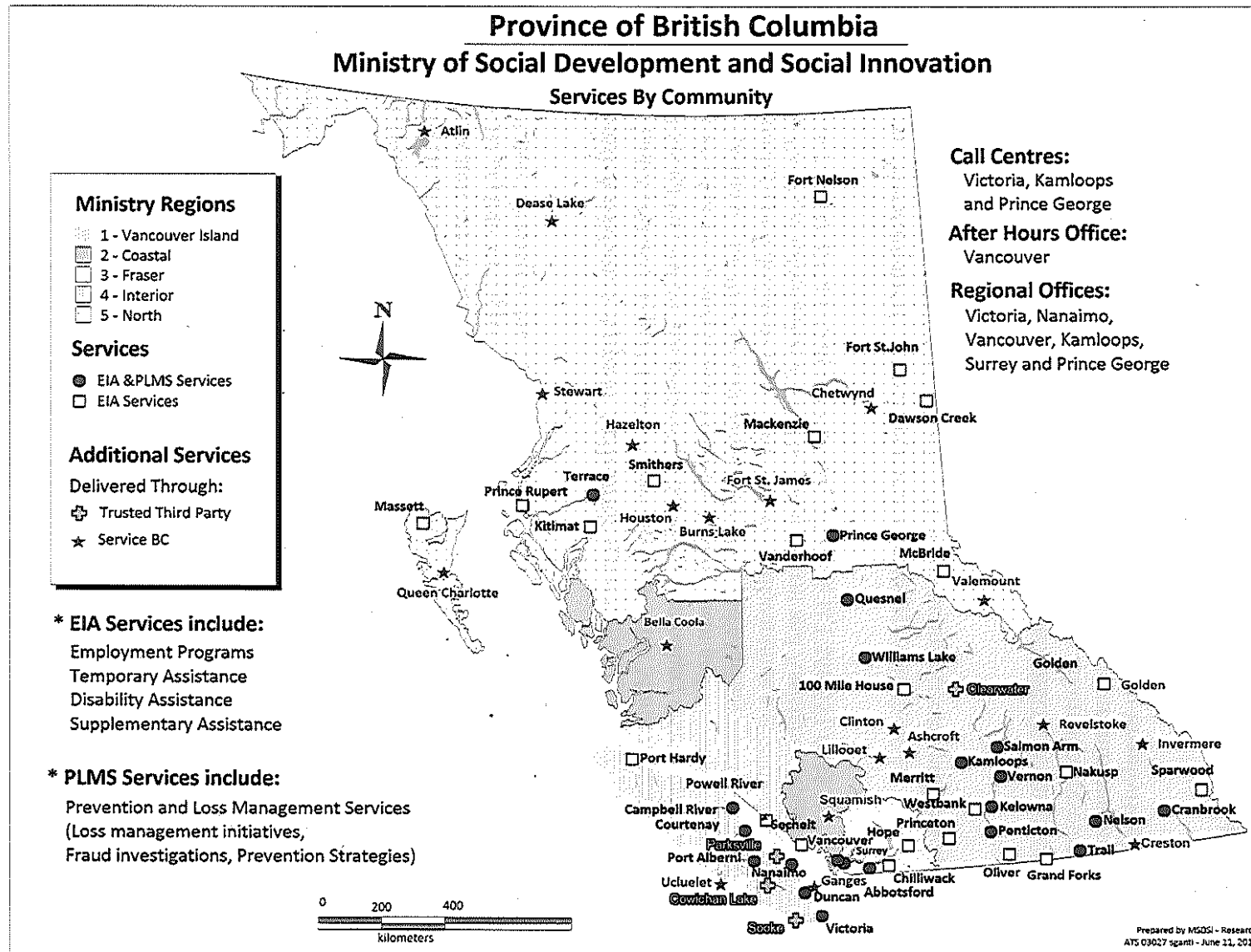
- In Victoria, call: 250 387-6121
- In the Lower Mainland, call: 604 660-2421
- Elsewhere in British Columbia call: 1 800 663-7867
- Outside British Columbia call: 1 604 660-2421
- E-mail address: EnquiryBC@gov.bc.ca
- Telephone device for the deaf and hearing impaired (TDD):
 - In the Lower Mainland, call: 604 775-0303
 - Elsewhere in British Columbia, call: 1 800 661-8773

Employment and Income Assistance

The Ministry has approximately 100 Employment and Income Assistance offices throughout British Columbia. To find the office that provides services for a specific community, go to: www.hsd.gov.bc.ca/contacts/city.htm, or contact the Ministry toll free by telephone from anywhere in the province at 1 866 866-0800.

Employment and Labour Market Services

General Enquiries: 250 356-0050



Hyperlinks to Additional Information

Advocate for Service Quality: www.eia.gov.bc.ca/advocate

The Advocate works for Adults with Developmental Disabilities and transitioning youth with special needs and their families to access supports and services that are available from the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation, from other ministries, Community Living BC or from service agencies in the community. If you live outside Vancouver, call Enquiry BC and ask them to transfer you to Office of the Advocate for Service Quality's office at 1 604 775-1238.

Community Living British Columbia: www.communitylivingbc.ca

Community Living BC (CLBC) delivers supports and services to eligible adults and their families in British Columbia. Adults with developmental disabilities or who meet the Personalized Supports Initiative criteria are eligible for supports through CLBC. For more information about CLBC services, please call the toll-free information line at 1 877 660-2522.

Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal: www.gov.bc.ca/eaat

The Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal hears appeals of the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation reconsideration decisions that refuse, reduce or discontinue income, disability assistance or a supplement under the Employment and Assistance Act and the Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act, and Ministry of Children and Family Development reconsideration decisions that refuse, reduce or discontinue a subsidy under the Child Care Subsidy Act. For more information about The Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal's services, please call 250 356-6374 or call toll-free long distance at 1 866 557-0035.

Integrated Case Management: www.integratedcasemanagement.gov.bc.ca

Information about the Integrated Case Management system, including periodic progress updates, is available on the project web site.

Labour Market Development Agreement: www.labourmarketservices.gov.bc.ca

The Ministry Employment and Labour Market Services website is an information resource for employment programs and services available in British Columbia. For more information, contact local Employment and Labour Market Services through Enquiry BC by email at EnquiryBC@gov.bc.ca or by phone at 1 800 663-7867.

Online Resource (BC Employment and Assistance Policies and Procedures):

www.gov.bc.ca/meia/online_resource

The Online Resource is the Ministry web based resource for all B.C. Employment and Assistance policy, procedures and program information for eligibility for Ministry programs.

Personal Supports: www.personalsupports.bc.ca

This site contains information about programs that provide equipment and assistive devices or other personal supports to persons with disabilities in British Columbia. If you would like to speak to a Personal Supports representative, please call the toll-free information line at 1 888 818-1211.

Representative for Children and Youth: www.rcybc.ca

The Representative for Children and Youth ensures the agencies serving children and youth between the ages of birth and 24 are providing programs and services that meet the needs of this vulnerable population.

Self Serve Assessment and Application Tool: www.iaselfserve.gov.bc.ca/homepage.aspx

The Self Service Assessment and Application Tool is the Ministry assessment and application web tool that is designed to assist clients in learning more about programs and services available, as well as additional links if clients would like to do an eligibility assessment or apply for Income Assistance.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The mission of the Ministry of Social Development is to make a difference in the lives of British Columbians trying to overcome social and economic barriers by believing in their ability to realize their potential and make meaningful contributions to their community; and by providing access to the services and resources to help them build the resilience and personal accountability necessary to achieve those goals.

MINISTRY SUMMARY (\$000)

	Estimates 2012/13 ¹	Estimates 2013/14
VOTED APPROPRIATION		
Vote 42 — Ministry Operations.....	2,456,780	2,487,135
OPERATING EXPENSES	<u>2,456,780</u>	<u>2,487,135</u>
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES ²	32,538	39,511
LOANS, INVESTMENTS AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS ³	—	—
REVENUE COLLECTED FOR, AND TRANSFERRED TO, OTHER ENTITIES ⁴	—	—

NOTES

¹ For comparative purposes, figures shown for the 2012/13 operating expenses; capital expenditures; loans, investments and other requirements; and revenue collected for, and transferred to, other entities are restated to be consistent with the presentation of 2013/14 *Estimates*. Schedule A presents a detailed reconciliation of the restatement of operating expenses and capital expenditures.

² Details of capital expenditures are presented in Schedule C.

³ Details of loans, investments and other requirements are presented in Schedule D.

⁴ Details of revenue collected for, and transferred to, other entities are presented in Schedule E.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CORE BUSINESS SUMMARY

(\$000)

OPERATING EXPENSES	2012/13	2013/14 ESTIMATES		
	Net	Gross	External Recoveries	Net
Core Business				
Income Assistance.....	1,663,883	1,694,318	(10,080)	1,684,238
Employment.....	55,488	356,686	(301,198)	55,488
Community Living British Columbia.....	718,777	728,777	—	728,777
Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal.....	1,751	1,751	—	1,751
Executive and Support Services.....	16,881	16,921	(40)	16,881
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	2,456,780	2,798,453	(311,318)	2,487,135
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	Net	Disbursements	Receipts	Net
Core Business				
Executive and Support Services.....	32,538	39,511	—	39,511
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	32,538	39,511	—	39,511

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

VOTE DESCRIPTIONS
(\$000)

Estimates 2012/13	Estimates 2013/14
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VOTE 42 — MINISTRY OPERATIONS

This vote provides for ministry programs and operations described in the voted appropriations under the following five core businesses: Income Assistance, Employment, Community Living British Columbia, Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal, and Executive and Support Services.

INCOME ASSISTANCE

Voted Appropriations

Income Assistance - Program Management.....	115,529	115,529
Temporary Assistance.....	429,985	383,639
Disability Assistance.....	847,075	913,576
Supplementary Assistance.....	271,294	271,494
	<u>1,663,883</u>	<u>1,684,238</u>

Voted Appropriations Description: This sub-vote provides for temporary assistance, disability assistance, and health and other supports for family units of eligible individuals in accordance with the *Employment and Assistance Act* and the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*, and other supports consistent with the Intent of the legislation. This sub-vote also provides for the operations and administration of employment-related programs to support individuals with multiple barriers and disabilities. This sub-vote also provides for support services and direct operating costs. Costs may be recovered from ministries, other levels of government, Bus Pass Program user fees, assignments authorized by the *Employment and Assistance Act* and the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*, and from repayable assistance and overpayments for services described within this sub-vote.

EMPLOYMENT

Voted Appropriations

Employment Programs.....	55,487	55,487
Labour Market Development Agreement.....	1	1
	<u>55,488</u>	<u>55,488</u>

Voted Appropriations Description: This sub-vote provides for the operation and administration of programs to assist eligible individuals to find sustainable employment. This sub-vote also provides for the operations and administration of employment-related programs to support individuals with multiple barriers and disabilities. In addition, this sub-vote supports organizations that provide employment services to unemployed persons and provides for developing and implementing strategies for dealing with labour force adjustments and meeting human resource requirements. Costs may be recovered from ministries and parties external to government under cost-sharing agreements for services described within this sub-vote.

COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA

Voted Appropriation

Community Living British Columbia.....	<u>718,777</u>	<u>728,777</u>
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Voted Appropriation Description: This sub-vote provides for general support and advice to the minister regarding Adult Community Living Services and includes transfer payments to Community Living British Columbia for the governance, management, operations, and delivery of services and support to adults with developmental disabilities. Payments for the provision of these services are in accordance with the *Community Living Authority Act*.

EMPLOYMENT AND ASSISTANCE APPEAL TRIBUNAL

Voted Appropriation

Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal.....	<u>1,751</u>	<u>1,751</u>
--	--------------	--------------

Voted Appropriation Description: This sub-vote provides for salaries, benefits, allowances, operating, and related expenses of the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal, which provides for an independent and impartial appeal of the ministry's reconsideration decisions. The Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal is a single-level, community-based appeal system established under the *Employment and Assistance Act*. Ministry clients that are dissatisfied with the outcome of the ministry's reconsideration decisions may appeal to the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal. Costs may be recovered from ministries for services described within this sub-vote.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

VOTE DESCRIPTIONS

(\$000)

Estimates
2012/13Estimates
2013/14

EXECUTIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Voted Appropriations

Minister's Office.....	475	475
Corporate Services.....	16,406	16,406
	<u>16,881</u>	<u>16,881</u>

Voted Appropriations Description: This sub-vote provides for the office of the Minister of Social Development and for executive direction of the ministry and administrative services for the operating programs of the ministry. This includes strategic and business planning, financial administration and budget coordination, human resources, asset and risk management, information technology, and records management. This sub-vote also provides for the salary and benefits of the Parliamentary Secretary for Non-profit Partnerships, corporate and community-based service delivery, including services provided by ministries and agencies on behalf of the ministry. Costs may be recovered from ministries and parties external to government for services described within this sub-vote.

VOTE 42 — MINISTRY OPERATIONS

2,456,780

2,487,135

MINISTRY GROUP ACCOUNT CLASSIFICATION SUMMARY

GROUP ACCOUNT CLASSIFICATION

Salaries and Benefits	122,174	127,435
Operating Costs	31,017	32,806
Government Transfers	2,610,017	2,633,506
Other Expenses	6,798	20,345
Internal Recoveries	(138)	(16,639)
External Recoveries	(313,088)	(311,318)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES.....	<u>2,456,780</u>	<u>2,487,135</u>

Ministry of
Social Development

2012/13
Annual Service Plan Report



For more information on the British Columbia Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation,
see Ministry Contact Information on Page 28 or contact:

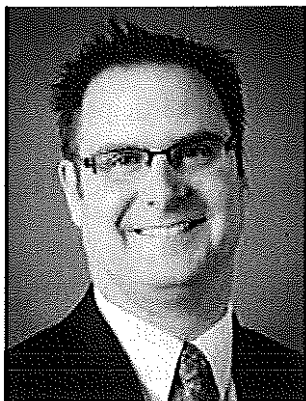
Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation:

PO BOX 9933
STN PROV GOVT
VICTORIA, BC
V8W 9R2

or visit our website at
www.gov.bc.ca/sd

Published by the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement



The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation is committed to providing a comprehensive range of supports and services for British Columbia's most vulnerable citizens. The Ministry provides access to the necessary tools to help people obtain employment, participate more fully in their communities, enhance independence, and to achieve better health and economic outcomes for themselves and their families. This allows us to continue to build an inclusive and prosperous B.C.

Last year, more than \$2.4 billion was spent providing income assistance to nearly 180,000 British Columbians across the province each month.

The Ministry also made changes to income assistance policies in October 2012 to ensure that the supports people need to get back into the workforce are provided, while helping to improve financial outcomes for vulnerable individuals and families. Through temporary help to those who can work and longer-term aid to those, who through disability or other barriers cannot, our government is ensuring that the needs of all British Columbians are being represented.

Over the past year, the Ministry and Community Living BC (CLBC) have worked hard to improve the supports and services available to people with developmental disabilities and their families. CLBC is currently delivering programs and services to more than 15,000 adults with developmental disabilities in B.C., and continues to work with them to help each person live a full, meaningful life. Most of the recommendations set out in *Improving Services to People with Developmental Disabilities: Deputy Ministers' Review of Community Living British Columbia* have been completed, and regular updates were provided to ensure ongoing and transparent communications around the implementation of the 12 point plan. The foundation has now been laid for a new integrated service delivery model and the Ministry is scheduled to launch five early implementation sites later this year to test, refine, evaluate and finalize the model prior to full operation.

The Ministry is the lead on ensuring B.C. has a citizen-centred system of disability supports and services that enable people with disabilities to work and participate more fully in their communities. The Minister's Council on Employment and Accessibility has identified solutions and strategies that will help increase employment and access for people with disabilities, and our ministry is working together, with the community, to realize these opportunities. Government is moving forward on a number of actions consistent with recommendations provided by the Council to improve employment and accessibility for persons with disabilities, and to improve the level of support, recruitment and retention of persons with disabilities in the Public Service. A key recommendation of the Minister's Council announced in March 2013, is the creation of a Presidents Group – a network of influential

Ministry of Social Development

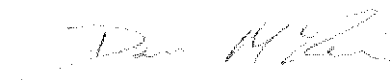
business leaders who will work with the Council, government, businesses and employers to improve opportunities, remove barriers and realize the potential of disability hiring within the workplace.

This government believes that people who can work truly want to be self-sufficient and contribute to their communities, and our role is to help make the process of finding and keeping a job as seamless as possible. The Employment Program of BC, delivered through 85 WorkBC Employment Services Centres around the province, helps people find work and provide stability for their families. One of the largest changes to the process was the switch to a one-window model, which has enabled a better tracking and reporting system designed to give us a balanced, realistic snapshot of all participants. This in turn has helped to ensure program accountability and transparency. To date, more than 67,000 people have received case management services, with almost 50 per cent of those who completed case managed services being able to secure employment.

Phase 3 of the Integrated Case Management (ICM) system successfully launched on March 4, 2013. This phase focused on inclusion of the Bus Pass and Senior's Supplement programs into ICM and the limited implementation of the ICM Service Provider Portal. Following the launch of Phase 2 of ICM in April 2012, concerns were raised around issues related to ICM, particularly in the area of child protection at the Ministry of Children and Family Development. In response, an Action Plan was implemented to address the concerns raised. Much of the work in that plan has now been completed and ICM is scheduled for completion, on budget, in Winter 2014.

Government is creating a climate focused on social innovation and strengthening the role of the non-profit sector through the development of innovative partnerships. The Ministry is working to change the perception of government from an organization that does something to people, to an organization where we are an equal contributor and partner. In 2012, government supported the BC Ideas Social Innovation Challenge, led by Ashoka Changemakers, which generated over 460 ideas and innovative solutions to health, social and environmental challenges facing B.C. communities today, and in the future. In the spring of 2013, government also introduced amendments to the Business Corporations Act to create a new hybrid type of company, a Community Contribution Company (CCC), which will become effective on July 29. This innovative business model-the first of its kind in Canada-combines the traditional benefits of a corporation, with an added social purpose commitment, that is aimed at encouraging private investment in B.C.'s social enterprise sector.

The *Ministry of Social Development 2012/13 Annual Service Plan Report* compares the actual results to the expected results identified in the Ministry's *2012/13 - 2014/15 Service Plan*. I am accountable for those results as reported.



Honourable Don McRae
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation
June 19, 2013

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Highlights of the Year

Over the past year, the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation has faced a number of challenges and has been provided opportunities toward achieving our vision of making a difference in the lives of British Columbians trying to overcome social and economic barriers.

The Ministry has realized a number of significant accomplishments that provide better services to our clients, improves our service delivery and builds on our commitment to social innovation strategies.

Integrated Case Management

The Integrated Case Management (ICM) system is a large, complex, multi-phase project being planned for completion in Winter 2014. This crucial computer system upgrade is enhancing the public's service quality expectations in addressing a wide range of critical social programs in both this Ministry and the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Phase 2 was implemented on April 2, 2012, on time and on budget. It was followed by two significant system updates: Release 2.1 on July 3, 2012 and Release 2.2 on September 24, 2012. These enhancements were based on feedback from staff and contractors during Phase 2 implementation, as well as required modifications to support policy changes to income and disability assistance. Phase 3 was successfully implemented, on time and on budget, on March 4, 2013 with limited impact to front-line users and no impact to services.

Service Delivery

In 2012, the Ministry introduced a number of service delivery enhancements focusing on standardization, building capacity, and streamlining processes, with the overarching goal of transforming service delivery to better serve British Columbians.

Additional staff capacity resulting from these changes has also allowed staff to focus on processing applications, reviewing employment plans, resolving outstanding client issues including processing stubs and performing follow-ups prior to appointments with clients to confirm documentation requirements. These strategies are intended to reduce the current number of repeat client follow-ups, both face-to-face and by telephone, to improve overall service level capacity and reduce client wait times. The Ministry has been closely monitoring the effectiveness of these service delivery changes in meeting client needs.

The Ministry has also focused on improving timeliness in decision-making, including processing times for Persons with Disabilities designation and Reconsideration decisions, resulting in marked progress toward improving the overall client service experience.

Channel Strategy

The Ministry has developed a Service Delivery Channel Strategy and has made strides this year to enhance service channel effectiveness and efficiency. The goals of the Channel Strategy are to broaden client access through multiple channels; maximize efficiency; integrate with other ministries and government priorities; and, ensure continuous service improvement.

Activities included increased consultation with frontline staff, clients, and stakeholders to lay the foundation for the ongoing enhancement of the Ministry's service delivery channels.

The Ministry initiated a primary consultation process with external stakeholders to seek feedback on current service delivery channels and to introduce an Online Client Portal. The Ministry's online portal is being developed to balance the needs of clients while building on opportunities to improve service delivery, supporting client access to key online services any time of day or night.

A number of focus group sessions were completed concurrently between January and March 2013. The focus of these feedback sessions was to launch a primary consultation process to validate channel development, followed with support by an ongoing and successively more extensive process to monitor client satisfaction by specific channels. Reaching out to clients through focus group sessions for their perceptions of the current service delivery experience has been a very positive step forward.

As a result of feedback from 71 clients and 58 advocates, representing approximately 45 advocacy organizations, the Ministry introduced an e-mail service option for Bus Pass requests and implemented a number of continuous improvements to up front caller messaging and triaging of calls within our telephone service channel. The Ministry has also launched an optional survey on the Self Serve Assessment and Application tool to collect data to monitor client satisfaction with this self-serve service delivery channel that will be useful in making future enhancements.

Employment Program of BC

With the launch of the Employment Program of BC on April 2, 2012, 85 WorkBC Employment Services Centres opened across the province culminating years of work in design and implementation. The successful launch was the result of carefully planning a comprehensive transition strategy to develop new policies and processes, supporting implementation of the ICM system, and delivering training on the new program.

Much of the 2012/13 fiscal year was focused on ensuring successful implementation of the program and collaborating with Ministry Contractor and Service Provider partners. As planned, within the first six months from the program launch, the Ministry engaged with contractors to help inform improvements to the program model and delivery, including reviews of the service fee structure.

With this work already underway, the Ministry continues to take steps towards operational stabilization of both the program and the organization. Within the first year of the new Employment Program of BC program over 67,000 clients were served through case management. The Ministry was the host of a symposium that focused on addressing the needs of specialized populations – such as

Aboriginal peoples, Francophones, individuals with disabilities and people who live in remote or rural areas. The event was attended by a range of contractors and set the stage for ongoing improvements in employment program service delivery.

Policy Changes

Last year the Ministry introduced a number of changes to its income and disability assistance policies to help clients lead more independent lives, achieve improved outcomes and transition into the workforce. Policy changes included increases to personal asset and trust limits; enhancements to earnings exemptions for disability clients; reinstating an exemption for employable clients; increases to the school start up and family bonus supplements; exemption of income tax refunds; and, the restoration of a number of medical equipment and supply allowances.

The first phase of annualized earnings exemptions began in January 2013. It allowed a select number of participants on disability assistance to use their earnings exemptions on an annual instead of monthly basis. This was designed to assist individuals whose income fluctuates during the year due to various medical conditions.

The changes to the Domestic Violence and Fleeing Abuse policy consolidated all existing Ministry policies that are intended to support individuals and families fleeing abuse. All information is now in one location and accessible online. As well, these improvements made systems changes to improve tracking, monitoring and service provision in cases where domestic violence may be a factor. The Ministry also extended the provision of income assistance to single parents without legal status who are fleeing abuse and are unable to leave the country with their children.

Minister's Council on Employment and Accessibility

The Minister's Council on Employment and Accessibility is a forum comprised of members from the business, community, non-government organization, and government sectors as well as families and individuals with disabilities that advises the Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation on solutions and strategies to increase employment and access for people with disabilities.

In 2012, the Minister's Council on Employment and Accessibility initiated and completed a Council's Framework for Action. These recommendations identified potential actions in the areas of providing employer/individual supports, strengthening policies and optimizing the use of existing resources/services. As well, linkages were made with the Federal Panel on Labour Market Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities to align any of Council's initiatives to the work of the Panel where appropriate.

In December 2011, the Deputy Ministers' Review of Community Living BC, Improving Services to People with Developmental Disabilities, was issued providing 12 recommendations for moving forward. The Ministry has led the cross-government team to implement these recommendations and, as of March 31, 2013, 11 of the 12 recommendations have been completed and the remaining recommendation is in progress and scheduled to be completed in the coming year. This work included

extensive engagement with self-advocates, families, communities, experts and government agencies to understand the issues and test ideas for a new integrated service delivery model. As a result of these consultations a new integrated service delivery model was developed that will represent real changes in how families and individuals with developmental disabilities receive services and supports. This includes the introduction of a new Navigator role, someone who can act as a single contact and help co-ordinate planning for and access to the range of services and supports available. The new service model will be piloted in five communities across the province beginning this Fall.

The Ministry has also supported ongoing innovation within the sector and recognized and supported innovations developed, championed and undertaken by families and individuals. This includes work with the Journey of Families that supports identifying innovative housing models for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Government Non-Profit Initiative

The Government Non Profit Initiative is a partnership between government and the non-profit sector. Its objective is to strengthen the way the two sectors work together to support stronger communities and better outcomes for British Columbians. The Initiative is led by a cross-sector Leadership Council, which is co-chaired by the Deputy Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation and the CEO of the Vancouver Foundation, and includes participation from six government ministries and a network of over 1000 agencies from across the province.

In 2012/13, the Ministry successfully completed the first implementation of Mentoring Our Rising Executives, a mentoring program for government and non-profit sector leaders. The Ministry developed a number of cross sector recommendations and provincial cross-sector procurement training to ensure non-profit agencies have the tools and resources they need to determine the full cost of delivering a service and can respond effectively to government Requests for Proposals. The result will ensure that contract reporting captures outcomes in addition to outputs in order to fully describe the impact of service delivery.

In 2012, the Ministry worked with the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training to include social enterprises as key stakeholders in the Small Business Summit and development of the Small Business Accord. In conjunction with the Ministry of Finance, changes to legislation and regulations will come into effect on July 29, 2013 that will enable organizations to incorporate as Community Contribution Companies – businesses that pay dividends to shareholders but direct most of their profits to their declared social purpose.

In recognition of the significant contributions of the social enterprise sector, and of government's continued commitment to supporting social enterprise, March 27th was proclaimed as Social Enterprise Day in British Columbia.

The BC Ideas competition – an online competition that asked British Columbians to submit innovative solutions to BC's most complex social problems – was hosted by the BC Partners for Social Impact (in collaboration with Ashoka Changemakers). More than 450 ideas were submitted

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from 81 communities, and \$30,000 in grand prize funding, provided by the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation, was awarded to three innovative, community-based programs: InclusionWorks!, Inn Home Support – Homelessness Prevention Program and Local Peer-to-Peer Micro Lending.

There were many excellent ideas generated and the BC Ideas partnership wanted to do more. They raised an additional \$270,000 in seed capital to help 30 more social change projects and innovative problem-solvers make an even greater difference in British Columbia. A list of the winning projects is available here: <http://pulse.changemakers.com/competitions/education/2012/05/bc-ideas>

Purpose of Ministry

The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation provides support and assistance to people with disabilities and offers unemployed and underemployed British Columbians access to programs and services that allow them to find work, attach to the labour market and secure their future.

Working in collaboration with other ministries, other levels of government, service agencies and stakeholder groups, the Ministry continually strives to deliver responsive, innovative and integrated services, ensuring that all programs are effectively delivered through the use of outcome based practices in all employment and assistance services.

The Ministry service delivery model provides British Columbians a range of channels through which programs and services can be accessed. The Integrated Case Management project is part of the commitment and support given to cross-Ministry integration and cooperation.

By funding a diverse mixture of employment services and community services that are delivered by third party service providers throughout the province, the Ministry is able to provide appropriate services and assistance to those British Columbians with varying abilities and who are in need. This has allowed the Ministry to direct its efforts to building the supports that adults with developmental disabilities and their families need in order to achieve their goals of employment and connecting with their communities.

A core function of the Ministry is leading the provision of programs and services for persons with disabilities and their families. Part of this mandate is the Ministry's continued support for Canada's commitment to the UN Convention on the rights of people with disabilities which has the cooperation of governments, community organizations, clients and their families.

The Ministry seeks ways to integrate citizen-centered service delivery, disability supports and services that lead to innovative community based initiatives that ultimately will increase employment and inclusion opportunities for persons with disabilities. This includes working with partners to improve the transition for youth with disabilities and continue to work with and engage business, community, families and other disability stakeholders to increase employment gains, inclusion and independence for persons with disabilities.

The Advocate for Service Quality is able to assist in situations involving adults with developmental disabilities and transitioning youth that have special needs and their families who could benefit from the intervention assistance. The Advocate's office is available to assist individuals to advocate for themselves and to support an individual's ability to work through processes. This is accomplished through encouraging participation of all those involved in the decision-making process to promote problem-solving and resolution at the local level.

The Advocate is an independent office. All work of the office is done in collaboration with Community Living BC, the Ministry along with the Ministry of Natural Gas Development and

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Responsible for Housing, Ministry of Children and Family Development, Ministry of Health, and other ministries as required. The Advocate also works with the Representative for Children and Youth, and the Public Guardian and Trustee.

In 2009, the Cross Ministry Transition Planning Protocol for Youth with Special Needs report was released. As a result, the role of the independent Advocate for Service Quality was expanded to include youth with special needs and their families transitioning into adulthood.

The Ministry is the cross-ministry lead for an innovative partnership model that encourages and develops new partnerships by working with non-profits, businesses and governments to seek new solutions to complex social issues. Social innovation utilizes existing social and financial resources to create large-scale change to take on those difficult social, financial and environmental challenges. The Ministry plays a key role in advancing social innovation through its support of the implementation recommendations made by the Advisory Council for Social Entrepreneurship. The Ministry also co-chairs the Government Non-Profit Initiative and is home to the Government Non-Profit Initiative Council Office. Through the Government Non-Profit Initiative, government and the non profit sector work collaboratively to address challenges and opportunities of mutual interest to support stronger communities and better outcomes for British Columbians.

The Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal is a service available to those individuals who disagree with a Ministry decision regarding their eligibility to receive assistance. This is an independent quasi-judicial body that provides an accessible appeal process. This tribunal reviews Ministry decisions related to employment programs and income assistance, and Ministry of Children and Family Development determinations related to the child care subsidy program. All review decisions are done in a timely and fair manner.

The provincial Crown Agency, Community Living BC, delivers province-wide supports and services to adults with developmental disabilities and their families. The agency works to support adults and their families, and helps to create communities where people with developmental disabilities have more choices about how they live, work and contribute.

The Ministry conducts all business in accordance with the core values of the British Columbia Public Service: integrity, courage, teamwork, passion, service, accountability, and curiosity.

Strategic Context

The Ministry provides support and assistance to people with disabilities and offers unemployed and underemployed British Columbians access to programs and services that allow them to find work in the labour market and secure their future.

Cross Ministry Connections

The Ministry has a broader social sector responsibility in delivery of our programs and services. This includes developing and working in partnership with many other ministries on a range of social innovation initiatives that are shared across organizational business lines.

The Ministry works closely with the Ministry of Children and Family Development on transformation initiatives, implementation of the Integrated Case Management project and the alignment and integration of policies and service delivery for those youth with special needs and their families who are transitioning from Ministry of Children and Family Development to this Ministry.

Economic Outlook

British Columbia's real GDP increased by 1.7 per cent in 2012 (according to preliminary GDP by industry data from Statistics Canada), following growth of 2.8 per cent in 2011. Annual gains in the domestic economy during 2012 were observed in employment, consumer spending and housing starts. B.C.'s exports fell during the year, however, as global demand weakened and prices fell for some key commodities. Several risks to British Columbia's economy remain, including further slowing of domestic economic activity, a return to recession in the United States, the ongoing European sovereign debt crisis threatening the stability of global financial markets, exchange rate volatility, and slower than anticipated economic growth in Asia dampening demand for B.C.'s exports.

Changing Economy and Demographics

The recent economic downturn has increased unemployment and decreased labour force participation rates. The structure of the labour market has changed with more part-time employment and less jobs in manufacturing. At the same time, the population is aging and the incidence of persons with disabilities is increasing. As in other jurisdictions, British Columbia continues to experience demographic shifts as a result of longer life expectancies, low birth rates and an aging baby boomer generation. The population distribution indicates that in 2019 the number of people aged 65 years or over in the province will surpass the number of people under age 19. Older individuals enjoy a longer life expectancy as medical and technological advances continue but also have a higher likelihood of significant health issues compared to younger generations. As a result, the number of individuals with disabilities or who require extra assistance to take part in employment is projected to increase as the population ages. These shifts have had an impact on the caseload.

Caseload Outlook

The temporary assistance caseload has been in general decline since the start of fiscal 2010/11. Based on research from the 1980s and 1990s recessions, the caseload declines following a downturn occur at a slower rate than the caseload increases at the beginning of the downturn. The temporary assistance caseload has been declining at 30 per cent the rate of increase experienced at the start of the recession. As the caseload is more sensitive to increases in unemployment than to declines in unemployment, it is expected that the reduction of the Ministry's temporary assistance caseload will continue to lag behind improvements in the economy.

The disability assistance caseload continues to rise. The disability caseload accounts for 62 per cent of the total caseload compared to fewer than 35 per cent in 2002. Other Canadian jurisdictions, the United States and most Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries are also facing increasing numbers of individuals on disability assistance. The incidence of disability in the general population is growing and will continue to rise as the population ages. As a result, the growth in the disability assistance caseload is expected to continue over the longer-term.

Youth employment is down 38,100 compared to pre-recession levels, an 11 per cent decline; and youth continue to experience the highest unemployment rate among age groups. During the recession, youth dropped out of the labour market and have not returned which puts youth labour force participation rates at all-time lows. As a result, the youth caseload increased over the recession and currently remains 45 per cent above pre-recession levels (the equivalent of 4,493 additional youth).

The number of families with children on the caseload is 29 per cent higher than pre-recession levels – that is 4,746 additional families on assistance. This means an additional 8,139 children on the caseload compared to 2007. Children growing up in income assistance households are vulnerable to poor outcomes and the increased likelihood of inter-generational welfare dependence.

Citizen-Centred Service Delivery

A key focus for the Ministry was to improve services to clients to ensure they had access to the range of services that met their diverse needs. Through the continuing collaboration with other ministries, service providers, community groups and clients, the Ministry was able to ensure its services were effective, client-centred.

Through its use of a Lean organizational approach, the Ministry was able to concentrate on maximizing opportunities in existing channels to ensure clients received delivery of up-to-date outcome based services. Improvements have been realized in office based visits, enhanced phone systems and increased functionality of Ministry computer based self-service. These changes will allow the Ministry to increasingly report out on performance across its services lines.

The ability to increase community inclusion for persons with disabilities requires an integrated approach. In an effort to find creative solutions has meant that the Ministry continues its work with all levels of government, the business sector, non-profit groups, community organizations and citizens. As many individuals with disabilities and their families looked for increased employment

opportunities, the Ministry has continued its work to expand inclusion and employment opportunities for people with disabilities through a revitalized volunteer program and other initiatives.

The Communication Assistance for Youth and Adults (CAYA) project has a goal to ensure that the needs of young adults with severe communication disabilities are being met as they leave the education system. CAYA supports B.C. citizens over the age of 19 to maintain communication with the world, at no financial cost to them. The Ministry continues to support the Equipment and Assistive Technology Initiative which provides equipment and assistive technology for persons with disabilities to achieve their employment goals.

Representative for Children and Youth

On March 14, 2013, legislation was created to implement all of the recommendations made by the Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth in its review of the *Representative for Children and Youth Act*. The mandate of the Representative for Children and Youth was expanded and initially the expansion will allow the Representative to continue to advocate on behalf of young adults who are between the ages of 19 to 24 year olds and have developmental disabilities. Effective September 30, 2013, this regulation change helps ensure these young adults' needs are met as they transition from youth services into adult services through Community Living BC.

Family and Youth Partnership

A key government priority is to provide the tools and supports needed for children and struggling families to reach their full potential. In April 2012, the Ministry launched the Family and Youth Partnership pilot project in Victoria, Vancouver, Surrey, Kelowna and Prince George. The pilot is based on voluntary participation, and since it began over 135 clients and their families have been connected to the services and supports they need.

The pilot assists young families where one or both parents are between the ages of 19-25 on income assistance, and youth transitioning out of care that may become dependent on income assistance. This pilot has leveraged the successes of previous intervention initiative models and helped individuals access the supports and services they need.

The Ministry partnered with other ministries, government agencies, community service providers and other community partners to ensure that these young families and youth are connected to existing services that will assist with preparatory programs, education or employment programming, as well as services that will help to ensure their children are ready for school.

Transitioning Youth

The Ministry is implementing voluntary simplified Persons with Disabilities application and adjudication process for youth who have a documented diagnosis of an intellectual disability as defined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder. The new simplified Persons with Disabilities application process is intended to centralize the intake process and enable the Ministry to make a determination of the client's eligibility for the Persons with Disabilities designation.

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These youth are transitioning onto Income Assistance from School District education services and/or Ministry of Children and Family Development. Persons with Disabilities designations are based on psychological assessments conducted by a school psychologist or other medical professional and held by a school district or Ministry of Children and Family Development without the need for the individual to complete the Persons with Disabilities application form.

Information will be collected from the client or the client's family, or from individual school boards/school districts, or from Ministry of Children and Family Development where applicable. The process being proposed builds on the existing streamlined Persons with Disabilities application process for youth transitioning from Ministry of Children and Family Development's "At Home Program Medical Benefits" to the Ministry's Disability Assistance, and centralizes intake for both of these client groups.

Report on Performance

Performance Results Summary Table

Goal 1: British Columbians in need have access to income assistance and receive the appropriate supports to meet their changing needs. For greater detail see pages 17 to 18	2012/13 Target	2012/13 Actual
1.2 Supplementary supports are available and delivered through accessible channels to meet the changing and individual needs of British Columbians. Per cent of reconsideration decisions that are made within time frames.	100%	88% NOT ACHIEVED

Goal 2: Accessible services that support increased independence and sustainable employment for those British Columbians in need. For greater detail see pages 18 to 22	2012/13 Target	2012/13 Actual
2.1 The resilience of families and youth in B.C. is enhanced so that they can achieve increasingly positive economic outcomes and greater well-being. Expected to Work and Expected to Work Medical Condition caseload as a percentage of the population aged 19-64.	1.3%	1.3% ACHIEVED
Median length of time clients with employment obligations receive assistance (months).	5.3	TBD ¹
Per cent of clients that have their initial case management and needs assessment meeting within 10 business days.	80%	MEASURE CLOSED ²
Per cent of clients that have fully developed employment action plans within 10 days of initial case management and needs assessment meeting.	80%	MEASURE CLOSED ²

1 Please see page 21 for a detailed description of how this measures is determined.

2 Please see page 23 for an explanation how measures related to the Employment Program of BC are being changed.

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Goal 3: Support British Columbians in need who have disabilities by providing an effective system of support to gain and maintain meaningful independence and inclusion in their community. For greater detail see pages 22 to 24		
	2012/13 Target	2012/13 Actual
3.1 Ensure a comprehensive and integrated system of supports and services for Persons with Disabilities. Per cent of applications for Persons with Disabilities designation completed within Ministry standards.	99%	99.8% EXCEEDED
3.2 Engage British Columbians across sectors to promote programs and services that enhance community inclusion for Persons with Disabilities. Per cent of Persons with Disabilities cases with declared earnings.	14.9%	14.3% SUBSTANTIVELY ACHIEVED

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Results

The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation launched a number of key service delivery initiatives over the last year that expanded and enhanced employment programs and services to those in need. The Ministry continues to provide open and transparent information on data reported to the public.

Goal 1: British Columbians in need have access to income assistance and receive the appropriate supports to meet their changing needs.

Objective 1.2: Supplementary supports are available and delivered through accessible channels to meet the changing and individual needs of British Columbians.

Strategies

- Provide supplemental assistance to eligible clients including subsidized bus passes and dental and optical assistance.
- Provide eligible low income seniors with the Seniors' Supplement.
- Provide eligible low and moderate income families that have children with dental and optical assistance through the Healthy Kids Program.

Performance Measure 1: Per cent of reconsideration decisions that are made within time frames.

Performance Measure	2003/04 Baseline	2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Actual	2012/13 Target	2012/13 Actual
Performance Measure	82%	12%	56%	100%	88% NOT ACHIEVED

Data Source: Reconsideration and Appeal System, Ministry of Social Development

Discussion

The Ministry has a two stage appeal process for clients who are unsatisfied with a Ministry decision. Clients have a right to request "a reconsideration", an internal Ministry process. The Reconsideration

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Branch reviews all requests and makes a new and final Ministry decision. If unsatisfied with this decision, a client may request an appeal to the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal. This second step of the appeal process is external to the Ministry.

The Ministry has substantively improved in its goal towards meeting time frames and providing efficient service to clients as highlighted in the actual results of this performance measure. Adjudication of health decisions represents a large and growing proportion of the reconsideration requests that the Ministry undertakes annually. Health reconsiderations assess issues specific to individuals, such as their eligibility for a persons with disability designation or requirements for tailored medical equipment, supplies and supports. As a result, health reconsiderations are often complex and require additional medical evidence or clarification from Legal Counsel to be submitted. All documents received are examined by professionals and undergo a detailed examination to ensure they are complete.

The Ministry has thoroughly investigated the causes of late reconsideration decisions. Many of the errors are the result of reconsideration requests being sent to Reconsideration Officers after the deadline for a reconsideration decision to be made has already passed. The Ministry has worked extensively with all regional offices to develop, in consultation with regional staff, new procedures and protocols that will ensure the timely transmission of reconsideration requests to the Reconsideration Officers.

Goal 2: Accessible services that support increased independence and sustainable employment for those British Columbians in need.

Objective 2.1: The resilience of families and youth in B.C. is enhanced so that they can achieve increasingly positive economic outcomes and greater well-being.

Strategies

- Reduce unnecessary welfare dependency by ensuring that the Ministry's programs and initiatives support people to work.
- Engage relevant government and community partnerships in discussions on reducing intergenerational dependency.
- Youth and Family Partnership clients are provided with integrated services and supports to increase employment and independence.
- Use client needs assessment to align employment services with individual client needs.

Performance Measure 2: Expected to Work and Expected to Work Medical Condition caseload as a percentage of the population aged 19-64.

Performance Measure	Baseline (2001/02)	2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Actual	2012/13 Target	2012/13 Actual
Expected to Work caseload and Expected to Work Medical Condition as a percentage of the population aged 19-64.	3.6%	1.6%	1.5%	1.3%	1.3% ACHIEVED

Data Source: Research Branch, Ministry of Social Development

Discussion

This measure tracks the percentage of British Columbia's working age population receiving temporary assistance with employment related obligations and assisting clients to find employment is an integral part of the Ministry's mandate. Achieving this measure provides evidence that Ministry programs are having a positive effect helping clients find attachment to the labour market.

This performance measure is very sensitive to the state of the economy. The employment obligated caseload has been in general decline since 2011. However, history has shown that caseload declines occur at a slower rate than the caseload increases following a recession. As the economy continues to slowly recover, it is expected that the employment obligated caseload will continue to decline.

Performance Measure 3: Length of time clients who have obligations to seek employment receive Income Assistance.

Performance Measure	2001/02 Baseline	2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Actual	2012/13 Target	2012/13 Actual
Median length of time clients with employment obligations receives assistance (months).	4.2	5.6	5.8	5.3	TBD

Data Source: Research Branch, Ministry of Social Development

Discussion

The Ministry closely monitors the length of time clients receive assistance. This measure indicates the median length of time Expected-to-Work clients receive assistance. Median durations measure the number of months it takes for half of new starting Expected to Work clients to stop receiving assistance. The economic downturn has impacted British Columbia especially hard relative to other parts of Canada. With employment opportunities declining over the recession, the median duration on assistance increased to 5.8 months in 2011/12, up from 5.6 months the year before.

Despite signs that the labour market is beginning to slowly recover, unemployment remains almost 75 per cent higher than pre-recession levels which are keeping durations up. The increase in durations has largely been driven by single men, who have been hit especially hard by the recession. As the economy continues to recover, it is expected that the number of job opportunities will increase and the median durations for employable clients will begin to decline.

Median durations measure the number of months it takes for the middle half of a cohort of new starting Expected to Work clients to stop receiving assistance. This methodology means that the median length of time clients with employment obligations receives assistance in 2012/13 will not be known until Fall 2013, the Ministry will provide an update at that time.

Objective 2.2: Achieve effective practices through the new Employment Program of BC.

Strategies

- Deliver services to ensure accessibility through the new Employment Program of BC via a network of WorkBC Employment Service Centres operated by service providers located across the province.
- Reduce barriers to access for all clients of employment and labour market services, including persons with disabilities, immigrants, youth and other specialized populations, by engaging experts through advisory panels.
- Create opportunities for partnerships and innovation at the community and employer partnership level.
- Assist vulnerable youth and adults to move towards independence and self-reliance by providing employment services and supports to assist them to lead more meaningful and productive lives.

Performance Measure 4: Per cent of clients receiving employment services within service standards.

Performance Measure	2012/13 Target	2012/13 Actual
Per cent of clients that have their initial case management and needs assessment meeting within 10 business days.	80%	MEASURE CLOSED

Data Source: Employment and Labour Market Services Division, Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

Performance Measure 5: Per cent of clients having employment action plans within service standards.

Performance Measure	2012/13 Target	2012/13 Actual
Per cent of clients that have fully developed employment action plans within 10 days of initial case management and needs assessment meeting.	80%	MEASURE CLOSED

Data Source: Employment and Labour Market Services Division, Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

Discussion

Performance Measure 3 and Performance Measure 4 were initially developed to evaluate the Ministry's performance to ensure that clients' needs are assessed in a reasonable time frame and that an employment action plan is also fully developed. The April 2012 launch of the Employment Program of British Columbia integrated services from 10 legacy programs into one program available to any unemployed British Columbian.

The Ministry developed a comprehensive performance measurement framework, which included measures on service delivery, service quality, and outcomes. The baseline and target performance measurement numbers were contractually set at 80 per cent for all WorkBC Employment Service Centres. The Ministry will continue to monitor and evaluate clients' ability to receive services in a timely manner and as of a result of work reviewing several program components with stakeholders has replaced these performance measures to better reflect alignment to client employment outcomes. These new measures can be found in the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation Revised 2013/14 – 2015/16 Service Plan.

Goal 3: Support British Columbians in need who have disabilities by providing an effective system of support to gain and maintain meaningful independence and inclusion in their community.

Objective 3.1: Ensure a comprehensive and integrated system of supports and services for Persons with Disabilities.

Strategies

- Provide adults with disabilities access to high quality, responsive supports and services that enable them to meet their needs, participate as full citizens and have improved outcomes.
- Facilitate access to all supports outside of income assistance for families who provide support to family members with a disability.
- Work collaboratively with other ministries and local, regional and provincial partners to continue the integration and alignment of innovative and inclusive disability supports and services to improve outcomes for Persons with Disabilities and their families.
- Identify and assist eligible youth with disabilities to begin the application process at age 17 and a half to come on at age 18.
- Improve the transition process for children with special needs to transfer from youth services offered by the Ministry of Children and Family Development to the Ministry's disability assistance program and adult community living services offered through Community Living BC.

Performance Measure 6: Meeting standards for processing Persons with Disabilities applications.

Performance Measure	2010/11 Baseline	2011/12 Actual	2012/13 Target	2012/13 Actual
Per cent of applications for Persons with Disabilities designation completed within Ministry standards.	99%	99%	99%	99.8% EXCEEDED

Data Source: Provincial Service Branch, Ministry of Social Development

Discussion

Throughout 2012/13, the Health Assistance Branch managed an average monthly volume of 932 Persons with Disabilities applications.

This measure evaluates the Ministry's performance in the review and adjudication of applications for designation as a person with a disability. Determining eligibility for designation as a person with a disability is a complex and often time intensive process, requiring the review of detailed medical evidence and a close examination of all case materials. The Persons with Disabilities Designation Application includes detailed information from the applicant's physician and other health professionals on diagnosis, health history, the degree of impairment and its impact on the applicant's daily living activities. The length of the adjudication process reflects the commitment to reaching fair and consistent decisions that comply with legislative requirements and the principles of administrative fairness. All applicants receive notice of the decision outcome in writing. Applicants deemed ineligible receive full and detailed written explanations of the adjudicator rational used to reach the decision. A triage process allows the Ministry to identify cases that involve urgent medical situations or children with disabilities, requiring expedited adjudication.

Although the process for determining eligibility is complex the Ministry is committed to delivering timely and efficient service. The Ministry has set aggressive goals to reduce the average time to process Persons with Disabilities applications by 50 per cent over the next three years. Although likely not without challenges, the consistent results achieved against this performance standard in 2012/13 and in prior years lends credence to the Ministry's objective of reducing the target for processing Persons with Disabilities applications by 50 per cent.

Objective 3.2: Engage British Columbians across sectors to promote programs and services that enhance community inclusion for Persons with Disabilities.

Strategies

- Work with partners across the sector to develop and implement initiatives that enhance community inclusion for Person with Disabilities.

Performance Measure 7: Per cent of Persons with Disabilities cases with declared earnings.

Performance Measure	Baseline (2001/02)	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Actual	2012/13 Target	2012/13 Actual
Per cent of Persons with Disabilities cases with declared earnings.	11.2%	14.8%	14.4%	14.9%	14.3% SUBSTANTIVELY ACHIEVED

Data Source: Research Branch, Ministry of Social Development

Discussion

This measure tracks the percentage of Persons with Disabilities cases declaring earnings. The Ministry provides supports and programs to Persons with Disabilities to work, including earnings exemptions and employment programs. This measure is sensitive to the state of the economy. The percentage of Persons with Disabilities cases declaring earnings has declined from 15.9 per cent in 2007/08 to 14.3 per cent in 2012/13.

Although unemployment declined over the 2011/12 to 2012/13 period, unemployment remained above pre-recession levels suggesting reduced opportunities compared to pre-recession resulting in a small decline in the per cent of disability clients declaring earned income. As the labour market improves over the next few years, the percentage declaring earnings is expected to begin to rise.

Report on Resources: Summary Table

	Estimated	Other Authorizations	Total Estimated	Actual	Variance
Operating Expenses (\$000)					
Income Assistance	1,659,720	-	1,659,720	1,671,870	(12,150)
Employment ¹	55,488	-	55,488	25,686	29,802
Community Living BC	718,777	-	718,777	730,800	(12,023)
Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal	1,751	-	1,751	1,575	176
Executive and Support Services ²	21,044	-	21,044	15,411	5,633
Sub-Total	2,456,780	-	2,456,780	2,445,342	11,438
Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual ³	-	-	-	(4,151)	4,151
Total	2,456,780	-	2,456,780	2,441,191	15,589
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)⁴					
Employment	1,564	-	1,564	-	1,564
Executive and Support Services	30,974	3,248	34,222	24,935	9,257
Total	32,538	3,248	35,786	24,935	10,821

1 Savings due to first year of BC Employment Programs.

2 Variance mainly due to partial transfer of budget to Income Assistance subsequent to Service Plan release.

3 The Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual includes a \$3.324 million reduction to Healthcare Benefit Trust Unfunded Liability.

4 Capital expenditures for Executive Support Services include amounts for Integrated Case Management (ICM). ICM is an investment in information systems used to deliver critical social programs. This is an initiative between the Ministries of Social Development and Social Innovation, Children and Family Development and Citizens' Services. 'Other Authorizations' are for system enhancements.

Annual Service Plan Report Appendices

Appendix A: Ministry Contact Information

Service BC refers members of the public to the appropriate Ministry office, and transfers calls and forwards e-mails free of charge. Hours of operation for Service BC are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding statutory holidays.

- In Victoria, call: 250 387-6121
- In the Lower Mainland, call: 604 660-2421
- Elsewhere in British Columbia call: 1 800 663-7867
- Outside British Columbia call: 1 604 660-2421
- E-mail address: EnquiryBC@gov.bc.ca
- Telephone device for the deaf and hearing impaired (TDD):
 - In the Lower Mainland, call: 604 775-0303
 - Elsewhere in British Columbia, call: 1 800 661-8773

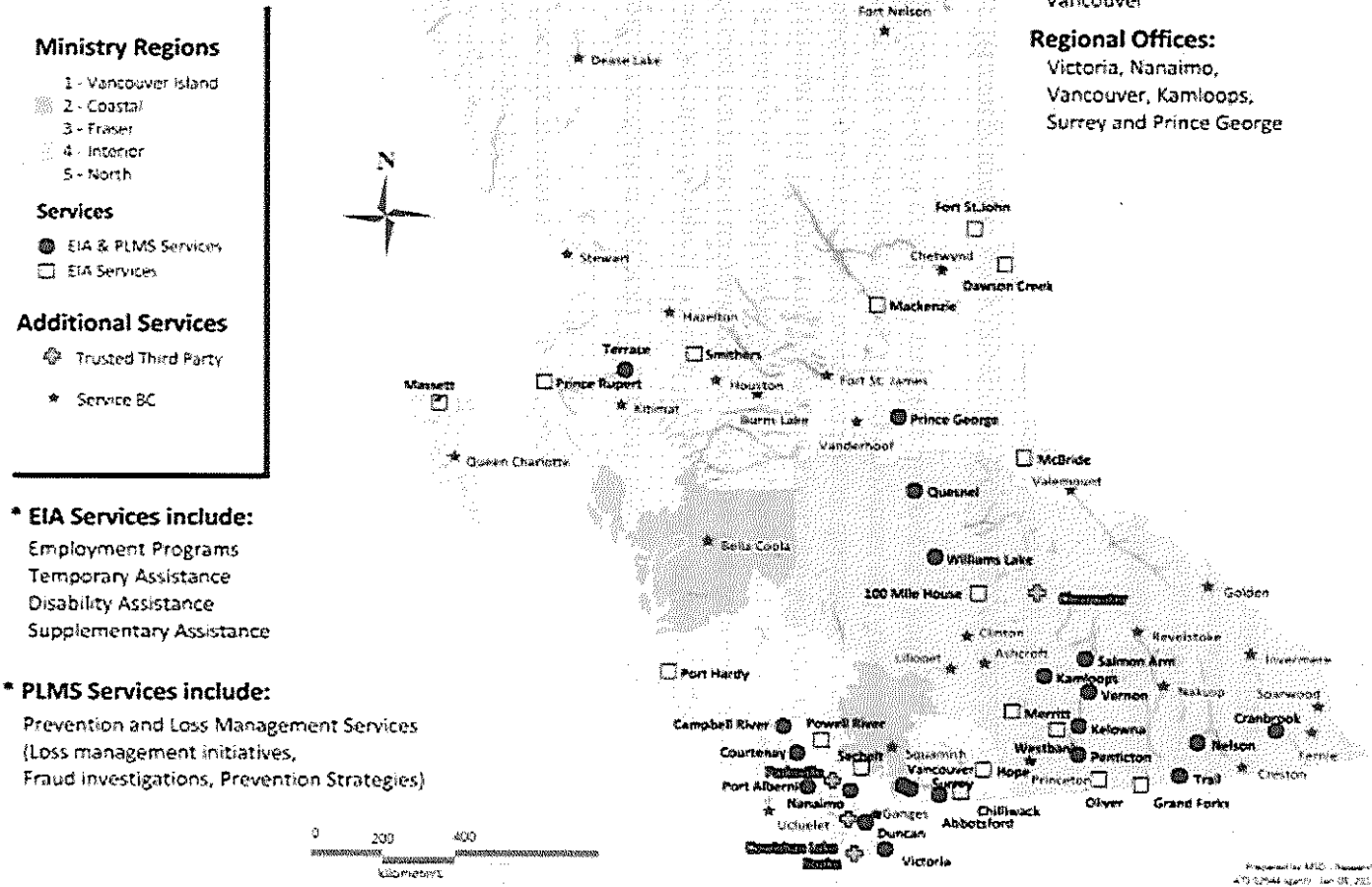
Employment and Income Assistance

The Ministry has approximately 100 Employment and Income Assistance offices throughout British Columbia. To find the office that provides services for a specific community, go to: www.hsd.gov.bc.ca/contacts/city.htm, or contact the Ministry toll free by telephone from anywhere in the province at 1 866 866-0800.

Employment and Labour Market Services

General Enquiries: 250 356-0050

Province of British Columbia
Ministry of Social Development
Services By Community



Appendix B: Hyperlinks to Additional Information

Advocate for Service Quality: www.hsd.gov.bc.ca/advocate

The Advocate works for Adults with Developmental Disabilities and transitioning youth with special needs and their families to access supports and services that are available from the Ministry of Social Development, from other ministries, Community Living BC or from service agencies in the community. If you live outside Vancouver, call Enquiry BC and ask them to transfer you to Office of the Advocate for Service Quality's office at 1 604 775-1238.

Community Living British Columbia: www.communitylivingbc.ca

Community Living BC (CLBC) delivers supports and services to eligible adults and their families in British Columbia. Adults with developmental disabilities or who meet the Personalized Supports Initiative criteria are eligible for supports through CLBC. For more information about CLBC services, please call the toll-free information line at 1 877 660-2522.

Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal: www.gov.bc.ca/eaat

The Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal hears appeals of the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation reconsideration decisions that refuse, reduce or discontinue income, disability assistance or a supplement under the Employment and Assistance Act and the Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act, and Ministry of Children and Family Development reconsideration decisions that refuse, reduce or discontinue a subsidy under the Child Care Subsidy Act. For more information about The Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal's services, please call 250 356-6374 or call toll-free long distance at 1 866 557-0035.

Integrated Case Management: www.integratedcasemanagement.gov.bc.ca

Information about the Integrated Case Management project, including periodic progress updates, is available on the project web site.

Labour Market Development Agreement: www.labourmarketservices.gov.bc.ca

The Ministry Employment and Labour Market Services website is an information resource for employment programs and services available in British Columbia. For more information, contact local Employment and Labour Market Services through Enquiry BC by email at EnquiryBC@gov.bc.ca or by phone at 1 800 663-7867.

Online Resource (BC Employment and Assistance Policies and Procedures):

www.gov.bc.ca/meia/online_resource

The Online Resource is the Ministry web based resource for all B.C. Employment and Assistance policy, procedures and program information for eligibility for Ministry programs.

Personal Supports: www.personalsupports.bc.ca

This site contains information about programs that provide equipment and assistive devices or other personal supports to persons with disabilities in British Columbia. If you would like to speak to a Personal Supports representative, please call the toll-free information line at 1 888 818-1211.

Representative for Children and Youth: www.rcybc.ca

The Representative for Children and Youth ensures the agencies serving children and youth between the ages of birth and 24 are providing programs and services that meet the needs of this vulnerable population.

Self Serve Assessment and Application Tool: www.iaselfserve.gov.bc.ca

The Self Service Assessment and Application Tool is the Ministry assessment and application web tool that is designed to assist clients in learning more about programs and services available, as well as additional links if clients would like to do an eligibility assessment or apply for Income Assistance.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
CORPORATE PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Changes to Ministry Service Plan

KEY MESSAGES:

s.13

BACKGROUND:

- Two new performance measures were added to this year's Service Plan:
 - Percentage of active claimants served with the Employment Program of BC.
 - Percent of Employment Program of BC clients obtaining outcomes (employment and/or community attachment).
- These performance measures were developed in relation to the Employment Program of BC to assess the effectiveness of the program in light of serving clients and achieving employment outcomes and will identify areas where further improvements can be made.
- As a result of adding the previous two new measures, two employment program related measures were closed:
 - Percent of clients that have their initial case management and needs assessment meeting within 10 business days. This measure was originally established to ensure that client's needs were assessed within a reasonable time frame.
 - Percent of clients that have fully developed employment action plans within 10 days of initial case management and needs assessment meeting. This measure was originally established to ensure that a client's employment action plan was fully developed within an established time frame following a needs assessment.

CHANGES TO MINISTRY SERVICE PLAN

Contact: Wes Bovd. ADM, Management Services Division
 Cell phone: s.17
 Date: June 17, 2013

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**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
MANAGEMENT SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

Deputy Minister Responsible: Sheila Taylor

Ministry Description:

The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation focuses on delivering responsive, innovative and integrated services to individuals and families. The ministry provides supports and assistance to people with disabilities and offers unemployed and underemployed citizens access to programs and services that allow them to find work, attach to the labour market and secure their future. The key accountabilities include:

- Provision of income assistance to those in need according to eligibility criteria established by statute and regulation
- Support for community living services to help adults with developmental disabilities and their families achieve their goals; and
- Delivery of employment programming and services to individuals, employers and communities, including employment supports to adults with disabilities.

The ministry supports a model of citizens at the centre by providing a variety of avenues through which British Columbians can access services. The ministry has services in just about every community across the province. The ministry also supports B.C.'s most vulnerable - those who are disabled – and people who have many barriers to taking care of themselves, as a result of chronic drug addiction and homelessness.

Individuals who disagree with a ministry decision regarding their eligibility to receive assistance can appeal to the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal, an independent, quasi-judicial body that provides an independent and accessible appeal process. Its mandate is to deliver timely and fair decisions while reviewing ministry determinations related to employment programs and income assistance and Ministry of Children and Family Development determinations related to the child care subsidy program. The Tribunal has approximately 95 members across the province and is chaired by Marilyn McNamara.

Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) is a provincial Crown agency that delivers supports and services to adults with developmental disabilities and their families. CLBC is accountable to the legislature through this ministry. The ministry funds CLBC, sets and communicates government's mandate in this program area, establishes key policy and priority direction, and oversees performance.

Individuals who receive services from CLBC have the option to seek independent assistance from the Office of the Advocate for Service Quality, Jane Holland. The purpose of the Advocate is to help adults with developmental disabilities, youth with special needs who are transitioning to CLBC services and their families access available supports and services, and resolve concerns and complaints. The Advocate collaborates with CLBC, the Ministries of Social Development and Social Innovation and Children and Family Development, other ministries and ministry service providers. The Advocate is appointed by and reports to the Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation, but is independent of government.

The Advocate's work will be augmented by the work of the Representative for Children and Youth. As part of the ministry's efforts to improve accountability and responsibility for CLBC, the expansion of the Representative's mandate to include youth transitioning into CLBC is anticipated to become effective in September 2013.

The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation is made up of five divisions: Employment and Labour Market Services, Management Services, Policy and Research, Regional Services and Social Sector Information Services.

Employees (Headcount): Approx. 2,074 (March 31, 2013) vs. 2,221 (March 31, 2012)

The number of employees has remained fairly consistent in each division. The total number of employees in the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation also includes staff from Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunals (EAAT) branch – 14, the Deputy Minister's Office (DMO) – 14, and the Minister's Office (MO) – 5. These three branches are not included in the divisions listed below.

Related Legislation:

- *Community Living Authority Act and Regulation*
- *Employment and Assistance Act and Regulation*
- *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act and Regulation*

REGIONAL SERVICES DIVISION

ADM Responsible: Sharon Moysey

Division Description:

The Regional Services Division is responsible for delivery of the BC Employment and Assistance Program. The division is comprised of eight organizational units: five regions that provide services in each geographical area of the province (Vancouver Island, Vancouver Coastal, Fraser, Interior and North); one branch that provides provincial or centrally delivered services (Provincial Services Branch); one branch responsible for program integrity (Prevention and Loss Management Services Branch); and one branch that provides business supports, strategic analysis and coordination and provincial implementations (Regional Operations Branch).

- The *five regions* deliver services directly through 59 local BC Employment and Assistance offices or, in some smaller locations, through an agency relationship with 29 Service BC offices. Services are also provided over the telephone and increasingly over the web. Services include determining eligibility for income assistance programs, referrals to employment programs, and increasing outreach to connect clients with other supports and services
- The *Provincial Services Branch* is responsible for various supplementary assistance, including Bus Pass, Senior's Supplement, Healthy Kids , dental and optical programs, and the determination of eligibility for the Persons with Disabilities designation and access to health supplements.
- The *Prevention and Loss Management Services Branch* develops and implements programs and enforcement strategies designed to reduce overpayments, deter Income Assistance fraud and prosecute serious offenders. The branch is staffed with both criminal investigators who have Special Constable status under the *Police Act* and investigative officers who follow up on allegations, and – using risk-based assessment tools – verify and conduct reviews to ensure that income assistance is provided only to those who are eligible.
- The *Regional Operations Branch* is responsible for quality assurance and effective business and financial planning, monitoring and reporting. It also provides project management and implementation oversight for significant change initiatives; provides policy interpretation services for ministry staff; ensures effective communications and engagement with external stakeholders, including the legal advocates and Office of the Ombudsperson; and resolves customer or client service issues on behalf of the Minister's Office.

Employees (Headcount): Approx. 1,573 (March 31, 2013) vs. 1,664 (March 31, 2012)
Data as at March 31, 2013. Does not include ADM office or Regional Operations as they are not service delivery staff.

Related Legislation:

- *Employment and Assistance Act and Employment and Assistance Regulation*
- *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act and Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Regulation*

MANAGEMENT SERVICES DIVISION

ADM Responsible: Wes Boyd

Division Description:

The Management Services Division (MSD) provides a range of corporate services to the ministry through staff based in Victoria and Vancouver. The division is organized into four branches.

The *Engagement and Workforce Development Branch* is responsible for leadership and organizational development, wellness and occupational health and safety, workforce planning and strategic HR advice and management of service level agreements with the Public Service Agency. This branch also provides expertise in marketing, communications, customer service and web support and produces communications plans and materials, ministry publications, and the ministry's internet and intranet sites.

The *Financial and Administrative Services Branch* is responsible for financial accounting and reporting, financial policy and training, budget planning and reporting, assurance monitoring and compliance, and facilities and vehicles management.

The *Information Management Branch* is responsible for information and technology management, including information security, systems planning, support, enhancements, and help desks, security management, enterprise architecture services, IT project delivery, and service level agreements with Workplace Technology Services.

The *Corporate Planning Branch* provides expertise in strategic and business planning, performance management and reporting, risk management, internal surveys, business continuity planning and emergency preparedness. Deliverables include the ministry Service Plan, Corporate Risk Register, the ministry Annual Service Plan Report, the Carbon Neutral Action Report. The branch also manages the ministry's Lean Coordination Office.

Employees (Headcount): Approx. 96 (March 31, 2013) vs. 144 (March 31, 2012)

EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION

ADM Responsible: Allison Bond

Division Description:

The Employment and Labour Market Services Division (ELMSD) is responsible for the development, management, and evaluation of the Employment Program of BC (EPBC), designed to provide any unemployed British Columbian with a range of employment services and supports. EPBC was launched on April 2, 2012 after over three years of extensive consultations with communities across British Columbia. EPBC is delivered through 73 contracts operating 85 WorkBC Employment Services Centres across the province.

The division consists of three branches and an Integrated Case Management Project Team:

- The *Program Management Branch* is responsible for supporting the overall program delivery and service quality through planning, policy, governance, and quality assurance. The branch supports ongoing program improvement through analysis, performance measurement, and evaluation. The branch includes an office responsible for ensuring the needs of specialized populations, including persons with disabilities, youth, immigrants etc, continue to be met through the program.
- The *Operations Branch* ensures quality contract management, planning and budget/financial activities at the regional and local levels, along with activities that support the development of strong and productive relationships with service providers and community partners.
- The *Engagement, Partnerships and Strategic Initiatives Branch* provides corporate supports and resources including communications, employee engagement, stakeholder relationship development and issues management at the divisional level. The branch is also responsible for the ministry's Family Youth Partnership Project.
- The *ELMSD ICM project team* works with the other program areas involved in the ICM project (Ministry of Children and Family Development and Regional Services Division) to define business requirements and work with the contracted system integrators, Deloitte, to create a common system design. The team works on business analysis, design, testing and implementation of the ICM system.
- Furthermore, in December 2011, the Deputy Ministers' Review of Community Living BC, *Improving Services to People with Developmental Disabilities*, was issued providing 12 recommendations for moving forward. To address the recommendations, the Deputy Ministers established the Services to Adults with Developmental Disabilities (STADD) Assistant Deputy Ministers Steering Committee, with membership consisting of all of the government ministries and

organizations providing services and supports to individuals with developmental disabilities. Allison Bond is the ADM responsible for STADD.

Employees (Headcount): Approx. 235 (March 31, 2013) vs. 294 (March 31, 2012)

Related Legislation:

- *Employment and Assistance Act* and Regulations
- *Employment and Assistance For Persons with Disabilities Act* and Regulations
- *Employment Insurance Act* and Regulations

POLICY AND RESEARCH DIVISION

ADM Responsible: Molly Harrington

Division Description:

The Policy and Research Division (PRD) is the integrated service, policy and legislation unit of the Ministry of Social Development and Innovation (SDSI). The Division provides research and analysis, policy, regulations, legislation, advice, strategic services and consultation for the broad span of SDSI functions.

PRD develops and delivers strategic social policy in support of the Ministry's mandate, supports the provision of core programs, strategies and services for people with disabilities and their families and supports the ministry's oversight of Community Living BC. PRD leads a significant segment of the ministry's stakeholder engagement, for example, with the federal and other provincial governments to contribute to national cross provincial collaboration and discussions, the federal government and First Nations organizations to identify gaps in services and opportunities for improvements and with poverty and disability stakeholders to gain broad and inclusive input into SDSI policy development.

PRD houses the ministry's legal, legislative and appeal services (a shared service branch headquartered at SDSI that also serves MCFD) providing clients with an internal reconsideration of decisions rendered by Regional Services.

PRD is the lead for the development and implementation of cross-sector and cross-ministry innovative partnerships, including government's Disability Strategy and Social Innovation Agenda. PRD also contributes economic research, analytics, caseload forecasting and recommendations that support ministry reporting requirements, evidence based analysis and decision processes.

There are five branches in the division:

- The *Strategic Policy Branch* leads the development, implementation and evaluation of the ministry's strategic policy and leads the ministry's stakeholder relations activities, which includes Federal, Provincial, Territorial (FPT) and aboriginal partnerships and consultations with disability and poverty stakeholders. The branch works collaboratively with other divisions, ministries, governments and stakeholders to develop innovative research-based policy. The Strategic Policy Branch provides definitive income assistance policy advice to Ministry Executive and all divisions of the ministry.
- The *Research Branch* leads and conducts research and evaluation projects that make recommendations, in support of policy development, caseload forecasting and employment programs. The branch also leads several FPT working groups,

including those on poverty, disability and cross-jurisdictional social research and provides ministry budget support which includes design, policy development and impact estimates for new initiatives. The Research Branch houses one of the largest income assistance data sets in the world and has recognized expertise in labour market, employment insurance, income support programs and poverty issues. Trends in inter-jurisdictional caseloads, the labour market and other income support programs are monitored and researched by the branch.

- The *SDSI-MCFD Legislation, Litigation and Appeals Branch* manages litigation issues and provides legislation, appeal and reconsideration services to both SDSI and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). In addition to legislation and litigation services, the branch delivers the reconsideration programs that ensure clients are treated consistently and within the principles of administrative fairness and that they receive the assistance for which they are eligible.
- The *Disability Services Branch* leads the implementation of government's Disability Strategy and supports core programs and services for people with disabilities and their families. The Disability Services Branch is responsible for the Minister's Council on Employment and Accessibility; assisting with coordination of government's response to the UN Declaration of Rights for Persons with Disabilities. The Branch researches national and international strategies that support people with disabilities, engages with an array of community organizations to identify innovative solutions to improve outcomes for people with disabilities, supports oversight of Community Living BC and with community partners delivers the Employment and Assistive Technology Initiative. The Disability Services Branch works to position BC as a Canadian leader, creating the systems and supports that allow people with disabilities the opportunity to live the life they choose, enabled by an innovative, integrated system of networked services and personal supports that generate and sustain welcoming, accessible and inclusive communities.
- The *Innovative Partnerships Branch* leads the Provincial Social Innovation Agenda by providing strategic direction and management expertise to the implementation of cross government and cross sector social innovation initiatives. The Branch provides strategic and secretariat support to the Government Non Profit Initiative Council Office, the ADM Committee on Non Profit Partnerships and BC Partners for Social Impact. The Innovative Partnership Branch acts as a catalyst for social change by accelerating and amplifying meaningful social innovation solutions that improve the lives of British Columbians.

Employees (Headcount): Approx. 65 (March 31, 2013) vs. 41 (March 31, 2012)

Related Legislation:

- *Community Living Authority Act*
- *Employment and Assistance Act*
- *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*
- *Human Resource Facility Act (section 1.1 (b) and (c))*

SOCIAL SECTOR INFORMATION SERVICES DIVISION

ADM Responsible: Jill Kot

Division Description:

The Social Sector Information Services Division provides strategic and operational information management and information technology services for the Ministries of Social Development and Social Innovation, and Children and Family Development. It is responsible for building, implementing and supporting the Integrated Case Management (ICM) system, a joint initiative between the two ministries, and the Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services. ICM is a \$182 million business and technology transformation project that will be completed in winter 2014.

The division is also responsible for supporting over 50 legacy systems used by both ministries, which have external interfaces to other government agencies and third parties. Key functions of the division include project management, strategic planning, business analysis, application management, help desk, security administration, vendor management, infrastructure support, and IT planning and portfolio management.

The division is made up of staff from the three ministries involved, and manages contracted resources from the Systems Integrator (Deloitte Inc.); the software vendor (Oracle); and legacy systems service providers.

The ICM capital budget for 2013/14 is \$38.2 million.

The SDSI operating budget (Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation portion only) for 2013/14 is \$11.3 million. This budget is included in "Income Assistance - Program Management".

Number of Employees (Headcount): 100 employees: 50 SDSI; 37 CFD and 13 shared (March 31, 2013) vs. 57 employees: 29 SDSI and 28 CFD (March 31, 2012)

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Budget 2013/14 – Financial Q & A's

BUDGET 2013/14 – FINANCIAL Q & A'S

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GENERAL

1. What is the 2013/14 Budget for the ministry?

- The budget for 2013/14 is \$2.49 billion for ministry operations, a \$30 million increase from \$2.46 billion in 2012/13, but \$11 million less than the Budget 2012 fiscal plan for 2013/14.

2. What are the funding changes to the ministry since Budget 2012?

- Budget 2013 reflects a shift in demand from temporary assistance to disability assistance, and an overall fiscal plan decrease of \$11 million for 2013/14, with \$1 million decrease in 2014/15 and 2015/16.

Table 1.1 Funding Changes from Budget 2012 Fiscal Plan				
(\$ millions)	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Total
Temporary Assistance.....	(43)	(66)	(68)	(177)
Disability Assistance.....	32	63	63	158
Supplementary Assistance.....	-	2	4	6
Total	(11)	(1)	(1)	(13)

- Budget 2012* provided the ministry with significant funding increases of \$444 million over the fiscal plan to support individuals and families
- The Temporary Assistance caseload is in decline and the TA budget was reduced accordingly. This reduction was offset by the growth in the Disability Assistance caseload; and some increase to Supplementary Assistance for fiscal 2013/14 to 2015/16
- The ministry received an \$80,000 lift to fund staff in the Minister's office

3. Why has the Temporary Assistance caseload decreased so significantly, is this related to the Jobs Plan?

- The Temporarily Assistance caseload decreased by 10 per cent in 2012/13, and is forecast to decline further over the fiscal plan.
- This is good news as it means fewer British Columbians need to access funding of "last resort". It implies that more British Columbians in need are able to find employment.

- In addition, the ministry implemented modest income assistance related policy reforms including strengthening applicants efforts in finding employment.

4. Why is the disability assistance caseload increasing?

- Disability assistance caseloads are forecast to increase due to population growth and a higher incidence of persons with disabilities. Budget 2013 provides an additional \$158 million over three years to support a disability assistance caseload of 92,795 (three year average).
- Budget 2013 also provides an additional \$6 million over three years for supplementary assistance supports (i.e. basic dental, school supplies, medical equipment) associated with the increase in disability assistance caseloads.

5. What is the focus of Budget 2013?

- The ministry continues to be committed to providing British Columbians with access to needed supports and employment services people can quickly and easily find and use. As we build up the foundation of our economy, it is important that we continue to provide the services and supports necessary to help more people and families become self-sufficient so they can contribute to an expanding economy and healthy communities.
- British Columbia has a solid income and disability assistance system which provides temporary help to those who can work, and longer-term aid to those who, through disability or other barriers, have a more difficult time working or who cannot work.

6. What new funding did the ministry receive in Budget 2012?

- Budget 2012 included a \$108 million increase to the 2012/13 base operating budget to help address income assistance caseload pressures.
- Increase in funding was as follows:
 - Temporary Assistance: \$34 million to total of \$430 million
 - Disability Assistance: \$17.2 million to total of \$847 million.
 - Supplementary Assistance: \$14.1 million to \$269 million
 - Program management: \$2.8 million to \$111 million
 - Community Living BC \$37.8 million to total of \$718.8 million

3 of 11

Contact: Wes Boyd, ADM, Management Services Division
 Cell phone: s.17
 Date: June 19, 2013

- Communication Assistance for Youth and Adults (CAYA) for \$1.9 million

Contact: Wes Boyd, ADM, Management Services Division
Cell phone: s.17
Date: June 19, 2013

INCOME ASSISTANCE

7. How many British Columbians receive income assistance?

Caseload (March 2013)	Cases	Recipients
Temporary Assistance	50,443	77,772
Disability Assistance	85,753	102,288
Total	136,196	180,060

- As of March 2013, 136,196 cases, consisting of 180,060 recipients, were receiving income assistance, compared to 136,065 cases (180,497 recipients) in March 2012.
 - a. Of these, 85,753 cases, consisting of 102,288 recipients, were receiving disability assistance, compared to 83,314 cases (98,093 recipients) in March 2012.
 - b. The incidence of PWD (PWD caseload as a percent of the population age 18-64) has been continuously increasing. The incidence of PWD has increased from 1.6 per cent in 2001 to 2.7 per cent in 2012. Incidence generally increases with age, peaking at ages 55 to 59.
 - c. At the same time, the BC population has been rising. Since 2001, the BC population age 18-64 has increased by 397,000 (15 per cent). The population is expected to increase a further 6.4 per cent by 2022 – an increase of 195,900.

8. Have income assistance rates increased?

- Income assistance rates are unchanged. The provincial government increased rates substantially in 2007 for all clients. This marked the first across-the-board increase since 1992.
- Government has raised rates twice since 2001. In 2005, the support allowance for Persons with Disabilities was increased by \$70 or 15 per cent.
- In 2007, there was a \$50 across-the-board increase to shelter allowances for all client groups, the first increase since 1992.

5 of 11

Contact: Wes Boyd, ADM, Management Services Division
 Cell phone: s.17
 Date: June 19, 2013

- Also in 2007, support rates for employable clients were increased by 27 per cent, and support and shelter payments for families with children were standardized, a change which benefited 18,000 families.

9. Are income assistance rates indexed for inflation?

- No. Indexing rates to inflation would potentially impede government's ability to control its budget over the long term and to target increases to the most pressing needs of British Columbians.
- The Province will continue to review income assistance rates annually as part of its fiscal plan.

10. How do income assistance rates in BC compare to other provinces?

	Single Employable	PWD
British Columbia	\$610	\$906
Average of Other Provinces	\$605	\$944
BC Ranking	4	5

- As of January 2013, BC's income assistance rates rank 4th highest for single employable clients and 5th highest for individuals receiving disability assistance.

11. How do income assistance volumes in BC compare to other provinces?

- As of October 2012 (latest month for which we have data for all provinces), BC had the 4th lowest per capita income assistance rate (of population age 15 to 64) at 4.1 per cent.
- The lowest is Alberta at 2.9 per cent and the highest is Newfoundland and Labrador at 6.9 per cent.
- BC experienced a 1.3 per cent caseload decline between October 2011 and October 2012, compared to a 0.5 per cent increase nationally. Only Prince Edward Island (2.9 per cent), New Brunswick (2.3 per cent) and Quebec (1.7 per cent) saw larger declines.

12. What has the Ministry of Social Development done to address the waitlist for the Community Volunteer Supplement?

- Community Volunteer Supplement (CVS) provides a supplement of up to \$100 a month to BC Employment and Assistance clients who do not have employment obligations.
- The supplement is intended to help volunteers offset the cost of clothing, transportation and other expenses necessary to perform their volunteer work.
- The CVS program, as it existed, was not sustainable.
- In October 2011, as promised, every person on the CVS waitlist was given the opportunity to apply for the program and begin receiving their supplement.
- For those in the CVS program, everyone will continue to receive their supplement for as long as they choose to keep working at their volunteer job.
- We will continue to spend the funds required to maintain this benefit for those participating in CVS.
- Maintaining this program for its current participants is the fair thing to do.
- By safeguarding those who were participating in the CVS or were on the waitlist, we minimized disruption by protecting their opportunity to receive CVS for as long as they keep their volunteer jobs.
- More people are receiving CVS than in past years other than in Fall of 2011
- Going forward, our government is increasingly focused on addressing the employment gap for persons with disabilities and on policies, programs and initiatives that will increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities.
- We'll continue to work with disability groups to find a balance between increasing opportunities for employment and community inclusion for people with disabilities with the accountability the public expects from government.

13. What services does the funding provided to CAYA provide?

- The Communication Assistance for Youth and Adults project provides alternative and augmentative communications (AAC) technology to adults with severe communication disabilities.

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Date: June 19, 2013

- Supporting the CAYA project fills a gap which previously existed as youth left the K-12 education system and could no longer access assistive technology services provided through that system.
- The Province has financially supported CAYA over several years and recognizes the important work the organization does in support of individuals with developmental disabilities.
- As a further demonstration of this support, the ministry committed \$1.9 million per year for three years in Budget 2012. This funding will allow CAYA to serve approximately 90 new clients annually, as well as provide ongoing support to existing clients.

EMPLOYMENT

14. How much federal funding for employment programs will the ministry receive for 2013/14 and how will that money be used?

- The ministry will be investing \$280.6 million through the Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) and \$55.5 million in provincial spending.
- The ministry will receive \$8.0 million in 2013/14 funding through the Labour Market Agreement (LMA) which is managed by the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training
- The LMA funding will be allocated to the following programs:
 - \$4.4 million to increased access to Assistive Technology for Persons with Disabilities;
 - \$1.3 million to the Specialized Community Assistance Program: Housing and Employment Sustainability Pilots; and
 - \$2.3 million to the Employment Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities with a Focus on Developmental, Cognitive and Mental Disabilities, including Learning Disabilities.
- The new Employment Program of BC (EPBC) has committed \$276.6 million for 73 Employment Service Contracts (ESC) throughout the province.
- In addition the ministry receives \$20.5 million annually to support the administration costs of the LMDA.

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INTEGRATED CASE MANAGEMENT (ICM)

15. Why is Social Development and Social Innovation implementing a \$182 million system to manage case files just when a sluggish global economic recovery is placing more demands on social services in BC?

- Integrated Case Management (ICM) is a long-overdue computer system that replaces numerous outdated and inflexible information systems – some more than 30 years old and obsolete – that deliver critical social programs.
- This project involves a wide range of critical social programs in both the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation (SDSI) and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD).
- ICM has been up and running at SDSI for over two years now and is working well. At the Ministry of Children and Family Development, ICM is generally performing as expected with the exception of concerns in the child protection area, which MCFD are addressing.
- By phasing in the system over five years Government is better able to manage risk, measure results, and keep the project on track.

With the implementation of a major systems project of this scale, it was expected that there would be bumps and challenges along the way. Despite issues and challenges, the fundamental reasons for moving to a new system still exist – ICM will help provide our staff with the tools they need so they can better support vulnerable children and families across B.C.

- The technical aspects of ICM are stable and secure and once complete, will provide the flexibility to allow government to make changes, as needed, to meet ongoing business requirements.
- Phase 3 of the ICM system was implemented on March 4, 2013 and is working well.
- The ICM project is on time and on budget for completion in December 2014

16. What are the key features of ICM?

- In order to meet the needs of B.C. families – who often receive services from multiple programs and services across multiple ministries – we need modern computer systems that can respond to changes in legislation and practice.

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 Date: June 19, 2013

- When fully implemented, ICM will improve outcomes for people receiving services through coordinated planning, consistent service standards, appropriate information sharing and service delivery options.

17. How will ICM benefit British Columbians?

- ICM is replacing computer systems that have been in use for decades, and provides better tools for both front-line workers and our service delivery partners.
- The changes to how we do business – and share relevant information appropriately – will ultimately produce better outcomes for individuals and families.
- ICM is also improving the links between public spending and outcomes for the people we serve, and it's able to provide more complete information to support policy and program changes that best meet the needs of British Columbians.

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**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Ministry Budget and FTE Overview

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

Table 1.1 Funding Changes from Budget 2012 Fiscal Plan				
(\$ millions)	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Total
Temporary Assistance.....	(43)	(66)	(68)	(177)
Disability Assistance.....	32	63	63	158
Supplementary Assistance.....	-	2	4	6
Total	(11)	(1)	(1)	(13)

- There is no plan to return to detailed FTE reporting within budget documents.
- Ministers have accountability to balance the budget to the bottom line dollar figure.
- The number of FTEs that can be accommodated within a ministry's budget depends on many factors, including attrition, staffing lag and the staff mix throughout the year.

BUDGET:**Ministry Budget Operating Expenses**

Cora Business Area	2012/13 Actual	2012/13 Restated¹	2013/14 Plan	2014/15 Plan	2015/16 Plan
Income Assistance	1,671,870	1,663,883	1,684,238	1,690,838	1,690,838
Employment	25,686	55,488	55,488	55,488	55,488
Community Living BC	730,777	718,777	728,777	738,777	738,777
Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal	1,575	1,751	1,751	1,751	1,751
Executive and Support Services	15,434	16,881	16,961	16,965	16,967
Total	2,445,342	2,456,780	2,487,215	2,503,819	2,503,821

Data Source: Financial and Administrative Services Branch

1: Amounts have been restated for comparative purposes only, to be consistent with Schedule A of the 2012/13 Estimates.

Ministry Budget Capital Expenses

Cora Business Area	2012/13 Actual	2012/13 Restated¹	2013/14 Plan	2014/15 Plan	2015/16 Plan
Executive and Support Services	24,965	35,786	39,607	18,151	1,306
Total	24,965	35,786	39,607	18,151	1,306

Data Source: Financial and Administrative Services Branch

1: Capital actual expenditures for ESS 2012/13 are related to Integrated Case Management (ICM). Due to timing adjustments for Phase 4, ICM budget has been re-profiled over fiscal 13/14 and 14/15. The overall ICM project is still on budget and on time.

Staff Counts by Division

Division	Number of Staff (headcount)	
	April 1, 2013¹	April 1, 2012
Employment and Labour Market Services	228	287
Management Services	100	142
Regional Services	1,580	1,715
Integrated Case Management	49	29
Policy and Research	62	60
Deputy Minister Office	14	5
Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal	14	14
Total	2,047	2,252

1: Staff moved from Management Services to DMO/ICM 2012/13 due to internal reorganization.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: 2012/2013 Year End Financial Results

KEY FACTS:

- The ministry ended fiscal year 2012/13 in a surplus position of \$15.589M
- Significant savings were achieved in the new BC Employment Program and Temporary Assistance, which offset pressures with Disability Assistance and CLBC
- The ministry did not require access to contingency due to the achieved savings.
- The ministry saw additional savings in salary and operating costs due to spending restraints.

Ministry Budget Operating Expenses

Core Business Area	2012/13 Budget	2012/13 Actuals	2012/13 Variance
Income Assistance	1,663,883	1,671,870	(7,987)
Employment	55,488	25,686	29,802
Community Living BC	718,777	730,777	(12,000)
Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal	1,751	1,575	176
Executive and Support Services	16,881	15,434	1,447
Sub total			11,438
Adjustment from Prior Year*			(4,151)
Ministry Totals:	2,456,780	2,441,191	15,589

*Mainly due to reduction in Healthcare Benefit Trust unfunded liability

2012/2013 Year End Financial Results

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**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
MANAGEMENT SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Minister's Office Budget

KEY MESSAGES:

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BUDGET:

	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14 Budget
	Budget	Expenditures	Budget	Expenditures	
Minister's Office	\$0.55M	\$0.48M	\$0.48M	\$0.44M	\$0.56M

Data Source: Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

STATISTICS:

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Minister's Office staff	4	4	5

Data Source: Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

MINISTER'S OFFICE BUDGET

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Minister's Mandate Letter

KEY MESSAGES:

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White paper

- We've made a platform commitment to develop a white paper on the issues facing people with disabilities in British Columbia.
- Using the white paper as a guide, a provincial summit will bring together leaders in the disability sector, government and the business community to discuss what actions and strategies would be needed to make B.C. a leader in reducing barriers and increasing freedoms for people living with disabilities in B.C.

Community Living BC

- My mandate is also very focused on ensuring that we continue to implement the reforms underway at Community Living BC.
- An important part of that plan will be the implementation of five early implementation sites in communities across British Columbia in the fall of this year.
- We are committed to delivering the best possible service to people with development disabilities—and doing so in a fiscally responsible manner.

Social assistance reforms

- An important part of my mandate, which is to improve services to people receiving income assistance and disability assistance, is well underway—and will continue.
- Last fall we introduced a suite of balanced changes that ensure we're providing the supports people need to get back into the workforce, while

MINISTER'S MANDATE LETTER

helping to improve financial outcomes for vulnerable individuals and families.

- Going forward, we will continue to work with job seekers, families, businesses, community members and advocates to look for other innovative, progressive ways to improve the system.

A balanced budget

- In every improvement that we move forward on, I am mandated to stay in budget and remain fiscally responsible to taxpayers.
- I am confident that we have the ability to achieve this and I believe that we can work together with community partners to improve supports for the people we serve.

BACKGROUND:

The following are the specific initiatives which are expected to be completed by Minister McCrae and the ministry over the coming years:

1. Balance your ministerial budget in order to control spending and ensure an overall balanced budget for the province of British Columbia.
2. Deliver on the platform commitment to create a white paper on how to improve the lives of those living with disabilities in British Columbia.
3. Continue client service integration to improve services and supports to people living with disabilities.
4. Complete and monitor CLBC reforms and report out to Cabinet.
5. Manage the budget of CLBC to ensure both fiscal discipline and maximum service delivery to individuals.
6. Implement the next phase of our social assistance reform as presented to Treasury Board earlier this year.

In addition, each mandate letter provided to Executive Council Members outlined the following government priorities:

- To bring back the legislature to pass Balanced Budget 2013;
- To ensure that government does not grow;
- To conduct a core review of government to make sure we are structured for success on all of our objectives; and
- To eliminate red-tape so that we can get to yes on economic development without needless delay.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Aging Families and Adults with Developmental Disabilities

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

- As a result of deinstitutionalization and the richer quality of life offered by community living, British Columbia now has, for the first time, a growing population of individuals with developmental disabilities who are aging in their communities.
- Approximately 28% of those served by CLBC are 50 or older.
- CLBC's draft 'Strategy on Aging' identifies the challenges and opportunities of meeting the potential demand for more and different services and supports for these aging adults. This strategy has been approved and is ready for public release.
- The strategy was developed by a 23-member committee of self-advocates, family members, Community Council members, health professionals and CLBC staff.
- The advisory committee was informed by input from the Ministry of Health, as well as feedback from 1,270 participants in 39 consultations provincewide who provided their perspectives on challenges faced by aging adults with developmental disabilities and

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Date: June 19, 2013

their families. The advisory committee will also advise CLBC on development of an implementation workplan that sets out detailed actions and indicators CLBC will use to measure progress on the strategy.

- Key foundational values and beliefs contained within the strategy include:
 - Rights and values matter – Education, advocacy and innovation are required to ensure people with developmental disabilities continue to live in the community as they age, with access to the same rights, choices and treatment as everyone else.
 - This is a shared responsibility – Partnerships and collaborations with families, government agencies, service providers, community professionals and seniors' organizations are needed to develop shared capacity to support aging individuals.
 - It's as much about families, as well as individuals – Families and extended families also need support as they age in their long-term roles as caregivers and emotional and financial supporters.
 - Relationships are key – Supporting existing caregiver and extended family relationships and expanding personal support networks are critical to ensuring aging individuals have people in their lives who love them and can safeguard their well-being.
 - Responsive and proactive planning is essential – Flexible and timely service responses and age-appropriate planning that are collaborative, values based and rooted in best practices are needed to avoid crisis situations.
- Currently, planning for aging individuals and their families is not delivered in a consistent way across the province, but on an individual-by-individual basis.
- CLBC staff work with service providers, home share providers, Health Services for Community Living nurses (employed with health authorities), family members and adults who are aging to explore and develop supports that address their changing needs. The 'Strategy on Aging' will help shape a more consistent provincial approach and support broader provincial partnerships with key community and government organizations.
- In addition, as part of the deputy ministers' review, CLBC and the Ministry of Health are responding to recommendation #9 by working on a joint three-year plan to support aging adults. This plan will reflect much of the feedback that CLBC gathered in its consultations and is anticipated to be completed in the summer/fall of 2013.
- Recommendation #9 states: CLBC and the Ministry of Health will "assess and model needs of (an) older cohort of individuals with developmental disabilities and develop a three-year plan to meet those needs and ensure early planning with families."

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
DISABILITY SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Community Living BC 2012/13 Annual Report

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

- Issues of note from the Annual Report
 - The report is entitled “Putting People First”, which is intended to reflect CLBC’s efforts over the past fiscal year at ensuring that the people they serve are their first priority in decision-making.
 - Key themes include increased engagement with individuals and their families; the new Community Employment Action Plan; and the commitment to working with the ministry regarding the development of a “one government” approach to the delivery of services to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.
 - CLBC’s work relative to the Deputy Ministers’ 12 Point Plan is also highly profiled throughout the document.
 - A key indicator of service excellence – “individuals and families feel well supported by their service providers” – continued a three-year declining trend, albeit last year only from 75% to 74%.
 - However, three measures of organizational responsiveness improved over 2011/12 by significant amounts:
 - “Individuals and families who feel their concerns were listened to” increased from 70% to 74%;

- “Individuals and families who feel their concerns were addressed in a timely manner” increased from 63% to 70%; and
 - “Individuals and families who feel they were provided with useful referrals and resources” increased from 63% to 68%.
- Each of those improvements also represent a reversal of two year declining trends.
 - In 2012/13 CLBC provided new or enhanced services to nearly 50% more individuals over the previous year, and a further 24% more individuals were eligible for Personalised Supports Initiative (PSI) services than in 2011/12.

BUDGET:

Statement of Operations						
\$ millions	2011/12 Actual	2012/13 Budget	2012/13 Forecast	2013/14 Budget	2014/15 Plan	2015/16 Plan
Revenue						
Operating Contributions from the Province ¹	687.5	730.1	730.1	739.3	747.2	747.7
Cost Sharing Agreements with Health Authorities	12.5	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0
Interest and Other Income	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
Amortization of Capital Grants	2.6	3.8	3.1	3.2	3.5	3.8
Total Revenue	703.8	748.1	747.4	756.7	764.9	765.7
Expenses						
Contracted Services						
Developmental Disabilities Program	643.8	678.5	681.2	688.2	694.8	695.4
Personalized Supports Initiative	6.0	10.0	10.2	9.6	9.6	9.6
Provincial Services	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.7
Regional Operations and Administration	46.2	50.8	48.0	50.8	52.2	52.2
Amortization of Tangible Capital Assets	3.1	4.1	3.4	3.4	3.6	3.8
Total Expenses	703.8	748.1	747.4	756.7	764.9	765.7
Annual Surplus/ (Deficit)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Accumulated Surplus	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7
Total Debt	0.2	0.1	0.1	-	-	-
Capital Expenditures	3.8	3.5	3.8	3.5	3.6	3.1

Note 1 Operating Contributions from the Province exclude contributions restricted for capital purposes

STATISTICS:

CLBC is responsible for funding supports and services that meet the disability-related needs of eligible adults and their families. As of March 31, 2013:

- 15,055 adults with a developmental disability were registered for service with CLBC:
 - 5,683 were receiving residential and community inclusion services;
 - 805 were receiving support for independent living and community inclusion services; and

- The majority of the remaining 8,567 adults and families were receiving community inclusion services and respite, or other CLBC services such as assistance to develop a support plan.
- 513 adults with FASD or ASD were registered with CLBC under the PSI:
 - 87 were receiving shared living and community inclusion services;
 - 85 were receiving supports for independent living and community inclusion; and
 - 341 were receiving community inclusion services or other CLBC services such as planning assistance.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: BC CEO Network and Community Living Agencies Network

KEY MESSAGES:

BC CEO NETWORK AND COMMUNITY LIVING AGENCIES NETWORK

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BACKGROUND:

- The BC CEO Network represents 80% of CLBC's business, with representation from over 70 CEOs from the social service sector, primarily unionized providers. The network represents private and non-profit agencies, both large and small, from around the province.
- A Guiding Principles for Working Together agreement signed April 13, 2010 by CLBC, the BC CEO Network and the Community Living Agencies Network (CLAN has since merged with the BC CEO Network) sets out a collaborative process to move the sector forward in a sustainable manner. CLBC and these two groups negotiated a comprehensive framework describing expectations for both CLBC and service providers.

- In 2011/12, the three groups reached a series of agreements about how they work together in a collaborative process. They meet regularly to discuss matters of mutual interest.
- In 2012/13, agreement was reached on the implementation of the service level reporting requirements and the recovery of funds related to undelivered service.
- Preliminary agreement has been reached on the changes in cost factors in the two years since the inception of the agreement.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Community Living BC Budget

KEY MESSAGES:

COMMUNITY LIVING BC BUDGET

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June 24, 2013

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BUDGET:**CLBC – Operating Revenue and Expenditures 2011/12 to 2013/14
from Service Plan**

<i>All figures in millions</i>	2011/12 Actual	2012/13 Budget	2013/14 Budget
Revenues			
Operating Contributions ¹	\$687.5	\$730.1	\$739.3
Other revenue ²	\$16.3	\$18.0	\$17.4
Total Revenues	\$703.8	\$748.1	\$756.7
Expenditures			
Contracted services (DD)	\$643.8	\$678.5	\$ 688.2
Contracted services (PSI)	\$6.0	\$10.0	\$9.6
Provincial Services	\$4.7	\$4.7	\$4.7
Regional operations and administration	\$46.2	\$50.8	\$50.8
Capital asset amortization	\$3.1	\$4.1	\$3.4
Total Expenditures	\$703.8	\$748.1	\$756.7
Net Income (loss)	-	-	-

Note 1: See following table for further detail

Note 2: Other revenue includes recoveries from Health Authorities, interest and amortization of capital grants.

CLBC – Contributions from the Province 2011/12 to 2013/14

<i>All figures in millions</i>	2011/12 Actual	2012/13 Budget	2013/14 Budget
Voted Appropriation			
Base Funding ¹	\$673.6	\$698.5	\$698.5
Personalized Supports Initiative	\$7.4	\$10.3	\$10.3
Youth Transition & Employment ²	-	\$10.0	\$20.0
	\$681.0	\$718.8	\$728.8
Access to Contingencies			
MPP Funding	\$7.7	-	-
Caseload Growth	\$6.0	\$12.0	\$12.0

Total Government Transfers	\$694.7	\$730.8	\$740.8
Restricted Contributions - Operating	\$(2.4)	\$1.3	\$0.5
Restricted Contributions - Capital	\$(4.8)	\$(2.0)	\$(2.0)
Operating Contributions	\$687.5	\$730.1	\$739.3

Note 1: Beginning in 2012/13, base funding includes \$17.8 million to address the annualized cost of services implemented in 2011/12, and \$10 million for ongoing Municipal Pension Plan costs.

Note 2: Funding for Youth Transition and Employment will increase to \$30 million in 2014/15 and will be provided to SDSI who will work with CLBC and other Ministries to develop youth transition, employment and other services.

Note 3: Utilization of \$0.5 million in deferred funds is indicated for 2013/14, as this reflects the amount anticipated when the original Service Plan was completed, however current Budget Planning for 2013/14 allows for utilization of \$6.2 million in deferrals made available through underutilization in 2012/13.

STATISTICS:

CLBC – Caseload

Individuals Registered for Service	March 31, 2012 Actual	March 31, 2013 Actual	March 31, 2014 Projected
Developmental Disabilities Program	14,241	15,055	15,799
Personalized Supports Initiative	341	513	690

BACKGROUND:

- In Budget 2012, CLBC's Base Operating Contributions were increased \$17.8 annually to allow for continuation of services put in place in 2010/11, along with \$10 million annually replacing the funding provided through contingency for MPP implementation
- Another \$10 million for 2012/13 rising to \$20 million in 2013/14 and \$30 million in 2014/15 was also approved at that time, to address the needs of transitioning youth and to further develop employment and related supports, bringing the total Voted Appropriation for 2012/13 to \$718.8 million, a \$37.8 million increase over 2011/12.
- Access to contingency was also approved in Budget 2012 at \$12 million annually.
- No further funding was approved in Budget 2013, so the Voted Appropriation for 2013/14 is shown as \$728.8 million, a \$10 million increase from 2012/13.
- CLBC's service demand continues to be primarily driven by both caseload growth, which is well ahead of general population growth, and by the aging (and related increasing care needs) of both the individuals and their families and caregivers
- Supports provided to individuals and their families through contractual arrangements with service providers across the province represent ongoing commitments of financial resources. When supports are introduced partway through a fiscal year, the ongoing annualized cost in the following year is higher.

- CLBC monitors budgetary commitments on a continuous basis, and works with service providers to ensure that supports provided are appropriate to each person's disability-related needs and are delivered in cost-effective ways.
- CLBC's service delivery model supports local decision-making aimed at creating flexible supports and services.
- There are a variety of formal, paid supports available to the adults CLBC serves such as residential services, community inclusion activities, family support services, and professional support services.

Budget Planning for 2013/14

- CLBC has proceeded with budget planning based on government's direction to continue addressing service demand in a measured and responsible manner consistent with 2012/13.
- However, only a \$10 million increase in funding for 2013/14 is reflected in the revised service plan and, therefore, budgeted expenditures for both programs for people with developmental disabilities and the PSI are also shown within the limits of available funding, and do not fully reflect anticipated costs.
- Funding needed to continue services implemented in 2012/13 and to address 2013/14 service demand for people with developmental disabilities and the PSI is outlined below and has been acknowledged by SDSI.
 - In addition to the \$10 million funding increase for 2013/14 shown in the revised service plan, another \$12 million in annual and ongoing funding will be required for continuation of services implemented in 2012/13.
 - \$23.5 million of additional annual funding will be required in 2013/14 to address new service commitments within the year.
 - New services put in place in fiscal 2013/14 will result in an estimated ongoing annualized cost of \$46.5 million in fiscal 2014/15.
 - The budget impacts to CLBC of the ministry's integrated service delivery model is not yet known and therefore not reflected in the above figures.
- In summary, the funding required is as follows:
 - An additional \$35.5 million annually effective in 2013/14 (\$12 M plus \$23.5 M) and
 - Another \$23 million ongoing annually effective in 2014/15 to cover incremental annualizing costs of new services put in place in 2013/14 (\$46.5 M less \$23.5 M).

Utilization of Deferred Funds in 2013/14

- The revised service plan reflects the utilization of \$0.5 million in one-time funding available due to deferral from prior periods (see *Contributions* table on page 3) . However, CLBC was able to defer sufficient funds in 2012/13 to make \$6.2 million available for use in 2013/14.
- This is not reflected above because the original service plan was completed prior to the 2012/13 yearend so the actual amount was not known. The significant difference

between the estimate and the actual is partly due to additional funding being made available to CLBC late in the year (\$3.6 million of the youth transition and employment funding).

- In the revised service plan, the only financial information that we were able to update was the actual results for 2012/13. The 2013/14 budget information remains as originally presented.
- The calculation of funding requirements above has taken into account this \$6.2 million that will be available in 2013/14 but not in 2014/15. This means the funding requirement for 2013/14 is \$6.2 M lower than it would otherwise have been. Conversely, with the loss of the \$6.2 M in 2014/15, the incremental cost to be added in 2014/15 is higher than it would otherwise have been.
- The net impact of the availability of the deferral is that it moves \$6.2 million of the cost pressure from 2013/14 to 2014/15.

Service Implementation 2013/14

- In 2013/14, CLBC is planning to provide new services and supports to over 2,200 individuals with developmental disabilities, costing \$31.7 million in the fiscal year and \$47.9 million annually.
- Another 250 individuals will receive new services and supports through the PSI with a fiscal cost of about \$4 million and an annual and ongoing cost of \$6 million.
- As noted above, these costs are not fully reflected in the 2013/14 budget as presented here.

Personalized Supports Initiative (PSI)

- \$10.3 million of the ministry's annual operating contributions to CLBC are directed to this program, which was implemented in February 2010.
- Effective in 2013/14, this funding has been fully utilized and, therefore, the funding shortfall identified above includes allowance for continuing existing services and addressing new service demand for both PSI and DD. As of March 31, 2013, 513 adults have been confirmed eligible and are receiving supports and service through the PSI, this number is up from 341 at March 31, 2012 and expected to reach 690 by March 31, 2014 .
- Services include supported living, home sharing, community inclusion, respite and homemaker services.

Individualized Funding

- CLBC services include supports to help families care for individuals in their family home. Families may receive supports through contracted services or through Individualized Funding to purchase services themselves. CLBC has increased the number of families using individualized funding options to 393 in 2012/13, up from 314 last year.

- Individualized Funding is a payment mechanism that is available through two options: Host Agency Funding and Direct Funding.
- Host Agency Funding allows individuals or families to select a CLBC approved Host Agency to administer the money allocated to them and to assist them with arranging and managing the supports that they require. This option provides individual and families with the benefits of Individualized Funding but with less responsibility for paper-work and record-keeping.
- Direct Funding is when money is paid directly by CLBC to an agent, usually a family member, for the purchase of supports and services.
- Individualized Funding enables people with disabilities to use the money allocated to them by CLBC to make individual choices about how the supports and services are provided. It gives individuals more control over the decisions that affect their lives.
- Individualized Funding provides individuals and families with flexible, person-centered, self-directed payment options for arranging, managing, and paying for supports and services.

Provincial Assessment Centre

- The Provincial Assessment Centre, operated by CLBC is a 10-bed tertiary designated Mental Health Facility.
- The Provincial Assessment Centre provides multi-disciplinary assessments, diagnosis, medication reviews and recommendations for individuals aged 14 and over experiencing mental illness and/or other severe behaviour challenges.
- Since 2005, the Provincial Assessment Centre has served 211 individuals.

Family Independence Fund

- The Family Independence Fund was created by Vancouver Foundation as a result of a \$30 million provincial government donation made through CLBC. The ministry gave the Vancouver Foundation's Giving in Action Society \$2 million in new funding this March for one-time grants to families with children or adults with developmental disabilities.
- The Family Independence Fund helps families buy equipment, convert vehicles and renovate homes so family members with developmental disabilities can remain at home and gain greater access to their communities.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #28** - CLBC – The Personalized Supports Initiative

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Collective Bargaining 2013

KEY MESSAGES:

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING 2013

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BACKGROUND:

- Collective agreements for CLBC's unionized service providers and CLBC unionized employees expired in March 2012.
- CLBC has 353 employees who belong to the B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union, and at the Provincial Assessment Centre there are 11 employees who are members of the Union of Psychiatric Nurses of B.C. and three employees who are members of the BC Nurses' Union.
- Wage increases of 1% are effective on April 1, 2012, Aug. 15, 2012, April 1, 2013 and Dec. 1, 2013.

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Contact: Doug Woollard, Interim Chief Executive Officer, CLBC
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Date: June 21, 2013

- Service providers are represented by the Community Social Services Employers' Association, and their unionized employees are represented by the Community Social Services Bargaining Association of Unions.
- On April 22, 2013, employers represented by the Community Social Services Employers' Association (CSSEA) and unionized employees represented by the Community Social Services Bargaining Association (CSSBA) announced that they had ratified two-year agreements reached on Mar. 2, 2013 with the General Services and Community Living Services groups.
- CSSEA represents approximately 220 social service organizations collectively employing approximately 15,000 people across B.C., about 11,700 of which are unionized employees in the sector. These organizations have contracts with multiple government ministries, including the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation and CLBC.
- Highlights of their agreements include:
 - Modest wage increases of 1.5% on April 1, 2013 and Jan. 1, 2014 funded from savings found within existing budgets and net-zero trade-offs, as required by the 2012 Cooperative Gains Mandate.
 - Other targeted adjustments to address labour market issues, funded through the Savings Plan and net-zero trade-offs.
 - Harmonization of benefits.
 - Renewal of a memorandum on Continuity of Service.
- Savings for modest wage increases, under the Cooperative Gains Mandate, will be found within existing budgets, with no impact to services.
- Employer agencies are anticipating direction from government regarding how wage increases and funding pressures will be addressed through Cooperative Gains.
- Furthermore, additional agencies, which are not represented by CSSEA, also hold service contracts in the community social services sector. In many cases, these agencies provide services that are the same as or similar to those provided by CSSEA agencies.
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MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Conflict of Interest

KEY MESSAGES:

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

BACKGROUND:

- As part of the 2011 Ministry of Finance's Internal Audit Branch review, 13 CLBC employees were found to have contracts to provide CLBC funded services to adults with developmental disabilities, which by definition were conflicts of interest.
- While CLBC has policies and procedures in place to manage conflicts of interest, the internal audit review found that those controls were not consistently followed or enforced.

- CLBC accepted the risks associated with conflict of interest activities (e.g., by allowing employees to hold contracts), for two reasons:
 - CLBC wanted to preserve the continuity-of-care for persons with developmental disabilities who were receiving home sharing services from these employees before they were hired by CLBC.
 - CLBC employs people who have specialized knowledge and expertise in the developmental disabilities field. Consequently, they have the skill sets needed to care for adults with developmental disabilities.
- The 13 employees who hold contracts to provide CLBC funded services either contract directly with CLBC, subcontract through CLBC-funded service providers or are also employed with CLBC-funded service providers but have responsibilities at CLBC that do not allow them to influence contracting decisions..They are in a variety of management and unionized positions and hold contracts of under \$60,000, with many being for a lesser amount.
- The interim chief executive officer has reviewed the situations of all 13 employees with the director of human resources and ensures mitigation strategies are in place to eliminate any conflict of interest.
- Since the internal audit, CLBC has revised its conflict of interest policy, and staff training to strengthen accountability and service quality and ensure that conflicts, or perceived conflicts, are resolved.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Contracted Services Reviews

KEY MESSAGES:

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CONTRACTED SERVICES REVIEWS

BACKGROUND:

- Since 2010/11, CLBC has been focused on working collaboratively with service providers to identify ways to effectively manage our resources and ensure our system of supports is sustainable for individuals with developmental disabilities.
- As of August 2012, CLBC delivered services through more than 3,400 families and service providers, including :
 - 1,180 direct contracted home share providers
 - 1,230 families (direct funding)
 - 300 person-centred societies
 - 432 individual contractors and partnerships

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Date: June 21, 2013

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- 154 non-profit societies
- 156 for profit corporations
- 156 service provider contracts were valued at over \$500,000; 272 at between \$100,000 and \$500,000; and 3,033 under \$100,000.
- 142 unionized providers received 66% of contract funding - \$427 million.
- 136 service providers were accredited.
- As of March 31, 2013, the number of families and service providers was approximately 3,300, who provided services through approximately 5,600 contracts with CLBC.
- The number of adults with development disabilities coming to CLBC for service and supports continues to grow at a higher rate than the overall provincial population. The number of adults registered with CLBC for service has grown by close to 6% annually over the last four years with the majority of the individuals who request service are between the ages of 19 to 23.
- Increased service demand is managed through a range of options including reviewing existing contracts to assess service levels and responding to families' requests for services which achieve more person-centred and cost effective approaches.
- In order to ensure an equitable approach to the allocation of services, CLBC developed a Guide to Support Allocation for staff to use to understand an individual's disability-related needs and to determine the required level of service.
- Having an equitable, standardized approach that defines levels of service based on disability-related need is a methodology used in many jurisdictions supporting people with developmental disabilities.

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CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #26** – CLBC – Staff Residential (Group Homes)

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
SERVICES TO ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Deputy Ministers' Review of CLBC – Update on the 12 point plan

KEY MESSAGES:

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DEPUTY MINISTER'S REVIEW OF CLBC –
UPDATE ON THE 12 POINT PLAN

BACKGROUND:

- Prior to 2010, there were concerns expressed by the community living sector, individuals with developmental disabilities, and families, regarding services delivered to adults with developmental disabilities.
- In response, the government requested an internal audit and external reviews to be completed (e.g. the Queenswood Report); these reports are available on the government website.
- In December 2011, the Deputy Ministers' Review of Community Living BC, *Improving Services to People with Developmental Disabilities*, was issued providing 12 recommendations for moving forward.
- To address the recommendations, the Deputy Ministers established the Services to Adults with Developmental Disabilities (STADD) Assistant Deputy Ministers Steering Committee, with membership consisting of all of the government ministries and

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Date: June 17, 2013

organizations providing services and supports to individuals with developmental disabilities.

- The overarching mandate of STADD is to implement the 12 recommendations in the Deputy Ministers' Review. Taken together, these 12 recommendations directed the ministries to develop an integrated service delivery model that reflects a one-government approach which will better support individuals with developmental disabilities throughout their lifespan and across service systems, particularly through periods of transition.
- STADD has undertaken significant consultation in order to deliver on the 12 point plan, including:
 - Consultations with individuals with developmental disabilities (self-advocates);
 - Workshops with experts, practitioners, service providers and family members;
 - Cross-ministry workshops;
 - Open community engagement session in 14 communities across the province;
 - A province-wide Reference Group which has provided advice throughout the project; and,
 - Focused consultations with families modelling the integrated service delivery model.
- STADD has made good progress on addressing the recommendations and has developed a new integrated service delivery model based on its engagement processes and inter-ministry work.
- On April 9, 2013, then Minister of Social Development, the Honourable Dr. Moira Stilwell, announced progress on the 12-point plan, including:
 - A streamlined process for youth transition to Persons with Disability (PWD) designation, to be implemented July 8, 2013;
 - An integrated service delivery model, to be implemented through five Early Implementation Sites (EIS) in the Fall 2013 to test, refine, evaluate and finalize the model prior to full implementation; and,
 - As part of the EIS, the introduction of a "navigator" who can act as a single contact and help co-ordinate planning for and access to the range of services and supports available.

BUDGET:

Budget Centre	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14 Budget
	Budget	Expenditures	Budget	Expenditures	
STADD	N/A	N/A	\$2.86M	\$1.36M	\$3.77M

Data Source: MSD

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note 14** – Deputy Minister's Review of CLBC – Early Implementation Sites

12 Point Plan: Summary of Activities to Date (June 2013)

Recommendations	Status	Comments
1. Develop a coherent "one government" policy framework for persons with developmental disabilities.		Services to Adults with Developmental Disabilities Steering Committee established. Integrated Services Support Team (ISST) developed and implemented June 13, 2012. - Website, toll-free line and email address operational. Review and Analysis of Integrated Models and Design Options: May – July 2012. - Map Transitional Protocol - Develop options for consideration in workshops Workshop on High Level Service Delivery Model: July 24 and 25, 2012. Follow Up Workshop on High Level Service Delivery Model: Sept 21, 2012 Develop Service Delivery Model: Aug – Nov 2012. Community Engagement on Service Delivery Design: Oct-Nov 2012. Developed the framework for the proposed model based on this feedback. Model released publicly April 2013.
2. Implement a more consistent assessment platform across the Ministries of Children and Family Development, Health, Education, and Social Development, along with CLBC, to ensure consistency and clarity of needs assessment and planning for individuals and their families.		Research and development initiated on common assessment platform. Develop Assessment Platform: May – Dec 2012 - Assessment Platform Working Group established May-Dec 2012. - Develop Assessment Prototype: May – July 2012 for Fall Consultation - Develop Assessment Platform structure- April 2013 July 8 implementation of PWD application streamlining: Using CLBC diagnosis as PWD eligibility. Mar. 21, 2013-IN: <i>Youth Transition Protocol (YTP) Review and Next Steps</i> approved by MSD and MCFD DMO. Platform to be tested in early implementation sites.

Recommendations	Status	Comments
3. Use a coherent and integrated system to track demand, wait times and service delivery across relevant ministries and CLBC.		Integrated Services Support Team (ISST) developed and implemented June 13, 2012. Revised process for CLBC forecasting and use of Request for Service (RFS) list. Review and Analysis of Integrated Models and Design Options: May – July 2012 • Map Transitional Protocol • Developed options for consideration in workshops Workshop on High Level Service Delivery Model: July 24 and 25, 2012. Follow Up Workshop on High Level Service Delivery Model: Sept 21, 2012 Develop Service Delivery Model: Aug – Nov 2012. Community Engagement on Service Delivery Design: Oct-Nov 2012.
4. Improve cross-government planning for individuals who are transitioning through different types of care, to reduce stress on them and on their families.		Assessment platform and service delivery mechanisms incorporated into work plan of steering committee. Extension of the mandate for the Representative for Children and Youth – to be implemented in Fall 2013 Workshop on High Level Service Delivery Model: July 24 and 25, 2012. Follow Up Workshop on High Level Service Delivery Model: Sept 21, 2012 Community Engagement on Service Delivery Design: Oct-Nov 2012. Engagement with CLBC and MOH to develop strategies to enhance resource allocation and joint decision-making Proposed integrated service delivery model developed, with an initial implementation strategy, to improve cross-government planning and provide better access to services and supports. • Proposed model includes early planning, integrated assessments, and strengthening supports during periods of transition including the 16-24 year-old age cohort as well as transitions older adults face associated with aging. • Role of Navigator within the new model introduced and agreed to by inter-ministry committee. Simplifying the Persons with Disabilities (PWD) designation process for youth eligible for CLBC supports – in collaboration with the ministry of Children and Family Development and Education.

Recommendations	Status	Comments
5. Maintain CLBC as a Crown Agency. Implement changes to address mandate tension created by generational change, and improve approach to and relationship with families and individuals.		CLBC is maintaining its current mandate. Any future changes will reflect government direction flowing from the work of the steering committee. Stakeholder Engagement ongoing throughout project • Document ongoing Stakeholder Engagement of individuals with developmental disabilities, their families, and their advocates. • ISST Website ongoing updates • Reference Group established • Self Advocate Engagement: June 2012 • Workshop on High Level Service Delivery Model: July 24 and 25, 2012. • Follow Up Workshop on High Level Service Delivery Model: Sept 21, 2012 • Community Engagement on Service Delivery Design: Oct-Nov 2012. Develop Service Delivery Model: Aug – Nov 2012. Governance and Accountability Structure is part of the overall work plan. Better collaboration and planning with families and CLBC to ensure services provided are responsive to the needs of each individual and family.
6. Implement new government capacity focused on transition supports.		Steering committee focusing on transitions-planning and supports. CLBC implemented a minimum of \$2,800 per person respite for all transitioning youth. Integrated Services Support Team (ISST) developed and implemented June 13, 2012. ISST replaced CST. • Website, toll-free line and email address operational.
7. Increase employment services planning and supports, as well as alternative day programming options.		Generic customized employment services will be enhanced to specifically reflect requirements of adults with developmental disabilities in 2012/2013 based on work of the customized employment demonstration project. CLBC Sponsored Work Around Employment Strategy. CLBC Community Action Employment Plan Summit: Oct 22, 23, 2012 Overview of CLBC Employment Action Plan Session: May 1, 2013 WorkBC and CLBC working together to find ways to improve employment services and supports.

Recommendations	Status	Comments
8. Support greater utilization of individualized funding.		Will ensure that IF continues to be a service payment option for individuals and their families. Workshops on High Level Service Delivery Model: July 24 and 25, 2012. Follow Up Workshop on High Level Service Delivery Model: Sept 21, 2012
9. CLBC and Ministry of Health to assess and model needs of the older cohort of individuals with developmental disabilities and develop a three-year plan to meet those needs and ensure early planning with families.		Paula Grant, Carol Goozh, Jane Holland, Leigh Ann Seller, Betty Weber, Deborah Andersen, and Kimberly Azyan confirmed as a formal sub-committee. Ageing Strategy consultation for STADD, CLBC, MOH, and UBC representatives held Dec. 3 in Vancouver. Background work complete based on documents: research in Alberta and other jurisdictions; CLBC's 'Aging Strategy'; consultation with UBC- School of Nursing. Mar. 26, 2013-Draft <i>Three Year Strategic Plan for Older Adults with Developmental Disabilities</i> presented and discussed at STADD Steering Committee meeting. MoH continuing work on the strategy in collaboration with CLBC. Ministry of Health and CLBC provided an outline of the plan at the June 7th Steering Committee and will bring the plan back to the Steering Committee – this item will move to yellow after this status report
10.Reinforce government's accountability and responsibility for CLBC through more effective use of legislative authorities.		Review mechanism through ISST. The Office of the Advocate for Quality Services will continue with current mandate. Governance and Accountability Structure is part of the overall work plan.
11.Carefully increase funding to support these changes, and link new funding to clearly identified outcomes.		MSD will continue with CLBC to align budget requests with projected need. MSD Information Bulletin identifies funding and outcomes. Any changes to funding will be post this.

Recommendations	Status	Comments
12.Support ongoing innovation in the sector, and recognize and support the innovations developed, championed and undertaken by families and individuals.		Family and service provider representatives continue to meet to develop innovative responses to reconcile increasing demand with limited resources. A design team subset of the group has been identified to identify a longer term mechanism which would facilitate ongoing dialogue and innovation development. Housing solutions are an area of immediate focus. Ongoing 'Mapping the Journey' meetings have been well attended.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
SERVICES TO ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Deputy Ministers' Review of CLBC – Early Implementation Sites

KEY MESSAGES:

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**DEPUTY MINISTERS' REVIEW OF CLBC –
EARLY IMPLEMENTATION SITES**

BACKGROUND:

- Prior to 2010, there were concerns expressed by the community living sector, individuals with developmental disabilities, and families, regarding services delivered to adults with developmental disabilities.
- In response, the government requested an internal audit and external reviews to be completed (e.g. the Queenswood Report); these reports are available on the government website.

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- On Jan. 19, 2012, the Deputy Ministers' Review of Community Living BC, *Improving Services to People with Developmental Disabilities*, was released providing 12 recommendations for moving forward.
- To address the recommendations, the Deputy Ministers established the Services to Adults with Developmental Disabilities (STADD) Assistant Deputy Ministers Steering Committee, with membership consisting of all of the government ministries and organizations providing services and supports to individuals with developmental disabilities.
- STADD has made good progress on addressing the recommendations and has developed a new integrated service delivery model based on extensive community consultation.
- The service delivery model addresses the following Deputy Ministers' recommendations:
 - One-government policy framework for persons with developmental disabilities;
 - Improve cross-government planning in all transition phases including older individuals;
 - A system to track demand, wait times and service delivery across ministries and CLBC;
 - Consistent assessment platform across the Ministries of Children and Family Development, Health, Education and Social Development and Social Innovation, along with CLBC;
 - New government capacity focused on transition supports; and
 - Increase employment services planning and supports.
- This new model will be implemented, tested and refined in five early implementation sites in communities around the province. The early implementation sites were announced by then Minister Moira Stilwell in April 2013.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #13 – CLBC - Deputy Minister's Review of CLBC – Update on the 12 point plan**

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Publication of DSM V

KEY MESSAGES:

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PUBLICATION OF DSM V

BACKGROUND:

- The DSM is a standard classification of mental disorders used by mental health professionals. It contains descriptions, symptoms, and other criteria for diagnosing mental disorders.
- The 5th edition of the DSM was officially released on May 18th.
- The DSM-V will supersede the DSM-IV-TR, published in 1994, and revised in 2000.
- The ministry is obtaining a copy of the DSM-V and has not yet been able to review it, but a news release from the APA confirms a number of expected changes.

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- Diagnosis made under the DSM-IV-TR will continue to be valid. The DSM-V and its new terminology will begin to be used for assessments and diagnoses after the May 18, 2013 release date.

Changes in the DSM V

- Dr. Grace Iarocci, Director of the Autism and Developmental Disorders Lab at Simon Fraser University and an advisor to CLBC has reviewed the DSM-V and describes the following major related changes:

- A re-organization of several disorders under the new term "Neurodevelopmental Disorders". This includes clients with the newly defined "Autism Spectrum Disorder", an umbrella term which covers the spectrum of severity of autism disorders.
- The DSM-V removes a specific age limit from a diagnosis of developmental disorders. The DSM-IV-TR specified that the onset of these disorders must occur prior to the age of 18 years. The DSM-V replaces that age criterion in favour of the broader term "during the developmental period". This term could be interpreted differently by different practitioners. Now that the final language in the DSM-V is available,

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- Under the DSM-V, it is no longer necessary to have an overall adaptive functioning score 2 standard deviations below the mean. The criteria is now met when "at least one domain of functioning - conceptual, social, or practical - is sufficiently impaired that on-going support is needed".
- The DSM-V replaces the term "mental retardation" with "Intellectual Developmental Disorder". This change is anticipated to be well received by health care practitioners, individuals with developmental disorders and their advocates and the public.
- The DSM-V has removed Rett's Disorder from under the umbrella of autism. In discussions with CLBC and the Ministry of Children and Family Development, it was determined that there are very few cases of clients with Rett's Disorder in our caseloads, and those clients would continue to qualify for services due to the severity of their disabilities.

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BUDGET:

- Budget impacts are yet to be determined.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Executive Pay Structure

KEY MESSAGES:

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EXECUTIVE PAY STRUCTURE

BACKGROUND:

- Discussions about the appropriateness of salary holdbacks began when CLBC commissioned compensation studies from Western Compensation Benefits Consultants in November 2008 and in April 2010 from SEAB Solutions. Among options, Western and SEAB suggested rolling holdbacks into base salaries.
- The auditor general also reviewed executive compensation at Crown corporations in 2009 and, in June 2010, the Crown Corporation Employers' Association prepared an executive compensation framework.
- CLBC's Board agreed July 27, 2011 to seek government approval to integrate the variable pay into the base salary.
- The Public Sector Employers' Council (PSEC) supported the proposal, provided the ministry approved it, during a Sept. 1, 2011 meeting. PSEC noted the low amount of the holdback, along with CLBC's challenging goals and demanding workloads meant the holdback had been applied more as an 'entitlement' than 'reward.' Almost all excluded CLBC managers received their full holdbacks.
- PSEC suggested using a three-year average of the holdbacks to calculate the amount to include in base salaries.
- In October 2011, following media reports about the salary holdbacks, then Minister of Social Development Stephanie Cadieux requested that the holdback provision of CLBC's incentives-based compensation be eliminated and the board agreed.
- CLBC's new compensation plan was made retroactive to April 1, 2012. Excluded managers receive their full base salary, prorated over 12 months, with no performance-based holdback.

- The former at-risk incentives model was based on a structure proposed by the Ministry of Children and Family Development and approved by PSEC in 2005. It had three components: base salary; at-risk incentive payments, which consisted of holdbacks that were part of the base salary and were tied to performance targets; and benefits. Under this plan, excluded managers and directors had up to 5 % and vice-presidents up to 10 % of their salary held back until their annual performance review at end of fiscal year.
- The holdback amount was based on achieving CLBC's operational goals, included in managers' performance plans but, in practice, almost all managers received their full holdbacks.
- Among considerations that led to including the former holdback in base salaries was a Nov. 3, 2011 CLBC briefing note, discussed at the CLBC board's governance and human resources committee Nov. 23, 2011, that notes a legal opinion Nov. 4, 2011 from Harris and Company suggested eliminating variable pay without serving proper notice to impacted employees could constitute 'constructive dismissal.' Harris and Co. recommended a minimum of seven months notice to mitigate concerns had CLBC breached an essential term of the employment contract. CLBC recommended to the committee that an equivalent amount of variable pay be integrated into salaries, pension and benefits, while suggesting the board seek independent advice.

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MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Funding Guide

KEY MESSAGES:

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FUNDING GUIDE

BACKGROUND:

- The funding guide is intended to:
 - ensure that service providers have funding to meet reasonable costs associated with contracted services;
 - ensure that the cost to CLBC is predictable and appropriate;
 - ensure that service providers are free to manage within their contractual obligations;
 - ensure that the risk of loss through inefficiency is borne by the service provider;
 - minimize variances in funding for comparable services throughout the province; and
 - reduce the amount of time and effort required to analyze and negotiate contracts.
- The Funding Guide Policy is part of a suite of policies and tools that support the implementation of CLBC's overall contracting framework.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- Note #8 - BC CEO Network and Community Living Agencies Network

KEY MESSAGES:

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GUIDE TO SUPPORT ALLOCATION

- CLBC uses the Guide to Support Allocation (GSA) to help assess the disability-related need of an individual. It is part of CLBC's resource allocation process and is used in conjunction with a suite of other tools – the Catalogue of Service and the Resource Allocation Schedule and priority tool – to determine the amount, type and timing of service delivery. Understanding how decisions are made about the amount, type and timing of services they are likely to receive is important to ensuring individuals and families are communicated with in a transparent manner.
- CLBC reviewed research and practice in other jurisdictions to establish an assessment tool to measure disability-related needs and support service provision decisions. As a result of this review, CLBC adapted a standardized tool in use in the United Kingdom. The draft GSA was introduced in 2007.

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- The GSA was tested for reliability in 2008 and 2010 and, based on the results of these tests, the GSA was improved and retested to strengthen its reliability.
- The GSA has not gone through the validity testing associated with more formal assessment instruments, such as the InterRAI used by Health Authorities.
- In December 2011, a demonstration project began on south Vancouver Island to have CLBC facilitators complete the GSA at a very early stage, working jointly with the individual and their family. This ensured that everyone understood the results of the assessment before the plan for services and supports was developed. Based on positive outcomes of the project,
- By March 2013, CLBC had implemented changes to the GSA process provincially in all but one area. This change addresses a recommendation in the 2009 Review of the CLBC Service Delivery Model by the Queenswood Consulting Group.
- Completing the GSA early in the process helps to manage expectations of individuals and families as to what supports they might be eligible for, as the results of the GSA are known early in the planning process.
- Communications materials are being developed for CLBC staff to assist them in understanding and explaining the GSA, and for individuals and families so that they can better understand how decisions are made about service provision.
- There have been challenges in applying the GSA. For example, there has been a misperception that going through the resource allocation process will result in a formula driven approach to resource allocation when, in fact, a number of factors are taken into consideration in determining amounts and types of services to be offered. Examples of these factors are the strength of natural supports available and extenuating complex care or mental health issues.
- In the past, there have also been situations where an individual was re-assessed using the GSA process and found to have a lower rating -- although there has been no noticeable change in their situation -- and, as a result, had a reduction in services or funding. In the last year, CLBC changed its process around the application of the GSA and accompanying resource allocation processes to be more inclusive of individual and family input, and more flexible in considering individual circumstances.
- Previously, CLBC's quality service analysts applied the GSA based on written materials forwarded by the facilitator, after the facilitator had planned the services and supports with the individual and family. This often resulted in a disconnect between family expectations for services and supports and what was offered once the GSA was applied.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #25** – Resource Allocation Schedule and Catalogue of Services

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Healthcare Benefit Trust

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

- A legal action against the Province and trustees of the Healthcare Benefit Trust has been launched in B.C. Supreme Court by member agencies who allege mismanagement at the not for profit trust has led to excessive financial penalties.

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- The Healthcare Benefit Trust is a not for profit organization that administers employee benefits to over 400 member organizations in acute health care, community care, community social services and other specialty health care services throughout B.C. and the Yukon.
- Member agencies pay money into a pool, which the trust then draws upon to pay off long-term disability claims and others.
- Healthcare Benefit Trust currently provides benefits for about 95,000 employees, including over 6,000 disabled employees (active long-term disability claims) as of March 31, 2013.

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HEALTHCARE BENEFIT TRUST

s.15, s.17

- The Healthcare Benefit Trust goes through a yearly actuarial valuation of the financial strength of the plan to ensure assets are between 95% and 105% of outstanding liabilities. Any valuation outside of this range results in an adjustment to the liability. When the cost of claims to the trust exceeds the money in the pool, the deficit is booked in the trust's financial accounts as an unfunded liability.
- Participating employers must sign an agreement with the Healthcare Benefit Trust before their employees are eligible for the health and welfare benefit plan. Since it is a volunteer benefits trust, members can choose to withdraw from the trust to seek benefits coverage elsewhere. At the time of entering Healthcare Benefit Trust, employers agree to fund their portion of any deficit when they terminate their membership. Agencies are, therefore, responsible for paying 'exit levies' in relation to their share of the trust's existing unfunded liabilities at that time.
- The process of collecting exit levies is designed to be a transparent way to protect the disability benefits of the Healthcare Benefit Trust's remaining members and the integrity of the trust.
- During fiscal 2012/13, then Ministry of Social Development led a Request for Proposal process to test the market to ensure the current benefit model and provider is still the most effective and cost competitive. Other public sector employers (e.g. government/Public Service Agency) do not use a trust or pooled arrangement and simply pay as an ongoing expenditure.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #68** – Healthcare Benefit Trust, SDSI

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Interim Report

KEY MESSAGES:

INTERIM REPORT

s.13

Contact: Doug Woollard, Interim Chief Executive Officer, CLBC
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Date: June 21, 2013

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BACKGROUND:

- CLBC faced considerable criticism during 2011 that it had lost sight of its core values and created stress and anxiety for individuals and their families as a result of service changes that included the closures of staffed residential (group) homes.
- CLBC's CEO was terminated by the board Oct. 13, 2011. The interim report was an update on the Crown agency's current status and was prepared at the Minister's request by the Board Chair and Interim Chief Executive Officer.
- The report included immediate changes being made by the Interim Chief Executive Officer and outlined the Board's view of the longer-term changes envisioned for the organization to ensure individuals with developmental disabilities and their families are provided with the highest quality support possible.
- The interim report and the Minister's response are available on the ministry's website.
- CLBC's vision of 'good lives in welcoming communities' remains its principal goal and the organization continues to be committed to ensuring greater inclusion for adults with developmental disabilities through employment and appropriate supports based on innovative practice.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #23** – Queenswood Review
- **Note #26** – Staff Residential (Group Homes)

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Internal Audit Review of CLBC

KEY MESSAGES:

s.13

INTERNAL AUDIT REVIEW OF CLBC

BACKGROUND:

- The Internal Audit was launched in September 2011 by the Ministry of Finance to investigate Community Living BC's budget and management.
- The Internal Audit and the deputy ministers' review 'Improving Services to People with Developmental Disabilities' were released by Premier Clark and Minister of Social Development Stephanie Cadieux on Jan. 19, 2012. The deputy ministers'

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review is a comprehensive 12-point plan to address issues and concerns around CLBC and the government-wide system of supports for British Columbians with developmental disabilities.

- For the Internal Audit, auditors reviewed CLBC's caseload, request for service list, operating costs, cost pressures and other areas.
- The recommendations from the audit were:
 1. That the ministry and CLBC finalize the Accountability Framework and that it be reviewed regularly.
 2. That the ministry more effectively monitor CLBC's performance and service delivery.
 3. That the ministries responsible for providing services to individuals with developmental disabilities work together to harmonize the transition from youth to adult services to lessen the impact on clients and their families.
 4. That CLBC enhance its information system and business processes to:
 - provide more useful and reliable information to clearly identify current versus future service needs;
 - distinguish between assessed needs and client/family requests; and
 - link service needs to funding requirements.
 5. That CLBC needs to manage their conflict of interest management practices effectively by strengthening, enforcing and monitoring their policies and procedures.
- Recommendation #3 is significant because approximately two-thirds of new CLBC registrants are transitioning from children services to adult services.
- The request for services list (RFSL) was not intended to be a comprehensive list of individuals awaiting service needs and has not been used as a waitlist, however, there were data collection issues that needed to be addressed.
- The audit of the RFSL has resulted in recommendation #4 above, the full implementation of which will enable CLBC to clearly define outstanding service demand in a systematic manner.
- The review also found that overall, CLBC manages its funds well and its operating costs are reasonable. Cost efficiencies and recoveries realized within its existing budgets are used to provide services to their clients that the agency might otherwise have been unable to provide. Even though 93% of its expenditures are spent on providing services to their clients, demands for services exceed funding levels.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #13 – Deputy Ministers' Review of CLBC – 12 Point Plan**

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**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Municipal Pension Plan for Contracted Service Providers

KEY MESSAGES:

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BUDGET:

Municipal Pension Plan	2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Actual	2012/13 Budget	2013/14 Budget
Funding	\$9.1M	\$7.7M	\$10.0M	\$10.0M

Data Source: CLBC

MUNICIPAL PENSION PLAN FOR CONTRACTED SERVICE PROVIDERS

BACKGROUND:

- The Municipal Pension Plan (MPP) was negotiated through the collective bargaining process.
- The B.C. government provided \$9.1 million to CLBC in 2010/11 and \$7.6 million in 2011/12 from contingency funds to address the incremental costs of the implementation of MPP. The amount was lower in 2011/12 to reflect amounts recovered from agencies in that year for payments made to them in 2010/11 in excess of actual costs.
\$10 million was added to CLBC's base budget in 2012/13, being the estimated ongoing annual incremental costs.
- Now that implementation is in place, similar to other employee benefits, ongoing contribution rate increases and changes in participation mix will continue to create cost pressure for CLBC service providers.
- The estimated ongoing impact of cost pressure related to MPP over and above the funded implementation costs for 2013/14 is \$1.9 million annually. This is currently being accrued and will be funded through savings generated through other contract efficiencies.
- Actual payment of these increased pressures will be made to service providers through contract amendments in 2013/14, pending finalizing the cooperative gains strategy.
- The B.C. government committed to fund the incremental costs to employers of implementing the MPP for eligible employees, without reducing direct services to clients.
- CLBC continues to monitor the increasing cost of providing support and services through its service delivery network.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA – DISABILITIES SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Queenswood Review

KEY MESSAGES:

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QUEENSWOOD REVIEW

BACKGROUND:

- This review was commissioned by then Ministry of Social Development, CLBC's main funder, and the Ministry of Finance, with a mandate to look at three broad topics:
 1. The efficacy of CLBC's service delivery system and operations, with particular consideration of:
 - a. Caseload data and forecasting methodology;
 - b. The Request for Service List;
 - c. Efficiencies that CLBC has introduced as well as opportunities for additional efficiencies; and
 - d. Performance monitoring metrics;
 2. Progress made by CLBC in implementing 27 recommendations from a 2008 Queenswood review of its service delivery system; and

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Contact: Doug Woollard, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Community Living BC
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3. The wider service delivery system for people with developmental disabilities in B.C., through consideration of:
 - a. Service delivery systems and supports in selected comparator jurisdictions;
 - b. The range of services that are available through British Columbia's various government sources; and
 - c. Options for consideration in moving forward with improvements to the service delivery system.
- The overall objective of the review was to provide government with a sense of CLBC's progress on these key topics, and to present some wider context for the service delivery system that serves people with developmental disabilities in B.C. It was designed as a means of providing options for future consideration about CLBC's direction, rather than as a review that would result in clear recommendations for proceeding on the above matters.

Key Findings:

- **Caseload** – caseload growth has caused concern both within CLBC and among other stakeholders. Linking caseload projections to cost projections is challenging under the current service delivery model. Over time, it is likely that cost estimates will be more accurate, as CLBC has better data to draw on for an understanding of how individual-based need translates into financial support.
- **Request for Service List** - managing and communicating information about the list has been a challenge for CLBC. The agency's list is an important first step in trying to rationalize, prioritize, and provide services to the people that need them most in a context of budget restrictions. CLBC will work with the ministry to define clear expectations and work processes to capture the necessary information to manage and document service demand.
- **Efficiencies realized and anticipated** - CLBC has made significant progress in terms of identifying and capitalizing on potential efficiencies, including its contract review process resulting in the identification of \$24.87M in contract efficiencies (from April 2010 to Aug. 31, 2011). This has been re-invested in the organization, allowing CLBC to expand the reach of its services and address the needs of people on its Request for Service List even within its budget restrictions. This work will continue, as CLBC continues to implement its contract management system.
- **Performance Metrics** – CLBC has implemented significant improvements to its data system, performance measures and reporting capabilities since 2005. Overall performance metrics have been developed and implemented in five areas (service delivery, financial, innovation and communications, quality of life and safety, and human resources). As noted in the Queenswood Report, CLBC's annual client satisfaction survey has been in place since 2006 as a measure of personal outcomes, however, at the time of the report, CLBC was engaged in work to develop a more in-depth way of directly measuring quality of life outcomes. This work is continuing

under the Include Me! initiative, which measures personal outcomes through a 50-question quality of life questionnaire. Each ministry or agency that serves people with developmental disabilities appears to have its own performance measures. These inter-ministry metrics are not generally linked and there is an opportunity to improve alignments in order to more accurately measure need, service delivery options and most importantly, outcomes.

- **Progress on 2008 Recommendations** - CLBC has completed implementation of the vast majority of the 27 recommendations that were made in the 2008 review of its service delivery system, policy framework and tools, guardianship policies and procedures, and sustainability. Twenty-five of 27 recommendations are assessed as either complete (if the recommendation contemplated an action that was finite) or ongoing (if the recommendation was for a more ongoing, systemic action). Two recommendations still require attention or clarification.
- **Comparison with other jurisdictions** - The service delivery systems and levels of supports for people with developmental disabilities in B.C. was compared with Alberta, Ontario, Manitoba, Western Australia and New Zealand. The State of Washington was compared with respect to its employment programs. Overall B.C. provides a comparable range of individual and family support services, with a moderately high degree of funding per client served. B.C. also provides greater flexibility for a growing number of families through individualized funding models. B.C. spends less per capita on income and employment supports for people with disabilities than Alberta and Ontario (for very comparable results). While B.C. spends more per capita on individual and family supports, supports which typically help to enable inclusive societies, B.C. spent less than Alberta and Western Australia on residential supports for people with developmental disabilities.
- **Assessment tools** - Currently, the various ministries that provide services to people with developmental disabilities use different assessment tools. This is inefficient and inhibits a standardized comparison and understanding of individuals' needs over time and across service systems. Most of the comparator jurisdictions use some form of assessment to determine disability-related need and, in some cases, to link resource allocation to that need.
- **The Guide to Support Allocation**, developed and used by CLBC, presents some strong benefits, including a clear link to resource allocation and minimal implementation and operational costs.

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- **Services for people with developmental disabilities in B.C.** - The cost of serving people with developmental disabilities is an ongoing concern, for families, CLBC and government more broadly. One of the key questions is that of equity and comparability of services. A first step in bringing greater service level equity across

disability categories (so that services are based on need), is to identify how service levels differ. Consideration of this question is new, and obtaining the relevant data is challenging, but initial analysis suggests that CLBC clients are supported at a higher level than people who have similar disability challenges but who are not eligible for CLBC service.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #20** – Interim Report
- **Note #21** – Internal Audit Review of CLBC

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Recruitment of Community Living BC CEO

KEY MESSAGES:

s.13

RECRUITMENT OF COMMUNITY LIVING BC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Contact:
Cell phone:
Date:

Doug Woollard, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Community Living BC
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June 21, 2013

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BACKGROUND:

- Former CLBC Chief Executive Officer Rick Mowles was terminated by CLBC's board Oct. 13, 2011.
- Interim CEO Doug Woollard's base position is Vice President of Organisational Development.
- The CEO's salary holdback was eliminated in 2009/10, with 13.5% of the 15% holdback added to the CEO's base salary.
- CLBC eliminated its variable pay compensation system (or salary holdback) compensation plan for managers, directors and vice presidents effective April 1, 2012. PSEC approved the change April 13, 2012, agreeing to CLBC's plan to eliminate variable pay and add the average variable pay awarded to employees for the past three years into their base salaries, after deducting any resultant increase to pension contributions and salary-sensitive benefits.
- This resulted in salary, pension and benefit consideration costs of 9.66%, 4.96% and 4.93%. These amounts were added to employees' base salaries and were slightly less than the holdbacks paid under the variable pay plan (5% annually for managers and directors and 10% annually for vice-presidents).

CROSS REFERENCE:

Note #16 – Executive Pay Structure

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Request for Service List and Replacement

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

- CLBC is working with the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation to develop a new, more accurate inventory of demand for services that shows current and future needs, distinguishes between assessed need and family requests and links services and funding requirements.
- It will replace CLBC's Request for Service List, which was never designed to be used as a complete list of assessed needs or as a forecasting tool. Existing information systems also meant that data integrity could not be reliably maintained.
- The data quality issues were raised by the Ministry of Finance's Internal Audit Branch review in 2011. The CLBC Board Interim Report to the Minister also raised concerns, indicating that "the current request for service list is a useful tool for tracking requests, but is an inadequate tool for reporting information publicly."
- Improvements to information management systems will better allow tracking of current and future needs, distinguish between assessed need and family requests and also link services and funding requirements.

REQUESTS FOR SERVICE LIST AND REPLACEMENT

- As of March 31, 2013, 15,055 eligible individuals with developmental disabilities were registered for services with CLBC - a 5.7% increase compared to March 31, 2012 and a 32.6% increase over the last five years. This includes:
 - 2,441 in staffed residential resources;
 - 3,242 in shared living arrangements, including home sharing;
 - 805 receiving supports for independent living, to live in their own homes; and
 - 8,567 using planning assistance, family support or community inclusion services.
- The number of eligible adults with developmental disabilities is forecast to increase by 4.9% in 2013/14.
- Of the 15,055 eligible individuals, CLBC supports 513 individuals who are eligible for services through the Personalized Supports Initiative.
- Program services accounts for 93% of CLBC's operating budget.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #13** - Deputy Ministers' Review of CLBC – 12 point plan
- **Note #20** – Interim Report
- **Note #21** – Internal Audit Review of CLBC

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Resource Allocation Schedule and Catalogue of Services

KEY MESSAGES:

s.13

BACKGROUND:

- To ensure equitable use of funding, CLBC allocates resources for individuals based on the relationship between identified goals and current disability-related needs.
- This process begins by cross-referencing the individual's Guide to Support Allocation level with the Catalogue of Services and the Resource Allocation Schedule to determine the amount of service and/or funding.
- The Catalogue of Services lists the services that CLBC funds. There are four broad programs of services in the catalogue: residential, community inclusion, respite and supports for individuals and families.
- The Resource Allocation Schedule is a grid showing the typical amounts and lengths of time that various services can be provided based on an individual's Guide to Support Allocation level. The Home Sharing and Respite Rate Table does the same thing as the Resource Allocation Schedule for shared living options (home sharing / live-in support) and respite.
- Most services in the catalogue are available to all eligible individuals. However, there are a small number of services that are available only to individuals with specific Guide to Support Allocation levels (e.g. home based community inclusion is only available to individuals with complex support needs while outreach support tends to be accessed by individuals who are independent).
- Manager approval is required for funding allocation in excess of that which is outlined in the Resource Allocation Schedule.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION SCHEDULE AND CATALOGUE OF SERVICES

CROSS REFERENCE:

- Note #18 – Guide to Support Allocation

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Staff Residential (Group Homes)

KEY MESSAGES:

STAFF RESIDENTIAL (GROUP HOMES)

s.13

BACKGROUND:

- Community Living BC (CLBC) supports individuals to live as fully and independently as possible in the community. Many individuals with developmental disabilities, particularly younger people, aspire to employment, inclusion and independence.
- Since the closure of large residential institutions in the late 1980s and 1990s, more adults with developmental disabilities are living in community residences. CLBC's

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range of residential services includes shared living (home sharing or live-in supports), supports for independent living and staffed residential.

- In fall 2011, concerns were expressed by individuals, families and media that CLBC was closing staffed residential homes – also referred to as group homes - without consultation.
- Of the 67 group homes across B.C. that closed between April 2010 and March 2012 , 168 individuals have transitioned to different residential arrangements that meet their disability-related needs, including other staffed residential (group home) facilities. Another 11 individuals are since deceased due to health problems or age.
- The 168 who transitioned include:
 - 99 people who moved to other staffed residential;
 - 55 who moved to home sharing;
 - 11 who moved to supports for independent living;
 - 1 who returned to living in the family home, while awaiting a home sharing placement;
 - 1 who went to long term care; and
 - 1 individual who continues to be supported by CLBC, but is no longer receiving residential services.
- In addition, 225 individuals received new staffed residential services over that same period.
- As of March 31, 2013, there were:
 - 2,441 adult individuals receiving staffed residential services in over 800 locations at an average per person cost of \$112,000 a year.
 - Average number of residents in a staffed residential home is three.
 - 3,329 adult individuals receiving shared living services (home sharing arrangements) at an average per person cost of \$33,000 per year.
 - 890 adult individuals receiving supported living services (to live in their own home) at an average per person cost of \$22,000 per year.
- For comparison, as of March 2012, there were:
 - 2,472 adult individuals receiving staffed residential services at an average per person cost of \$109,000 a year.
 - 3,162 adult individuals receiving shared living services at an average per person cost of \$32,000 per year.
 - 752 adult individuals receiving supports for independent living at an average per person cost of \$24,000 per year.
- Home sharing is the fastest growing option for people requiring residential services.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Strategic Plan

KEY MESSAGES:

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STRATEGIC PLAN

BACKGROUND:

- Community Living BC (CLBC)'s 2012/13 to 2014/15 strategic plan identifies three key directions:
 1. Enhance participation and citizenship.
 2. Align with the "one government" approach to persons with developmental disabilities.
 3. Promote innovation and resiliency.
- The plan outlines the direction the Crown agency will take as it works with stakeholders and the community to fulfill its core mandate and explore new ways to achieve the shared vision of good lives in welcoming communities.
- CLBC will report out on and update the plan annually as it seeks to balance certainty and change with finding new and more nimble, sustainable approaches to delivering needed services.

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Date: June 19, 2013

- The plan reflects consultations over eight months with stakeholders, including academics and international leaders in best practices, the ministries of Social Development and Social Innovation and Children and Family Development, and CLBC staff, to understand the operational landscape and where change is required.
- The deputy ministers' review "Improving Services to People with Developmental Disabilities" was considered in its development.
- There are four key areas identified for 2012/13:
 1. Transitioning youth.
 2. Sustainability of the community living system.
 3. Data quality.
 4. Building stakeholder support.
- The plan also communicates changes in CLBC's mission, vision and value statements, which include:
 1. A refreshed vision statement that conveys CLBC's commitment to influence and enlist the aid and support of others in positively influencing the well-being of those CLBC serves and providing equitable access: "CLBC is a recognized leader in supporting adults with developmental disabilities to live good lives in welcoming communities."
 2. A refreshed mission statement to reflect CLBC's focus on enabling multiple partners to play a role in service delivery: "In partnership with our stakeholders, CLBC facilitates and manages a responsive and sustainable network of supports and services that assists people with developmental disabilities to be full participants in their communities."
 3. A value-for-money statement that indicates CLBC will balance effectiveness with cost, provide equitable access to services and ensure services are flexible, responsive and delivered within CLBC's available resources.
- An update on implementation of the strategic plan has been included in CLBC's 2012/13 annual report.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Personalized Supports Initiative

KEY MESSAGES:

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PERSONALIZED SUPPORTS INITIATIVE

BACKGROUND:

- The Personalized Supports Initiative (PSI) was launched Feb. 1, 2010, after an October 2009 regulatory change that expanded the eligibility criteria for CLBC's supports.
- The expanded criteria focus on adults who have a diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder or a Pervasive Developmental Disorder, also known as Autism Spectrum Disorder, and have significant limitations in adaptive functioning.
- The eligibility criteria was expanded in response to criticisms by the Representative for Children and Youth, the Ombudperson's office and advocacy groups and litigation (Fahlman and Baby A). The expanded criteria moves away from IQ and places the focus on significant limitations in adaptive functioning (day-to-day abilities).

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- PSI services and supports may include housing, employment, community inclusion, respite and personal or homemaker supports. These services are intended to augment rather than replace other available services.
- Funding for PSI is managed separately from other CLBC programs, and program expenditures include both CLBC staffing costs and service delivery by contracted service providers. In the early stages of this initiative, funding requirements have been less than budgeted and the excess funding has either been deferred or redirected by the ministry to address other cost pressures.
- Between Feb. 1, 2010 and March 31, 2013, 642 adults and youth (who are transitioning to CLBC services when they turn 19) have been confirmed as eligible. Of those:
 - 154 had a diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder;
 - 478 had a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder; and
 - 10 had a diagnosis of both Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- Effective in 2013/14, annual funding will be fully used, including the balance of deferred amounts, and provision of additional service will be dependent on access to contingencies or other funding.
- CLBC's 2013/14 service plan projected that, based on the current budget, per individual funding for PSI will decrease in each of the coming three years, as demand will exceed funding. Understanding this possibility, the ministry is closely monitoring the situation and has acknowledged the potential need for additional funding.
- As the PSI proceeds, information is being gathered on the profiles of eligible individuals, service need, service provided, and involvement of ministries/agencies to evaluate efficacy of service delivery. Tracking of program and administrative expenditures per individual will enable monthly financial reviews, consistency in prioritization in resource allocation, maintenance of fairness and accountability, and provision of information for budget forecasting.

BUDGET:**Personalized Supports Initiative Funding and Costs**

All figures in \$ millions	2009/10 Actual	2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Actual	2012/13 Prelim. Actuals	2013/14 Plan	2014/15 Plan	2015/16 Plan
Funding							
Received from Voted Appropriation ¹	1.4	4.3	7.4	10.3	10.3	10.3	10.3
Deferrals ²	(0.9)	(1.4)	0.2	1.2	0.5	-	-
	0.5	2.9	7.6	11.5	10.8	10.3	10.3
Expenditures							
Program development and staffing ³	0.4	1.1	1.6	1.6	1.2	0.7	0.7
Contracted Services ⁴	0.1	1.8	6.0	9.9	9.6	9.6	9.6
	0.5	2.9	7.6	11.5	10.8	10.3	10.3
Eligible Individuals							
At Year End	20	169	341	513	690	870	1,053

- Note 1 - From *Voted Appropriation – Personalized Supports Initiative* line of table on page 29 of Revised Service Plan
- Note 2 - Funding received for PSI but not utilized in the current year can be deferred for utilization in a future year. The amount shown here is included in the *Restricted Contributions –Operating* line in the table on page 29 of the Revised Service Plan
- Note 3 - PSI program development and staffing costs are included in CLBC's total *Regional Operations and Administration* line in table on page 28 of the Revised Service Plan.
- Note 4 - From *Contracted Services - Personalized Supports Initiatives* line in the table on page 28 of the Service Plan.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Transition to Adult Services

KEY MESSAGES:

TRANSITION TO ADULT SERVICES

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BACKGROUND:

- From April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013, 788 youth turning 19 registered for service with Community Living BC (CLBC), 694 with developmental disabilities and 94 who were eligible through the Personalized Supports Initiative.
- An estimated 724 youth turning 19 will register for CLBC in 2013/14 – including those with developmental disabilities and those who are eligible through the Personalized Supports Initiatives. Most will have been receiving support in high school and some have received service as youth through the Ministry of Children and Family Development.
- CLBC is a signatory on the Cross Ministry Transition Planning Protocol for Youth with Special Needs, along with eight government organizations. The protocol is an agreement on how to work together to support the transition of a broad range of youth with special needs to adulthood, including those who may go on to use CLBC services.
- The Joint Ministry of Children and Family Development and CLBC Agreement also outlines their respective roles for assisting youth and their families before a youth turns 19.
- Transition planning starts after a youth's 16th birthday, when they may apply to confirm their eligibility. Youth and their families meet with a CLBC facilitator after their 17th birthday to complete a request for future services and after their 18th birthday to develop an individual support plan where required. Services from CLBC may begin once the youth is 19. Access to services is dependent on the circumstances of the family, the disability-related needs of the person and the availability of funds.
- Information about how CLBC assists youth and their families before a youth turns 19 is available on the CLBC website. Transition planning guides are available online on the Ministry of Children and Family website and some communities have developed transition planning guides and practices.
- CLBC also works together with partners in the community to hold information events to assist youth and their families to learn about the range of supports they may access in adulthood.
- Transitioning from education and special needs services for children and youth to CLBC's adult services can be a challenging phase for young people with developmental disabilities and their families. CLBC is working with government to provide better planning and simplified processes for youth. This is part of ongoing work since January 2012 to address the recommendations in the deputy ministers' review, 'Improving Services to People with Developmental Disabilities.'

- All transitioning youth receive a minimum of \$2,800 annually for respite services, or an equivalent amount of money where another service is preferred. This is the minimum level of support, with additional funding and services are available to young adults with higher needs.
- CLBC has also released a three-year Community Action Employment Plan that will help to create more job opportunities and training for young people who wish to work in their communities.
- Because of differential service and fee structures between CLBC and the Ministry of Children and Family Development, young people and their families may experience significant funding changes when they transition. CLBC and the ministries of Children and Family Development and Social Development and Social Innovation are currently reviewing the issue of disparities in services between youth and adults.
- These disparities will be of particular concern over the next three years, as families who participated in the Auton-Anderson litigation continue to transition to CLBC. This litigation, known as "B.C. Attorney General and Medical Services Commission v. Connor Auton, 2004," resulted in a Supreme Court of Canada ruling that non-core medically necessary treatments, such as ABA/EIBI, are not protected under section 15(1) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. As such, the Province is not compelled to provide the treatment, although CFD has subsequently been funding ABA/EIBI for some families. The decision overturned B.C. Supreme Court (2001) and B.C. Court of Appeal (2002) decisions that failure to provide ABA/EIBI constituted discrimination.
- While there is a lack of evidence that ABA/EIBA therapy is effective for adults, as the children of these families transition, CLBC is endeavouring to reduce the disparity between ministry and CLBC funding for these youth. This has resulted in some high needs youth with autism spectrum disorder continuing to receive ABA/EIBA therapy into adulthood, as well as other specialized services that are substantially more costly than what has been provided in the past for transitioning youth.
- CLBC and the ministries of Children and Family Development and Social Development and Social Innovation will continue to monitor the financial impacts these disparities create in order to forecast the cost to government of current and future services for transitioning youth.
- Beginning Sept. 30 2013, the Representative for Children and Youth's mandate will also be broadened to enable her to advocate for young adults with developmental disabilities between 19 and 24.
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CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #13** – Deputy Ministers' Review of CLBC – 12 point plan
- **Note #28** – Personalized Supports Initiative

YOUTH WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES TRANSITIONING TO PWD

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- In January 2012, government released the report *Improving Services to People with Developmental Disabilities* which included 12 recommendations with cross-government implications. Government made a commitment to address these recommendations, including moving towards a one-government approach; streamlining access to services; developing a common assessment platform, and improving transition planning for individuals transitioning through different life stages.
- This simplified PWD application process aligns well with the report's recommendations as it allows families to submit existing assessment and diagnostic

documentation directly to the ministry, rather than completing a full PWD application and getting a new diagnosis.

- The simplified process will be available to individuals who have a diagnosis of Intellectual Disability, as specified in the internationally recognized American Psychiatric Association's (APA) *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM). Intellectual Disability replaces the previous diagnostic terminology of "mental retardation". Both diagnoses will be acceptable for participation in the streamlined process.
- The process will not be available to clients with Fetal Alcohol or Autism Spectrum Disorders. As Spectrum Disorders, these conditions can range from mild to very severe, and the ministry will require a full PWD application to be completed to order to adjudicate applications from clients with these disabilities.
- 662 youth turning 19 were eligible for CLBC services in 2011/2012.

BUDGET:

- This new simplified process is not anticipated to impact the ministry budget for services and supports.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #15 – DSM V**

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
DISABILITY SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Advocate for Service Quality

KEY MESSAGES:

ADVOCATE FOR SERVICE QUALITY

s.13

BACKGROUND:

- The Advocate for Service Quality works in cooperation with but independent of Community Living BC and other Ministries/agencies and service providers who

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Date: June 6, 2013

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provide services and support to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

- The Advocate was established in 1992 to respond to situations involving individuals with developmental disabilities that require the intervention of someone who is independent of the ministry. Authority for the Advocate flows from an Order in Council under the *Public Service Act*.
- The Advocate for Service Quality is appointed by and reports to the Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation.
- The Advocate can help with services from several different ministries, including the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation, Ministry of Health, Community Living BC and other service agencies in various communities.
- The Advocate can help individuals and their families:
 - if they do not like the services they are receiving
 - if they think they are not being treated fairly or with respect
 - if they do not agree with a decision that was made, or
 - if they have questions about eligibility and funding of services
- The Advocate also encourages and helps adults to advocate for themselves.
- Dealing with specific requests for help is the primary activity the Office of the Advocate. Since 2007/08, the Advocate has dealt with nearly 4,000 requests.

STATISTICS:

Contacts Received:	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Total	%
Completed / Resolved	852	841	632	457	351	407	3,540	97%
Monitoring Complaint	10	14	-	36	12	10	82	1%
Completed / Not Resolved	81	92	50	3	4	0	230	2%
Total	943	947	682	496	367	417	3,852	100%

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
LEGISLATION, LITIGATION AND APPEALS BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Expanded Mandate of the Representative for Children and Youth

KEY MESSAGES:

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s.13

BACKGROUND:

- In March 2013 the Legislature approved amendments to the *Representative for Children and Youth Act*. The amendments enable the expansion of the Representative's mandate, by regulation, to provide advocacy services to young adults, aged 19 to 24, who were receiving reviewable services within 15 months of their 19th birthday.
- Reviewable services are defined in the *Representative for Children and Youth Act* and primarily mean Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) services or services prescribed by regulation.
- As a first step, Cabinet approved a regulation enabling the Representative to provide advocacy services to youth transitioning to adult community living services under the *Community Living Authority Act*. These are services provided by Community Living BC. The regulation is effective September 30, 2013.
- Expanding the Representative's mandate – as well as other changes recently made to the Representative for Children and Youth Act – implement all of the recommendations made by the Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth in its review of the Representative for Children and Youth Act.
- The changes also reflect recommendation number four in the Deputy Ministers' review of CLBC.

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**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
DISABILITY SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Equipment and Assistive Technology Initiative (EATI)

KEY MESSAGES:

s.13

EQUIPMENT AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE (EATI)

s.13

BACKGROUND:

- EATI is delivered and managed through a partnership between government and the Personal Supports Network; a group of community organizations that are working together to assist persons with disabilities to access the services and personal supports they need.
- EATI is based on the Participation Model for Personal Supports, developed by the disability community, which puts the individual at the centre of service delivery and makes him/her an active/driving partner in the process.
- An evaluation being conducted by the University of British Columbia (September 2013) will share learnings and be instructive for future delivery of the Equipment and Assistive Technology Initiative should the program continue.
- The Province supports several initiatives aimed at building inclusive communities and providing assistive technologies that 1) assist British Columbians who can work find and maintain employment and 2) ensure greater social inclusion:
 - EPBC provides assistive technology and supports to assist individuals to find and maintain employment.
 - CAYA provides Speech Generating Devices to adults with severe communication disabilities.
 - The Giving in Action fund, administered by the Vancouver Foundation, provides grants through two funds: the Family Independence Fund and the Children and Youth with Special Needs Fund. The Giving in Action fund helps families with home renovations including lifts, elevators, ramps, flooring and door widening, and the purchase and/or modification of wheelchair-accessible vehicles.
 - The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation (SDSI) provides disability supports for daily living including mobility aids, hearing aids, and orthotics.
 - Set-BC is one of the Ministry of Education's programs that lends assistive technologies (reading, writing, and communication tools) where required to ensure students' access to educational programs.

- The Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology provides financial programs, assistive technology and accommodation services for people with disabilities to access post secondary education.

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BUDGET:

2011/12		2012/13		2013/14 Budget
Budget	Expenditures	Budget	Expenditures	
\$4M	\$3.901M	\$4M	\$4.014M	\$4.4M

Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training

STATISTICS:**Equipment and Assistive Technology Initiative (2009 - 2013)**

Year	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Expenditures	1,206,938	2,277,770	3,901,387	4,014,226
Numbers served	114	403	469	505

Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training

CROSS REFERENCE:

Note #36 - Federal Panel Report on Disability Employment, New Employers Disability Forum

Note #34 - Communication Assistance for Youth and Adults

Note #37 - Minister's Council

Note #47 - Employment Program of British Columbia

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
DISABILITY SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Communication Assistance for Youth and Adults (CAYA)

KEY MESSAGES:

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COMMUNICATION ASSISTANCE FOR
YOUTH AND ADULTS (CAYA)

BACKGROUND:

- Providing alternative and augmentative communications technology through CAYA is consistent with the transformation of services for persons with disabilities into a more modern, sustainable, flexible, responsive system that supports people to realize their personal, social and economic potential.
- The provision of alternative and augmentative communications technology reduces social isolation for individuals with communication disabilities. Studies indicate that

isolation contributes to an increased incidence of negative health outcomes, which results in increased health care costs.

- From 2005 to 2015, the Province will have provided CAYA with \$16.85 million in discretionary grants including:
 - \$1.2 million – February 2005 (Ministry of Education)
 - \$6.0 million – 2005/06 to 2007/08 (then-Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance)
 - \$0.80 million – March 2010 (then-Ministry of Social Development)
 - \$1.65 million – 2011/12 (then-Ministry of Social Development)
 - \$1.5 million – March 2013 (then-Ministry of Social Development)
 - \$5.7 million – \$1.9 million annually for the fiscal years 2012/13 to 2014/15 (Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation)
- CAYA is now supporting over 650 youth and adults with severe communication disabilities to participate more actively in their communities (as at March 31, 2013).
- A commitment to provide base funding over three years enables CAYA to continue working with the network of professionals that has been developed since inception providing support and services to those individuals who are in need.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
DISABILITY SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Disability White Paper

KEY MESSAGES:

DISABILITY WHITE PAPER

s.13

Contact: Molly Harrington, ADM, Policy and Research Division
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Date: June 14, 2013

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s.13

BACKGROUND:

- B.C. has never had a broad-based public consultation on disability, but does have a number of existing consultation bodies on disability issues.
- The development of a white paper as a tool for initiating discussion in public consultation is a standard best practice. As modeled in other jurisdictions, such as Manitoba and New Zealand, both regional and national disability action plans have been developed through a public stakeholder consultation process, and identify focus areas (housing, disability supports, accessibility, employment and income security, co-ordination), a vision, common goals and objectives and measurable outcomes.
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), of which Canada is a signatory and has ratified, is being used in leading jurisdictions as a framework for reporting on disability action plans. The Province of B.C. has submitted its first report on the CRPD in partnership with the Attorney General and the Disability Strategy Reference Group.
- B.C. has had a Disability Strategy since 2006 when it was approved by Cabinet. It has been used as a framework to develop and champion work that will improve outcomes for persons with disabilities. A vision and focus areas were identified, in consultation with social service Deputy Ministers.
- In February 2012, the Minister's Council on Employment and Accessibility was reinitiated with an expanded membership to advise the Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation, as the lead of the Disability Strategy, on solutions and strategies to increase employment and access for people with disabilities.

- In September 2012, Council members delivered their report of recommendations (Action Plan Framework) to the Minister, who formally acknowledged receipt of this proposed framework. Recommendations identify potential actions in the areas of providing employer/individual supports to promote employment, strengthening policies and optimizing the use of existing resources and services.
- The council has also been working with leading disability expert Susan Scott-Parker (UK Business Disability Forum) to provide information and best practice knowledge on furthering employer commitment and support for hiring people with disabilities . The Council Chair and Ms. Scott-Parker individually also met with the Federal Panel on Labour Market Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, which was created in 2012 to identify private sector successes and best practices with regard to the labour market participation of persons with disabilities.
- The Federal Panel released a report that shares similar themes and interests with the Minister's Council; in particular, the Panel's interest in engaging community partners, providing support for employers and working to de-stigmatize disability in the workplace.
- Another initiative is the Disability Strategy Reference Group (DSRG), which consists of assistant deputy ministers from across government who work to support opportunities for ministries and government agencies to collaborate, share learning, and integrate and align initiatives across sectors to improve outcomes for persons with disabilities and their families.
- Citizen engagement is identified as a priority for government and there are a number of existing mechanisms and stakeholder partnerships that could be utilized to develop a comprehensive white paper and consultation process.

BUDGET:

- White Paper and Public Consultation: Within existing budgets (estimated costs \$50,000 - \$100,000)

STATISTICS:

(Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS) Statistics Canada, 2006)

- Number of people with disabilities in B.C.: 750,000*
- Low income rate for people with disabilities: 17.2% (6th in Canada)
- Employment rate for people with disabilities: 56.5%
- Unmet need for assistive technology for people with disabilities: 38% (5th in Canada)

* Number of people with disabilities is adjusted for 2013, based on a demographic projection from the 2006 survey

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #37** – Minister's Council on Employment and Accessibility
- **Note #36** – Federal Panel on Labour Market Opportunities, New Employers Disability Forum

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
POLICY AND RESEARCH BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

**ISSUE: Federal Panel Report on Disability Employment, New
Employers Disability Forum**

KEY MESSAGES:

**FEDERAL PANEL REPORT ON DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT, NEW
EMPLOYERS DISABILITY FORUM**

s.13

Contact: Molly Harrington, ADM, Policy and Research Division
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Date: June 14, 2013

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s.13

BACKGROUND:

- The Federal Panel on Labour Market Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities was appointed by the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development Diane Finley in 2012 to identify private sector successes and best practices with regard to the labour market participation of persons with disabilities.
- Panel membership includes: Kenneth Fredeen (Deloitte & Touche LLP), Dr. Gary Birch (Neil Squire Society), Mark Wafer (Tim Hortons) and Kathy Martin (Loblaw Companies Limited).
- The Panel conducted about 200 in-person, telephone and online consultations across Canada with employers from a range of sectors to identify successes, best practices and barriers in employing people with disabilities.
- Minister's Council Chair, Carla Qualtrough was included as part of these consultations.
- In January 2013, Minister Finley and Minister of Finance, Jim Flaherty released a report of the Panel's findings, entitled "Rethinking Disability in the Private Sector".
- In response to the Panel's report, a time-limited \$2M investment was announced in March, 2013 as part of the federal budget to support the creation of the Canadian Employers Disability Forum. Work is underway to secure an Executive Director for the forum and establish a Board of Directors.
- While the Federal Panel is coming to a close all the members remain active in the new Employers Forum.
- Opportunities exist to strengthen linkage with a B.C. Presidents Group and Canadian Employers Disability Forum.
- The Canadian Employers Disability Forum will be an initiative led by a number of Canadian businesses leaders including Loblaw Companies Limited, and will be managed by employers, for employers, to support education, training and sharing of

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resources and best practices concerning the recruitment and retention of people with disabilities. Under the leadership of the forum, employers will help to promote and further the invaluable contributions that persons with disabilities can make to their businesses.

- In May 2013, Minister Findley announced her support for private Member's motion 430 introduced by Phil McColeman. The motion formally calls on the federal government to endorse the Panel's report.
- Both the Minister's Council and the Federal Panel have worked with UK disability expert, Susan Scott-Parker, which may present an opportunity to develop connections and collaborative work between the two groups.

CROSS REFERENCE:

Note #37 – Minister's Council on Employment and Accessibility

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
POLICY AND RESEARCH DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Minister's Council on Employment and Accessibility

KEY MESSAGES:

s.13

MINISTER'S COUNCIL ON EMPLOYMENT AND ACCESSIBILITY

Contact: Molly Harrington, ADM, Policy and Research Division
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Date: June 14, 2013

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BACKGROUND:

- The Council is currently comprised of 14 members, appointed by the Minister, who are selected to ensure diversity of representation from various sectors, including: business leaders, community-based organizations/NGOs, government, community leaders and individuals with disabilities, as well as their families.
- In September 2012, the Council delivered their Action Plan Framework to the Minister. Recommendations in the report identify potential actions in the areas of providing employer and individual supports, strengthening policies and optimizing the use of existing resources and services.
- Acting on Council recommendations, work is underway in number of areas:
 - The Minister recently announced the co-chairs of a “Presidents Group” (Tamara Vrooman, Vancity and Wynn Powell, London Drugs), which will be a leadership network of prominent business leaders in B.C. who will champion best practices to support recruitment and retention of persons with disabilities.
 - The Council has been working with leading international disability expert Susan Scott-Parker (UK Business Disability Forum) to explore opportunities to improve “disability confidence” in B.C. and in the B.C. Public Service.
 - Linkages are being formed with the Federal Panel on Labour Market Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, which was created in 2012 to identify private sector successes and best practices with regard to the labour market participation of persons with disabilities.
 - In January 2013, the federal panel released a report that is consistent with the recommendations of the Minister’s Council on Employment and Accessibility. To support the recommendations, \$2M was announced in the last Federal budget, which will support the creation of a Canadian Employers Disability Forum, to be modeled after similar forums created in the UK, Australia and the US.
- Additional linkages for the Minister’s Council include the provincial Disability Strategy, proposed Disability White Paper and Disability Summit and the Cross-Ministry Disability Strategy Reference Group (ADM-level).

BUDGET:

- The Minister’s Council on Employment and Accessibility’s budget is assumed under operational funding of the Policy and Research Division.

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP:

- **Dr. Jaimie Borisoff**, Canada Research Chair in Rehabilitation Engineering Design at BCIT and ICORD (International Collaboration on Repair Discoveries)
- **Dr. Henry G. Harder**, Professor and Chair, School of Health Sciences, University of Northern British Columbia
- **James Ho**, Founder, CEO Mainstream Broadcasting Company
- **Karen Lai**, Program Developer for the AIM program, BC Centre for Ability Association
- **Jennifer Leye**n, Registered Rehabilitation Professional, Director, WorkSafeBC
- **Dr. Nigel Livingston**, Professor, University of Victoria and Founder/Director, CanAssist
- **Dr. Joe McLaughlin (Deputy Chair)**, McLaughlin Educational Consulting Services
- **Roger Mundell**, CEO, Udu Online Learning Solutions
- **Carla Qualtrough (Chair)**, Vice-Chair of the Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal of BC
- **Michael Schratter**, Teacher, David Oppenheimer Elementary School and mental health ambassador
- **Mayor Mary Sjoström**, City of Quesnel
- **Sheila Taylor**, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation (ex-officio member)
- **Christa Williams**, Executive Director, First Nations Public Service

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #36** – Federal Panel Report on Disability Employment, New Employers Disability Forum

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
DISABILITY SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2012/13

ISSUE: Personal Supports

KEY MESSAGES:

PERSONAL SUPPORTS

s.13
s.17, s.16

s.16

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BACKGROUND:

Equipment and Assistive Technology Initiative

- Funded through the six-year Canada-British Columbia Labour Market Agreement (2009 - 2014), the EATI provides equipment and assistive technology, and related services such as assessment, repair and training, to support eligible persons with disabilities to attain their employment goals.
- EATI is based on the Participation Model for personal supports, developed by the disability community, which puts the individual at the centre of service delivery and makes him/her an active/driving partner in the process.
- EATI is delivered and managed through a partnership between government and the Equipment & Assistive Technology Initiative Partners Council (EPC), a group of community organizations that are working together to assist persons with disabilities to access the services and personal supports they need.

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BUDGET:

2011/12		2012/13		2013/14 Budget
Budget	Expenditures	Budget	Expenditures	
\$4M	\$3.901M	\$4M	\$4.014M	\$4.4M

Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training

STATISTICS:**Equipment and Assistive Technology Initiative (2009 - 2013)**

Year	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Expenditures	1,206,938	2,277,770	3,901,387	4,014,226
Numbers served	114	403	469	505

Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training

CROSS REFERENCE:**Note #33** - Equipment and Assistive Technology Initiative**Note #36** - Federal Panel Report on Disability, New Employers Disability Forum**Note #37** - Minister's Council on Employment and Accessibility

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
DISABILITY SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP)

KEY MESSAGES:

REGISTERED DISABILITY SAVINGS PLAN (RDSP)

s.13

BACKGROUND:

- The federal government launched the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) in 2008 – an initiative to assist parents and friends to save money towards the future care and long-term financial security of a person with a severe disability who is eligible for the disability tax credit, and for the beneficiary to save toward his or her future as well.
- RDSPs are similar to Registered Education Savings Plans. For households with an annual income below \$85,000, the federal government will match every \$1

contributed to an RDSP with up to \$3 in Canada Disability savings grants. The maximum grant is \$3,500 each year, with a lifetime limit of \$70,000.

- In addition, low-income families are eligible for a \$1,000 Canada Savings Bond each year, with a lifetime limit of \$20,000. No personal contribution is required to receive the bond.
- Contributions can be made by anyone to an RDSP and there is no B.C. Employment and Assistance limit to the amount that can be contributed, but the federal government has limited personal contributions to \$200,000.
- B.C. was the first to announce its support of the RDSP in Canada, making it fully exempt when calculating eligibility for income assistance.
- B.C. was also the first province to launch a granting program to encourage uptake of the RDSP. A donation of \$5 million from the Province of B.C. to assist low-income persons with disabilities enabled the Vancouver Foundation to create Endowment 150. Endowment 150 supports eligible persons with disabilities to open a RDSP with a \$150 gift. Approximately 3,500 people in B.C. have been provided with the \$150.
- B.C. has approximately 13,500 RDSPs already open. It is estimated that B.C.'s potential uptake for RDSPs is 85,000 – indicating there is tremendous remaining capacity for uptake.
- B.C. leads the nation in per capita uptake among people with disabilities as well as the general population.
- In January 2013, the Minister of Social Development wrote to Minister Flaherty recognizing the recent improvements the federal government made to the RDSP through their 3-year review and suggested potential changes they might consider for future updates. Minister Flaherty responded and commended the province on its policies and work to support the RDSP, including its work on supported decision-making and representation agreements. Stakeholders, including the PGT and Ministry of Justice are working to resolve emerging issues with current legislation in this area, while B.C. continues to be seen as a leader on Representation Agreements and supported decision-making.
- For some clients, a Trust will be a superior option to a RDSP. Not all ministry Persons with Disabilities (PWD) clients will meet the federal government's criteria for a RDSP; namely, they won't qualify for the disability tax credit. Furthermore, RDSP rules for withdrawing funds also favour those who set up their RDSP when they are younger, so an older client may be better off with a trust.
- For those persons with disabilities that it is a good option, we are working with stakeholders to support uptake..
- The Province is co-hosting a series of community engagement sessions to develop a collaborative approach to improving uptake. These include Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network, Community Living BC, Vancouver Foundation, Canadian Centre for Financial Literacy, Public Guardian and Trustee, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Children and Family Development and more.

Stakeholders and Consultation

- Stakeholders have identified various reasons for low uptake including:
 - Lack of awareness of the RDSP
 - Complexity of application process
 - Culture around savings and financial literacy
 - Immediate needs come first
 - Challenges with the legislative framework (Rep. Agreements)
- The ministry is co-hosting regular stakeholder engagement sessions to develop a collaborative approach to address issues and support increased uptake of the RDSP with participants including the BC Coalition of People with Disabilities, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, Community Living BC, Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network, the Vancouver Foundation and more.
- The ministry is supporting clients and staff to access information sessions hosted by Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network and the Federal Government on the RDSP and has been promoting the RDSP to Aboriginal stakeholders, living on and off reserve.

STATISTICS:

- As of March 2013, there were approximately 69,000 RDSPs open in Canada and 6,000 pending plans.
- B.C. has 20% (13,500) of the RDSPs in Canada.
- B.C. is first in Canada for RDSP uptake per capita.
- B.C.'s estimated potential uptake for RDSPs is 85,000.
- Approximately 1/3 of PWD clients are estimated to be eligible.

INTERJURISDICTIONAL COMPARISONS:

- B.C., specifically the Vancouver Foundation, was the first province to launch a granting program to encourage uptake of the RDSP (Endowment 150).
- In every province and territory, the RDSP is exempt from asset testing for disability benefits.
- In B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut, people can withdraw as much as they want without affecting disability benefits.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #106 – Trusts**

MINISTRY SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

**ISSUE: Services for Adults with Developmental Disabilities
On-Reserve**

KEY MESSAGES

s.13

s.16

BACKGROUND:

- Community Living BC delivers a range of programs for adults with developmental disabilities off-reserve, while on-reserve services funded by the federal government are delivered by bands, contractors and a range of federal departments.

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s.16

- Approximately five transitioning youth on-reserve and some adults have requested Community Living BC services in the last few years.
- The ministry is in the process of signing off on the results of a joint review project with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada. The project resulted in a report that assesses the comparability of the respective provincial and federal programs available to adults with developmental disabilities.
- The report shows that the vast majority of services available off-reserve are matched by the same or similar services on reserve. Where on and off-reserve services were

SERVICES FOR ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ON-RESERVE

found to differ was primarily in the methods of delivery and availability. There is also more consolidation of services for adults with developmental disabilities off-reserve.

s.13, s.16

INTERJURISDICTIONAL COMPARISONS:

Alberta

- Alberta delivers the Person with Developmental Disability Program off-reserve and refers on-reserve residents to the band for support and services. On-reserve individuals often move away from the reserve because of a lack of service. Despite language in a 1991 Arrangement with the federal government which includes reimbursement for the costs for adults with disabilities, Alberta has indicated that reimbursement is not occurring due to administrative requirements.

Ontario

- The Ontario Disability Support Program (income assistance) and Ontario Developmental Services are available throughout the province regardless of residency on or off-reserve. There is no federal reimbursement for these services.

Saskatchewan

- In Saskatchewan, provincially funded community based organizations deliver day programs, operate group homes and provide respite. These services are not available on-reserve. Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada will not fund day programs for individuals living on reserve, but has supported some First Nations individuals who were on-reserve and needed to move off-reserve for services. Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and some First Nation Bands do occasionally establish contracts with service providers for service off-reserve, but this is uncommon.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
DISABILITY SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Social Innovations for People with Developmental Disabilities

KEY MESSAGES:

s.13

SOCIAL INNOVATIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

BACKGROUND:

- On January 19, 2012 the Province announced a comprehensive 12 point plan, including funding, to strengthen supports for British Columbians with developmental disabilities which included, as Recommendation 12, to “Support ongoing innovation in the sector, and recognize and support the innovations developed, championed and undertaken by families and individuals”.
- **STEPS Forward** supports students with a wide range of intellectual abilities. Eligibility for support is based on the desire of the individual to be a student, not on ability. Students supported through the initiative have multiple and complex physical and mental challenges, as well as an intellectual disability. Success is measured by on the student's dedication, engagement on campus and unique individual support, not on level of academic ability.

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Date: June 6, 2013

- The **Canadian Inclusive Lives Learning Initiative (CILLI)**, pronounced “chilly”) is an innovative pilot project designed by the Centre for Inclusion and Citizenship to offer tools and information to help individuals with intellectual disabilities and their family members to build an inclusive adult life.
- The **Centre for Inclusion and Citizenship** is being supported by the ministry to undertake specific , research and knowledge exchange projects which further the inclusion and full citizenship of people with intellectual disabilities and their families locally, nationally and globally.
- Among the projects being supported are: the *Ideas Workshop Series*, a public educational dialogue series; a plain language strategy for knowledge translation; and a forum in the summer of 2013 on the transition of young people with special considerations into adulthood.
- The **Connecting People with Disabilities project** operated by the ConnecTra Society is a pilot project to recruit and train community “connectors” who meet with people with physical disabilities – individually, one-on-one – to help them become more involved in the community. The principal outcomes of this pilot project are to determine whether their approach can improve or increase:
 - Labour market attachments;
 - Increased levels of community involvement; and
 - Increased levels of physical activity and improved overall health.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Supporting Increased Participation and Community Inclusion

KEY MESSAGES:

s.13

SUPPORTING INCREASED PARTICIPATION
AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION

BACKGROUND:

- The Supporting Increased Participation (SIP) group has been meeting on a monthly basis since late 2011 and consists of both government and community members who have a mutual interest in policy and programming related to persons with disabilities.
- Community Members include:
 - the BC Coalition for Persons with Disabilities;
 - Inclusion BC;
 - the Social Planning and Research Council;
 - the Community Legal Assistance Society; and
 - the Canadian Mental Health Association.

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- The common purpose of the group is to look at ways to support increased participation for persons with disabilities in B.C., through community inclusion, employment, volunteering and social connections.
- A main focus of the group is on information and data sharing, particularly about the disability assistance caseload, to promote discussion about opportunities.
- The community members have also functioned as a consultation body as required on policy issues.

Report on PWD Rates

- In late May 2012, the Disability without Poverty Network, a subgroup of SIP, released a report entitled “Overdue – The Case for Increasing the Persons with Disability Benefit in BC”.
- The report proposed increasing the rate of assistance and level of support provided to persons with disabilities by:
 - Increasing the PWD benefit to \$1,200 per month;
 - Indexing the PWD benefit; and
 - Establishing a shelter assistance program for people with the PWD designation.
- In addition to the regular monthly SIP meetings, the Network met separately with ministry staff and previous Ministers to discuss the issues contained in the report.
- British Columbia's rate for single persons with a disability is currently fifth among the provinces, behind Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Quebec.
- While British Columbia is not currently in a budgetary position to index or raise disability assistance rates, we remain open to exploring other options to better support Persons with Disabilities.
- The October 2012 policy reforms contained several modest changes aimed at improving supports for Persons with Disabilities, including:
 - Increases to earnings exemptions and the introduction of an annualized earnings exemption option;
 - Increases to trust limits and increased flexibility around trust disbursements; and
 - Increases to general asset limits.
- The SIP members are a key stakeholder group that we remain committed to working with on exploring innovative solutions to better support persons with disabilities.

Recommendations Regarding the BC Disability Supports System

- In January 2013, SIP members provided the Ministry with a draft document with six recommendations regarding the disability assistance system in B.C.
- As in the May 2012 “Overdue” report, the recommendations included:
 - Providing adequate disability supports; and
 - Supporting access to safe, secure and affordable housing;
- The document also recommended additional areas for consideration:
 - Providing supports with a person-centered approach;
 - Supporting employment and inclusion;

- Making changes to the Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers designation; and
- Not eliminating current supports as a part of any attempt to simplify or restructure the system.
- The document clarified SIP's position that employment for PWD clients should be voluntary, and enhanced with a range of pre and post employment supports. It also contained specific recommendations around PPMB, including removing the 12 out of 15 time period and simplifying the application process.
- Many of the recommendations are consistent with steps the Ministry is taking to support increased participation, including working with employers and looking at ways to enhance disability assistance outside of a rate increase.
- The ministry is committed to continuing to engage with SIP on the other issues (e.g. PPMB) to look at ways to mutually address the issues and concerns.

On-Going Structure of the Group

- Although the SIP group has been meeting regularly since 2011, a formal structure or Terms of Reference has not been created.
- In April 2013, SIP provided the ministry with a draft briefing note outlining a proposal for the future of the table, and exploring options for formalizing some of the functions. The proposal recognized:
 - the importance of evidence and practice-based policy recommendations;
 - the importance of cross-disability expertise and knowledge; and
 - the importance of moving towards person-centered policy development.
- SIP members stated they felt the table had value and was developing into a key forum to discuss policy issues related to persons with disabilities. They recommended that it continue.

Call for Concepts

- In early 2013, the Deputy Minister MSD proposed and committed \$500K in annualized funding for community inclusion funding for PWD clients to the SIP group starting fiscal year 2013/14. SIP was invited to present a proposal to MSD. GCPE worked with SIP on joint communication materials to be sent to stakeholders announcing the initiative.
- At the request of MSD DM, in April 2013, SIP reached out to various community partners for ideas to consider funding through a "call for concepts". They received 24 proposals from organizations across B.C. that they shared with the ministry in a May 2013 briefing note. The proposals mainly focus on issues of social/recreational initiatives; social enterprise initiatives; and projects that emphasize collaboration across sectors.
- The submission SIP provided to the ministry indicates that although they believe the initial ideas have promise, they recommend the funds should be spent on a deeper

engagement process to explore the initial proposals and develop them into broader initiatives with more wide-ranging impacts.

Next Steps

- The ministry is planning to re-engage with SIP in summer 2013 to discuss the “call for concepts”, the structure of the table on a go forward basis and additional initiatives of mutual interest for the upcoming year.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Civil Rights Now Society Campaign

KEY MESSAGES:

CIVIL RIGHTS NOW SOCIETY CAMPAIGN

s.13

Contact: Molly Harrington, ADM, Policy and Research Division
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Date: June 24, 2013

s.13

Background:**Civil Rights Now (CRN)**

- CRN is identified on their website as a volunteer, not-for-profit society.
- CRN is campaigning for:
 - new legislation aimed at enforcing standards of care for persons with disabilities, and
 - new legislation that would provide access to individualized funding paid directly from the Ministry of Finance for persons with disabilities and their families
- On March 23 2013, Civil Rights Now launched a campaign called Think Twice to promote their proposed legislation.
- Two members of Civil Rights Now, Jean Lewis and David Marley, met with the then Minister, Dr. Moira Stilwell, in March 2013. These two members of Civil Rights Now are also active in Families for Early Autism Treatment BC, which is interested in direct, individualized funding for families of children with autism from the Ministry of Children and Family Development.
- The ministry has not made any commitments or scheduled any future meetings with this group

Standards of Care

- Existing provincial and federal human rights legislation as well as the Charter already provide recourse and protection of fundamental rights for persons with a disability. Further, the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, *Article 19: Independent Living and Being Included the Community* sets out the right to live in the community with choices equal to others. It goes on to state this includes access to a range of in-home, residential and other community support services, including personal assistance necessary to support living and inclusion in the community.
- Program specific legislation, standards and in some cases contractual obligations on service providers also establish service standards and standards of care that are tailored to the service being provided. For example, the CLBC Standards for Home Sharing, adopted after a formal consultation process in 2007, are now used as provincial guidelines for all home sharing providers. Ministry of Health licensing, investigation and compliance mechanisms help ensure that care facilities comply with standards under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act and Residential Care Regulations*.

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 Date: June 24, 2013

- Government upholds and improves standards of care through the continuous evaluation and analysis of its own programs. For MSD, examples include the CLBC reviews and STAAD, as well as the Cross Ministry Transition Planning Protocol for Youth with Special Needs.

Individualized Funding (IF)

- IF is currently available as a funding option for Community Living BC (CLBC) clients under the Community Living Authority Act. CLBC has several hundred individuals using this mechanism either independently, directly, or through micro-boards or host agencies.
- The Services for Adults with Developmental Disabilities (STADD) project is tasked with implementing recommendations from the Deputy Minister's review of CLBC, which includes supporting greater utilization of IF. Enhanced access to IF will be incorporated into the integrated service delivery prototypes being piloted by STADD in the fall.
- Legislation to establish an IF funding model for all persons with a disability may not be appropriate however, as this funding model may not suit all services and all families. For example, the STADD project heard in community engagement sessions that many families want individualized services but do not want to take on the tasks and functions related to being an 'employer of record' under an IF arrangement. IF also places administrative, reporting and 'audit' requirements on families to ensure that funds are properly accounted for and spent on legitimate services.
- As of September 3, 2013, the Ministry for Children and Family Development is introducing a direct payment option for families with children aged 12 to 18 who are eligible for or are receiving or autism funding. This option can give families greater ability to purchase eligible services – such as those focusing on community based inclusion and recreational skills – to meet the needs of older children and youth and promote successful transitions to adulthood.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Employment and Labour Market Services Budget

KEY MESSAGES:

ELMSD BUDGET

s.13

BACKGROUND:

- The EPBC service delivery model leverages the infrastructure of the Employment Services Centres to deliver a one-stop access to employment supports and services for any eligible unemployed British Columbian.
- The number of clients accessing EPBC has been increasing steadily since the program implementation. The ministry is working with communities, stakeholders, and

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Contact: Allison Bond, ADM, Employment and Labour Market Services Division
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Date: June 17, 2013

contractors to ensure that more British Columbians are aware of employment services available to them through EPBC.

- The ministry is committed to ensuring that every British Columbian in need of employment receives services they require and are eligible for.

LMDA Funding

- B.C. spent a total of \$225M from the \$280M allocation for 2012/13, resulting in \$55M in federal dollars surplus at the end of the fiscal year 2012/13.
- Changes to the program model, combined with fewer people claiming EI in post-recession economy, contributed to the amount of LMDA savings in 2012/13.
- Clients who do not require extensive case management, can access self-serve areas, which include access to job search resources such as job vacancies, local labour market information, computers, self-assessment tools, and workshops.
- The ministry receives \$20.5 million annually in federal funds for Labour Market Development Agreement administration.

Provincial Funding

- B.C. spent a total of \$223 million from the \$280 million allocation for 2012/13, resulting in \$57 million surplus at the end of the fiscal year 2012/13.
- Changes to the program model contributed to the amount of provincial savings in 2012/13.
- The ministry has implemented strategies such as increasing the ratio of formal referrals for new income assistance clients from every third client, to one in every two clients.

LMA Funding

- In partnership with the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, the ministry plans to invest \$8.0 million in Labour Market Agreement funds in 2013/14 on employment-related initiatives. This is over and above the federal Labour Market Development Agreement funds and provincial budget. The additional \$8.0 million will be allocated to the following programs:
 - \$4.4 million to increase access to Assistive Technology for Persons with Disabilities;
 - \$1.3 million to the Specialized Community Assistance Program: Housing and Employment Sustainability Pilots;
 - \$2.3 million to the Employment Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities with a Focus on Developmental, Cognitive and Mental Disabilities, including Learning Disabilities;
- The ministry receives \$7.5 million under the LMA for Labour Market Development Agreement transition.

BUDGET SUMMARY:

Source of Funding	2012/13	2013/14
Labour Market Development Agreement annual baseline transfer	\$280.0	\$280.6
Employment Programs (provincial)	\$55.5	\$55.5
Labour Market Agreement funding for employment-related initiatives	\$8.0	\$8.0
Total Investment	\$343.5	\$344.1

Funding Allocation	2013/14
Provincial Employment Service Contracts	\$55.4
Federal Employment Service Contracts	\$221.2
Total ESC Commitment	\$276.6
Skills Development Employment Benefit	\$32.0
Research and Innovation	\$6.4
Labour Market Partnership	\$7.9

Community Employer Partnerships (CEP)	\$6.2
ELMSD R&I	\$7.0
Labour Market Agreement	\$8.0
Total Annual ELMSD Budget	\$344.1

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #51** – LMDA General – Employment General

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Employment and Labour Market Services Division -
Service Plan Performance Measures

KEY MESSAGES:

s.13

BACKGROUND:

- The Employment Labour Market Services Division (ELMSD) launched the new Employment Program of BC (EPBC) on April 2, 2012.
- The program is responsible for delivering a range of employment-related services under provincial and federal Labour Market Development Agreement mandates.
- The program is delivered primarily by 73 third-party contractors geographically located throughout the province.
- The Integrated Case Management (ICM) system is the primary system used by all third-party contractors, which enables the ministry to monitor performance.
- A new reporting system is being developed to provide better tools for performance monitoring. Baseline performance measures are being established for 2012/13.
- Each year the ministry conducts extensive strategic planning to determine goals, objectives and performance measures holding the ministry accountable to achieve outcomes.

ELMSD SERVICE PLAN PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Employment Program Ministry Service Plan

Performance Measure	2012/13 Baseline	2013/14 Target
# 4 - Percent of active claimants of the Employment Program of BC that receive case management services	Develop Baseline	Baseline + 2%
# 5 - Percent of Employment Program of BC case managed clients who receive employment and/or community attachment	Develop Baseline	30%

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #56** – Control Framework – Employment EPBC
- **Note #47** – EPBC Overview– Employment General
- **Note #58** – Employment Outcomes – Employment EPBC

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Employment Program of BC Overview

KEY MESSAGES:

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM OF BC OVERVIEW

s.13

BACKGROUND:

- The Employment Program of BC's design was based on extensive consultation with staff, service providers, advocacy groups and other stakeholders. Research was conducted to identify effective employment programming approaches in Canada and internationally.
- The integration of these programs and services was made possible with the signing of the Canada-BC Labour Market Development Agreement in February 2008.
- The Employment and Labour Market Services Division contract maximum for the Employment Program of BC is \$276.6 million in 2013/14, for 73 Employment Service Contracts throughout B.C.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #45** – Employment and Labour Market Services Budget – Employment General
- **Note #46** – ELMSD Service Plan Performance Measures
- **Note #51** – Labour Market Development Agreement
- **Note #53** – Apprenticeships - Employment Program of BC
- **Note #57** – CPAC and Changes to EPBC – Employment EPBC
- **Note #58** – Employment Outcomes – Employment EPBC
- **Note #62** – Specialized Populations – Employment EPBC

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Employment and Labour Market Service Division (ELMSD)
Facility Changes

KEY MESSAGES:

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ELMSD FACILITY CHANGES

BACKGROUND:

- As per the collective agreement, offices may be closed if staff are re-located within their geographic area, defined as 50 km radius, or 32km radius in the Capital Regional District (CRD) or Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD)
- In 2013-14, ELMSD has confirmed plans to vacate from the following offices

Region	City	Address	Notes
1	VICTORIA	771 Vernon Ave.	Move staff to 614 Humboldt (6th Flr)
3	PORT COQUITLAM	2755 Lougheed Highway	Move staff to Surrey or Abbotsford (staff choice)
3	SURREY	13450 102nd Ave.	Vacant Office
4	PENTICTON	254 Haynes St.	4 Staff to move to Kelowna office
5	PRINCE RUPERT	309 W. 2nd Ave.	Vacant Office

s.17

BUDGET:

Budget Centre	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14 Budget
	Budget	Expenditures	Budget	Expenditures	
Building Occupancy Charges	\$3.31 M	\$2.85 M	\$2.91 M	\$2.39 M	\$2.41 M

Data Source: Employment and Labour Market Services Division, Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Labour Market Agreement – Ministry Initiatives

KEY MESSAGES:

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LABOUR MARKET AGREEMENT – MINISTRY INITIATIVES

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BUDGET SUMMARY:

Initiative	Budget 12/13	Budget 13/14
Specialized CAP	\$1.3M	\$1.3M
Equipment and Assistive Technology	\$4.4M	\$4.4M
Individualized Employment Service – Specified Disabilities	\$2.3M	\$2.3M
Total	\$8.0M	\$8.0M

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities
(LMAPD)

KEY MESSAGES:

LABOUR MARKET AGREEMENT FOR
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

s.13

BACKGROUND:

- The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation (SDSI), as a representative at the Ministers Responsible for Social Services table, manages the LMAPD for B.C. The federal government is represented by the Ministry of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC).
- The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation coordinates accountability requirements, including the collection of budget and program indicators from Social Development and Social Innovation, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Advanced Education and Community Living British Columbia.

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- LMAPD funding is deposited to general revenue and is not directly attributed to specific programs.
- The federal government has expressed ongoing concerns with all provinces about LMAPD reporting. During the 2011 renewal process, the federal government made renewal of the agreement for all jurisdictions contingent on additional evaluation and reporting requirements.
- B.C. has taken Canada's reporting requirements very seriously and has taken steps to demonstrate this to the federal government. B.C. has met and continues to meet all of the reporting requirements under the Agreement.
- The current agreement expired on March 31, 2013. The Federal government made a budget announcement on March 21, 2013 that there would be a one-year renewal under the same terms as the current agreement. They also announced plans to renegotiate a new generation of LMAPD agreements beyond 2014.
- It is expected that the new generation of LMAPD agreements will include more rigorous reporting requirements from the federal government, including more direct linkages with employment outcomes for persons with disabilities.
- In anticipation of a one-year renewal, and as per previous reporting requirements, B.C. sent the 2013/14 Annual Plan to Canada on March 31, 2013 with an outline of B.C.'s estimated expenditures for the upcoming year. These expenditures were estimated at \$86,237,500.
- Canada sent B.C. a one-year renewal in early May 2013. The terms are the same as the previous agreement. In June 2013, B.C. requested an amended Agreement from the federal government to reflect the recent appointment of Minister McRae. The amended Agreement is expected by mid-July.
- The federal government release funds when there is a signed agreement, which is expected to happen during the summer of 2013.
- Discussions at the federal/provincial/territorial level indicate that the federal government is likely to approach B.C. in July 2013 to begin the 2014 LMAPD negotiations. These negotiations are expected to take 3-4 months.

BUDGET:

Budget Centre	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14 Budget
	Budget	Expenditures	Budget	Expenditures	
Provincial Expenditures (includes all Ministries)	\$96.3M	\$107.4	\$87.39M	\$102.1M	\$86.2M (Estimated)
Federal Funding	\$30.74M	\$30.74M	\$30.74M	\$30.74M	\$30.74M (Expected)

Data Source: Strategic Policy Branch, Policy and Research Division

- Differences in provincial expenditures from 11/12 and 12/13 are due to program reporting changes in the Ministry of Health. In the 12/13 fiscal year, the Ministry of Health reduced reported expenditures in Mental Health and Addictions for case management services for employment and reduced their total expenditures under the LMAPD from \$46,532,000 to \$33,432,000. The 2013/14 estimated expenditures have very slight decreases from SDSI, Health and Advanced Education – primarily due to program uptake or shifting in funding.

INTERJURISDICTIONAL COMPARISONS:

- With the Federal Budget announcement in March 2013, Canada announced its intention to extend all LMAPD agreements for one year. All provinces and territories have received renewals under the same terms and are all anticipating next steps.
- As the Co-Chair of the Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee under the Ministers Responsible for Social Services Forum, B.C. has taken a lead role in organizing LMAPD discussions with other provinces and territories to discuss approach and strategy for the upcoming 2014 negotiations.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

LABOUR MARKET DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

ISSUE: Labour Market Development Agreement

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

- Canada and British Columbia entered into a Labour Market Agreement (LMA) and Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) in 2008. In 2009, Employment Insurance Part II employment programming was transferred to provincial jurisdiction under the LMDA, which includes approximately \$280 million in annual federal transfers to support the provision of services and supports for unemployed job seekers.
- The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation is the lead ministry for LMDA. The Ministry of Jobs, Tourism, and Skills Training is responsible for LMA.
- British Columbia effectively managed the first three years of the LMDA transfer by fully investing federal LMDA funding and exceeding all performance targets, even during challenging labour market conditions created by the recession. In the fall 2009, the province launched a project to transform federal and provincial employment programming into an integrated Employment Program of British Columbia (EPBC).
- EPBC was launched on April 2, 2012, opening 85 WorkBC Employment Services Centres in communities across the province, administered through 73 contracts. This model replaced the ten separate programs administered by almost 400 contracts. The integrated program serves all unemployed British Columbians with a full suite of services and supports.
- Since launch, WorkBC Employment Services Centres have provided employment supports and services to more than 94,000 people.

- Approximately 82% of all people receiving services through the EPBC have been provided services through an employment case manager.
- The EPBC employment rate for people who have received and completed case managed services is approximately 47%.
- As the result of having an integrated program and using one case management system, the province now has very robust data to track and monitor performance, which far exceeds reporting capabilities that existed under the federal legacy programming.
- The LMDA has no expiry date. There is a two-year termination clause contained in the LMDA and the agreement may be amended at any time with the mutual consent of the parties.
- The federal budget announced on March 21, 2013 has a number of measures related to the labour market, including proposals to:
 - Maintain existing funding for Labour Market Development Agreements but to reopen the agreements "to reorient training toward labour market demand";
 - Continue the current funding envelope of \$500 million per year (across Canada) after the Labour Market Agreements expire at the end of 2013/14, but to radically change the terms of the agreements; and
 - Extend the Labour Market Agreements for Persons with Disabilities (LMDAPDs) for one year, until the end of 2013/14, while negotiating a "new generation" of agreements with "stronger accountability regimes" and terms that "better meet the employment needs of businesses and the employment prospects of persons with disabilities".
- The federal government has not yet advised provinces and territories on details associated with re-opening of the labour market agreements. B.C. recognizes an opportunity to work collaboratively with Canada on building a more robust and responsive framework for meeting provincial labour market needs.
- Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) has indicated openness to bilateral engagement on the LMDA in the coming months.
- The province's position in regards to the proposed LMDA renewal should include the following:
 - British Columbia and Canada collaborate on the development of clear interpretation parameters for the LMDA to realize additional flexibility to deliver provincially-focused programming in order to meet labour market needs;
 - British Columbia will be providing input to where LMDA flexibility is limited by EI legislation; and
 - British Columbia and Canada to jointly define performance measurements that reflect the successful outcomes of employment programming and focus on the goal of providing employment programming that meets the needs of the provincial labour market, job seekers, employers and communities.

- B.C. is committed to ongoing collaboration with the federal government in respect to the delivery of LMDA-funded services. In May 2013, B.C. was one of the first jurisdictions to sign an information sharing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) under the Connecting Canadians with Available Jobs initiative.
- The MOU will provide B.C., on a pilot basis, with data on Employment Insurance claimants, so individuals can be informed about job search services and supports available to them earlier in their claim.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #45** – ELMSD Budget – Employment General
- **Note #47** – Employment Program of BC Overview – Employment General
- **Note #61** – Services to Francophone Clients - Official Languages
Commissionaire Report

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: STEP JOB MATCH SERVICES

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

- STEP Job Match Services contract evolved out of JTST's STEP Program and the Job Match Pilot Initiative, which was initiated in response to the Feb 2012 Budget Speech.
- Skilled Trades Employment Program (STEP) background:
 - Has been operating since 2006 with a current contract between JTST and BCCA

STEP JOB MATCH SERVICES

- Focuses on helping individuals who are seeking jobs or training in apprentice Trades jobs and work in the construction industry
- BCCA has other STEP partners such as the Industry Training Authority
- Job Match Background:
 - Job Match Pilot Initiative jointly led by SDSI, JTST and the BC Construction Association
 - Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training signed a \$2.92M contract with the BC Construction Association
 - Pilot ran from Aug 2, 2012 – March 31, 2013 with target of placing 250 unemployed British Columbians into available jobs in the construction sector
 - Pilot concluded with 366 successful client placements, including 23 placements for income assistance clients
- Merging STEP and Job Match created a program that could serve all British Columbians and will create a more streamlined and efficient process for citizens.
- The current STEP Job Match contract with BC Construction Association is held by JTST.
- An MOU is in place between SDSI and JTST to transfer LMDA funding from SDSI to support the STEP Job Match program.

BUDGET:

Budget Centre	2013/14	
	Budget	Expenditures
LMA (JTST)	\$3.4M	TBD
LMDA (SDSI)	\$3.4M	TBD

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
ENGAGEMENT, PARTNERSHIP AND STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Apprenticeships – Employment Program of BC

KEY MESSAGES:

APPRENTICESHIPS – EPBC

s.13

BACKGROUND:

- Apprenticeship is a form of post-secondary education that combines paid work based training (about 85% of training) with technical in class training or shop setting training (about 15% of training).
- On April 2, 2012, the Province launched the Employment Program of British Columbia. This integrated system of employment services and supports is delivered through a network of WorkBC Employment Services Centres. All Apprentice supports and services are accessible through these Centres.
- Apprentices are funded under the Canada - BC Labour Market Development Agreement.
- Supports for Apprentices provide Employment Insurance Benefits to eligible registered apprentices who are temporarily laid off, specifically to attend the school components of their apprenticeship program.
- The Employment Program of BC provides financial supports to apprentices including living supports and specific incremental training related costs.
- All training must be approved by the Industry Training Authority.
- Apprentices must be registered with the Industry Training Authority for training to be recognized.
- The Industry Training Authority is the provincial Crown Agency responsible for overseeing the industry training and apprenticeship system in B.C.
- Successful completion of both program components along with examinations is required to become a certified tradesperson. The length of apprenticeship can range from one to five years with the majority requiring four years to complete.
- Apprentices who are employer sponsored can be laid off their jobs to attend the training components of their program. Apprentices eligible for Employment Insurance will receive living supports from Part I and Part II of the *Employment Insurance Act*. Additional funding for specific incremental training related costs, if required, is provided from Part II of the *Employment Insurance Act* under the Labour Market Development Agreement.
- Unemployed Apprentices whose Employment Insurance claim has expired may be eligible to receive funding through the Employment Program of BC
- Apprentices who are in the traditional trades (i.e. plumbers & welders) are not required to be case managed by a WorkBC Employment Services Centre.
- The ITA has designated a few programs that do not attach individuals to employers but instead to training providers. Examples of these programs are hairdressers and cooks. Because there is no guaranteed work with these positions like there is for more traditional programs, they will require case management prior to being considered for approval for training and financial supports.

Implementation of a Centralized Unit

- Effective November 28, 2011, all Apprentice applications across the province are processed through a Centralized Unit.
- The goal of the Centralized Unit is to provide timely, consistent service delivery for all client transactions and to support the field offices and the Employment Program of British Columbia.

Implementation of the online Apprentice application program, Apprentice Online Portal:

- Effective February 6, 2012, a web-based online application program, Apprentice Online Portal, was launched.
- The Apprentice Online Portal is available to Apprentice clients for input of applications for courses. These clients submit their Applications via the Apprentice Online Portal application and processing and payment of supports is an automated process. This client group do not have direct interaction with the Employment Services Centres as they do not require case management services.
- The Centralized Unit provides support to Apprentices in accessing and navigating the Apprentice Online Portal and responding to any queries Apprentices may have regarding completing the application.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #47** – EPBC Overview – Employment General

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: BC Centre for Employment Excellence

KEY MESSAGES:

s.13

BC CENTRE FOR EMPLOYMENT EXCELLENCE

BACKGROUND:

- The Centre provides a variety of resources including:
 - a research and development program
 - resources aimed at supporting the work of career practitioners across the province
 - a blog/discussion forum for stakeholders
 - a system to share best practices in the employment industry
 - links to relevant events and conferences
- The Centre is an investment in employment research and innovation under the Employment Program of BC.
- In its first year of operation, the Centre focussed primarily on the needs of career practitioners, as identified through extensive consultations with stakeholders during the first months of the Centre's operation.
- In their second year, the Centre will more firmly establish their programming and services for employers.

- The Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) was the contractor selected through the request for proposal process. SRDC is a national non-profit research organization with a strong presence in British Columbia. It specializes in social demonstration projects that test government policies and programs.

BUDGET:

- Over the initial three years of operation, the BC Centre for Employment Excellence will receive \$2M in funding, provided through the Canada-B.C. Labour Market Development Agreement.
- The Centre will be in its second contract year beginning June, 2013. It will have access to a \$1.5M research fund over three years that will support research into emerging and best practices intended to strengthen employment policy, programs and practice.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Client Volumes

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

- 20,000 clients were transitioned from legacy provincial and federal employment programs into the EPBC.
- For the first few months of the new EPBC program, client volumes declined as the focus was primarily on supporting transitioning clients to ensure no loss of service. Client volumes have been increasing steadily month over month, and have now surpassed pre-transition levels.
- The ministry is committed to ensuring that every British Columbian in need of employment receives services they require and are eligible for.
- The ministry continues to work with its stakeholders to increase client participation to meet the needs of unemployed British Columbians. Strategies include:
 - Increasing the ratio of formal referrals for new income assistance clients from every third client, to one in every two clients.
 - Working with the EPBC contractors to develop strategies for improving awareness about EPBC services at a community level.
 - Working with Human Resources and Skills Development Canada on a pilot to reach new EI Part I claimants earlier during the claim to link them with employment supports and services.
 - Promoting EPBC services through an awareness and information campaign.
- The ministry has formed working groups with EPBC contractors for Specialized Populations and Client volumes to develop strategies to increase client volumes and to address unique challenges associated with delivering services in rural and remote communities.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Control Framework - Employment Program of BC

KEY MESSAGES:

CONTROL FRAMEWORK - EPBC

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BACKGROUND:

- To maintain service quality and financial accountability of the EPBC, the ministry conducts pre- and post-payment reviews of contractor invoices and also audits

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achievement of all contracted deliverables including the quality of program and service delivery. The ministry has established in-house capability to provide leadership to these quality assurance functions.

- A comprehensive quality assurance framework for the Program includes the following activities:
 - **Service Monitoring On-site Reviews** – With the implementation of the Integrated Case Management System, the ministry is able to access a wide range of information to support quality assurance activities.
 - **On-site reviews** - Onsite reviews in contract service delivery facilities are ongoing as appropriate. This also includes compilation and analysis of direct client feedback. Ministry staff conducted a round of Business Foundation Reviews in the summer of 2012, several months after the program launch, to ensure that service delivery facilities were in place and operating.
 - **Annual LMDA audit** - The Auditor General will conduct an annual LMDA Audit for each fiscal year. An audited financial statement is submitted to the federal government on or before June 31 of every year.
 - **Other audits** - In exceptional cases, the ministry may require an external audit of a contractor's performance to provide independent assurance on performance concerns identified through the ministry's monitoring and review activities.
 - **Contract Expenditure Controls** – Through service monitoring and on-site reviews, contractors will demonstrate to the ministry that they have effective expenditure controls in place to provide assurance that the contractor can manage within the contract limits.
 - **Program and Contract Performance Measuring and Reporting** – The ministry has established performance measures for the Employment Program of BC as a whole and for individual contracts. At the end of the two year monitoring period, the ministry will be establishing targets and service levels for the remainder of the contract term.
 - **Client Surveys** – The ministry may administer client surveys to measure overall client satisfaction, ease of access, etc. Contractors are responsible for informing clients about the survey and provide access to the survey as required by the ministry.
 - **Program Evaluation** – Post the two-year monitoring period, the ministry will undertake program evaluation activities with the scope and specific requirements being determined by the ministry. The ministry will provide the contractors with notice of an evaluation.
 - **Contractor and Service Provider Supports** – The ministry continues to support contractors and service providers in program delivery and ongoing operations.

- Training – the ministry provides contractors with training that supports the delivery of the program and related operational processes and requirements as well as the use of the Integrated Case Management and the Corporate Financial Management System.
 - Program Support Materials – The ministry continues to develop relevant materials to support program modifications. This includes a policy and procedures manual; operational guidelines; user guides; relevant tools and resources; an Extranet site; and, a transition strategy. Where possible avoid sub-sub points
- A Governance Framework comprised of five unique panels/committees has been established to ensure Program objectives are met:
 - Sub-topics have hollow-point
 - Two external Advisory Panels, including one focused on Specialized Populations (arms length to government)
 - The Corporate Program Advisory Committee (ministry and Employment Program of BC contractors)
 - The Ministry Program Steering Committee (ministry staff)
 - The Contract Management Committee (ministry and Employment Program of BC contractors)
 - The ministry supports the Centre for Employment Excellence, which provides a single coordination point for research and innovation in the area of employment programming. Where possible avoid sub-sub points
 - Issues identified through quality assurance reviews are raised through the Governance Framework, starting with the Contract Management Committees. Contractors are required to provide the ministry with an action plan to address any noted deficiencies and the ministry monitors the Contractor's progress in implementing remedies.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #46** – ELMSD Service Plan Performance Measures
- **Note #60** – Governance Framework – Employment Program of BC
- **Note #62** – Specialized Populations – Employment Program of BC

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: CPAC and Changes to the Employment Program of BC (EPBC)

KEY MESSAGES:

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CPAC AND CHANGES TO THE EPBC

BACKGROUND:

- In the first few months of operation, contractors and the ministry identified a number of system-related issues, the most critical of which were soon rectified through system enhancements in the summer of 2012.
- Through further consultations with contractors, the ministry was able to identify a number of program-related issues, including the payment model, which needed attention.
- In August 2012, the ministry's Employment and Labour Market Services Division staff and contractors formed 11 collaborative working groups to address these specific program issues.
- These working groups made a series of recommendations to the EPBC Program Steering Committee in October 2012.

- There were three key concerns associated with the payment model that were raised by the contractors:
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- Based on extensive analysis and consultations with the contractors, the ministry made decisions on program enhancements, including changes to the financial model.
- As a result of this work, a number of enhancements will be implemented July 2, 2013, including:

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CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #47** - Employment Program of BC Overview

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Employment Outcomes

KEY MESSAGES:

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EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

BACKGROUND:

- In February 2009 the ministry accepted responsibility for the management of the Canada – BC Labour Market Development Agreement allowing greater flexibility to adapt employment programming to suit the evolving needs of unemployed British Columbians.
- The new EPBC was launched in April 2012 as a single employment program to meet the multiple needs of British Columbians. EPBC integrates services from 4 previous provincial programs and 6 federal employment programs.
- Since program launch, the average wage paid to people placed into a job directly through the EPBC was \$15.54 an hour.

- Since the launch of the Employment Program of BC (EPBC) on April 2, 2012, over 95,000 British Columbians have received services. Of these:
 - 82 per cent received services through an employment case manager;
 - 10 per cent are non case managed apprentices; and
 - the balance benefited from self serve services available through EPBC¹.
- Since launch, 17,043 people have achieved employment outcomes or approximately 47 per cent of these found employment.
- Specialized Populations (eg. Aboriginal, Persons with a Disability, Immigrant, Rural, Youth) are well represented as 64 per cent of the overall EPBC client population.
- The outcome rate for clients from Specialized Populations is 44 per cent.
- An outcome comparison of EPBC to legacy programs is difficult due to different measurement approaches and limited performance tracking abilities that existed under the legacy federally funded employment programs. On average, across all of the legacy programs, employment outcomes were approximately 30 per cent.
- Under the EPBC contracts, contractors are paid an outcome fee for people who have achieved and sustained employment (for 52 weeks). Payments are made 13 months after employment outcome is achieved. Payments made to date include:

Invoice Month	Number of Contractors	Number of Clients who have sustained employment for 52 weeks	Amount Paid
May/2013	59	257	\$ 19,525
June/2013	60	373	\$ 26,750

- Calculation is based on the rate for average length of time in the program multiplied by the number of clients with sustained employment.

Fee Per Client	Length of time in the program (Months)			
	Tier 1 Avg.	Tier 2 Avg.	Tier 3 Avg.	Tier 4 Avg.
\$75	0 – 2	0 – 3	0 – 4	0 – 6
\$50	2 – 4	3 – 6	4 – 8	6 – 12
\$25	4 – 6	6 – 9	8 – 12	12 – 18
\$0	Over 6	Over 9	Over 12	Over 18

¹ The total number of self serve clients is greater. Not all self serve clients are counted for reporting purposes as they may not require services for which a case is created in the Integrated Case Management system.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #46** – ELMSD Service Plan Performance Measures
- **Note #62** – Specialized Populations – Employment EPBC

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: External Advisory Panels

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

- A Governance Framework comprised of five unique panels/committees was established to ensure the objectives of the Employment Program of BC (EPBC) are met. The framework consists of:
 - The **Ministry Program Steering Committee**, which includes the executive team of the Employment and Labour Market Services Division and is responsible for strategic direction and management of the EPBC.
 - The **External Advisory Panel**, which is comprised of knowledgeable individuals from across the province with experience and expertise in employing or delivering employment services. The panel provides information and advice to the Ministry Program Steering Committee to assist with governance and decision making and recommending improvements to EPBC policy and practice for the ministry's consideration that will improve the outcomes for all job seekers in British Columbia.
 - The **Expert Advisory Panel on Specialized Populations**, which is comprised of individuals with experience and expertise in employing or delivering employment services to specialized populations. The panel provides information and advice to the ministry to assist in ensuring the Program meets the employment service needs of specialized populations.

EXTERNAL ADVISORY PANELS

- The **Corporate Program Advisory Committee**, which serves as a forum for the Ministry Program Steering Committee, the program's contractors and key operations branch staff to meet and consult about the program.
- The **Contract Management Committees**, which consist of ministry staff and contractor staff that provide an oversight function of the EPBC contracts in each local catchment area across the province.
- Recruitment of the External Advisory Panel and the Expert Advisory Panel on Specialized Populations was conducted through the B.C. Board Resourcing and Development Office. The inaugural meetings were held in person in June 2012. In person meetings are scheduled four times per year with additional meetings held by conference call.
- The first annual report profiling the work done by the two external panels is expected to be submitted to the ministry in July 2013.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #60** – Governance Framework – Employment Program of BC
- **Note #62** – Specialized Populations - Employment Program of BC

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Governance Framework - Employment Program of BC

KEY MESSAGES:

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GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK - EPBC

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BACKGROUND:

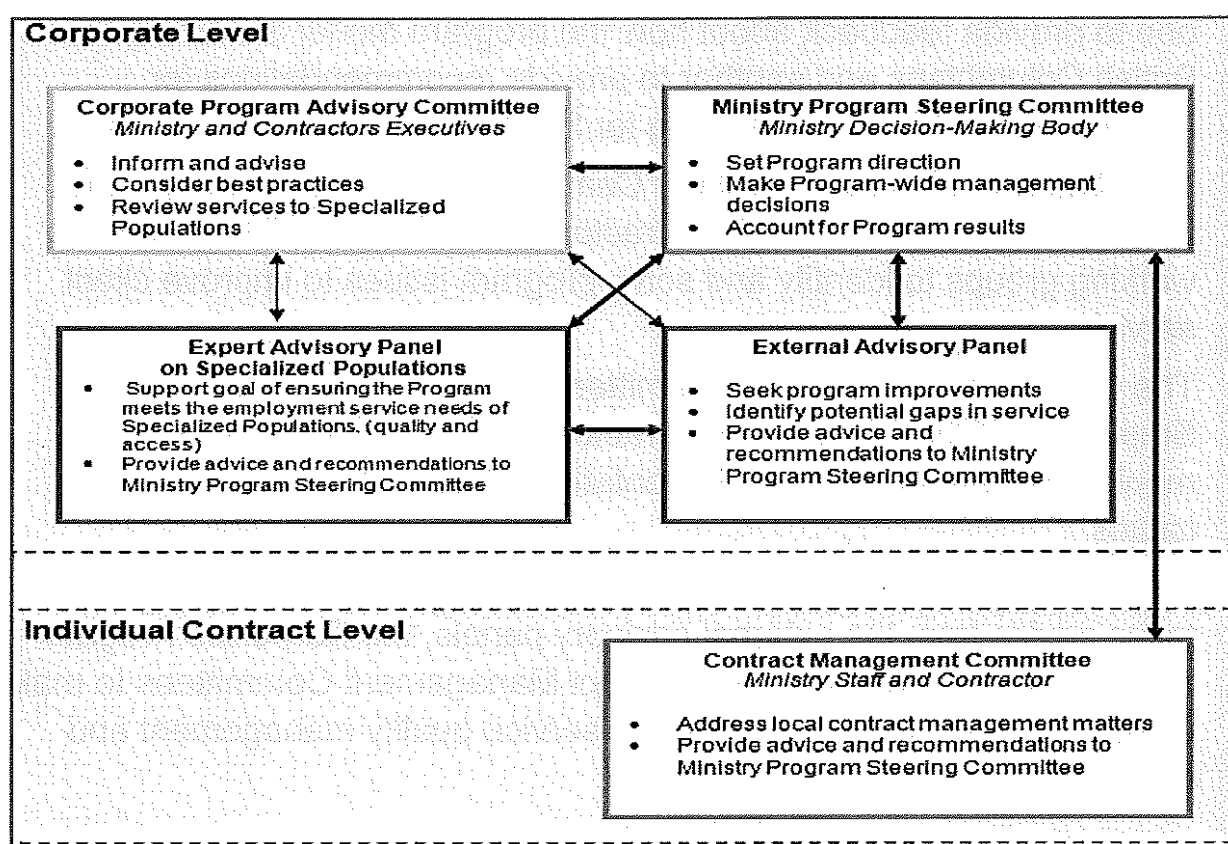
- The governance structure is designed to support the Employment Program of BC and ensure:
 - **Awareness:** Increased ease of access to, and awareness of services so clients are able to recognize and understand the intent and purpose of the program and its services. This also assists clients to have increased access to consistent information and messaging, regardless of the service provider from whom they receive services.

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- **Service Quality:** Greater consistency in applying policy and procedures. Clients have access to high quality services, for which the policies are to be applied in the same way, regardless of where they are accessed in the province.
- **Consistent Client Experience:** Enhanced consistency and improvement of the client experience. Clients of the Employment Program of BC are to share a similar experience and process which includes physical and functional accessibility.
- **Specialized Populations are Served:** The Employment Program of BC meets the employment needs of specialized populations. Sub-topics have hollow-point

Governance Structure Overview



CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note # 56** – Control Framework - Employment Program of BC
- **Note # 59** – External Advisory Council – Employment Program of BC
- **Note # 61** – Services to Francophone Clients - Official Languages Commissionaire Report
- **Note # 62** – Specialized Populations – Employment Program of BC

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

**ISSUE: EPBC services to Francophone clients – Official Languages
Commissioner Report**

KEY MESSAGES:

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**EPBC SERVICES TO FRANCOPHONE CLIENTS –
OFFICIAL LANGUAGES COMMISSIONER REPORT**

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June 20, 2013

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BACKGROUND:

- In 2011, a group of francophone service providers who held contracts to deliver employment services prior to the launch of the Employment Program of BC (EPBC), filed a complaint with the Office of the Commissioner for Official Languages (OCOL) alleging that the proposed EPBC model didn't meet the needs of francophone job seekers.
- Ministry representatives, including then Minister Stephanie Cadieux, met with francophone organization representatives on numerous occasions to consider their concerns and ensure they were addressed in the program model. These organizations received an official response to their concerns prior to the launch of the new program. The response detailed how the concerns had been addressed in the EPBC.
- EPBC was launched on April 2, 2012, replacing ten provincially and federally-funded employment programs and introducing an integrated program model with 85 WorkBC centres across British Columbia.
- In September 2012, the OCOL completed an initial investigation and concluded in a preliminary report that the French services provided by the EPBC service providers were not sufficient and claimed that there was a loss of services since the changeover.
- The final report by the Commissioner was delivered by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) in May 2013. HRSDC is currently working on the final response, which is expected by the end of June. HRSDC, Service Canada and the provinces are working to ensure issues raised by the Commissioner have been appropriately addressed.
- The goal of the EPBC is to provide all unemployed British Columbians who are eligible to work in B.C.—including francophone job seekers—with access to a full range of employment services and supports. All of the WorkBC ESC's are expected to provide a welcoming, safe and accessible environment.
- To date, 752 people who self-identified as francophone have received EPBC services. As of the end of May 2013, 527 francophone job seekers were actively receiving services through EPBC.

- Under EPBC, service providers are responsible for providing:
 - Direct French language services for Francophones where there is significant demand: Victoria, Nanaimo, Vancouver, Abbotsford, Chilliwack, Kelowna, Kamloops, Penticton and Prince George.
 - Translation and interpretation services to meet the needs of job seekers in their community.
 - Support to eligible job seekers that have been identified as needing English as second language (ESL) training.
- WorkBC Employment Services Centres in areas of significant demand are expected to have French-speaking staff that can serve clientele.
- EPBC contractors operating the WorkBC centres in the communities of significant demand, have contractual obligations to deliver services and provide information in both official languages.
- The ministry conducts ongoing service quality and performance reviews to ensure that all EPBC contractors are operating as prescribed by the terms of contract. Any noted issues are addressed through the established governance framework and contract management practices.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #51** – LMDA General – Employment General
- **Note #60** – Governance Framework – Employment EPBC
- **Note #62** – Specialized Populations – Employment EPBC

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
PROGRAM MANAGEMENT BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Specialized Populations – Employment Program of BC

KEY MESSAGES:

SPECIALIZED POPULATIONS - EPBC

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BACKGROUND:

- For the purposes of the new employment program, specialized populations include:
 - People with Disabilities;
 - Immigrants;
 - Francophones;
 - Multi-barriered clients;
 - Survivors of violence and/or abuse;
 - Aboriginal peoples;
 - Rural and remote populations; and,
 - Youth
- Concern has been expressed by stakeholders involved with specialized populations that the new program model allows members of these populations to fall through the cracks.
 - In the previous model, specialized populations had access to specialized employment centres, which provided exclusive services. Access to these services, however, varied highly from community to community, resulting in inconsistency and inequality. There were a number of communities across the province that did not offer specialized services at all.
 - To address concerns raised around the EPBC, we are continuing to work with our service providers to make sure they are able to effectively assist all job seekers who come through their door.
 - Service provider contracts are being monitored to ensure that they are delivering on their commitments, including quality service delivery to specialized populations.
- The new program model ensures that, regardless of where an individual lives, they will have access to the same suite of quality services and supports. The integrated model also allows for a more flexible and individual approach to service delivery, further benefiting all clients, including those from a specialized population.
- The program ensures that employment supports are available to clients who are assessed as needing them to reduce or remove the impact of an individual's disability or barrier in employment. Such supports include: job coaching/retention support, disability supports, assistive technology, workshops, access to skills training, and

more. There are also some exceptions to the program definition of “unemployed” for individuals with disabilities in order to meet individual employment needs and circumstances.

- An external advisory panel is in place to help ensure that specialized populations are receiving the services they need under the Employment Program of BC.
- In March of 2013, the ministry hosted a three-day symposium designed to educate, inform and equip WorkBC service providers with strategies for assisting individuals with specialized employment needs to successfully find—and keep—a job.
- The BC Centre for Employment Excellence, which was launched in January 2013, provides a single coordination point for research to connect both the B.C. employment services sector and the employer community with the best and emerging information about employment and training programs, practices and resources.
- The Centre offers a website, articles, training and other opportunities to enhance knowledge and practice among its key stakeholders, with the aim of improving employment outcomes for all job seekers in B.C. The Centre has garnered attention nation-wide.
- The ministry is planning to support additional initiatives this fiscal year for people with disabilities and youth.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #47** – Employment Program of BC Overview
- **Note #56** – Control Framework - Employment Program of BC
- **Note #58** – Employment Outcomes
- **Note #59** – External Advisory Council – Employment Program of BC
- **Note #60** – Governance Framework - Employment Program of BC
- **Note #61** - EPBC services to Francophone clients – Official Languages Commissioner Report

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
MANAGEMENT SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Cooperative Gains in the Social Sector

KEY MESSAGES:

**COOPERATIVE GAINS IN THE SOCIAL
SECTOR**

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BACKGROUND:

- The Community Social Services Employers' Association (CSSEA) is the accredited bargaining agent for the approximately 200 employers in the social services sector. Unionized employees in the sector fall into three bargaining units – Aboriginal Services, Community Living Services, and General Services. Bargaining occurs between CSSEA and the Community Social Services Bargaining Sector (CSSBA), which is an association of the eight unions operating in the sector, of which BCGEU is the largest.

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- CSSEA represents the portion of the unionized sector where service delivery agencies (Agencies) receive more than \$250,000 in funding from the Province. In most cases the funding is from multiple contracts and multiple funding ministries and/or funding agencies such as Community Living BC. In addition, there are non-CSSEA Agencies providing similar or the same services in communities, who do not meet the criteria to be represented by CSSEA. There is past precedent to provide funding to both CSSEA and non-CSSEA agencies for benefits related cost increases.
- The total labour cost for CSSEA, including excluded employees and management, is approximately \$600 million which means that every 1 per cent increase in general compensation costs is approximately \$6 million. s.17

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- CSSEA and the unions comprising the CSSBA reached a two-year collective agreement for Community Living Services and General Services for the period between April 1, 2012 and March 31, 2014. Ratification was reached in late April 2013.
- The agreement was achieved under the provincial government's cooperative gains mandate and provides for an increase in compensation found through savings identified in cooperation with the CSSBA. It provides:
 - A wage increase for all employees of 1.5 per cent on April 1, 2013 and 1.5 per cent on January 1, 2014; an extra 1 per cent wage increase for all step 1 employees on April 1, 2013; and a labour market adjustment review for all General Service and Community Living classifications.
- The funding ministries submitted and received approval from the 2012 Cooperative Gains Savings Officer Designate of its Cooperative Gains Savings Plan (Savings Plan) in relation to the CSSEA and the community social services sector. As part of the approval:
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- The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation's ADM for Management Services has been identified as the sectoral lead for this initiative.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Debt Collection

KEY MESSAGES:

DEBT COLLECTION

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BACKGROUND:

- BC Employment and Assistance legislation requires clients to repay debt owed to the Province due to overpayments or receipt of repayable income assistance.
- Pursuant to the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, the ministry is entitled to reimbursement of income assistance paid to clients who have been sponsored as family class immigrants. The sponsor is liable for these debts.
- The ministry is responsible for all matters related to the establishment of debt, while the Ministry of Finance is responsible for all matters related to debt collection.
- As of March 31, 2013, ministry clients and sponsors owed the ministry \$147 million. These debts are a result of the following types of overpayments and repayable benefits:
 - \$103.6 million or 70% in client overpayments;
 - \$18.9 million or 13% in sponsorship debt;
 - \$17.8 million or 12% in utility and security deposits;
 - \$6.7 million or 5% in repayable hardship benefits; and

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- The ministry recovers debt in two primary ways:
 - Automatic deductions to client assistance payments (which resulted in fiscal year 2012/13 payments of \$11.2M or 7.6% of outstanding debts); and
 - Collection by the Ministry of Finance and Revenue Services of British Columbia (which resulted in fiscal year 2012/13 payments of \$3.8M or 2.6% of outstanding debts).
- Based on past collection rates, the ministry expects to recover \$44.7 million or about 30.4% of the \$147.0 million debt, summarized by the following table:

	10 year avg recovery rate	\$ expected to be recovered
Client overpayments	23%	\$23.7M
Sponsorship	34%	\$6.4M
Security deposits	69%	\$12.3M
Repayable hardship	34%	\$2.3M

- Automatic deductions begin at \$10/month for overpayments and are \$20/month for repayable security deposits.
- When clients leave income assistance, any remaining debt is referred to Revenue Services of British Columbia.
- Revenue Services of British Columbia collects most of the ministry's client debt; sponsorship debt and miscellaneous accounts are collected directly by the Ministry of Finance.
- As of March 31, 2013 there were 18,812 accounts in debt collection with Revenue Services of British Columbia totaling \$33.7M. Of that total, 437 debts totaling \$8.5M were established by court order, of which 362 totaling \$7.0M were obtained through fraud convictions. Another 1,045 are sponsorship accounts.

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- Any write-offs over \$5,000 must be approved by the Comptroller General. Write-offs under \$5,000 must be approved by the ministry's Chief Financial Officer.
- Debt can be extinguished when a settlement is reached or the debt, it is discharged in bankruptcy, or has not seen a payment or acknowledgment in six years (statue barred). Once debt is extinguished, it is no longer collectible.

- In 2012/13, the ministry extinguished \$4.9 million in statute barred debt.
- A primary consideration of the ministry is dealing with client concerns efficiently, effectively and fairly:
 - The ministry explains debts and the debt collection process to clients during eligibility reviews;
 - Clients are asked to sign written acknowledgements only of their rights and the fact that they understand those rights;
 - Clients are not asked to agree with ministry decisions regarding overpayments;
 - Client questions regarding the origin of debt are addressed by the ministry; and,
 - Questions regarding the collection process are addressed by the Ministry of Finance or Revenue Services of British Columbia, depending on which is administering the debt collection on the file.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #72** – Sponsorship Default Recovery Program

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: ELMSD Workforce

KEY MESSAGES:

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ELMSD WORKFORCE

BACKGROUND:

- ELMSD is responsible for the administration and management of federal and provincial employment programs. Federal programs are administered under the authority of the Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA).
- ELMSD receives administrative funding from the federal government of \$20.535M annually. This funding is separate from program funding which supports client service delivery through our 73 employment contracts.
- ELMSD has also received funding from the Labour Market Agreement (LMA) to support the transition of labour market programming. LMA administrative funding varies annually and expires in 2014/15. The following illustrates ELMSD administrative funding from 2012/13 to 2014/15:

Funding Source	2012/13 (\$000)	2013/14 (\$000)	2014/15 (\$000)
LMDA	20,535	20,535	20,535
LMA Transition Funding	9,000	7,500	Nil
Total	29,535	28,035	20,535

- Since 2009, ELMSD has engaged in a budget reduction process to create efficiencies and ensure administrative costs are reduced wherever possible. Similarly, ELMSD has been reducing its overall staff complement through attrition. The result of these strategies has been significant, including a reduction in overall staff complement of almost 20%, and annual reductions in administrative costs resulting in \$4M under-expenditure in 2012/13 (based on projections).

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- An all staff meeting is scheduled for June 26, during which organizational changes will be announced and a process for implementation of the new structure detailed.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Family and Youth Partnership Pilot Project

KEY MESSAGES:

FAMILY AND YOUTH PARTNERSHIP PILOT PROJECT

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BACKGROUND:

- Family and Youth Partnership project was officially launched in April 2012. Since then, the project has engaged over 250 clients. The project is currently working with 190 young families and youth transitioning from care.
- The project
 - Has established dedicated key workers to work collaboratively with Family and Youth Partnership clients to connect them to necessary employment services and supports to achieve better outcomes for themselves and their families.
 - Has actively connected 81 clients to date with preparatory programs, education or employment suitable for their stage of readiness for employment and independence.
 - Has assisted 40 clients to reduce dependency on income assistance and increase their independence, to the point of being able to leave income assistance.
- The program is entirely voluntary, and is meant to attract clients who have the desire, but need assistance to develop their skills, connect to the programs available, and eventually to transition off of income assistance.
- While the focus of the project is employment and supporting young clients to reach economic independence and stability, the project will also focus on assisting the clients to access other community services and supports for themselves or their children, such as childhood development programs, health and education.
- Ministry teams are making strong connections in the communities, building excellent partnerships, and have been very successful in engaging clients.
- Family and Youth Partnership is based on the lessons learned, relationships developed, creation of integration teams and from service delivery model of the Homelessness Intervention Project.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #69** – Homelessness Intervention Project (HIP) Final Report

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Government Non Profit Initiative (GNPI)

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

- GNPI is led by a cross-sector Leadership Council, which is co-chaired by the Deputy Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation and the CEO of the Vancouver Foundation, and includes a network of over 1000 agencies from across the province.
- In addition to the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation, the Ministries of Children and Family Development; Community, Sport and Cultural Development; Health; Justice; and Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training also participate in the Government Non Profit Initiative.
- The GNPI is also supported by a cross-sector Council Office.
- The interdependence of the government and non profit sectors means that neither can be successful without the other. GNPI recognizes the fact that success depends on a strong relationship and a more strategic approach to selecting and investing in priorities.

GOVERNMENT NON PROFIT INITIATIVE (GNPI)

- Comparable strategies to enhance the relationship between the provincial government and the non-profit sector have been implemented in Alberta, Ontario and New Brunswick.
- The 2013/14 estimated cost for the GNPI Secretariat is \$311,000, which includes government's contribution to the operating budget of the GNPI, consultations and staff salaries. The Vancouver Foundation, as the non profit lead, and also makes financial and in-kind contributions.
- The government is well-informed about non profit concerns with respect to contracting for services. The sector would like more multi-year funding (rather than funding for single projects or in one-year cycles) and the ability to recover what it sees as the full cost of service delivery. The financial stability and sustainability of key service partners is important, as is the responsibility to manage taxpayer dollars responsibly.
- The GNPI currently has a number of working groups focusing on specific aspects of the government/non profit relationship, such as contract reporting requirements, full-cost financial modelling, cross-sectoral mentoring, and shared learning opportunities.
- GNPI's accomplishments include the following:
 - Facilitating a \$5 million Labour Market Partnership Agreement (with the Vancouver Foundation) to support non profit sector capacity building
 - Facilitating a \$611,000 Labour Market Partnership Agreement (with the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres) to address human resource challenges within Aboriginal non-profit agencies
 - Successful completion of Mentoring Our Rising Executives (MORE), the first cross-sector mentoring program (plans are underway to expand the program).
 - Initiating a research project with the University of Victoria on regional and community cross-sector network capacity.
 - Development of cross sector recommendations to:
 - ensure non-profit agencies have the tools and resources they need to determine the full cost of delivering a service and respond effectively to government Requests for Proposals (Full Cost Financial Modelling)
 - ensure contract reporting captures outcomes, in addition to outputs, in order to fully describe the impact of service delivery
 - Development and implementation of provincial cross-sector procurement training
 - Three Summits (2008 – 2011), at which government and non profit leaders shared challenges and explored joint solutions.
 - Regional Roundtables in eight communities (Abbotsford, Cranbrook, Kelowna, Nanaimo, Prince George, Victoria and Vancouver).

BUDGET:

Budget Centre	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14 Budget
	Budget	Expenditures	Budget	Expenditures	
Government Non Profit Initiative			\$0.3 M		\$0.3 M

Data Source: Branch, Division or Ministry

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
MANAGEMENT SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Healthcare Benefit Trust

KEY MESSAGES:

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HEALTHCARE BENEFIT TRUST

BACKGROUND:

- The Healthcare Benefit Trust is a not-for-profit organization that administers employee benefits to over 400 member organizations in acute health care, community care, community social services and other specialty health care services throughout B.C. and the Yukon.
- Healthcare Benefit Trust currently provides benefits for about 95,000 employees, including over 6,000 disabled employees (active long-term disability claims) as of March 31, 2013.
- At the time of joining the Healthcare Benefit Trust, employers agree to fund their portion of any existing deficit when they terminate their membership in the Trust; however, several members have withdrawn without providing this funding.
- These groups have obtained coverage from other providers and have stopped making contributions for their share of the Healthcare Benefit Trust deficit, thereby weakening the pool.
- Failure to collect these obligations means an added liability and potential hardship for those employer members who continue to remain with the trust as they will now have to absorb that added liability.
- Payment of the exit levy is required to protect the ongoing benefits of disabled employees that remain covered by the Trust through Long Term Disability, ensures equity amongst the Trust's remaining members and protects overall integrity of the Trust itself.
- This provision has been in place since the inception of the Trust. The payment is now referred to as an exit levy. The exit levy payment is calculated in an equitable and transparent manner, validated by external sources, that is consistent with industry practice.
- 105 organizations of the Healthcare Benefit Trust have withdrawn from the Trust without paying their portion of the existing trust pool deficit through an exit levy. Sixty-One of these organizations are members of the Community and Social Services Employers Association and 44 are from the Health Employers Association of BC Affiliates and Permitted Employers Groups.
- In the summer of 2012, after extensive consultations between Government and the CEO Network representing sector agencies, HBT agreed to provide a 10-year payment plan for the full value of the assessed exit levies, plus an interest charge. Payment of the exit levy is required to protect the ongoing benefits of disabled employees that remain covered by the Trust through LTD; ensuring equity amongst HBT's remaining members and protecting overall integrity of the Trust itself.

- Government further attempted to address the concerns of CCSEA agencies by:
 - Creating working groups, with representation from HBT, CSSEA (and/or its agencies) and government, to explore ways to reduce benefit costs to CSSEA employers while still providing appropriate coverage to CSSEA agency employees;
 - Working with HBT and CSSEA agencies to develop approaches that maintain the ongoing financial viability of the HBT while minimizing costs to its CSSEA clients;
 - Securing agreement between funders and HBT to provide a ten-year payment plan to exiting agencies to recover the full value of the assessed exit levies;
 - Providing for flexibility in approach to identifying funds to pay for exit levies on an agency-by-agency basis; and,
 - Working with HBT to terminate the existing legal actions under way.
- For Community and Social Services Employers' Association (CSSEA) agencies, annual paybacks will range from just over \$10,000 to approximately \$65,000 with the majority being at the lower end. Funding sources (CFD and CLBC) would work with CSSEA agencies around how to adjust contracts on an individual basis to remit the owed amounts to HBT without any impact on service.
- In October 2012, the Ministry of Social Development confirmed with CSSEA agencies that those that have left the Trust should work with their funding ministry/agency to determine how the exit levies will be paid, including paying the owed amounts over a 10-year period, and that current HBT members that request to leave HBT must present a business case to the funding ministry/agency.
- As a result of these arrangements, Healthcare Benefit Trust agreed not pursue further legal proceedings to collect an exit levy, except in accordance with the payment plan agreement.
- As of May 24, 2013, there were 105 organizations that have left the trust and owe a total of \$15.9 million, representing their collective share of the HBT trust pool deficit.
 - 61 CSSEA agencies owe exit levies worth a total of \$7.4 million.
 - 44 HEABC organizations that left the Trust owe a total of \$8.5 million.
- On May 28, 2013, Melinda Heidsma, president of the BC CEO Network, wrote a letter to Premier Christy Clark regarding the Healthcare Benefit Trust, alleging that "Government's failure to respond constructively to this issue before the election forced us to initiate litigation." The CEO Network represents sector agencies that are part of HBT.
- In April 2013, five social service agencies, in two different legal actions, filed Notices of Civil Claim with the Supreme Court of British Columbia against the Province of British Columbia and the Trustees of the Healthcare Benefit Trust. The plaintiffs' claim includes seeking release from their obligations respecting the Trust, including exit levies and seeks damages against the province and costs. Heenan Blaikie LLP (HB) represents the plaintiffs.

- The May letter reiterates several other letters that have been written to government requesting that government commit to funding the deficit recovery charges for all agencies, whether they have remained in the HBT or not.
- Government has until September 16, 2013 to file a response. Discussions are ongoing.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Homelessness Intervention Project (HIP) Final Report

KEY MESSAGES:

HOMELESSNESS INTERVENTION PROJECT (HIP) FINAL REPORT

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BACKGROUND:

- When the Homelessness Intervention Project was implemented in March 2009, the aim was to house 1,800 of the chronically homeless, taking them off the streets and connecting them to housing over an 18-month period.
- Every Homelessness Intervention Project community exceeded their targets and has implemented stronger collaboration with community partners and stronger service integration, ensuring the homeless are housed and connected to resources and support services.
- The array of services accessible to the homeless includes income assistance, health supports and life skills support.
- In March, 2011, the Research Agreements that allowed the project to count number of clients housed, expired. Communities continue to work with their integrated teams to address chronic homelessness, but the province is no longer tracking those numbers.
- Homelessness Intervention Project Vancouver is built on five streams of outreach, and care is integrated within these streams: the Supportive Housing Registry, Downtown Community Court, Vancouver Police Department, BC Housing Tenant Support providers and BC Housing Homeless Outreach.
- Homelessness Intervention Project Victoria is built on the region's Streets to Homes initiative and incorporates the BC Housing Homeless Outreach Program, Assertive Community Treatment Teams and the Victoria Integrated Community Outreach Team.
- Surrey's Homelessness Intervention Project outreach is done through the BC Housing Homeless Outreach. The Surrey Guiding Team represents every stakeholder group in the community. Income Assistance and Mental Health and/or Addictions Services are available to Homelessness Intervention Project clients at Surrey's two main shelters (Gateway and Hyland House).
- Homelessness Intervention Project Kelowna and Homelessness Intervention Project Prince George have established single integrated teams that complement existing, community-based homeless outreach activities.

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Contact: Allison Bond, ADM, Employment and Labour Market Services Division
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 Date: June 18, 2013

- An evaluation of Homelessness Intervention Project has been completed. The review provided input into how to best integrate services around a vulnerable client group.
- Building on initial project success, Homelessness Intervention Project has developed two pilots that use the same integrated approach to assisting vulnerable clients:
 - The Integrated Offender Management / Homelessness Intervention Project pilot project in the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island. The pilot takes a preventative approach to support sentenced adult offenders who are homeless or at risk of homelessness when they leave provincial prisons. From 2011 to 2013, 99 IOM/HIP clients in the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island transitioned from custody to the community. Of these clients, 76% were stably housed, 92% received income assistance and 7% participated in volunteering, pre-employment or employment programs.
 - The Family and Youth Partnership Project, working with over 190 young parents on income assistance and youth transitioning from government care. The project has been successful in connecting these youth to life skills, training and education, health and dental care, early childhood development programs, and in supporting many of them to be financially independent and leave income assistance. Of the 250 clients who have been engaged in FYP, 12% have found part or full time employment and 20% have returned to part or full time education, and 32% have left income assistance.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #66** – Family and Youth Partnership Pilot Project

APPENDIX A: HIP COMMUNITY PROFILES:

Vancouver

- From March 2009 to February 2011, **2134** homeless persons housed.
- HIP partners implemented a number of client flow initiatives and HIP sub-projects including:
 - 23 rooms dedicated at BC Housing's St. Helen's Hotel as transitional and supportive housing for clients awaiting admission to the Burnaby Centre for Mental Health and Addictions;
 - the opening of 22 bed facilities for men (Leeside) and for women (Brookside) at Riverview to provide transitional and supportive housing for clients discharged from Burnaby Center for Mental Health and Addictions;
 - a specialized Community Assistance Program with integrated housing and supports for 20 youth (Urban Youth Project);
 - a pilot in two government-owned supportive Single Room Occupancy hotels (the Beacon and the Dominion) where residents have access to a fully integrated team comprising of an employment and assistance worker, a BC Housing worker, a tenant support worker from the on-site not-for-profit service provider and Vancouver Coastal Health's Clinical Tenant Support Team (nurse, case manager and health care worker);
 - specialized outreach supports for the francophone community through the Ministry of Social Development providing in kind contributions to co-fund outreach workers at La Boussole under the Canada-BC Cooperation Agreement on Official Languages.
- In early 2011, HIP Vancouver implemented a pilot to provide access to housing and support services to clients of the Integrated Offender Management program who are transitioning from custody to communities in Vancouver

Victoria

- From March 2009 to February 2011, **840** homeless persons housed.
- Victoria continues to strengthen collaborative and integration efforts highlighted by the following:
 - Launched the **Victoria Streets to Homes Project (S2H)**
 - Implemented the Specialized Community Assistance Program with integrated housing and supports at Tillicum Apartments to provide stable housing, 24/7 health supports, and life skills support to 15 chronically homeless persons, and now moving to a scatter site model supporting Victoria Integrated Community Outreach Team and Assertive Community Treatment clients to total up to 33 participants

- Partners in the implementation of the Victoria Integrated Court Project with Integrated Partners, Courts, Community Corrections, Police, Assertive Community Treatment and Victoria Integrated Community Outreach Teams to serve client population intersecting with the criminal justice system.
- Housed the majority of the individuals identified through the 900 Block Pandora Project

Surrey

- From March 2009 to February 2011, **383** homeless people housed.
- Implemented the Specialized Community Assistance Program providing life skills support with integrated housing and supports for HIP clients at the Ted Kuhn Towers (Surrey BC Housing). This includes in-residence supports provided by Fraser Health, Options Community Services Society, South Fraser Community Services; and Pacific Community Resources Society that provides Specialized Community Assistance Program services. Currently, serving 20 participants.
- Established income assistance worker (two employment and income assistance workers) presence in shelters (Gateway and Hyland House) to assist in moving chronic homeless to stable housing with supports
- In addition, Community-based solutions and initiatives linked to and supporting HIP include:
 - Bridges to Life: a volunteer program linking homeless persons with volunteers who help homeless persons re-socialize
 - Wellness Clinic: routine health care is provided to homeless persons through a Nurse Practitioner and nursing students from Kwantlen University and Douglas College
 - LINKLine: a service for the business community to readily connect the homeless with BC Housing's Homeless Outreach Program/Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program (and others) to best respond to business concerns over homeless persons near their businesses

Kelowna

- From March 2009 to February 2011, **255** homeless people housed.
- Kelowna has established a single integrated team for HIP that complements existing, community based homeless outreach activities (Partners in Community Collaboration).
- The new Integrated Care Management Team has a Care Coordinator that provides support, direction and guidance to the Care Managers. They meet bi-weekly to discuss the HIP clients and update their care plans. The steering committee gives overall direction to the Care Management team. The Steering Committee consists of key partners and participating managers and supervisors from representative

organizations such as BC Housing, the Ministry of Social Development, Interior Health Authority, Community Living British Columbia, RCMP and the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

- Designated integrated care coordinators ensure that partners provide coordinated care to individual HIP clients and help them navigate the support system seamlessly.
- Progress to date:
 - Implemented the Specialized Community Assistance Program with integrated supports at scattered sites for up to 30 housed HIP participants.
 - Launched an additional supportive recovery home (Coral House – current Mental Health facility, expanded services to include supportive recovery home clients).
 - Implemented extensive outreach services for chronically homeless at multiple community agencies and service points including: hospital, outreach urban health, Friendship Centre, multiple supportive recovery homes, Crossroads treatment centre, and Gospel Mission.

Prince George

- From March 2009 to February 2011, **300** homeless people housed.
- Prince George has a newly established integrated single team in the community to address homelessness. This includes:
 - An integrated community care team responsible for outreach/intake. The integrated outreach/intake team is comprised primarily of BC Housing's Homeless Outreach Program/Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program, the Ministry of Social Development, Northern Health – Mental Health and Addictions, Kopar Administration. We also include any other community agencies that have a role to play with the client as the need arises eg: RCMP, John Howard Society.
 - A care plan for each HIP client and at least one care manager from partners such as health, income assistance and housing.
 - A care coordinator responsible for ensuring an integrated program of care and coordination between all partners. These processes ensure HIP clients remain housed.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
CORPORATE PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Lean

KEY MESSAGES:

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LEAN

BACKGROUND:

- The ministry has completed three major Lean projects.
- **Bus Pass** – this project reviewed the process for issuing new and a renewed bus passes to eligible clients. Key results included:
 - Reducing the time to make eligibility decisions, without impacting quality, by 44%;
 - Reducing email responses time from 10 days to 2 days; and
 - Reducing the peak load of calls received by the Ministry from 9,449 calls in the busiest week in 2012 to 4,144 calls in the busiest week in 2013.
- **Cheque Run** – this project reviewed the process the ministry uses to make payments to clients. Key results included:
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Date: July 8, 2013

- **Telephony** – this project, completed in partnership with the Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services, reviewed the ministry's call centre model. Key results included:
 - Implementing a three tiered service model for calls with low, medium or high complexity, this has increased efficiency and reduced wait times for clients;
 - Improving call greetings by staff through training and coaching that has enhanced client experiences; and
 - Increasing service consistency through the development of clearer standard operating procedures which increases fairness to clients.
- The ministry is currently working on four more major Lean projects:
 - **Client Intake** – this project will review the process for how clients initially receive services from the ministry;
 - **Assignment of Benefits** – this project will look at the process the ministry uses for clients who are eligible for Employment Insurance;
 - **Reconsideration** – this project will look at the process that the ministry uses when a client requests a reconsideration of a ministry decisions; and
 - **Medical Supplies** – this project will look at the process the ministry uses for issuing medical supplies to eligible clients.
- To support the development of a Lean culture the ministry has developed and implemented a comprehensive training and communications strategy that targets specific staffing groups with appropriate training and messaging.
- There is no budget for Lean; costs associated with Lean projects and training are managed within the ministry's current budget allocation.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Procurement

KEY MESSAGES:

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PROCUREMENT

BACKGROUND:

- The Procurement Services unit within the ministry provides tools and information to support effective risk-based and value-for-money decision-making and ensures the proper application of contract law, government policies and best practices.
- Justification for all direct award contracts with a value greater than \$25,000 are reviewed by contract specialists and approved by the Deputy Minister, prior to signing.
- The ministry has received no vendor complaints this fiscal year.

STATISTICS:

Contract Activity (dollar figures in millions)	2011/12		2012/13	
	Number of contracts	Amount expended	Number of contracts	Amount expended
Professional, Advisory, and IT Services ¹	80	\$49.60	79	\$47.43
Provincial Program Delivery Services ²	181	\$109.09	275	\$210.24
Federal Program Delivery Services ³	350	\$183.07		
Totals	611	\$341.76	354	\$257.67

¹ Examples of these types of services include: Security services, Information Technology services, Human Resource learning services, Project Managers, Business Analysts and other consultants.

² Provincial Program Delivery Services contracts include BC Employment Program, Bridging Employment Program, Community Assistance Program, Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities, third party administration services, interpretation and translation services and burial services. The increase in contracts between 11/12 and 12/13 is due to the integration of the federal and provincial employment programs into the Employment of BC Program (EPBC).

- 3 Federal Program Delivery Services contracts include those transferred under the federal Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) to the provincial government in February 2009. LMDA transferred programs expired in March 2012 are under federal contribution agreements and not BC service contracts.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Social Innovation

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

- The Province began providing formal support to social innovation in 2008, with a \$2.2 million grant to the Vancouver Foundation to create a social enterprise fund.
 - The Vancouver Foundation, working in partnership with Vancity, used this funding to develop the Resilient Capital Program, a 100% insured term deposit program designed to encourage investment in social enterprise.
 - The program has generated more than \$10 million in investment in B.C.-based social enterprises.
- In January 2011, government created the B.C. Social Innovation Council (the Council). Members were appointed by the Parliamentary Secretary for Non Profit Partnerships, Gordon Hogg, to assist the Province in seeking new and innovative ways to help B.C. communities tackle their most complex problems.

- The Council included representation from various levels of government, community agencies and businesses with an interest in social entrepreneurship (e.g., credit unions, foundations, investors, academic institutions, and social enterprises).
- On April 27, 2012, the Council presented the *Action Plan Recommendations to Maximize Social Innovation in British Columbia*. The plan contains eleven recommendations and serves as a framework for cross-sector collaboration.
- In May 2012, the B.C. Partners for Social Impact (BCPSI), the successor entity to the Council, was formed to implement the Action Plan recommendations. The partnership is led by three co-chairs representing government, the non-profit sector and business, and now has 46 multi-sector members.
- The Assistant Deputy Minister's Committee on Non-Profit Partnerships was created to act on the Action Plan recommendations and maximize social innovation within the B.C. government.
- The BCPSI and ADM Committee are supported by the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation's Innovative Partnerships branch.
- Key accomplishments to date are as follows:
 - In May 2012, the BCPSI launched BC Ideas, an online competition that encouraged British Columbians to submit innovative solutions to address health, social and environmental challenges facing their communities.
 - In November 2012, more than \$275,000, including \$30,000 from the Ministry of Social Development, was awarded to 33 organizations.
 - In November 2012, B.C. hosted the first Premier's Summit on Social Innovation. Over 360 leaders from the private, non-profit and public sectors attended to share ideas with local and global thought leaders.
 - Social enterprise owners were included in the February 2013 Small Business Summit and in the subsequent development of the Small Business Accord.
 - May 27, 2013, was proclaimed Social Enterprise Day in British Columbia.
 - With funding from the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation, Small Business BC and Enterprising Non Profits developed and delivered two seminars to introduce participants to social enterprise and blended value concepts.
 - Legislation and regulations enabling businesses to incorporate as a Community Contribution Company (CCC) will come into effect on July 29, 2013.
 - Development of a communications campaign to increase social enterprise access to small and medium enterprise programs and supports is underway. The ministry is working in partnership with the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.
 - Project alignment between the social innovation file and Small Business Accord with respect to procurement.
- Government will continue to work collaboratively across sectors to promote and support social innovation and social enterprise in British Columbia.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

SPONSORSHIP DEFAULT RECOVERY PROGRAM

ISSUE: Sponsorship Default Recovery Program

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

- Canadian citizens and permanent residents who sponsor individuals (spouse or common law partner, children, parents, grandparents) into Canada sign a sponsorship undertaking with Citizenship and Immigration Canada, promising to provide for the care and support of the sponsored individual(s) for up to ten years.
- The undertaking is legally binding and remains in effect throughout the term of the sponsorship period regardless of any change in the circumstances of the sponsor or sponsored individual(s), including a breakdown in the family relationship, financial deterioration or moving to another province.
- It is a term of the undertaking that the sponsor agrees to ensure that the sponsored individual(s) will not require social assistance during the sponsorship period. The sponsor acknowledges that social assistance paid to the sponsored individual(s) during the sponsorship period constitutes a debt owed by the sponsor to the federal and

provincial governments. Pursuant to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act between B.C. and the federal government, the Province is permitted to collect on these debts.

- If a sponsorship undertaking is defaulted, the sponsor has a legal obligation to repay the provincial government for assistance that the sponsored individual(s) received during the sponsorship period.
- The Sponsorship Default Recovery Program does not impact the sponsored individual's eligibility for income or disability assistance, if they meet all other eligibility criteria, because the sponsorship debt belongs to the sponsor.
- Sponsored individuals may be eligible for hardship assistance until ministry staff have been able to contact the sponsor to verify that the sponsor is unable or unwilling to support the applicant.

Notification to Sponsor

- When a sponsored individual applies for income or disability assistance, every reasonable effort is made to contact the sponsor, except in cases where there are substantiated concerns about the possibility of family violence or abuse.
- Ministry staff remind the sponsor and the sponsored individual of the sponsorship obligations and reiterate that assistance paid to or for the sponsored individual may be recovered from the sponsor as a debt owed to the Province. This provides an opportunity for the sponsor to assume financial responsibility for the sponsored individual and avoid the debt.

Sponsorship Default Debt Recovery

- The ministry actively pursues recovery of sponsorship default debt pursuant to an agreement between the ministry and the Ministry of Finance, the organization responsible for carrying out debt collection activity.

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Debt Collection Process

- The collection approach is consistent with the Ministry of Finance Taxpayer Fairness and Service Code and complies with all relevant federal and provincial laws.
- The amount of the sponsor's debt is equivalent to the amount that the sponsored individual(s) received from the government while on income or disability assistance.
- The design of the sponsorship debt collection process involved the input and collaboration of the ministry, Ministry of Finance and the federal government. The debt collection process was thoroughly researched over a period of many months and included consultation with other jurisdictions. The process was carefully designed to ensure it strictly complies with relevant legal and accounting principles.

Awareness of Sponsorship Responsibilities and Obligations

- The sponsorship undertaking clearly states that any social assistance that is paid to the sponsored individual(s) during the sponsorship period (of up to ten years) represents a debt that the sponsor owes to the federal and provincial governments.
- To ensure that all people who enter into sponsorship undertakings are fully aware of their obligations and responsibilities, especially where concerns of a language barrier exist, the brochure "Family Class Sponsorship: Defaulting on an Undertaking" is developed and provided in six languages: English, Chinese, Punjabi, Vietnamese, Spanish and Persian.
- The brochure is available in government service offices as well as within the various ethnic communities where sponsorship undertakings are common and non-governmental organizations such as MOSAIC (a multilingual non-profit organization). A diverse approach to distributing information ensures that people are fully aware of their sponsorship obligations and responsibilities through accessible and comprehensive information.

Sponsors in Financial Hardship

- Being in default of a sponsorship undertaking does not affect the sponsor's eligibility for income or disability assistance.
- If the sponsor is in receipt of assistance, the ministry will treat all sponsorship default debtors the same with regard to debt collection. Sponsors will be notified of their sponsorship debt and the collection approach will be consistent with the Ministry of Finance Taxpayer Fairness and Service Code and comply with all relevant federal and provincial laws.

Debt Value and Recovery

- In total, as of March 31, 2013, there are approximately 1,045 sponsor accounts actively being pursued in collection, owing the province \$18.9 million (including interest) and the ministry has recovered a total of \$21.5 million from sponsors in default (since active collection action began in November 2006).

STATISTICS:

Sponsorship Default Debt Recovery	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Number of sponsors in active collection with defaulted undertakings that owe debt to the province	2,580	2,370	1596	1355	1045
Total enforceable sponsorship debt	\$26.9M	\$24.9M	\$22.6M	\$21.9M	\$18.9M
Amount collected by MSD since 2006	\$13.2M	\$15.6M	\$17.8M	\$19.3M	\$21.5M

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Canada Pension Plan and Canada Pension Plan Disability

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

Canada Pension Plan - Early Retirement Benefits

- A person can apply for and receive Canada Pension Plan retirement benefits at any time between the ages of 60 and 65.
- Clients who may be eligible for Canada Pension Plan benefits, including early retirement benefits, who refuse or fail to apply for benefits may be ineligible for income assistance.

CANADA PENSION PLAN AND CANADA PENSION PLAN DISABILITY

- As of January 2013, the maximum monthly benefit for a single person collecting full Canada Pension Plan early retirement benefits is \$696.60, compared to \$610 for a single employable income assistance client and \$657.92 for a Person with Persistent Multiple Barriers. If the amount a client receives through Canada Pension Plan early retirement benefits is less than the ministry rate, the ministry will top-up the client's income to make up the difference.
- The maximum CPP monthly amount assumes that someone has worked for 40 years in Canada with employment earnings above the maximum contribution earnings amount every year.
- Clients applying for or receiving Canada Pension Plan early retirement benefits who are considered expected to work are required to have an Employment Plan and meet their employment-related obligations.

Impact of Applying for Early CPP Retirement Benefits

- Some clients' overall retirement income after age 65 may be negatively affected by receiving early retirement benefits.
- In 2013, Canada Pension Plan retirement benefits are reduced by 0.54% for each month they are received before age 65. Applicants who apply at age 60 will have their Canada Pension Plan reduced by 31.2%.
- Canada Pension Plan changes made in 2012 will gradually increase the deductions over a five year period to 0.6% per month by 2016.
- However, when a BC Employment and Assistance client reaches age 65, they usually become eligible for federal Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement on top of their Canada Pension Plan pension. This combined amount greatly exceeds the benefits received on assistance, even with the reduction in Canada Pension Plan retirement benefits due to accessing early retirement benefits.

Canada Pension Plan Disability Benefits

- Any individual who is found eligible for the Persons with Disabilities designation is screened for eligibility for Canada Pension Plan disability benefits and assisted to apply where financial eligibility is established.

Benefits to Clients Applying for Canada Pension Plan Disability Benefits

- Clients can consent to use their Persons with Disabilities application in lieu of completing the Canada Pension Plan disability benefits medical report – saving time and effort for doctors and clients.
- Clients may receive a higher income from Canada Pension Plan disability benefits than from disability assistance. In cases where Canada Pension Plan disability benefits are lower, the ministry tops-up the income to the monthly income assistance disability rate.

- Canada Pension Plan disability benefits count towards Canada Pension Plan retirement pensions whereas income assistance payments do not. This results in higher income for clients when they retire.
- Clients are able to move anywhere in Canada without disrupting their Canada Pension Plan disability benefits.
- Canada Pension Plan disability benefits are not income or asset tested.
- The maximum monthly benefit for a single person collecting Canada Pension Plan Disability benefits is \$1,212.90 as of January 2013.
- For taxation year 2012, an individual receiving Canada Pension Plan disability benefits who earns \$5,000 in gross income must contact Service Canada. Benefits cease when an individual makes enough money for it to be considered as substantially gainful employment.
- When Canada Pension Plan Disability benefits are greater than the ministry rate, Persons with Disabilities clients who are no longer eligible for provincial disability assistance retain eligibility for specified health supplements through the Medical Services Only program. These supplements include Medical Services Plan premium assistance, dental care and medical equipment and supplies.

Access to the Provincial Bus Pass Program and General Supplements

- If Canada Pension Plan Disability benefits result in the client's income exceeding their income assistance they lose access to the Bus Pass program. When they turn 65 they may re-gain eligibility for the Bus Pass program if they are in receipt of Old Age Security/ Guaranteed Income Supplement and the Seniors Supplement.
- Clients leaving assistance for Canada Pension Plan benefits also lose access to General Supplements (e.g. Security Deposit Supplement); however the increased rate available through the Canada Pension Plan may assist in off-setting these costs.

Assignment of Benefits

- Income assistance clients sign a Canada Pension Plan Consent to Deduct assignment that redirects any lump sum retroactive Canada Pension Plan benefits directly to the ministry, up to an amount equal to the income assistance paid over that period.
- This prevents clients from receiving Canada Pension Plan benefits and income assistance for the same time period.
- It also ensures equitable treatment with other clients who are required to pursue alternate sources of income.

STATISTICS / BUDGET:**Canada Pension Plan Beneficiaries' Count and Declared Income**

March 2011			March 2012			March 2013		
CPP Benefit Type	Count	Amount	CPP Benefit Type	Count	Amount	CPP Benefit Type	Count	Amount
Disability	7,679	\$5.17M	Disability	7,441	\$5.32M	Disability	7,014	\$5.00M
Early Retirement	6,822	\$1.10M	Early Retirement	6,303	\$1.00M	Early Retirement	5,513	\$0.86M

These figures reflect the amount received by beneficiaries of Canada Pension Plan, who also received an assistance cheque for the benefit month of March.

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

- Consistent with other provinces, B.C. requires clients to pursue Canada Pension Plan Disability as another source of income.

Jurisdiction	Requirement to apply for Canada Pension Plan Disability?	Requirement to apply for early Canada Pension Plan?
Ontario	Yes	No
Manitoba	Yes	Yes
Saskatchewan	Yes	Yes
Alberta	Yes	No*
Nova Scotia	Yes	Yes
New Brunswick	Yes	Yes

*requires if client will be better off

CROSS REFERENCE:

- Note #137** – Health Supplements - Medical Services Only

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
RESEARCH BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Caseload – Key Information

KEY MESSAGES:

CASELOAD – KEY INFORMATION

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BACKGROUND:

- Each month, the ministry produces a three-year monthly forecast of the B.C. Employment and Assistance caseload by program designation.
 - The forecast is built using detailed monthly administrative income assistance data and incorporates information on caseload flows (starting and ending cases as well as transfers between programs), labour market trends, policy changes and the latest research.
- The B.C. Employment and Assistance caseload reached its peak in March 2011 (138,304 cases) and had been in a slow decline until starting to rise again in February 2013.
 - In March 2013, the B.C. Employment and Assistance caseload was 136,196, an increase of 131 cases (0.1%) compared to last year, as the decline in Temporary Assistance was offset by an increase in Disability Assistance.
 - Compared to its peak in March 2011, the B.C. Employment and Assistance caseload has decreased by 2,108 cases or 1.5%.
 - The B.C. Employment and Assistance caseload remains over 30,000 (29%) higher than it was in the same month before the economic downturn.
- The Temporary Assistance caseload has been in decline since March 2011.
 - The Temporary Assistance caseload was 50,443 in March 2013, down 3,307 cases (6.2%) since March 2012.
- The Expected to Work, including those with a medical condition, caseload has declined by 2,578 cases (6.6%) year-over-year, to 36,615.
 - There is a strong correlation between the number of people unemployed and the Expected to Work caseload.
 - The decline in the Expected to Work caseload is due to a decline in clients starting assistance, which have been in general decline since March 2011.
 - Despite two years of decline, the Expected to Work caseload is still 9,535 cases (35%) higher than the same month before the recession.
- The Temporarily Excused (predominantly single parents) caseload has increased slightly year-over-year, up 96 cases or 1.5% to 6,600.
 - Despite the increase, the Temporarily Excused caseload is down 333 cases (4.8%) compared to March 2011.
 - Compared to the same month before the recession, the Temporarily Excused caseload is 627 cases higher (10.5%).
- The Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers caseload has decreased by 826 cases compared to last year, a decline of 10.3%.
 - The Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers caseload has almost returned to

pre-recession levels, up 247 cases (3.5%).

- The growth rate of Persons with Disabilities caseload has slowed in 2013 compared to 2012.
 - In the first three months of 2013, the Persons with Disabilities caseload increased by an average of 4.4%, compared to 5.8% in 2012.
 - The Persons with Disabilities caseload has increased by an average of 247 cases per month in 2013, down from 384 in the same period in 2012.
- From October 2011 to October 2012 B.C. experienced a 1.3% decline in the B.C. Employment and Assistance caseload. This is the fifth best decline in total income assistance caseloads among Canadian provinces. Ontario (2.4%), Saskatchewan (1.8%), Alberta (1.4%) and Nova Scotia (0.2%) experienced growth in their total income assistance caseloads.
- This is an improvement from 2009, when B.C.'s total income assistance caseload growth was second highest after Alberta. The high 2009 growth was because the economic downturn hit the western provinces harder and in B.C. fewer unemployed are eligible for Employment Insurance benefits than in eastern Canada.
- British Columbia's labour market has improved since the height of the recession, with employment up by 98,200 (4.5%, seasonally adjusted) in March 2013 compared to March 2009 and unemployment down by 6,600 (3.7%, seasonally adjusted). However, the last few months have seen a setback in the labour market:
 - Employment in March 2013 was lower than in February 2013 by 14,800 (0.6%).
 - There were 18,400 more people unemployed (11.9%) in March than in February, the most unemployed since September 2012..
 - The unemployment rate increased to 7% in March, the highest rate since May 2012.
 - The participation rate remains low, at 64.5% in March was 2.2 percentage points lower than in the March 2008, a reduction of 84,500 people.
- The number of regular Employment Insurance beneficiaries has declined by 9,340 over the period March 2012 to March 2013 – a 15% decline.
- Employment Insurance (EI) coverage rates in B.C. and Alberta remain among the lowest in the country. In March 2013, only 30.9% of unemployed workers received regular Employment Insurance benefits in B.C., the lowest rate since at least 1996.
- Recent trends in the number of regular Employment Insurance beneficiaries suggest that the impact on the Temporary Assistance caseload of people exhausting their Employment Insurance benefits is likely small.

STATISTICS:**B.C. Employment and Assistance Cases by Program and Family Type**

	Cases		Per Cent Change From	
	Mar. 2013	Mar. 2012	Mar. 2012	Jun. 2001
Total Cases	136,196	136,065	0.1%	-11.2%
By Program				
Temporary Assistance	50,443	53,751	-6.2%	-54.3%
Expected to Work	33,307	33,538	-0.7%	-61.9%
Expected to Work - Medical Condition	3,308	5,655	-41.5%	N/A*
Temporarily Excused	6,600	6,504	1.5%	-71.4%
Persistent Multiple Barriers	7,228	8,054	-10.3%	N/A*
Disability Assistance	85,753	82,314	4.2%	99.9%
By Family Composition				
Singles	110,492	109,953	0.5%	9.8%
Men	66,014	66,286	-0.4%	5.1%
Women	44,478	43,667	1.9%	17.6%
Couples	4,344	4,335	0.2%	-34.9%
Families	21,360	21,777	-1.9%	-53.6%
Two Parent	3,428	3,477	-1.4%	-57.1%
Single Parent	17,932	18,300	-2.0%	-52.9%

*These programs commenced after June 2001. Expected to Work Medical Condition (April 2004) and Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers (February 2003).

B.C. Employment and Assistance Recipients by Program and Family Type

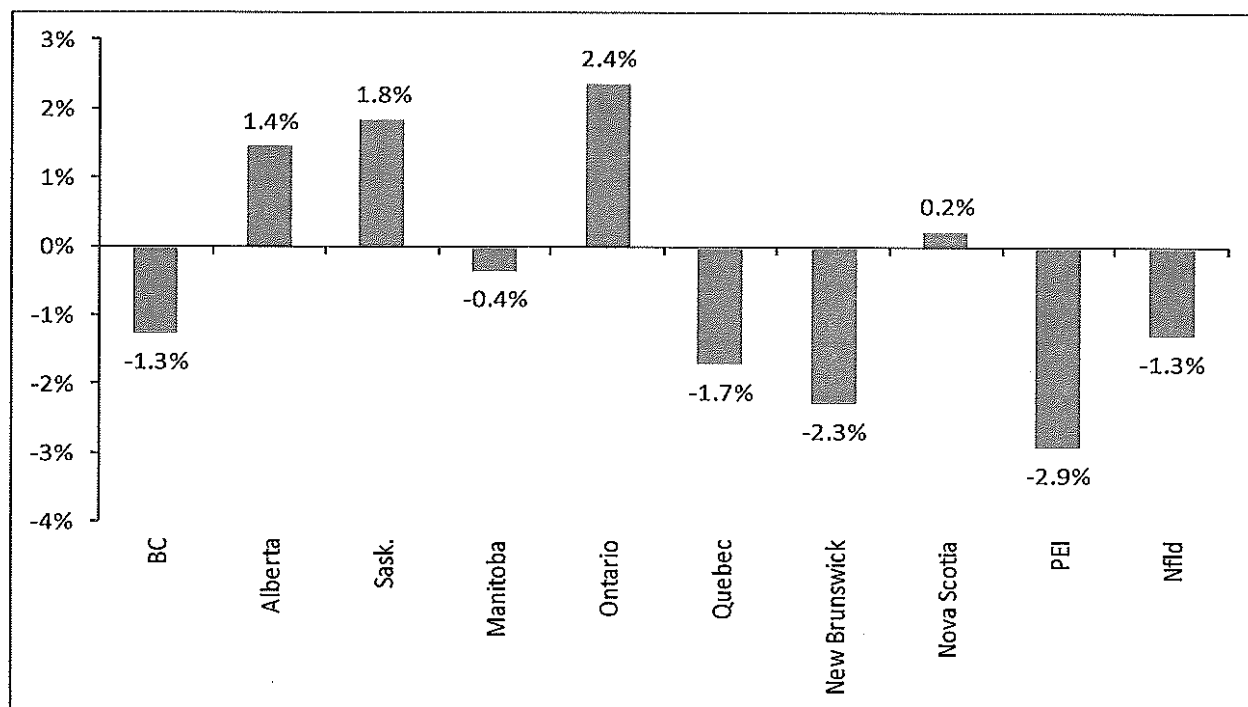
	Recipients		Per Cent Change From	
	Mar. 2013	Mar. 2012	Mar. 2012	Jun. 2001
Total Recipients	180,060	180,497	-0.2%	-27.3%
By Program				
Temporary Assistance	77,772	82,404	-5.6%	-60.1%
Expected to Work	48,970	48,805	0.3%	-67.8%
Expected to Work - Medical Conditon	4,108	7,265	-43.5%	N/A*
Temporarily Excused	15,157	15,608	-2.9%	-64.5%
Persistent Multiple Barriers	9,537	10,726	-11.1%	N/A*
Disability Assistance	102,288	98,093	4.3%	93.9%
By Family Composition				
Singles	110,492	109,953	0.5%	9.8%
Men	66,014	66,286	-0.4%	5.1%
Women	44,478	43,667	1.9%	17.6%
Couples	8,688	8,670	0.2%	-34.9%
Families	60,880	61,874	-1.6%	-54.5%
Two Parent	13,968	14,027	-0.4%	-57.0%
Single Parent	46,912	47,847	-2.0%	-53.6%

*These programs commenced after June 2001. Expected to Work Medical Condition (April 2004) and Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers (February 2003).

INTERJURISDICTIONAL COMPARISONS:**Total Employment and Assistance and Caseloads by Province (January 2010 to October 2012)**

	B.C.	Alberta	Sask.	Manitoba	Ontario	Quebec	New Brunswick	Nova Scotia	PEI	Nfld
Jan 10	132,304	79,432	26,295	33,357	512,708	343,751	23,350	28,069	3,646	24,984
Feb 10	132,913	79,777	26,773	33,412	514,856	345,446	23,687	28,386	3,654	24,841
Mar 10	133,843	80,583	27,424	33,577	520,617	346,138	24,034	28,449	3,666	25,122
Apr 10	133,220	80,790	27,061	33,717	521,285	345,382	24,260	28,453	3,670	25,135
May 10	133,207	80,693	27,021	33,900	522,533	343,838	24,407	28,338	3,665	25,174
Jun 10	133,432	81,160	26,999	33,917	523,736	341,473	24,499	28,337	3,574	24,983
Jul 10	132,839	80,971	26,925	33,931	523,416	340,010	24,475	28,393	3,576	25,073
Aug 10	132,524	81,010	27,029	33,975	524,760	340,063	24,542	28,349	3,575	25,026
Sep 10	132,068	81,048	27,076	33,988	526,330	338,725	24,616	28,289	3,595	24,995
Oct 10	131,903	80,590	26,485	33,982	523,352	336,888	24,452	28,061	3,607	25,043
Nov 10	132,120	80,614	26,462	34,045	524,938	337,381	24,394	28,212	3,691	25,135
Dec 10	133,565	81,104	26,585	34,292	529,082	338,315	24,581	28,449	3,733	25,084
Jan 11	135,729	81,563	26,580	34,405	534,591	340,824	24,849	28,440	3,757	25,119
Feb 11	136,730	81,312	26,866	34,651	535,251	341,698	24,851	28,581	3,748	25,026
Mar 11	138,304	81,772	27,194	34,976	540,371	342,139	25,044	28,765	3,730	25,305
Apr 11	137,628	81,634	26,889	35,163	540,487	341,543	25,139	28,707	3,748	25,194
May 11	137,386	81,497	26,776	35,311	544,274	340,417	25,079	28,748	3,972	25,275
Jun 11	137,619	81,384	26,807	35,340	547,924	339,471	25,091	29,003	3,978	25,005
Jul 11	136,778	80,236	26,502	35,341	554,415	338,853	25,186	28,899	3,893	24,770
Aug 11	135,965	79,638	26,726	35,385	549,087	337,992	25,161	28,973	3,865	24,806
Sep 11	135,365	79,120	26,819	35,399	549,984	333,696	25,083	28,805	3,852	24,795
Oct 11	134,664	78,365	25,953	35,332	545,566	331,200	25,034	28,552	3,849	24,636
Nov 11	133,996	78,399	25,998	35,418	547,499	330,939	25,068	28,495	3,894	24,664
Dec 11	135,167	78,624	26,152	35,507	551,239	331,331	25,073	28,706	3,967	24,406
Jan 12	135,714	79,180	26,242	35,620	556,860	333,969	25,111	28,792	3,981	24,717
Feb 12	135,714	79,303	26,344	35,624	557,740	334,667	25,130	28,952	4,010	24,718
Mar 12	136,065	79,749	26,720	35,685	560,219	334,523	25,292	29,119	3,988	24,637
Apr 12	135,277	79,439	26,515	35,725	559,088	333,583	25,372	29,068	3,952	24,716
May 12	134,361	79,735	26,557	35,804	563,584	331,864	25,353	29,096	3,926	24,794
Jun 12	134,332	79,630	26,467	35,788	563,837	328,991	25,162	29,143	3867	24,475
Jul 12	133,768	79,471	26,708	35,738	563,482	327,634	24,990	29,013	3,825	24,577
Aug 12	133,613	79,958	26,717	35,608	565,538	327,308	24,853	29,057	3,763	24,470
Sep 12	133,063	79,355	26,489	35,299	563,295	326,474	24,797	28,846	3,751	24,265
Oct 12	132,966	79,500	26,431	35,208	558,479	325,544	24,465	28,617	3,737	24,318

Percentage Change in Total Employment and Assistance and Caseloads by Province (From October 2011 to October 2012)



Employment and Assistance Caseloads as Percentage of the 15 to 64 year Old Population by Province (September 2008 and October 2012)

	Sep. 2008	Rank*-Sep.	Oct. 2012	Rank*- Oct.
B.C.	3.5%	2	4.1%	5
Alberta	2.5%	1	2.9%	1
Saskatchewan	3.6%	3	3.7%	2
Manitoba	3.8%	4	4.1%	4
Ontario	4.9%	7	6.0%	9
Quebec	6.1%	8	5.9%	8
New Brunswick	4.5%	6	4.8%	7
Nova Scotia	4.1%	5	4.4%	6
PEI	3.5%	2	3.8%	3
Newfoundland and Labrador	6.8%	9	6.9%	10

*Lowest to highest per capita income assistance rate (of population age 15 to 64).

Regular Employment Insurance Beneficiaries and Employment Insurance Coverage Rates by Province (March 2012 and March 2013). *Seasonally Adjusted.*

	EI Beneficiaries		EI Coverage Rate	
	Mar. 2013	Mar. 2012	Mar. 2013	Mar. 2012
Newfoundland and Labrador	30,770	34,690	93.5	102.3
Prince Edward Island	8,040	8,870	78.1	96.4
Nova Scotia	28,910	31,990	60.7	75.6
New Brunswick	33,580	35,660	81.3	89.6
Quebec	154,190	169,130	46.1	50.3
Ontario	159,740	167,110	28.1	30.7
Manitoba	13,100	14,640	39.1	41.6
Saskatchewan	10,410	11,540	46.1	43.2
Alberta	27,920	30,910	25.5	26.3
British Columbia	53,410	62,750	30.9	36.2

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
REGIONAL OPERATIONS BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Cash Off the Street – Direct Deposit

KEY MESSAGES:

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CASH OFF THE STREET - DIRECT DEPOSIT

BACKGROUND:

- Since 2006, direct deposit has been the ministry's preferred method of issuing assistance payments.
- The ministry encourages the use of direct deposit as a safe, convenient, cost-effective and dependable method for clients to manage their funds.
- Direct deposit assists with eliminating many of the issues associated with cheque issue week by reducing the actual and perceived amount of cash on the streets during this week and on cheque issue day.

- In cases where clients demonstrate an inability to manage monthly disbursements, cheques can be administered in smaller portions throughout the month and payments can be sent directly to landlords and utility companies.
- Of the total ministry caseload, almost 63% of clients receive their payments through direct deposit. Some clients, however, are not eligible for direct deposit, such as clients receiving repayable hardship assistance or Medical Services Only.
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Cross Reference:

- **Note #83:** Downtown Eastside:

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

**ISSUE: Changes to British Columbia Employment and Assistance
Since 2002**

KEY MESSAGES:

CHANGES TO BCEA SINCE 2002

s.13

Contact: Molly Harrington, ADM, Policy and Research Division
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Date: June 17, 2013

s.13

BACKGROUND:

“Employment First”

- Income assistance was reformed with the introduction of welfare to work with the 2002 *BC Employment and Income Assistance* legislation.
- The province launched the BC Employment and Assistance program which uses an Employment First approach and introduced a broad range of measures to get employable clients back to work and reduce their dependency on income assistance by:
 - Introducing time limits, two year independence, and the three-week work search;
 - Eliminating earnings exemptions for expected to work clients (reinstated in October 2012);
 - Making income assistance conditional on employable clients meeting employment-related obligations; and
 - Extending employment obligations to single parents when their youngest child reached 3 years of age.
- There are a number of exclusions or exemptions to ensure these policies do not create unintended hardship for clients, including clients who are fleeing abuse, Persons with Disabilities, or clients who have a physical or mental condition that precludes them from completing a search for employment.
- The exemption criteria are designed to ensure that those who are unable to work or those who are actively looking for work receive assistance to meet their needs.

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Major changes from 2002 to October 2012

- Three Week Work Search – exemption if client has an immediate need for food, shelter or medical attention, acceptance of proof of prior work search. A five week work search for new applicants was introduced in October 2012.
- Two Year Independence – additional exemptions were added. Most significantly, to allow increased discretion where reasons for lack of financial independence are beyond applicant's control OR where the possibility of undue hardship would occur if denied.
- Time Limits – additional exemptions were added. Most significantly, an exemption for clients as long as they remain compliant with their employment-related obligations. Time limits were subsequently removed in October 2012 and replaced with intensified work-search requirements to help ensure that those on income assistance are using all available resources to find work.

Client Impacts

- Time has shown us that these policies have been effective at reducing and preventing dependency on temporary income assistance. For example, the proportion of the unemployed on temporary assistance has decreased more than 50% - from 67% in 2001 to 30% in 2012.
- The ministry has conducted research on the outcomes of both former clients and those who initiated but never completed the application process. These studies found that clients are better off financially after leaving assistance and that their financial situation continues to improve.
- Today, an employment first model is a key feature of modern welfare programs both in Canada and internationally.

Single Parents

- A number of the changes made with the introduction of BC Employment and Assistance specifically impacted single parent families including:
 - Employment obligations when their youngest child turns three years old (previously seven)
 - Elimination of earnings exemptions for employable clients (reinstated in October 2012)
 - Elimination of income exemption for family maintenance payments
 - \$51 reduction in IA rate for single parents under 65
 - Elimination of the both workforce entry benefit and transition to work benefit
 - Access to Health Supplements reduced

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 Date: June 17, 2013

- Under BC Employment and Assistance, single parents caring for a disabled child or for a child under the age of three are excused from seeking work and exempt from time limits on assistance. Previously, single parents with children under the age of seven were excused from seeking work.
- This exemption acknowledges the important role parents play in the early years of their children's lives while also acknowledging the benefits of employment.
- Earnings exemptions for employable clients, including single parents, were eliminated. Earnings exemptions for employable clients were reinstated in October 2012.
- Single parents who have the Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers or Persons with Disabilities designation, as well as those caring for a disabled child, continue to be eligible for earnings exemptions.
- The income exemption for family maintenance payments was eliminated to encourage individuals to support their families rather than have them rely on income assistance.
- Employment supports are provided under the ministry employment programs.

Client Impacts

- Labour force attachment is particularly important for single parents with children where the cycle of dependence is most likely to begin.
- All of the evidence shows that working leads to better incomes and better outcomes for clients and their families.
- The longer someone is out of the workforce the more difficult it can be to re-enter. The ministry wants to encourage single parents to find sustainable employment to help move their families towards independence.
- Since 2001, the number of employable, single parent families receiving income assistance, many of which are headed by women, has dropped by approximately 72%. This reduction represents one of the most rapid declines of a caseload in the history of the income assistance program.
- The June 2010 CD Howe Institute report "Reducing Lone-Parent Poverty: A Canadian Success Story" concluded that a significant proportion of the decline in B.C.'s lone-parent poverty rate, and hence child poverty rate, and increase in single parent employment rates is the result of B.C.'s 2002 welfare policy reforms.
- All other provinces in Canada give an employment exemption to single parents with dependent children.
- The length of the exemption, which is based on the age of the child, varies across the provinces.

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 Date: June 17, 2013

- All provincial income assistance programs, with the exceptions of Alberta Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped and Quebec Social Assistance, treat family maintenance as non-exempt income.

Persons with Disabilities and Barriered Clients

- The introduction of the *BC Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*, enabled persons with disabilities to have greater independence, improved participation in the community and better support through security of income.
- Changes to the criteria for Persons with Disabilities designation under the *BC Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act* included:
 - Designation criteria focuses on those with functional limitation and the need for assistance with daily living activities
 - For the first time, mental disorders included in the definition of Persons with Disabilities
- Introduction of the Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers client category for longer term income assistance clients who had significant barriers to employment.
- Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers clients are provided with a higher rate of assistance and health supplements to help meet their unique needs.
- B.C. is among six other provinces that have a category for "barriered" clients that provides a higher assistance rate.

Major Changes from 2002 to October 2012

- Earnings exemption ceiling rose twice and was set at \$500 for a single Persons with Disabilities/Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers and \$750 for a Persons with Disabilities/Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers couple.
- Earnings exemptions for Persons with Disabilities were raised to \$800 in October 2012 and an annualized option was also introduced.
- Asset limits and trust limits were also increased in October 2012.
- Revisions to the criteria and adjudication process for the Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers category.
- Streamlined transition to disability assistance for 17-year-old recipients of the Ministry of Children and Family Development at Home Program.

Client Impacts

- The total number of BC Employment and Assistance cases in March 2013 was 136,196 – an 11% decline from June 2001.

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- The composition of the caseload has shifted dramatically since the introduction of BC Employment and Assistance when it was predominantly made up of Expected-to-Work recipients.
- Currently, 68% of BC Employment and Assistance cases are either designated as Persons with Disabilities or significantly barriered.
- After four years of decline, the Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers caseload increased in 2009, 2010 and 2011 in response to the economic downturn. In March 2013, the number of Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers cases was 7,228, accounting for 5.3% of the total caseload.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #95** - Policy Changes (October 2012)
- **Note #89** - Low Income Families and Children
- **Note #120** - Ministry Research on Client Outcomes
- **Note #107** - Women

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MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
REGIONAL OPERATIONS BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Channel Strategy

KEY MESSAGES:

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CHANNEL STRATEGY

BACKGROUND:

- The four main goals of the Channel Strategy are to:
 - Broaden client access to services (through multi-channel service delivery)
 - Maximize efficiency
 - Integrate with government priorities and between channels
 - Ensure continuing effectiveness

Face to Face Channel:

- A large portion of ministry services have traditionally been through face to face interaction, including client drop in, in-person appointments, and document drop offs. The ministry also provides face to face service through community outreach, third party agreements and Service BC Centres. Recent initiatives such as the Family and Youth Transition pilots target specialized client groups.
- While the ministry will continue to provide face to face services, it is expected that clients will increasingly choose to be served over the phone or web. Face to face service will always be available to clients for whom phone or self-service channels are not viable or optimal service options.

Telephone Channel:

- The ministry answers 1.5 million calls yearly. The demand for service over the phone have grown rapidly over the last five years.
- The ministry regularly monitors key performance indicators such as length of time before a call is answered.
- Significant performance enhancements by adopting best practises used in contact centres, such as sorting straightforward calls that can be resolved quickly from longer more complex calls that are better served by a callback.
- The ministry is pursuing enhanced software, which will offer features such as wait time notification and ability to leave your number to be called back rather than waiting on hold. The software will also enable those on the telephone to be networked together virtually, so that the first available agent anywhere in the province can answer a call.
- The functionality in the enhanced software will increase efficiency and effectiveness for clients and staff.

Online Channel:

- Many of our services could be delivered via an online portal, and a significant proportion of those could be self serve.
- An online Client Portal is under development, and will be implemented in a phased approach.
- In early 2014, the first phase of the Portal will be launched. In addition to providing access to general information and the Self Serve Assessment and Application, the portal will provide the opportunity to set up a secure account. Clients registered and authenticated, will have the opportunity to view their information, including cheque amounts, submit some documents, and receive messages from staff.
- When fully implemented, the Portal will offer clients flexibility in accessing their information, and the ability to submit questions, from a time and place of their choosing.

Stakeholder Engagement:

- The Channel Strategy Stakeholder Engagement Plan was developed to:
 - Obtain information and feedback to inform the Channel Strategy;
 - Identify service delivery efficiencies that will enhance client satisfaction; and,
 - Determine and monitor client satisfaction on an ongoing basis.
- Consultation with stakeholders has begun. Focus group sessions were held with advocacy organizations (Jan-March 2013) and clients (Feb – March 2013).
- An optional feedback survey has been added to the Self Serve Assessment and Application.
- Clients will be involved in usability testing for the online portal.
- A plan is under development to monitor client satisfaction with all channels.

Cross Reference:

- **Note #83:** Downtown Eastside
- **Note #94:** Outreach
- **Note #100:** Service Delivery Channels
- **Note #101:** Service Quality

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
RESEARCH BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Disability Assistance Rates and Reports, 2012-13

KEY MESSAGES:

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DISABILITY ASSISTANCE RATES AND REPORTS 2012-13

BACKGROUND:

- Over the last few years, reports have presented an inaccurate view of BC Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities as inadequate and failing to meet basic personal needs, and have called on us to increase Persons with

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Disabilities rates to the amount paid to seniors under the Old Age Security plus Guaranteed Income Supplement.

- Increasing Persons with Disabilities assistance to the Old Age Security plus Guaranteed Income Supplement level would cost over \$390 million per year in direct costs plus tens of millions more through the resulting increase in the caseload.
- A report by Ron Kneebone and Oksana Grynishak, was released in September 2011 by the University of Calgary, School of Public Policy, which compared disability assistance rates in B.C., Ontario and Alberta. This study concluded that B.C.'s disability assistance rates were inadequate to meet a person's long-term basic needs and recommended that the rates be increased to the Old Age Security plus Guaranteed Income Supplement level, similar to Alberta's rates.
- Alberta increased the rate for a single Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped client from \$1,188 per month to \$1,588 per month on April 1, 2012.
- B.C.'s support plus maximum shelter rate for a single person with disabilities is \$906.42 per month.
- The current Old Age Security plus Guaranteed Income Supplement maximum rate is \$1,286.51 per month for a single person and is indexed quarterly to changes in the Consumer Price Index.

Adequacy of PWD rates

- Social assistance rates are an incomplete measure of total income received by a person with disabilities on income assistance. The following need to be considered:
 - A single person with disabilities in B.C. with no employment earnings currently receives \$35.50 per month, pro-rated, from federal and provincial tax benefits (GST and Climate Actions Credits) in addition to the base Person with Disabilities rate of \$906.42.
 - B.C. provides a range of about 70 supplements for special needs incurred by Person with a Disability, in addition to the base income assistance rate. These include enhanced health services, health supplies, transportation needs, rent deposits, moving costs and many unexpected expenses. The average value of cash supplements adds between 5 and 10% to the base support plus shelter rates for Person with Disabilities.
 - Persons with Disability also receive dental and optical services that are in addition to the Medical Service Premiums and Pharmacare coverage received by people on the Old Age Security plus Guaranteed Income Supplement.
 - For some Person with Disabilities, the value of in-kind medical supplies, equipment and health services alone exceeds their monthly assistance amount.
 - Unlike the Old Age Security plus Guaranteed Income Supplement or other provinces, B.C. also offers Persons with Disabilities recipients a subsidized

annual bus pass for provincial transit systems for just \$45 per year – e.g., a saving of \$87.25 a month for a one-zone pass in metro Vancouver.

- For those Persons with Disabilities able to work, up to \$800 of monthly earnings are fully exempt in the calculation of the amount of income assistance.
- Persons with Disabilities are able to retain much higher financial assets than other income assistance recipients. Assets held in Registered Disability Savings Plans and up to \$100,000 held in legal trusts are fully exempt from asset limits. Withdrawals from Registered Disability Savings Plans and trust accounts used for disability-related expenses are exempted from income testing, while additional withdrawals from trusts up to \$8,000 per year for other expenses are also exempted.
- Most reports, including the Kneebone and Grynishak study fail to understand that a large proportion of Person with Disabilities assistance recipients in B.C. are able to work, either full-time or part-time, and want to work.
- The study argues that the Old Age Security plus Guaranteed Income Supplement is an appropriate standard because persons with disabilities are not expected to work, hence, there is no concern about the employment disincentive effects of higher rates. This runs contrary to the trend of policy thinking in Canada and internationally. Organizations representing persons with disabilities which recognize that even severely disabled Persons with Disabilities are able and want to work, either full or part-time. This is confirmed by detailed survey responses of severe and very severely disabled adults.
- The paper significantly underestimates the cost of raising the Persons with Disabilities single rate to the Old Age Security plus Guaranteed Income Supplement rate. It ignores the growth rate of the Persons with Disabilities caseload, fails to recognize that a large number of Canada Pension Plan Disability recipients, private pension recipients and low-income working Persons with Disabilities, with incomes between the provincial Persons with Disabilities and Old Age Security plus Guaranteed Income Supplement levels, would become eligible for provincial Persons with Disabilities benefits, and fails to recognize that there would be a substantial behavioural response leading to increased entry and decreased exit from benefits.

Setting Rates

- In reviewing support rates, the ministry takes into account the basic cost of nutritious food, as estimated by the Dietitians of Canada, and estimates of housing costs, clothing, hygiene and other goods reported by Statistics Canada. Changes in the Consumer Price Index of basic goods and services are also monitored.
- For example, the recent Dietitians of Canada, B.C. Region, report on the Cost of Eating in B.C. in 2011 reports that the cost of a basic nutritious diet in B.C. for a single male, aged 31 to 50 years, is \$292 per month and for a single female it is \$247.

The single Persons with Disabilities support allowance is \$531.42 per month (not including shelter allowance).

- Shelter rates also take into account detailed analysis of the actual market rent conditions reported by Statistics Canada and the needs of our clients.
- Rates reflect individual and family needs. Higher rates are provided to Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers and Persons with Disabilities, recognizing that they face additional barriers to employment.

INTERJURISDICTIONAL COMPARISONS:

Monthly Disability Assistance Rates by Province (June 2013)

Province	Monthly Rate (\$)	Rank
British Columbia	906	5
Alberta	1,588	1
Saskatchewan	1,217	2
Manitoba	721	8
Ontario	1,075	3
Quebec	918	4
New Brunswick	710	9
Nova Scotia	762	7
PEI	773	6
Newfoundland	708	10

Data Source: Research Branch

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Disability Supports

KEY MESSAGES:

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DISABILITY SUPPORTS

BACKGROUND:

Disability assistance and housing supports

- To be eligible for disability assistance, a person must meet the criteria for the Persons with Disabilities designation and be designated as such by the ministry.
- The ministry pays disability assistance in a number of ways. The amount of disability depends on family composition and place of residence. For instance, a single Persons with Disabilities client residing in private accommodation may receive funds for support and shelter up to \$906.42 per month.
- Clients in Community Living British Columbia facilities receive the full disability amount (up to \$906.42 per month) and clients are responsible to pay a set contribution (\$716.13) determined by Community Living British Columbia towards their support and shelter costs when residing in these facilities – leaving up to \$190.29 for personal expenses.
- Clients in Ministry of Health residential care facilities and other special care facilities such as alcohol and drug treatment facilities and private hospitals receive a \$95 per month comforts allowance for personal expenses. The ministry will pay user charges directly to the facility that are intended to meet the basic support and shelter needs of clients.

Health Supplements

- Health supplements that may be available to Persons with Disabilities clients include:
 - Premium-free medical coverage through Ministry of Health Medical Services Plan;
 - No deductible PharmaCare through Ministry of Health;
 - Infant formula;
 - Optical supplements;
 - Dental supplements;
 - Diet supplement;
 - Natal supplement;
 - Denture supplement;
 - Monthly Nutritional Supplement;
 - Nutritional supplements;
 - Hearing aids;
 - Medical equipment;
 - Orthoses (orthodontics and bracing);
 - Medical supplies;
 - Medical transportation; and
 - Extended medical therapies (acupuncture, chiropractic, massage therapy, naturopathy, podiatry and physiotherapy).

Medical Services Only

- Medical Services Only coverage assists Persons with Disabilities clients transitioning to self-sufficiency as they move from disability assistance into employment or federal income support programs. Medical Services Only coverage allows these former recipients access to premium assisted Medical Services Plan coverage and Fair PharmaCare benefits as well as specific health supplements such as medical equipment and dental coverage.

General Supplements

- There is a range of general supplements that may be available to Persons with Disabilities clients including:
 - A guide animal supplement of \$95 to assist with the monthly maintenance of a certified guide animal used by clients or their dependants.
 - An annual, subsidized bus pass for \$45 per year to assist eligible individuals to more fully participate in their communities. Clients who would otherwise be eligible for an annual subsidized bus pass but are unable to take public transit due to their disability, may be eligible for a Special Transportation Subsidy. This supplement is equivalent to the highest bus pass subsidy in the province.

Employment and Income Supports

- Earnings exemptions are intended to make it easier for Persons with Disabilities clients who face barriers to employment to participate in the workforce to the extent that they can. Beginning in 2012, the province has been raising the earnings exemptions to further support people with disabilities who are employed. Exemption levels for Persons with Disabilities:
 - \$800 per month for any family unit where one adult member is Persons with Disabilities, increased from \$500 in 2012; and
 - \$1600 per month for any family unit where both recipients are Persons with Disabilities, increased from \$750 in early 2013.
- The Employment Program of B.C. (EPBC) offers all British Columbians who are seeking employment access to a full suite of flexible services through one point of entry. WorkBC Employment Services Centres are in place to ensure that everyone in B.C., regardless of who they are or where they live, get the supports they need to help them find and maintain employment.
- Clients are not categorized by their disabilities or barriers, rather their service needs are assessed based on their strengths and employment readiness, and access to the services they require is determined through eligibility.
- The program service delivery model makes accommodations for specialized populations by providing flexible options to access services through satellite, outreach or remote service delivery channels.

- Since April 2012, 8,554 people identified as PWD clients. Of these, 5,760 were actively receiving case management services through EPBC as of May 2013.

Trusts

- Clients who have the Persons with Disabilities designation and applicants for the Persons with Disabilities designation may have extra costs directly related to their disability. Some of these costs might include changes to their home to accommodate their disability, mobility aids, or money for home support workers. Trusts provide a way for Persons with Disabilities clients and their families to safeguard assets for meeting disability-related costs now and in the future while remaining eligible for disability assistance.
- A non-discretionary trust is considered an exempt asset for eligible clients so long as the value of all capital contributions over time does not exceed \$200,000. This was increased in 2012 from \$100,000.
- Eligible clients may choose to transfer newly received income or assets to a trust to avoid being over the asset limit in subsequent months.
- Trust disbursements are fully exempt for eligible clients when used for specific disability-related costs, such as devices and medical aids, caregiver services, education and training and maintenance or renovations to their private residence.
- Disbursements used for any other item or service the client considers necessary to promote their independence are exempt up to an annual maximum of \$8000. This was increased from \$5484 in 2012.

CROSS JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

- All provinces and territories, except Newfoundland and the Yukon, provide a rate of assistance for persons with disabilities that is higher than their rates for temporary assistance.
- B.C.'s program of supports is comparable to other provinces.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #62** - Specialized Populations – Employment Program of BC
- **Note #86** - Income and Assets
- **Note #87** - Income Assistance and Shelter Rates
- **Note #106** - Trusts
- **Note #139** - Health Supplements - Overview
- **Note #135** - General Supplements

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Domestic Violence / Fleeing Abuse

KEY MESSAGES:

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE / FLEEING ABUSE

BACKGROUND:

- In 2012, the Representative for Children and Youth (RCY) released the report, *Honouring Kaitlynnne, Max and Cordon: Make Their Voices Heard Now*.
- The report calls for government to demonstrate a renewed and serious commitment to protect children living with domestic violence by closing gaps in policies and practices across government that touch the lives of children, including child welfare, adult mental health, criminal and family justice systems, police, victim services, education and income assistance.
- Recommendation 8 of the report states that this ministry should develop and implement a plan to improve the capacity of the income assistance program to contribute to the protection of children who are living in circumstances of domestic violence by improvements to its services to the families.
- The recommendation further states that improvements to ministry services should include:
 - improving compliance with policies related to cases where domestic violence is a factor;
 - a mechanism for flagging and monitoring of cases where domestic violence is a factor;
 - appointment of a single specialized case manager for clients fleeing domestic violence, where vulnerable children may be at risk;
 - training on domestic violence and policies regarding services to victims of domestic violence; and
 - ensuring the report is used to promote practical learning for income assistance and policy staff.

Ministry Response

- In May 2012, the ministry developed an Action Plan in response to Recommendation 8 of the Report.
- On December 3, 2012, the ministry published a consolidated topic of all policies that apply to persons fleeing abuse on its online policy manual, (the Online Resource) and added a Fleeing Abuse flag to the Integrated Case Management system (ICM).
- Additional policy clarifications were made to ensure that applicants and recipients do not need to provide third party verification for the policies to apply, only to disclose that they are fleeing abuse.
- In April 2013, the ministry identified key staff in each region with specialized training in domestic violence who will also be a point of contact for supports and services for persons fleeing abuse.
- By January 31, 2014, all frontline staff will have received training on recognising and understanding the impacts of abuse on clients who are victims of violence.

- Ministry supports available to persons fleeing abuse and their dependent children to establish themselves independently are:
 - Any applicant who discloses they are fleeing abuse on their income assistance application must be contacted within one business day to assess eligibility; a 'critical' service request for persons fleeing abuse has been added and a service standard has been published
 - Policy exemptions specific to persons fleeing abuse include: an exemption from the work search requirement, an exemption from two-year financial independence test and an exemption from employment obligations for up to six months.
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- Persons fleeing abuse may qualify for a moving supplement and/or an additional security deposit if they need to move for safety reasons.
 - Parents without legal status in Canada who are fleeing abuse, and cannot leave the country with their children, can receive assistance while they work with Citizenship and Immigration Canada to resolve their legal status.

STATISTICS:

Fleeing Abuse Applicants

Time Period	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	*Total (All Regions) FA in error	Total
Total (Dec. 3/12-June 2/13)	591	425	954	671	313	328	2626
Weeks 5-8 (Dec 31-Jan 27)	89	71	155	107	61	42	441
Weeks 9-12 (Jan 28-Feb 24)	106	68	153	104	59	50	440
Weeks 13-16 (Feb 25-Mar 24)	104	69	143	81	40	53	384
Weeks 17-20 (Mar 25-Apr 21)	91	68	117	115	43	47	387
Weeks 21-24 (Apr 22-May 19)	95	57	145	119	40	35	421

*Errors include misunderstanding, no longer "fleeing" or manual error on Stage 1 application.
Data Source: Regional Operations Branch, RSD

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #109:** Eligibility – Application Process and Orientation

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
REGIONAL SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/2014

ISSUE: DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE

KEY MESSAGES:

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DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE

BACKGROUND:

Collaboration with Community Partners – Address Unique Community Needs

- The ministry is committed to assisting those most in need and at the same time recognizes the unique challenges faced by individuals living on Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.
- That's why the ministry has been actively working together with the City of Vancouver, BC Housing, Vancouver Coastal Health, and Corrections on outreach activities that connect homeless individuals with assistance and safe shelter, often the same day.

Contact: Sharon Moysey, ADM, Regional Services Division
Cell phone: s.17
Date: June 20, 2013

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- The ministry is engaged in a number of initiatives with other levels of government, public and non-profit community agencies to address the complex social issues that contribute to homelessness.

Integration and Outreach

- Integration and Outreach in the Vancouver Coastal region is not specific to the Downtown Eastside, however many activities have a significant benefit to the Downtown Eastside due the nature of the issues involved.
- This would include collaborative projects such as Downtown Community Court, Drug Treatment Court of Vancouver, Vancouver Intensive Services Unit and structured Integration and Outreach Services
 - Downtown Community Court, Drug Treatment Court of Vancouver and the Vancouver Intensive Services Unit provide for effective administration of court orders for clients charged with a variety of criminal offences. Ministry workers participate as part of assertive case management teams to assist clients with basic living essentials including assistance, financial management, housing, and health care.
 - Integration and Outreach Services involves working with community teams connecting people who are homeless, or at risk of recurring homelessness. Ministry staff expedite the application process for assistance for these people. Outreach services are provided by ministry workers and teams from the Canadian Mental Health Association, Coast Foundation, Rain City Housing, Carnegie Centre and the Vancouver Recovery Club.
- Dedicated employment and assistance workers work with government, city and non-governmental organizational partners in a coordinated manner to address multiple social issues including housing and homelessness, crime, addictions and mental illness.

Response to Housing Issues in the Downtown Eastside – Integration and Outreach Services (aka Housing Integrated Task Team)

- The ministry, in collaboration with the City of Vancouver and other social service agencies, determined that some BC Employment and Assistance clients and low income persons were being targeted for fraud by unscrupulous landlords.
- Ministry integration and outreach workers address these and other issues through targeted cheque deliveries and other verification strategies to ensure that shelter funds are used for the intended purpose and those clients receive the accommodation for which they have paid. In addition, ministry workers use a variety of methods to minimize opportunities for fraud and maintain accurate record keeping, particularly with respect to known high risk single room occupancy residences.

- The majority of clients in the Downtown Eastside utilize rent direct, which helps to ensure that clients are not evicted due to non-payment of rent, and to reduce the high ratio of lost or stolen cheques being reported in the three Downtown Eastside offices.

Outreach services to impacted clients

- In cases where by-law enforcements or conversions have impacted groups of ministry clients, staff have provided targeted outreach services to assist clients in finding alternative accommodation. These services include:
 - Providing listings of available rental accommodations in the vicinity;
 - Assisting with moving costs and security deposits;
 - Providing listings of other community resources; and
 - Connecting clients with mental health and addictions outreach/liaison workers.
- Where appropriate, staff will visit clients on site at the building of concern to provide written information on available resources and a referral to staff at the local ministry office.
- Ministry staff also collaborate with local municipal officials. Municipal staff advise the ministry of impending actions likely to result in temporary or permanent loss of housing and displacement of clients. Ministry staff then inform municipal officials of the number of clients living at those addresses.
- In Vancouver, these outreach services are usually (though not exclusively) performed by members of Vancouver Coastal's Integration and Outreach Team.

Gentrification and Single Room Occupancy Hotels

- This ministry is focusing its initiatives and strategies in the Downtown Eastside on improving the quality of living standards, access to services and the protection of vulnerable persons at risk.
- The ministry is collaborating with the City of Vancouver and social services agencies to ensure residents are provided with the shelter they have paid for, and that the appropriate regulatory processes for managing and maintaining single room occupancy residences are in place.
- The ministry is working closely with BC Housing to ensure that the 24 single room occupancy residences purchased by the province, and designated for supportive housing units, are available for those who require them most (see next section as well).

Homelessness Intervention Program

- Vancouver is one of five sites in the province which participated in the Homelessness Intervention Program. This cross-ministry collaborative program focused on

chronically homeless individuals suffering from mental illness and/or addictions, moving them into supported housing using a case management approach.

- The program was particularly successful in Vancouver with 2,134 homeless persons housed from March 2, 2009 to February 2011 with 1,197 of these persons being chronically homeless. These individuals were housed primarily through BC Housing's Supportive Housing Registry and through the efforts of community and ministry outreach workers
- Vancouver Coastal Region's Integration and Outreach team has implemented many of the best practices learned through the Homelessness Intervention Program continuing to focus its services on the chronically homeless.
- The collaborative case management approach has continued with the Urban Youth Project, a partnership focusing on homeless youth challenged by severe mental health and addiction issues.

Mental Health Commission of Canada Demonstration Project

- A federally funded research project placed approximately 300 homeless individuals in both dedicated housing and market housing with support services attached. The ministry's Vancouver Coastal region was a partner and ensured income supports and other ministry programs were available to these individuals. Partners included the Vancouver Foundation and a number of non-profit service providers. As the term of the research project has formally ended, the region continues to work with the participants and service providers through a transition period to maintain and sustain project social, health and housing supports..

Elizabeth Fry Society

- In Vancouver, the Elizabeth Fry Society is the primary contractor for third party administration of clients who have demonstrated an inability to manage their own affairs, have restrictions on their access to ministry offices, and those who have demonstrated disruptive behaviour in the office such as intimidating staff.
- Elizabeth Fry Society provides service to clients from four locations in Vancouver.
- Elizabeth Fry distributes monthly, bi-weekly and daily cheques to clients and arranges suitable crisis or emergency needs solutions for clients who are not authorized to access the ministry office.
- Client funds are delivered to Elizabeth Fry for distribution to clients.
- At this time, 595 clients are served within an annual contractual budget of \$659,664.

Rent Direct

- Downtown Eastside clients have historically had high incidences of mental health issues, drug/alcohol addiction or a combination of both, which affects their ability to

manage their funds. As well, there is a high ratio of cheques reported as lost or stolen in the three Downtown Eastside offices.

- For these reasons, to ensure clients are not evicted due to non-payment of rent, these offices issue rent direct whenever possible.
- The majority of the clients in the Downtown Eastside are utilizing rent direct.

Cross Reference:

- **Note #77:** Cash Off The Street – Direct Deposit
- **Note #79:** Channel Strategy
- **Note #94:** Outreach

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Employment Plans and Related Obligations

KEY MESSAGES:

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EMPLOYMENT PLANS AND RELATED OBLIGATIONS

BACKGROUND:

Employment Plan – Content

- Clients in the Expected to Work category have employment obligations and are required to have an Employment Plan.
- An Employment Plan outlines employment objectives for clients and identifies interventions, expected outcomes and compliance requirements.

- An Employment Plan may include independent work search, referral to employment programs or referral to specific training for employment. It can also refer clients to services that deal with overcoming a person's barriers to employment.

Creating an Employment Plan

- Ministry staff work with clients to develop their Employment Plan using assessment tools (e.g., the Employment Readiness Information Questionnaire and Client Employability Profile) to assess a person's employability.
- These tools help to identify any barriers to employment and how they can be addressed.

Client Responsibilities and Obligations

- Clients are responsible for reporting their progress back to the ministry.
- If a client does not comply with the conditions of their Employment Plan, the family unit may be ineligible for assistance.
- A client is considered not to be meeting his or her obligations if he/she:
 - is non-compliant with an Employment Plan;
 - fails to accept suitable employment;
 - voluntarily leaves employment without just cause;
 - is dismissed for just cause; or
 - fails to demonstrate reasonable efforts to search for employment.

Non-Compliance – Consequences

Type	Consequence	Period of Time
Failure to comply with an Employment Plan	The <i>family unit</i> is ineligible (when there are no mitigating circumstances for the non-compliance)	Until they become compliant.
Failure to accept suitable employment or voluntarily left employment without just cause or dismissed for just cause	Singles and couples are ineligible. Family units with <i>dependent children</i> are subject to a \$100 per month rate reduction for each person subject to the sanction.	Two calendar months from whichever is later: The date of application for assistance or the date the default occurred.
Failure to demonstrate reasonable work search	Singles and couples are ineligible. Family units with dependent children are subject to a \$100	One calendar month from whichever is later: The date when the default occurred, or the date when the Minister becomes

	per month rate reduction for each person subject to the sanction.	satisfied the recipient is demonstrating reasonable efforts to search for employment.
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Conditions for Waiving an Employment Plan

- The ministry may temporarily waive the Employment Plan requirement where:
 - a client is not physically able to attend programs, even with accommodations, due to severe illness; or
 - a client is not mentally able to participate in a program or does not have the capacity to understand the requirement of the program due to a severe mental health condition
- While the Employment Plan is waived, there are no consequences for not meeting employment obligations.
- In exceptional circumstances, clients with severe physical or mental conditions may still have employment obligations because they have not provided medical information to support an exemption.

Employment Obligations-Expected to Work – Medical Condition

- Clients in the Expected to Work – Medical Condition category have temporary medical, alcohol or drug, or mental health conditions.
- These clients have employment obligations and are required to have an Employment Plan.
- The Employment Plan is tailored to the individual's specific conditions and helps to move clients toward increased employability to the best of their abilities.
- The ministry acknowledges that overcoming these conditions may be a longer-term process.
- In determining whether a condition would “interfere” with any type of employment, the ministry looks at the duration and severity of the condition, extent of restrictions and availability of supports.
- A Medical Report provides information on the condition and assists in employment planning.

No Employment Obligations/Temporarily Excused

- Clients who meet certain criteria may be temporarily considered to have no employment-related obligations:
 - Single parents with child under three years of age;
 - A person meeting the criteria as a Person with Persistent Multiple Barriers;
 - Seniors 65 and over;

- A person residing with and caring for a spouse with a physical or mental condition that precludes the person's employment;
 - Single parents caring for children, foster children, children in an out-of-care living arrangement or Child in the Home of a Relative with physical or mental conditions that preclude the parent's employment;
 - Single parents with children, foster children, children in an out-of-care living arrangement under the Child, Family and Community Service Act or Children in the Home of a Relative under age three;
 - Persons in special care, private hospital, extended care facilities;
 - Persons participating in treatment or rehabilitation that interferes with employment;
 - Persons separated from an abusive spouse or relative within the previous six months where it interferes with employment; and
 - Persons who do not meet citizenship requirements
- Ministry clients who do not have employment-related obligations are not required to enter into Employment Plans.

Clients with Persons with Disabilities Designation and Employment

- The ministry encourages clients who have the Persons with Disabilities designation to seek employment opportunities and participate in the workforce to the extent they are able.
- While not required to have an employment plan, clients with the Persons with Disabilities designation may be assisted to increase their independence and maintain their skills through an Employment Plan or Voluntary Participation Plan.

Employment Related Obligations and Client Designations

	Expected To Work	Expected To Work-Medical Condition	Temporarily Excused
Employment Obligations	YES	YES	NO
Employment Plan Required	YES	YES	NO
Required to search/accept/continue employment	YES	YES	NO
Required to participate in training or other programs	YES	YES	NO

STATISTICS:

	Dec 2012 to Date (Jun 18, 2013)*
Number clients with Active Employment Plans	21,445
Total number of Employment Plans	29,647

* As of December 2012 these data are collected in a new system (ICM). ICM collects data differently than the previous system and a relative longer term trend is not available.

CROSS JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

Other provinces use employment-planning tools like BC's Employment Plan to help people prepare for and move into employment.

Alberta

- Alberta Works clients are required to complete a Service Plan prior to approval for assistance.
- As a condition of eligibility Expected to Work Income Assistance clients must follow through with expectations to take work, rehabilitation or training that will lead to greater or total independence, as established in the client's individual Service Plan.

Ontario

- Participants in Ontario Works are required to participate in activities outlined in a Participation Agreement.
- Exceptions include: single parents with young children, disabled persons and where personal circumstances of the person are such that any degree of participation is impractical.
- Clients receiving Ontario Works are required to:
 - meet with ministry workers every three months to review their Participation Agreement and every 12 months to review financial information, and
 - take part in employment assistance activities.
- Participation reviews are completed every three to six months
- The Participation Agreement is an action-oriented plan that identifies the approved employment assistance activities the participant will undertake in order to prepare for, find and maintain employment.
- Under a Participation Agreement a client might be required to accept employment, satisfy community participation requirements, participate in employment measures, or undertake education or training.

Saskatchewan

- Saskatchewan uses a case planning approach to assist clients become as self-sufficient as possible.
- As part of the case plan, clients, regardless of their employment status, may be referred to employment, training opportunities or other related services.
- Non-compliance with the case planning can result in suspension of benefits

Manitoba

- Employable participants require employment plans, known as personal job plans.
- Some participants that are required to have a personal job plan may be deferred for short-term health, family violence, special needs child over six years old, compassionate care leave, and unavailability of resources to support the participant's personal job plans.
- The personal job plans:
 - Dependent upon the participant's employability level, includes the steps that are necessary for the participant to secure employment
 - Is case specific but could require telephone calls, or regular office visits
 - Participants with dependent children would receive sanctions of \$50 per person subject to work expectations. This sanction may be increased to \$100 per non-compliant household member. A suspension or termination of benefits may occur for non-disabled participants without children.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Income and Assets

KEY MESSAGES:

INCOME AND ASSETS

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BACKGROUND:

- Generally, money received by a client is considered income in the month it is received. It is considered an asset in subsequent months.
- By legislation, money received by a client can be earned income, unearned income or not considered income.
- Exemptions on income apply only in the calendar month in which the income is received regardless of the date the income was earned, payable or reported.
- Earned income means any money or value received in exchange for work or the provision of a service.
 - It also includes money or value from providing room and board or earnings from renting rooms or goods.
 - Certain categories of recipients are eligible for an earnings exemption.
 - When a client has earned income in excess of their earnings exemption but below prescribed assistance rates, the ministry will 'top-up' the client's assistance to the maximum rate for that family unit.
- Unearned income includes workers' compensation benefits, financial awards, family maintenance payments, pensions, employment insurance benefits, lottery winnings, inheritances, eviction compensation, education or training allowance.
 - When a client has unearned income, the ministry will top-up the client's assistance to the maximum rate for that family unit.
 - There are several exemptions to unearned income, such as partial exemptions up to the asset level for criminal injury compensation awards or other financial awards.
 - There are also full exemptions, such as payments from a trust used to meet disability-related costs.
- On May 1, 2012, the ministry made changes so that Temporary Wage Loss Replacement Payments under sections 29 or 30 of the *Worker's Compensation Act* (WCA) can be combined with earned income and included within a PWD family's maximum monthly earnings exemption. In this case, the person is absent from work as the result of a job-related injury, and the absence has been assessed as temporary. The exemption of temporary WCA payments supports the PWD client during the temporary work absence to regain work readiness and return to work as quickly as possible.
- Some forms of money are not considered income at all. This money is not taken into consideration for the calculation of a person's monthly income or disability assistance.
 - Family tax credits, such as the Universal Child Care Benefit and Family Bonus Tax Credit, as well as other tax credits are not deducted from a client's monthly assistance.

Asset Limits

- Assets include cash and any property that can be converted into cash. Program regulations establish asset levels that vary by client type.
 - Single clients - \$2,000
 - Couples or one- or two-parent families - \$4,000
 - Single person with the Persons with Disabilities (PWD) designation - \$5,000
 - Couples or one- or two-parent families where one person has the PWD designation - \$10,000

Asset Exemptions

- Some types of assets do not impact eligibility for assistance. These include necessary household equipment, a primary residence and one motor vehicle. Motor vehicles have an equity limit of \$10,000 – recipients with the PWD designation are not subject to this limit

Canada Pension Plan / Canada Pension Plan Disability Benefit

- Unlike the BC Employment and Assistance Program, the Canada Pension Plan is a true pension. Income and assets have no bearing on entitlement. The Canada Pension Plan includes a cost of living increase, which is adjusted once per year.
- The ministry 'tops-up' other income sources, such as Canada Pension Plan Disability, to ensure that a client's total monthly income is equal to current assistance rates.
- When a client is receiving income from most other support programs, any increase to that amount will reduce the income assistance amount dollar-for-dollar.

Compensation Awards

- Several financial compensation awards are fully exempt by Regulation. These include:
 - Japanese Ancestry Redress Payments
 - Human Immunodeficiency Virus Compensation
 - Jericho Hill School for the Deaf Compensation
- Other financial awards are exempt up to the family unit's asset level in the month the award is received. Examples of these type of awards include:
 - Criminal Injury Compensation Awards
 - CPP Class Action Settlement Agreement
 - Director of Employment Standards Determinations
 - Eviction Compensation

Ongoing monthly financial awards are generally considered unearned income and must be considered when calculating eligibility for assistance.

Earnings Exemptions

- Earnings exemptions allow eligible income assistance and disability assistance clients to earn income (up to a monthly limit) in addition to shelter and support assistance.
- These exemptions offer individuals a better opportunity to get job skills and experience to transition to employment, take advantage of short-term or temporary work, and better provide for their families while receiving assistance.

Client Group	Exemption Amount
Expected to Work Clients	\$200
Single client designated as Persons with Disabilities	\$800
Family unit with two adult recipients where only one recipient is designated as Persons with Disabilities	\$1000
Family unit where both adult clients are designated as Persons with Disabilities	\$1600
Family unit where at least one client is designated Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers	\$500
Single parents providing care for a child with disabilities	\$300

Annualized Earnings Exemptions

Annualized earning exemptions for individuals on disability assistance began on January 1, 2013. The Annualized earning exemptions is being phased in and the first phase focuses on individuals on disability assistance whose past earnings pattern shows they are most likely to benefit from an annualized earnings exemption. This phased approach will allow the ministry to monitor the program and make necessary adjustments before opening the program up to all British Columbians on disability assistance in January 2014.

Family Maintenance Program

Clients are required to pursue and accept all other means of support for which they may be eligible, such as Family Maintenance. When a family breaks up, spouses and parents who have primary care of the children may be entitled to financial support (maintenance) from the other spouse or parent.

- Family Maintenance payments are not exempt and are deducted dollar for dollar.
- The ministry then 'tops-up' Family Maintenance payments, to ensure that a client's total monthly income is equal to current assistance rates.

- When a client is receiving income from other sources, any increase to that amount, even if it is a result of a cost of living adjustment, will reduce the income assistance amount dollar-for-dollar.
- The Family Maintenance Enforcement Program is a service of the Ministry of Justice.

Gifts

- A gift is considered an asset. Receiving a gift will only make the client ineligible for assistance if the value of the gift exceeds the asset exemption level for the family. A gift can only be provided on a one-time basis. Gifts may not be periodic or ongoing. Periodic or ongoing cash payments fall within the definition of unearned income.

Income Tax Refunds

- Fully exempt for income and disability assistance recipients. Not exempt for hardship assistance recipients.

Lottery or Games of Chance

- Lottery or games of chance are considered unearned income and are not exempt. This is consistent with other jurisdictions across Canada, except for Alberta's Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped program that fully exempts this money and Alberta Works program that allows \$900 of the winnings to be exempt from the calculation of assistance.

Registered Disability Savings Plan

- Money held in or paid out of a Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) does not impact eligibility for hardship assistance, income assistance or disability assistance.
- The federal government provides matching grants for personal contributions to RDSPs as well as bonds for low-income beneficiaries.
- Clients can contribute up to \$200,000 to an RDSP (contribution limit set by the federal government).

Trusts

- Clients who have the Persons with Disabilities designation and clients who reside in a special care facility may contribute up to \$200,000 to a non-discretionary trust while remaining eligible for assistance. If a client's lifetime disability-related costs are expected to be greater than \$200,000, a higher contribution amount may be approved.
- The ministry does not consider a discretionary trust (a trust where the trustee has absolute authority over payments) to be an asset.

- Eligible clients can receive trust payments to meet disability related costs without those payments impacting eligibility for assistance
- Disability related costs include expenses such as special home renovations, medical aids, caregivers, education, training and up to \$8,000 per year for any item or service that promotes the client's independence
- Trust payments are also fully exempt when used for buying a place of residence for the client, contributing to a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP), or contributing to a RDSP

Registered Retirement Savings Plan

- Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs) are treated as an asset. Income earned by the capital portion and paid out of RRSPs is considered unearned income.

Universal Child Care Benefit

- Fully exempt

Working Income Tax Benefit

- The supplement is provided through the income tax system. It is not considered income and is fully exempt.

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL:

- Requiring clients to access other income before relying on assistance is common to income- and disability- assistance programs across Canada.

Comparison Chart:

Type	Is it exempt?			
	BC	Alberta	Ontario	Manitoba
CPP	No	No	No	No
Compensation Awards Other Awards	Up to asset level	Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) – Yes	Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) - \$100,000 Ontario Works (OW) – Exempt up to \$25,000	No
Earnings Exemptions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Family Maintenance	No	Alberta Works (AW) – No AISH - child support exempt; spousal support exempt if received by a cohabiting partner	No	No
Gifts	One-time gifts are asset-tested and not considered income. Ongoing gifts are considered income.	AW –\$900 per person per calendar year. Consumable items are exempt AISH – exempt, unless the gift is reportable to the Canada Revenue Agency	ODSP – \$6,000 per year plus disability-related costs. OW - Casual gifts and payments of small value. Payments of large value exempt if used to meet an extraordinary need (Ontario's recent budget has proposed mirroring the ODSP gift exemption Policy for OW)	Non-disabled adults and all children may receive non-recurring gifts up to \$100. Participants with a disability may receive ongoing cash contributions of up to \$500 per month
Income Tax refunds	Yes – as income and asset for Income and Disability assistance recipients No - for Hardship	AW - Yes, but treated as an asset AISH - Yes	ODSP / OW – exempt as income, not exempt as an asset	No
Lottery/Games of Chance	No	AISH – Yes	ODSP – Up to \$6,000 each year	No
RDSP (as income and an asset)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
RRSP	No – treated as an asset	AISH – Yes AW – No	ODSP & OW – No, unless locked in	No
Tax Credits (e.g. GST Credit)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #73** - Canada Pension Plan and Canada Pension Plan Disability
- **Note #88** - Income Tax Filing and Incentives
- **Note #110** - Eligibility – Overview

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
RESEARCH BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2012/13

ISSUE: Income Assistance and Shelter Rates

KEY MESSAGES:

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INCOME ASSISTANCE AND SHELTER RATES

BACKGROUND:

- Advocates typically criticize the adequacy of B.C.'s income assistance rates. The most common recommendations made by advocates are to raise income assistance

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rates to reflect actual costs of living and to index rates to the annual Consumer Price Index change.

- Advocates point to a report by Ron Kneebone and Oksana Grynishak, released in September 2011 by the University of Calgary, School of Public Policy, which compared disability assistance rates in B.C., Ontario and Alberta. This study concluded that B.C.'s disability assistance rates were inadequate to meet a person's long-term basic needs and recommended that the rates be increased to the maximum Old Age Security plus Guaranteed Income Supplement level, similar to Alberta's rates.
- Correcting a calculation error in the Kneebone and Grynishak study, our single Persons with Disabilities rate provides clients with a base total income just above the basic income threshold under the Fraser Institute's Basic Needs Line measure, which they cite.

Setting Rates

- In reviewing support rates, the ministry takes into account the basic cost of nutritious food, as estimated by the Dietitians of Canada, and estimates of housing costs, clothing, hygiene and other goods reported by Statistics Canada. Changes in the Consumer Price Index of basic goods and services are also monitored.
- Shelter rates are based upon an analysis of the actual market rent conditions and the needs of our clients, which do not necessarily reflect those of "average" market costs.
- If government were to drastically increase income assistance rates, many employable people may choose not to work and welfare could become a lifestyle choice that other working taxpayers would have to pay for.
- Rates reflect individual and family needs. Higher rates are provided to Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers and Persons with Disabilities, recognizing that they face additional barriers to employment.

Adequacy of Rates

- For employable individuals, income assistance is meant to be a temporary support and has never been intended to permanently replace full-time work.
- A \$200 monthly earnings exemption was introduced in October 2012 to help employable clients gain employment.
- Persons with Disabilities have additional barriers to overcome in transitioning to employment.
- British Columbia's highest rates of assistance are provided for Persons with Disabilities, in addition to significant health and other supplementary benefits and earnings exemptions (\$800 for families where one adult has disabilities, and \$1,600 for families where two adults have disabilities).

- Shelter rates for employable clients are among the highest in Canada.
- In addition to the support and shelter amounts, clients may also receive a number of additional health and other supplements for a wide range of special needs. There are about 70 supplements available.
- Clients also receive significant additional income from federal and provincial tax and child benefit programs. This ranges from \$30 per month for a single employable client to well over \$1,000 per month for a client with three or more children.

Indexing to Consumer Price Index

- Indexing rates has the potential to impede the ministry's ability to control its budget over the long term and to target increases to the most pressing needs of clients.
- It may also increase income assistance rates relative to average earnings, which research has shown reduces employment and increases income assistance dependence.

Last Rate Increase

- In April 2007, the ministry raised rates across the board for all of the ministry's clients. Highlights of the 2007 rates increase package:
 - \$50 increase to the shelter rate maximums for all client types and all family sizes (benefited 60,000 cases). This was the first such increase since 1992;
 - \$50 support increase for single clients and single parents who are expected to work (benefited 27,000 cases);
 - Support increases for Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers and Persons with Disabilities families with children (benefited 6,500 cases);
 - Additional \$45 to \$75 increases to the shelter maximums for Expected-to-Work and Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers families of 3 or more. This is in addition to the overall \$50 shelter increase (benefited 4,000 cases);
 - A new family category for Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers was created (for families where only one adult was Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers); and,
 - Hardship support rates were adjusted to be equal to the regular rates structure (benefited 400 families with children and seniors in hardship situations).

STATISTICS:**B.C. Shelter Rates**

Family Unit Size	Maximum Monthly Shelter
1 person	\$375.00
2 persons	\$570.00
3 persons	\$660.00
4 persons	\$700.00
5 persons	\$750.00
additional persons	+\$35.00

Total Basic Monthly Income on BC Employment and Assistance (Singles)**January – July to December 2013**

Payments	Employable	PPMB	PWD
Support Allowance	\$235.00	\$282.92	\$531.42
Shelter Allowance (maximum)	\$375.00	\$375.00	\$375.00
GST Credit (federal)	\$22.08	\$22.08	\$25.87
BC Climate Action Credit	\$9.63	\$9.63	\$9.63
Provincial Sales Tax Credit (paid in 2014)	\$6.25	\$6.25	\$6.25
Total Income	\$647.96	\$695.88	\$948.16

Total Basic Monthly Income on BC Employment and Assistance**(Couples no Children) – July to December 2013**

Payments	Employable	PPMB	1 PWD	2 PWD
Support Allowance	\$307.22	\$452.06	\$700.56	\$949.06
Shelter Allowance (maximum)	\$570.00	\$570.00	\$570.00	\$570.00
GST Credit (federal)	\$44.17	\$44.17	\$44.17	\$44.17
BC Climate Action Credit	\$19.25	\$19.25	\$19.25	\$19.25
Provincial Sales Tax Credit (paid in 2014)	\$12.50	\$12.50	\$12.50	\$12.50
Total Income	\$953.14	\$1,097.98	\$1,346.48	\$1,594.98

**Total Basic Monthly Income on BC Employment and Assistance (Parents)
July to December 2013**

Payments	Single Parent		2 Parent Family	
	1 Child (age 4)	2 Children (age 10 & 13)	1 Child (Age 4)	2 Children (age 10 & 13)
Support Allowance	\$375.58	\$375.58	\$401.06	\$401.06
Shelter Allowance (maximum)	\$570.00	\$660.00	\$660.00	\$700.00
GST Credit (federal)	\$55.75	\$67.33	\$55.75	\$67.33
BC Climate Action Credit	\$19.25	\$22.13	\$22.13	\$25.00
Provincial Sales Tax Credit (paid in 2014)	\$6.25	\$6.25	\$12.50	\$12.50
Canada Child Tax Benefit	\$119.41	\$238.82	\$119.41	\$238.82
BC Family Bonus/National Child Benefit Supplement	\$185.08	\$348.74	\$185.08	\$348.74
Universal Child Care Benefit	\$100	\$0	\$100	\$0
Total Income	\$1,431.32	\$1,718.85	\$1,555.93	\$1,793.45

- All clients who receive assistance for December receive an additional Christmas supplement of \$35 for each adult plus \$10 for each dependent child.
- All clients with school-aged children who receive assistance for September receive an additional School Start-up supplement of \$84 per child aged 5 to 11 years and \$116 per child aged 12 years and over.
- The federal GST Credit is paid four times per year. It is pro-rated over 12 months.
- The BC Harmonized Sales Credit is paid four times per year together with the GST Credit. It is pro-rated over 12 months.
- The BC Climate Action Credit is paid four times per year together with the GST and HST Credits. It is pro-rated over 12 months.
- The examples above assume that the families receive the maximum child and sales tax credits. These are income tested on previous year's income, except for the Universal Child Care Benefit.
- Single recipients with monthly income from BCEA above \$684.08 receive an additional single supplement to the GST Credit, up to a maximum of \$11.08 per month (total credit of \$32.17).
- The Universal Child Benefit is worth \$100 per month for each child under age six and paid monthly.
- The Canada Child Tax Benefit and National Child Benefit Supplement are paid monthly.
- The Canada Child Tax Benefit, National Child Benefit Supplement and GST credit amounts will increase in July by inflation indexing.

CROSS JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:**Monthly Total Income Assistance Rates by Province (as of June 2013) (including federal and provincial child benefits)**

	Employable				Temporarily Excused	Indefinitely Excused/ PPMB	Disabled
	Single	Couple	1-Parent 1 Child (age 4)*	2-Parent 2 Children (age 10&13)*	Single	Single	Single
B.C.	610	877	1,344	1,677	610	658	906
Alberta	627	956	1,322	1,836	713	809	1,588
Saskatchewan	670	1,207	1,462	1,955	822	822	1,217
Manitoba	505	782	1,203	1,747	505	721	721
Ontario	606	1,043	1,430	1,907	606	606	1,075
Quebec	604	936	1,458	1,810	733	918	918
New Brunswick	537	827	1,313	1,611	537	537	710
PEI	575	1,047	1,446	2,112	762	762	762
Nova Scotia	538	1,046	1,259	1,793	538	773	773
Newfoundland	708	1,142	1,511	1,766	708	708	708
Average of Other Provinces	597	998	1,378	1,837	658	740	941
B.C. Rank	4	8	6	9	6	8	5

*The rates for families with children include federal and provincial child benefits in order to ensure consistency across jurisdictions and because some child benefits are a component of the income assistance support rate in many provinces (such as B.C.).

Income Assistance Support Rates (as of June 2013)

	Employable				Temporari ly Excused	Indefinitely Excused/ PPMB	Disabled
	Single	Couple	1-Parent 1 Child (age 4)*	2-Parent 2 Children (age 10&13)*	Single	Single	Single
B.C.	235.00	307.22	774.07	977.13	235.00	282.92	531.42
Alberta	304.00	520.00	776.07	1,240.57	390.00	486.00	n/a
Saskatchewan	255.00	510.00	653.49	1,086.07	255.00	255.00	964.00
Manitoba	220.00	394.90	816.19	1,276.47	220.00	436.40	436.40
Ontario	230.00	453.00	840.15	1,212.40	230.00	230.00	596.00
Quebec	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
New Brunswick	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
PEI	239.00	386.00	785.49	1,283.07	239.00	239.00	239.00
Nova Scotia	238.00	476.00	688.57	1,172.90	238.00	238.00	238.00
Newfoundland	509.00	720.00	1,089.07	1,343.98	509.00	509.00	509.00
Average of Other Provinces	285.00	494.27	807.00	1,230.78	297.29	341.91	497.07
B.C. Rank	6	8	7	8	6	4	3 (of 7)

* The support rates for families with children include federal and provincial child benefits in order to ensure consistency across jurisdictions and because some child benefits are a component of the income assistance support rate in many provinces (such as B.C.).

Income Assistance Maximum Shelter Rates (as of June 2013)

	Employable				Temporarily Excused	Indefinitely Excused/ PPMB	Disabled
	Single	Couple	1-Parent 1 Child (age 4)*	2-Parent 2 Children (age 10&13)*	Single	Single	Single
B.C.	375.00	570.00	570.00	700.00	375.00	375.00	375.00
Alberta	323.00	436.00	546.00	595.00	323.00	323.00	n/a
Saskatchewan	415.26	696.76	808.71	868.56	567.14	567.14	253.00
Manitoba	285.00	387.00	387.00	471.00	285.00	285.00	285.00
Ontario	376.00	590.00	590.00	695.00	376.00	376.00	479.00
Quebec	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
New Brunswick	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
PEI	335.58	660.96	660.96	829.00	523.00	523.00	523.00
Nova Scotia	300.00	570.00	570.00	620.00	300.00	535.00	535.00
Newfoundland	199.00	422.00	422.00	422.00	199.00	199.00	199.00
Average of Other Provinces	319.12	537.53	569.24	642.94	367.59	401.16	454.80
B.C. Rank	3	4-5	4-5	3	4	5	4 (of 7)

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Income Tax Filing and Incentives

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

- Ministry research shows that approximately 27% of clients, or roughly 38,500 clients (as of March 2013), have not filed a tax return and as a result are missing out on additional income that could significantly improve their financial well-being.

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- Based on 27% of clients not filing taxes, a minimum of \$18 million in federal and provincial benefits are unclaimed each year.
- The additional income received from benefits is not deducted from a client's income assistance. Some of the tax credits clients may be eligible for include:
 - The GST Credit, BC Low Income Climate Action Tax Credit, BC Sales Tax Credit, Canada Child Tax Benefit, BC Family Bonus, BC Earned Income Benefit, National Child Benefit Supplement, Universal Child Care Benefit, and Working Income Tax Benefit.
- Ministry clients who receive disability assistance and families with disabled children can benefit even more. These extra benefits include the federal Disability Tax Credit, and Child Disability Benefit.
- The following are additional examples of other programs individuals may benefit from by filing taxes:
 - Medical Service Plan Premium Assistance, Healthy Kids Program, Rental Assistance Program, Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters, the Guaranteed Income Supplement, and Fair Pharmacare. The Seniors Supplement, Provincial Bus Pass, and more may be available by filing income taxes and meeting their respective eligibility criteria.
- As of October 2012, income tax refunds and retroactive Family Bonus payments are also fully exempt from the calculation of assistance.
- In June 2012, the ministry announced its intention to introduce income tax filing as a new eligibility requirement for income assistance by Spring 2013.
- The ministry also announced the establishment of a Community Benefit Fund, intended for first-time tax filers, to provide additional community level capacity to help people living with disabilities access Registered Disability Savings Plans, file their taxes and improve their financial literacy.
- Income tax filing as a new eligibility requirement has not been implemented to date. The ministry is currently assessing and will be consulting with stakeholders on options to implement this commitment, including discussions on appropriate exemption requirements.
- A Community Benefit Fund has not been established to date. Instead, the ministry explored other options to try and support targeted clients to file their taxes, including a tax filing incentive partnership with the Vancouver Foundation.
- In April 2013, approximately 900 families were sent letters offering a \$200 incentive for them to file their income taxes and access child tax benefits.
- These individuals were selected to participate because:
 - They were not currently in receipt of the National Child Benefit Supplement;
 - Their family unit had at least one dependent child who met the age criteria for that supplement; and

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- They had been in receipt of assistance for the last 12 months.
- Individuals are eligible for the \$200 tax filing incentive, administered through the Vancouver Foundation, if they file taxes for either 2011 or 2012 (or both) and provide proof of filing.
- Individuals were also informed that the Canada Revenue Agency partners with community organizations in the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program, which provides tax preparation clinics around rural and urban B.C. with volunteers on hand to help fill out a return.
- The initiative is now underway. The first report on uptake is expected from the Vancouver Foundation in July 2013.
- The overall goal is to have the majority of clients filing income taxes and realizing the financial benefits.

CROSS JURISDICTIONAL:

- Nova Scotia is the only province in Canada where filing an income tax return is an eligibility requirement for income assistance. If filing cannot be completed in a timely manner, income assistance may be provided in situations where the health and safety of a client is apparent and verified.
- British Columbia's treatment of income tax refunds is consistent with other jurisdictions.
- Most provinces in Canada treat income tax refunds either as exempt income or liquid assets exempt to a client's asset level.
- In provinces where income tax refunds are considered liquid assets, the refund may impact eligibility if a client's asset levels are exceeded.
- British Columbia's treatment of tax credits is consistent with other jurisdictions, including retroactive Family Bonus Payments. The majority of other jurisdictions exempt retroactive Family Bonus payments after reclaiming any provincial top-up they have provided.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
RESEARCH BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Low Income Families and Children

KEY MESSAGES:

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LOW INCOME FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

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June 28, 2013

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BACKGROUND:**Low Income in B.C. and the Rest of Canada**

- According to the 2011 after-tax Low Income Cut-Offs, 10.7 per cent of the population lived in low income, down 0.8 percentage points from 2010. This is the lowest rate since 1989.
- While the proportion of B.C. children living in low-income families in 2011 was 11.3 per cent—up from 10.5 per cent in 2010—this was lower than any rate prior to 2008 since 1981 and a 41 per cent reduction since 2003.
- B.C.'s child and overall low-income rates was the highest among provinces in 2011, under the Low Income Cut-Off measure
- B.C.'s rate of job growth from 2003 through 2007 was higher than most other provinces, leading to an improvement in low-income rates relative to most other provinces. However, the gap between B.C. and most other provinces widened slightly in 2009, as B.C. and Alberta were hardest hit by the 2008-09 recession.

Overview of Government Benefits Available to Low Income Families in B.C.

- The second highest minimum wage in Canada, \$10.25 per hour.
- No provincial income tax for individuals with incomes below \$19,000.
- Child Tax Benefit, B.C. Family Bonus/National Child Benefit Supplement, Universal Child Care Subsidy - up to \$404/month per child.
- Provincial Child Care Subsidy - up to \$750/month per child.

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- Social Housing (subsidized rent based on income).
- Rental Assistance Program - up to \$765/month.
- Federal GST rebate - up to \$265/year per adult (and first child of single parent); \$139 per child; plus an employment supplement for single adults of up to \$139 per year.
- Working Income Tax Benefit - up to \$208/month (including Disability Supplement).
- Medical Service Plan Premium Assistance – up to \$133/month in savings.
- Healthy Kids - dental (\$1,400 every 2 years) and optical (glasses every 12 months).
- Climate Action Tax Credit - up to \$115.50/year per adult, \$34.50 per child.

Government supports for low income families

- Over the last decade, the Province has invested \$2.8 billion to provide affordable housing for low income individuals, seniors and families. This year, more than 95,000 B.C. households will benefit from provincial social housing programs and services.
- In 2010-2011, the Province invested over \$562 million to provide affordable housing and fight homelessness – more than four times as much as in 2001.
- B.C. families are further supported by up to \$404 for each child each month through the Canada Child Tax Benefit, the B.C. Family Bonus, and the new Universal Child Care Benefit (for children under six). Families on income assistance receive the full amount.
- Medical Service Plan Premium Assistance to low-income British Columbians was further enhanced in January 2010 with a \$2,000 increase in the income thresholds for assistance.
- Premium Assistance now provides a 100 per cent subsidy for those with net incomes (adjusted based on age, family size and disability) of up to \$22,000, and premiums are phased in for incomes up to \$30,000. Those with adjusted net incomes over \$30,000 pay full premiums. A family of four with gross income of less than \$39,000 now does not pay for Medical Service Plan.
- The Climate Action Tax Credit more than compensate low-income families for any additional cost resulting from B.C.'s Climate Action initiatives.
- The Healthy Kids Program ensures children in low-to-moderate income families receive necessary dental and optical services.
- The money saved as a result of the federal government now paying most of the Family Bonus, through the National Child Benefit, is reinvested in provincial in-kind benefits and services that benefit low income children – such as supported child care, Healthy Kids medical and dental services, family support programs, programs for at risk youth and family social housing.
- B.C.'s National Child Benefit reinvestments totalled over \$373 million in fiscal 2008-09 (the latest data available). Research suggests that investments in these types of services can have a bigger impact in reducing child poverty than simple income transfer payments to families.

Initiatives to move families into good jobs

- The ministry invests \$55.5 million a year in a full range of employment programs to help income assistance clients achieve greater self-reliance, build a better life for their families, break the cycle of welfare dependency and meet the needs of the labour market.
- Since 2003/04, we have increased the number of licensed child care spaces by over thirty-seven per cent – today funding over 100,000 licensed child care spaces in communities across British Columbia. Government provides subsidies to children from low and moderate income families each year to assist with the costs of child care for working families and families studying to improve their employment opportunities.
- Launched in 2006, the Rental Assistance Program provides cash assistance to working families with children to help with their monthly rent payments. Families with an annual income below \$35,000 and not on income assistance may be eligible for benefits ranging from \$50 to \$765 each month.
- The government worked with the federal government to redesign and enhance the Working Income Tax Benefit for B.C. to better assist our clients to leave income assistance for work. Under the new B.C. designed Working Income Tax Benefit, a parent with dependent children is much better off moving to full-time employment than remaining on income assistance.
- Those families that have earnings from work can receive the Working Income Tax Benefit. Currently, for a family with one child, this could provide up to \$15 per month, based on their work income, and \$46 per month extra if they have a disability.

Ministry increased supports for families on Income Assistance

- In 2007 all income assistance clients received an increase of at least \$50 per month to the maximum shelter portion of their income assistance rates – a benefit to about 135,000 individuals. This was the first across the board shelter rate increase since 1992.
- In addition, our rate increases in 2007 helped families on assistance through:
 - A \$50 support increase for single clients and single parents who are expected to work.
 - Support increases for Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers and Persons with Disabilities families with children.
 - Additional \$45 to \$75 increases to the shelter maximums for Expected-to-Work and Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers families of 3 or more.
 This is in addition to the overall \$50 shelter increase.
- The ministry raised the Earnings Exemptions for Persons with Disabilities and Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers on income assistance to \$800 each month for one adult PWD, and \$1,600 per month for families with two adults designated as PWD.

- A \$200 monthly earnings exemptions for employable individuals and families, and families with youngchildren, were introduced in October 2012.
- The ministry invests \$55.5 million a year on employment programs to help people on income assistance find and keep good jobs.
- In 2006, the ministry doubled the School Start-up Supplement from \$42 to \$84 for children between the ages of 5 and 11, and from \$58 to \$116 for children between the ages of 12 and 18. This increase assisted about 18,000 families and 27,000 children to afford the tools and supplies they need for school.

Low Income Families – Living on Assistance

- We recognize it is a challenge to live on income assistance – and people often do not know about the various supports available to low income households.
- For instance, a two-parent family of four on income assistance receives a host of provincial and federal benefits that, in fact, bring their monthly income to about \$1,900 (\$2,100 if they are working part-time).
- Of course this example assumes both parents are employable – and receiving that level of support.
- Today a full two-thirds of income assistance clients are people with disabilities or serious barriers to employment – receiving the highest levels of support available in the province as well as a full range of dental and health benefits.
- For example that same family of four, with one parent with a disability would receive a total monthly assistance of about \$2,300.

Job Creation – the Key to Reducing Family and Child Poverty

- Since family poverty is most effectively reduced by getting parents into steady jobs, the B.C. government has concentrated on job creation. In fact, studies have shown that children with working parents are more likely to succeed at school, become self-reliant adults and stay off welfare.
- The ministry's Longitudinal Administrative Database analysis showed that individuals and families were better off when they left income assistance for work and that they became increasingly better off the longer they remained off income assistance.
- British Columbia was seriously set back by the global recession in 2009. Recovery of jobs from the recession has been gradual since 2010 .
- As B.C.'s economy continues to recover from the recession, the number of people in low income should continue to fall.

STATISTICS:**Provincial Ranking of Child Low-Income Rates British Columbia, 2001-2011
(After-tax Low Income Cut-Offs)**

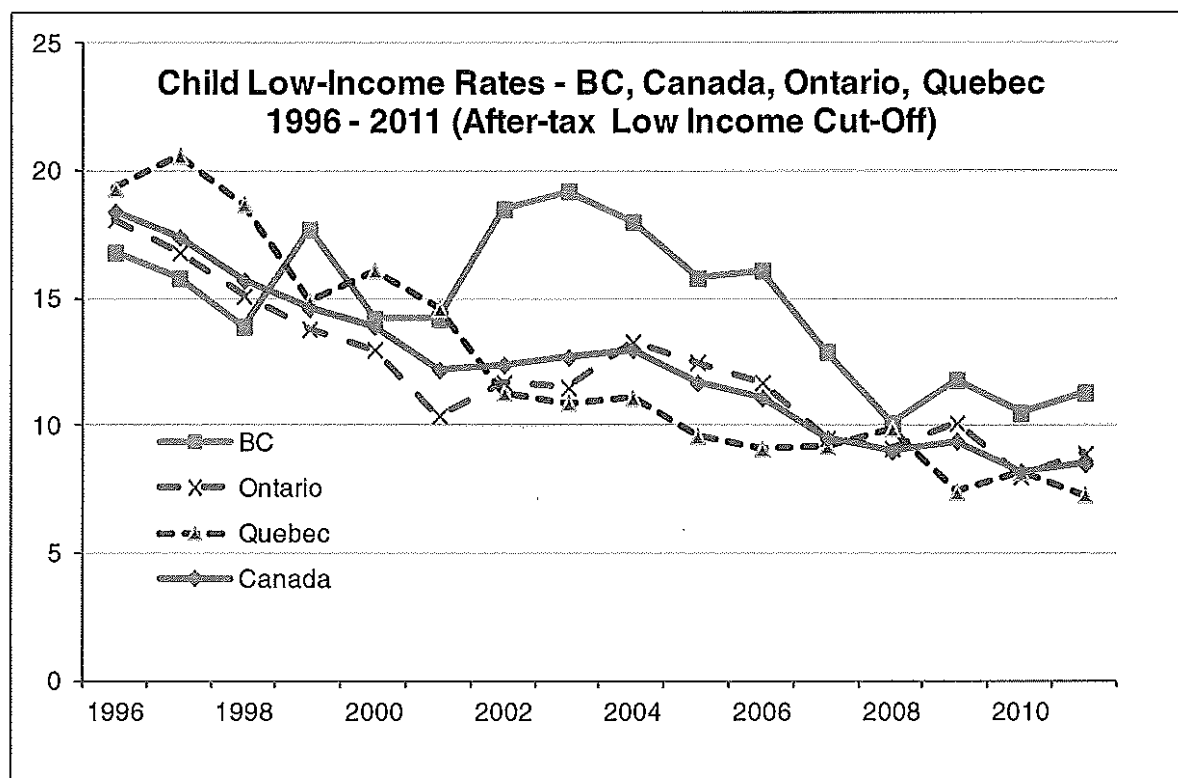
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
British Columbia	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1/2
Alberta	7	8	6	5	9	9	8	8	4	8	6
Saskatchewan	6	9	5	7	3	2	3	3/4	3	7	8
Manitoba	1	2	2	4	2	3	2	6	6	1	1/2
Ontario	8	5	7	3	4	4	5	3/4	2	6	3
Quebec	2	6	9	7	7	6	6	2	8	5	5
New Brunswick	9	7	8	9	6	5	4	9	9	9	7
Nova Scotia	5	4	4	5	8	7	7	7	7	4	4
Prince Edward Island	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Newfoundland & Labrador	4	3	3	2	5	8	8	5	5	3	9

Notes: All persons in low income family types. After-tax Low Income Cut-off (1992 Base).
1 indicates the highest rate.

**Percentage of All Persons and Children below After-tax Low Income Cut-Offs,
British Columbia, 2001–2011**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total Population (All Persons)	14.1	16.0	15.4	14.1	13.2	12.6	11.0	11.1	12.0	11.5	10.7
All children under 18 years	14.2	18.5	19.2	18.0	15.8	16.1	12.9	10.1	11.8	10.5	11.3

1992 base after-tax income Low Income Cut-off



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
RESEARCH BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Low Income Cut-offs (LICO)

KEY MESSAGES:

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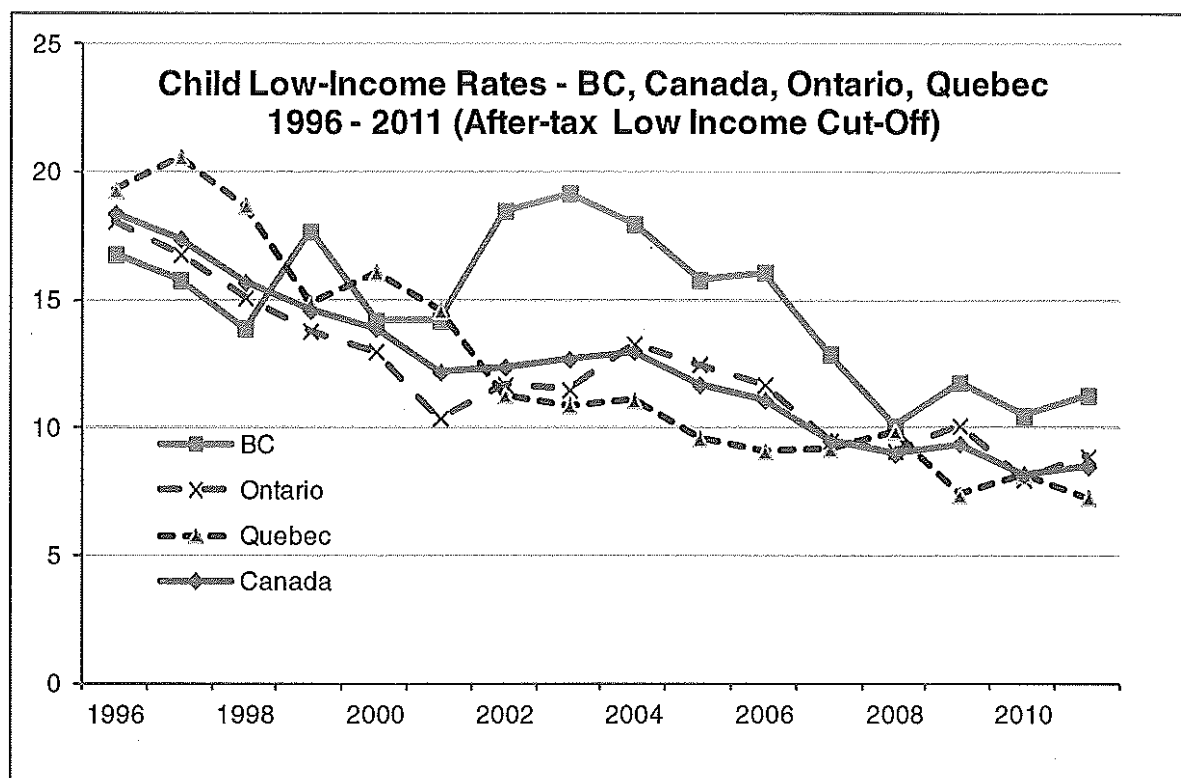
LOW INCOME CUT-OFFS

BACKGROUND:

Low Income Cut-Offs as a Measure of Poverty – Caution

- Media and advocacy groups often refer to low-income measures as “poverty measures.” Statistics Canada emphasizes that this is incorrect.
- There is no one measure that adequately defines low income or poverty. Low income in one year is not the same as living in poverty. Poverty is a chronic lack of resources that impairs physical and mental health and socially isolates people. It is difficult to escape because of a lack of access to education or jobs. There are many more people in B.C. living in transitory low income in a year than living in poverty.
- Media and advocacy groups often cite low-income measures using before-tax income. Statistics Canada emphasizes that this ignores the effect of taxes on disposable income and can lead to biased and inconsistent comparisons between family types and regions.
- Another problem is the lack of current information – the most recent estimates are for 2011. The statistics available are up to two years old, and do not account for recent improvements to the economy.
- The year-to-year changes in the Low Income Cut-Offs must be viewed with caution. These estimates are subject to a large degree of year to year random fluctuation and data revisions. Large changes in a sub-group, such as single parents for example, are often followed by some offsetting change in the following year.
- The Low Income Cut-Offs do not provide a reasonable measure of the adequacy of income assistance rates, as they fail to take into account the unique income, cost of living, needs and individual circumstances facing assistance clients. The measure is designed to provide for an ongoing adequate standard of living, whereas income assistance for single employable people is intended to provide temporary assistance until they find work.

Low Income Cut-Off Definition – Income levels at which families or persons, on average, spend 20 per cent or more of their income on food, shelter and clothing than the average family.



After-Tax Low Income Cut-Offs

- **Relative expenditure measure:** The after-tax Low Income Cut-Off is the income level below which families spend at least 20 per cent more of their income than the average Canadian family on food, shelter and clothing. Currently this means a low-income family spends 63 per cent or more of their after-tax income on food, shelter and clothing, based on 1992 family expenditures (the last expenditure update).
- The Low Income Cut-Off is not actually a relative income measure, as often claimed, but is relative to the average expenditures of Canadian families on basic goods and services.
- The Low Income Cut-Off income threshold is dependent on the size of the family unit. For families with children, the increase in the income thresholds due to an additional child is offset by 94 per cent to 140 per cent by the additional federal and provincial child benefits received by the larger family unit.
- Low Income Cut-Off levels vary by size of community, e.g., municipalities of over 500,000 (Vancouver, Montreal, Toronto, etc.) are estimated to be more expensive, so the Low Income Cut-Off is higher. The Low Income Cut-Off does not vary between communities of the same size across Canada, but is averaged across these communities.
- **Concerns with Low Income Cut-Off:** The ministry has serious concerns about the validity of cross-provincial comparisons using the Low Income Cut-Off because:

- The Low Income Cut-Off thresholds are estimated nationally, by community size, and do not account for local/provincial cost of living differences or spending habits.
- The Low Income Cut-Offs over-estimate the difference in the cost of living between large cities and smaller communities because of poor methodology. This means that they under-estimate the low income rate in provinces with a high proportion of the population living in small or rural communities (e.g., Prince Edward Island). Similarly, they overestimate low income in highly urbanized provinces (e.g., Quebec).
- Low Income Cut-Off income estimates do not include in-kind benefits for low-income families, such as the B.C. Child Care Subsidy, subsidized social housing, Healthy Kids dental and optical benefits, Fair Pharmacare benefits, or Medical Service Plan Premium Reduction. The values of these vary across provinces.

STATISTICS:

Percentage of Persons and Children below After-tax Low Income Cut-Off British Columbia, 2001–2011

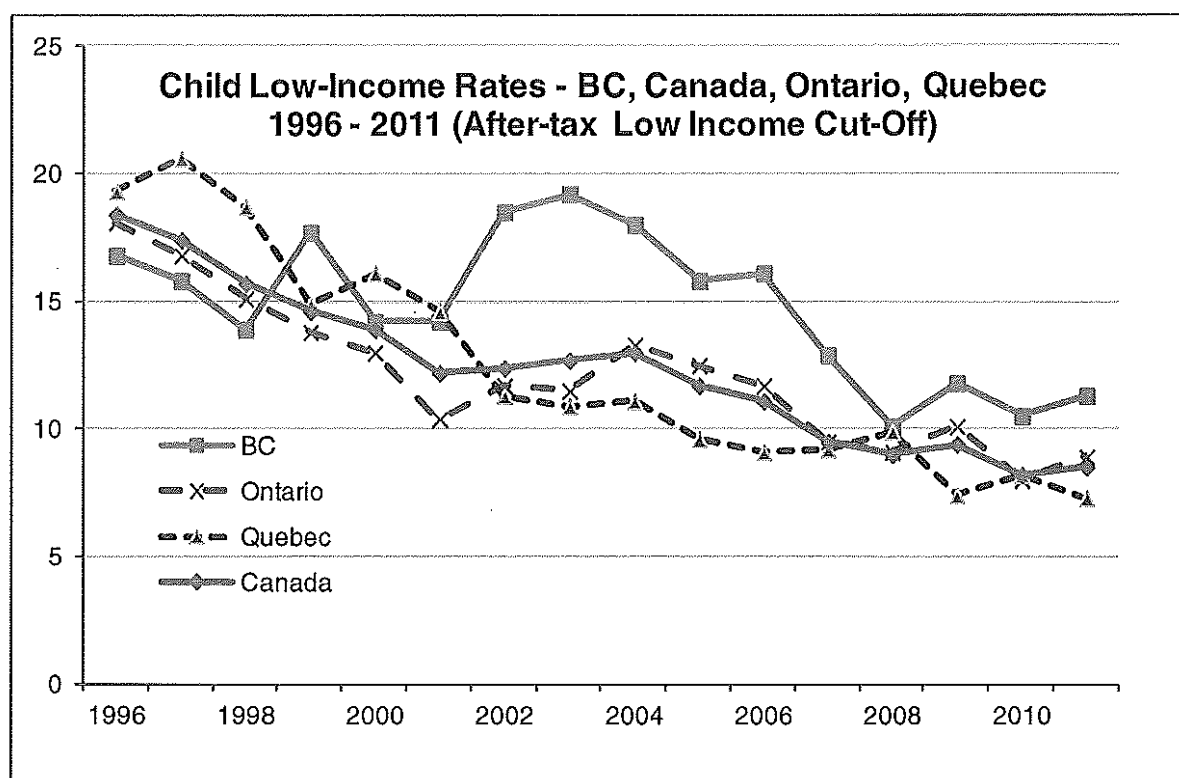
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total Population (All Persons)	14.1	16.0	15.4	14.1	13.2	12.6	11.0	11.1	12.0	11.5	10.7
All children under 18 years	14.2	18.5	19.2	18.0	15.8	16.1	12.9	10.1	11.8	10.5	11.3

1992 base after-tax income Low Income Cut-off

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:**Provincial Rankings of Low-Income Rates for All Persons
2001-2011 (After-tax Low Income Cut-Offs)**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
British Columbia	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Alberta	6	8	6	6	9	9	9	9	6	6	5
Saskatchewan	7	9	8	7	4	4	7	7/8	7/8	7/8	8
Manitoba	3	3	2	4	2	2	3	4	4	3	4
Ontario	8	5	7	5	5	5	4	3	2	4	3
Quebec	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	2
New Brunswick	9	7	9	9	6	6	5	6	9	9	7
Nova Scotia	5	6	5	8	7/8	7	6	5	5	5	5
Prince Edward Island	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Newfoundland & Labrador	4	4	4	2	7/8	8	8	7/8	7/8	7/8	8

Notes: All persons in low income family types. After-tax Low Income Cut-off (1992 Base).
1 indicates the highest rate.



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
LEGISLATION, LITIGATION AND APPEALS BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Ombudsperson Reconsideration Timelines

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

- In May 2009, reconsiderations for all original ministry decisions were centralized to the Reconsideration Branch (now a part of the Legislation, Litigation and Appeals Branch).
- At the same time, the unanticipated economic downturn took hold. From 2009 to 2012, a steady increase in applications for Persons with Disabilities (PWD) designation and various supplements resulted in a corresponding increase in the number of denials made by the ministry and in reconsideration requests.
- The number of reconsideration requests increased by 69% between 2008/09 and 2010/11.
- Given these circumstances, the ministry made best efforts to complete reconsiderations within regulated timelines and minimize the impact of late reconsiderations. Efforts included:
 - paying overtime to Reconsideration Officers;
 - redeploying regional staff to conduct reconsideration decisions;
 - having Appeal Analysts assist with reconsideration decisions; and
 - triaging PWD reconsideration requests.
- Health reconsiderations are complex, often requiring additional medical evidence to be submitted by professionals. The ministry often waits for medical information so as to corroborate applicant's eligibility.
- In June 2011, the Ombudsperson began an investigation into reconsideration decisions on eligibility for ministry programs made outside the legislated time-frame.
- The Ombudsperson has made five related requests for information.

**OMBUDSPERSON RECONSIDERATION
TIMELINES**

- An embargoed copy of the Ombudsperson's report is expected to be sent to the Minister in late June.
 - The report is expected to be tabled in the legislature in late June or early July.

STATISTICS:

	Reconsideration requests		
	Fiscal Year	Average per Month	Percentage within regulated timeframe
2008/09	3,165	264	94.9%
2009/10	5,031	419	29.4%
2010/11	5,239	436	14.6%
2011/12	4,816	401	62.5%
2012/13	4,069	339	87.5%

Reconsideration statistics from the ministry's Reconsideration and Appeal Tracking System

Cross Reference:

- **Note #92:** Ombudsperson Report – Income Assistance

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
REGIONAL OPERATIONS BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Ombudsperson Report – Income Assistance

KEY MESSAGES:

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**OMBUDSPERSON REPORT –
INCOME ASSISTANCE**

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BACKGROUND:

Systemic Investigation

- In February 2005, the BC Public Interest Advocacy Centre submitted a complaint to the Ombudsperson related to a number of issues involving the ministry's income assistance programs.
- In March 2005, the Ombudsperson decided to investigate six of the allegations:
 - Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers;
 - Ministry's documentation requirements;
 - Three week waiting period;
 - Emergency needs assessment;
 - Reconsiderations, appeals and administrative reviews; and

- Ministry home visits.
- Since the investigation began in 2005, the ministry has been proactive and committed to ensuring that its policies, procedures, and practices meet or exceed the principles of administrative fairness. The ministry has undertaken numerous initiatives and projects intended to address the concerns raised by the Ombudsperson over the course of this investigation.
- In March 2006, the former Ombudsperson Howard Kushner released the first public report about the investigation titled *Special Report No. 28: Ombudsman Investigation of the Public Interest Advocacy Centre's Complaints about the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance*.
- The former Ombudsperson noted that several areas of concern were no longer under investigation due to the ministry's efforts to resolve these matters. However, the former Ombudsperson indicated that he would again report publicly on Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers and the ministry's documentation requirements (allegations 1 and 2 above respectively).
- Under the current Ombudsperson, Kim Carter, the Office of the Ombudsperson continued the investigation. In March 2009, the Ombudsperson released the final public report titled *"Last Resort: Improving Fairness and Accountability in British Columbia's Income Assistance Program"*. This report concluded the systemic investigation.

Findings and Recommendations

- The Ombudsperson's March 2009 report contains 26 findings and 28 recommendations. The ministry accepted 27 of the 28 recommendations, with the exception of Recommendation 23 (retroactive compensation).
- The findings and recommendations address the following general areas:
 - Income assistance application process;
 - Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers to Employment;
 - Ministry's documentation requirements; and
 - Implementation of commitments made by the ministry to the former Ombudsperson in 2006.

Questions about Specific Client Issues or Outcomes included in the Report

- The ministry does not feel that the case studies cited in the report are representative of the average client experience with ministry programs and services.
- The Ombudsperson's report does not provide any indication that the events and outcomes in some of these examples are recurring or systemic. The ministry does not believe that a unique individual case outcome is the same as a systemic issue.
- Individual circumstances vary widely and all information is taken into consideration, but those cases cannot be discussed as that would be a breach of confidentiality.

Questions about Recommendation 23 (retroactive compensation)

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 Date: June 18, 2013

- In March 2006, the Ombudsperson's first report raised a concern about the date on which the ministry implemented appeal decisions and noted that this "issue has particular relevance in cases where the decision relates to an applicant's eligibility for designation as a Persons with Disabilities."
- The ministry committed to a broad review of policy and regulations related to implementation of appeal decisions and agreed to consider changing the relevant regulation. The ministry then proceeded to address the fairness issue raised by the Ombudsperson in a comprehensive manner that was not limited only to appeal decisions. In December 2008, the ministry amended the regulations, and as a result clients now receive backdated payments following a successful appeal.
- The Ombudsperson's March 2009 report stated that the ministry "unreasonably delayed" making the regulatory amendment and has requested compensation for any clients affected between April 2006 and December 2008. The ministry does not agree that it "unreasonably delayed" making the regulatory amendment. The amendment was delayed primarily due to unforeseen complexities identified by ministry staff, legislative counsel, and legal counsel.
- The ministry kept the Office of the Ombudsperson regularly apprised of its commitment to proceed with a proposed amendment. The result is an amendment that is consistent with the recommendations of the Ombudsperson and in BC Public Interest Advocacy Centre's original complaint.
- The ministry also proactively consulted with the BC Public Interest Advocacy Centre and other legal advocates as part of this process, ensuring transparency and full consideration of this matter with involvement of these stakeholders.
- The large volume of other policy and regulatory issues during that time period prevented the ministry from resolving this issue sooner. The ministry made 45 other regulatory amendments between April 2006 and December 2008.
- Concurrent with efforts to amend the regulation, the ministry invested substantial resources into improving the Persons with Disabilities adjudication process, as the denial of Persons with Disabilities designation is the most frequent issue appealed. As a result, the ministry was able to reduce adjudication times (7.6 weeks in 2006/07 to 3 weeks in 2008/09) and eligible Persons with Disabilities clients received benefits over a month sooner than before, including many of the people the Ombudsperson believes were "adversely affected" before the regulatory change was made.
- For example, a client who submitted a complete application for a Persons with Disabilities designation on March 1, 2008 received a decision by end of March and, if granted Persons with Disabilities status, was provided additional assistance beginning April whereas a client that applied for Persons with Disabilities on March 1, 2006 may not have received a decision until late April or May and would have received the additional assistance beginning May or perhaps June.

- As a result of the reduction in Persons with Disabilities adjudication times, the ministry informed the Ombudsperson in July 2007 that it would not be pursuing the retroactivity of any proposed regulatory amendment.
- The ministry does not agree that the time it took to change the regulation was unreasonable and the ministry was always proceeding to propose the regulatory amendment in good faith. As a result, the ministry did not accept this Ombudsperson's finding or recommendation.

Implementation of the 27 Ombudsperson Recommendations

- Several of the Ombudsperson's recommendations include a specific date for implementation. However, in the ministry's formal response to the report in February 2009, the ministry advised the Ombudsperson that the ministry has been experiencing extraordinary demands for service as a result of the current economic situation, and that while the ministry will make every effort to expedite work to implement the recommendations in the report, immediate client needs are the most pressing priority.
- The ministry has implemented 14 of the 20 one-time recommendations of the report and the other 6 one-time recommendations are in progress.
- There are 7 recommendations that are of an ongoing nature.
- The ministry has been responsive to requests from the Ombudsperson's office to provide progress updates.
- The Ombudsperson continues to monitor the implementation of ministry commitments and post updates publicly. The Ombudsperson's 2012/13 Annual Report, publicly released on June 18, 2013, provided an update on the ministry's progress in implementing the 27 recommendations.
- The Ombudsperson Report criticizes the ministry for not moving more quickly to implement recommendations, including the 6 recommendations accepted regarding the Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers (PPMB) program (Recommendations 12, 13, 14, 15, 16(A) and 16(B)). The ministry, more than three years after accepting the recommendations, reports that it continues to review the PPMB program as a whole. Additionally, the Ombudsperson points out that, as of March 31, 2013, no file reviews or audits evaluating compliance with legislation and ministry policies have been scheduled (Recommendations 8 and 25).
- The Ombudsperson Report acknowledges the ministry's progress updates, including:
 - The ministry is currently reviewing its intake process, to identify improvement opportunities with the goal of reducing the time to complete the intake process (Recommendation 7).
 - The ministry has completed Recommendation 21(A), reducing the number of forms that need signing in person:

- In August 2012 – updated policy and procedures on the Online Resource to increase the number of forms that prescribed professionals and other government staff may witness, instead of ministry staff.
- Two additional related updates have also been made: the ministry's Consent to Disclosure of Information form is now available publicly on the Online Resource so that anyone can witness this form; and, the witness requirement has been removed from the Child in the Home of a Relative Screen consent form.

6 One-Time Ombudsperson Recommendations Pending Implementation as of March 2013	Ministry Actions To Date – Progress Reported to Ombudsperson
<u>Recommendation 12:</u> The ministry take necessary steps to include an exemption in the Employment and Assistance Regulation from the requirement to be on income assistance for 12 of the previous 15 months for people who, at time of application, have barriers for which there is no program to remedy.	The ministry is currently in the process of reviewing all of the Ombudsperson's recommendations related to the ministry's PPMB program. Given the breadth of scope and related nature of these recommendations, a bundled approach is being taken to determine viable options for implementation of these recommendations.
<u>Recommendation 13:</u> The ministry revise the PPMB Medical Form so that it: • provides information to doctors about the PPMB program and documentation requirements; • provides an opportunity for doctors to include information on how the client's medical condition affects his or her ability to work; and • removes the request for information about the length of time a doctor has been seeing a patient.	The ministry continues to be responsive to requests from the Ombudsperson for updates on these recommendations. In March 2013, the ministry reported that it is continuing to review the PPMB program as a whole.
<u>Recommendation 14:</u> The ministry conduct a file review to determine compliance with the ministry's definitions of "seriously impedes" and "precludes" when staff determine PPMB eligibility and report results publicly.	
<u>Recommendation 15:</u> The ministry conduct a detailed review of the effectiveness of the employability screen in producing a useful measure of a person's ability to work and publicly report the results of this review. The ministry take these steps by December 1, 2009.	

Recommendation 16(A):

The ministry provide clear written information about the PPMB program to all people applying for income assistance by March 31, 2010.

Recommendation 16(B):

The ministry create a form that clients can use to apply for PPMB status themselves by March 31, 2010.

7 Additional Ombudsperson Recommendations - Actioning on an Ongoing Basis
Ministry Actions To Date – Progress Reported to Ombudsperson
Recommendation 1:

The ministry continue to simplify the process of applying for income assistance with a view to minimizing challenges for applicants.

The ministry do this on an ongoing basis and annually report the results to the public.

In 2009, the ministry continued to explore new initiatives with a view to further simplifying the process of applying for income assistance. In spite of the economic downturn during this period, the ministry successfully introduced pilot projects in select offices around the province to offer group orientations and group applications to new ministry applicants. The intended goals of these pilot initiatives were to make best use of available staff time and improve application intake wait times for clients.

As part of the pilot project, staff offered and booked, on a voluntary basis, groups of up to 10 new applicants to complete the orientation and Stage 1 application intake. Consents and third party checks were completed prior to the applicant's initial intake. The group process was completed with one-on-one intake sessions, and applicants received a checklist and instructions explaining what they must do to complete their application. Applicants then returned with all necessary documentation at pre-set appointment times to complete the application process.

While the group orientations and group applications were offered as a pilot project, on a strictly voluntary basis, feedback from new applicants and

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 Date: June 18, 2013

	advocacy groups was extremely positive. The ministry is currently in the process of evaluating and assessing the compatibility of the group application and orientations with the new Self Serve Assessment and Application Tool that was introduced in March 2010. The introduction in March 2010 of the new online self serve assessment and application tool now provides people with 24/7 access to income assistance program information and an eligibility assessment tool. The tool also provides people with the option of completing Stage 1 of the application process from the internet venue of their choice. This new tool offers another expanded service option, should people choose to explore the ministry's services from the privacy of their home or from other public internet sites such as libraries and Service BC offices. In August 2011, the Ombudsperson confirmed that adequate information has been received to satisfy this recommendation.
<u>Recommendation 6:</u> The ministry continuously improve compliance with its service standard that applicants who are exempt from the three-week work search requirement are provided with an eligibility appointment within five business days.	The ministry experienced an increase in demand for services, and has been focused on targeting available resources to serve clients in a timely manner to ensure that critical client needs are met. The ministry also indicated that maintaining the level of service established under the favourable economic conditions of 2008/2009 across all areas of the ministry's business may not be feasible until the economic environment improves. In spite of these challenges, the ministry has remained committed to continuous improvement in compliance with its service standards and in providing timely eligibility appointments. The ministry has made every effort given the available resources to respond to immediate client needs during this challenging period.
<u>Recommendation 7:</u> The ministry continuously improve compliance in providing eligibility appointments within one business day to individuals with immediate needs.	In January 2011, the ministry updated its service standards and now reflects the following related timeliness standards:

- Service requests that are not immediate in nature will be actioned within five business days
- Immediate Need requests (fleeing abuse, food, shelter and/or urgent medical attention) will be addressed within the same business day

While there is no longer a service standard specific to applicants who are exempt from the three-week work search requirement, ministry staff continue to make every effort to ensure these applicants are assessed within the new standards.

In March 2013, the ministry advised the Ombudsperson there is no further update, as there is no longer a service standard specific to applicants who are exempt from the three-week work search requirement (as reported in August 2011).

With respect to those individuals with immediate needs, the ministry continues to strive to provide eligibility appointments within one business day. However, as of the changes introduced in January 2011, the ministry's new standard is to meet an immediate need request without delay, and before an eligibility interview is completed, through the provision of food vouchers, shelter referrals, bus tickets, etc.

In August 2011, the ministry provided the Ombudsperson an update on this recommendation.

In March 2013, the ministry reported that it remains committed to improving compliance with its service standards, including to individuals with immediate needs. The ministry is currently reviewing its intake process, to identify improvement opportunities with the goal of reducing the time to complete the intake process.

Recommendation 8:

To ensure compliance with ministry policy on immediate needs assessments and increase consistency in how staff conduct these assessments, the ministry:

- regularly provide training for staff;
- regularly audit compliance; and
- report audit outcomes publicly on an annual basis.

A Quick Reference Guide had been developed in June 2009 on the immediate needs assessment, to ensure staff had access to immediate information they need, to improve consistency in conducting these assessments, and as a training tool. At that time, staff were also encouraged to reference the ministry's Online Resource for additional information on the immediate needs assessment where required.

As of March 31, 2011, there were no audits scheduled while the ministry continued to respond to immediate client needs as our most pressing priority. However, ongoing training was being led by regional Policy, Program and Implementation Managers across the province, including regular discussions with both supervisors and staff.

In August 2011, the ministry provided the Ombudsperson an update on this recommendation.

In March 2013, the ministry reported that in December 2012, detailed standard operating procedures were introduced for staff on completing immediate needs assessment intakes and for applicants that are fleeing abuse. See also related update on R25 as it relates to file reviews or audits.

Recommendation 11:

The ministry use Statistics Canada data to track whether people who discontinue income assistance applications move on to employment or educational programs within two months of discontinuing their applications and report this data publicly by September 1, 2010.

The ministry develop reliable and effective mechanisms to continue to track this and report the results publicly on an annual basis, beginning March 2011.

The ministry received Statistics Canada data, and has publicly released a report determining outcomes of those who discontinued an application for income assistance. The report was completed and posted on the ministry's public website on January 6, 2011.

As of March 31, 2011, the ministry does not have access to additional Statistics Canada data that would be required to track outcomes of those discontinuing an application for income assistance. The data is the only source of information that would allow the ministry to track clients, but even if access were available, it is unsuitable for annual tracking. Access to the data is very limited, annual monitoring of former clients would not be approved by

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Date: June 18, 2013

	Statistics Canada as an acceptable use of the data. Statistics Canada stopped accepting applications for access to data earlier this year. In August 2011, the ministry provided the Ombudsperson an update on this recommendation.
<u>Recommendation 18:</u> The ministry review its policies and procedures on an ongoing basis to identify and eliminate any circumstances in which clients with chronic or ongoing medical conditions are required to reconfirm these conditions to continue to receive health supplements.	The ministry completed an initial review of medical documentation requirements in 2006, to identify and eliminate any circumstances in which clients were required to reconfirm their chronic or ongoing medical conditions. The results of that review were reported to the Ombudsperson prior to the issuance of Public Report No. 45 in March 2009. In July 2010, the ministry completed a subsequent review of its policies and procedures for all continuing health supplements. Additionally, ongoing reviews will be conducted as part of the ministry's regular review of the health supplements program. In August 2011, the Ombudsperson confirmed that adequate information has been received to satisfy this recommendation.
<u>Recommendation 25:</u> The ministry adopt the use of file reviews and/or audits as its preferred method of evaluating compliance with legislation and ministry policies. The ministry make the results public and include methodology with the results.	The ministry remains cognizant of this commitment; however, as of March 31, 2011, no file review/audits evaluating compliance with legislation and ministry policies had been scheduled. In August 2011, the ministry provided the Ombudsperson an update on this recommendation. In March 2013, the ministry provided the Ombudsperson that no file reviews or audits evaluating compliance with legislation and ministry policies have been scheduled as of March 20, 2013.

14 One-Time Ombudsperson Recommendations Fully Implemented (as of March 2013)	Ministry Actions To Date – Ombudsperson Confirmed Adequate Information has Been Provided (at March 2013) to Satisfy Recommendations
<u>Recommendation 2:</u> The ministry enhance material already provided to income assistance applicants at the time of their initial application. The ministry include a clear written explanation of the steps involved in applying for income assistance in the new material. The ministry complete these steps by October 1, 2009.	The ministry has developed a new brochure entitled "Your Guide to Employment and Income Assistance" that provides a clear written explanation of the steps involved in applying for income assistance and references the exemptions from the three-week work search requirement. This publication was introduced on the ministry's Online Resource on January 4, 2010.
<u>Recommendation 3:</u> The ministry increase the accessibility of its application process by: - directing its staff not to provide non-reviewable preliminary opinions of clients' eligibility; - minimizing the number of times staff ask clients if they wish to proceed with the application process. The ministry preceding any question of this nature with confirmation that the individual has a right to continue the application process; - establishing in policy that if clients do not contact the ministry in the requested timeframe, that these files will become "No Case Mades" only after 90 days and that these files can be reactivated at any point as long as the clients meet the ministry's requirements. The ministry complete these steps by July 1, 2009.	A staff directive was issued on September 16, 2009 advising ministry staff of policy and procedures intended to increase the accessibility of the application process and to ensure that clients in need can complete this process. Concurrent amendments to the applicable staff scripts were effected with the implementation of this recommendation.

<u>Recommendation 4:</u> The ministry take the necessary steps to include an exemption from the three-week work search requirement in the Employment and Assistance Regulation for applicants who demonstrate that a work search to the ministry's standards was conducted in the three weeks immediately prior to their application.	BC Reg. 98/2009 (effective April 28, 2009): This Order in Council amended the Employment and Assistance Regulation and the Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Regulation allowing applicants for assistance to search for employment either three weeks following the date of application or to be able to demonstrate that a search for employment, satisfactory to the minister, was completed prior to the date of application.
<u>Recommendation 5:</u> The ministry take the necessary steps to include an exemption from the three-week work search requirement in the Employment and Assistance Regulation for single parents with children under the age of three.	BC Reg. 99/2009 (effective April 28, 2009): This Order in Council amended the Employment and Assistance Regulation and the Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Regulation to exempt sole applicants with a child under age three from the three-week work search requirement.
<u>Recommendation 9:</u> The ministry take the necessary steps to remedy the potential for unfairness caused by the two-year independence requirement by either seeking to add further exemptions or providing legal authority for supervisors to waive requirement by March 31, 2010.	BC Reg. 279/2009 (effective December 1, 2009): This Order in Council amended the Employment and Assistance Regulation to provide staff with legal authority to waive the two-year independence requirement in certain circumstances.
<u>Recommendation 10:</u> The ministry track the number of income assistance applications it receives. For each application, the ministry tracks whether it is approved, abandoned or denied. The ministry complete these steps by July 1, 2009.	The ministry is tracking the number of applications received, including whether each application is approved, abandoned or denied. To enhance the ministry's current tracking capacity, a staff directive issued on September 16, 2009 also emphasized the importance of properly coding the result of an application.
<u>Recommendation 17:</u> The ministry complete a review of the PPMB program to determine the reasons for the reduction in its caseload since 2003/2004 and report the results publicly by October 1, 2009.	The ministry has completed a review of the PPMB program to determine the reasons for the reduction in its caseload since 2003/04. The report can be found on the ministry's website as of April 1, 2010.
<u>Recommendation 19:</u> The ministry develop a clear policy directive that requires staff to review	The ministry's current practice and expectation is for ministry staff to routinely review documents on file before requiring clients to submit new documents

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Date: June 18, 2013

the documents that are on file before requiring clients to submit new documents and to return the original versions to clients. The ministry develop this policy directive by September 1, 2009.	when applying for supplements. A staff directive issued on September 16, 2009 also reaffirmed the ministry's current practice and expectation to ensure that ministry staff minimize requests for documentation.
<u>Recommendation 20(A):</u> The ministry develop policy outlining how and when it expects staff to assist clients to obtain documents by October 1, 2009.	The ministry developed new policy and procedures to outline how and when ministry staff may assist a client to obtain documents and to explain the duty to accommodate. The ministry's Online Resource was updated on September 29, 2009.
<u>Recommendation 20(B):</u> Provide training to staff on how and when to assist clients to obtain documents as required by policy developed pursuant to Recommendation 20(A).	As part of training on staff assisting clients and the duty to accommodate, the ministry developed a training package and staff script. Training delivered by regional PPIMs to ministry staff in conjunction with the introduction of these changes on the ministry's Online Resource on September 29, 2009.
<u>Recommendation 21(A):</u> The ministry review documents it requires applicants and clients to sign in person with the goal of reducing the number of forms that need to be submitted in person.	The preliminary results of the review had been prepared for final decision including any policy changes that could be implemented through an update to the ministry's Online Resource. In March 2013 the ministry reported in August 2012 the ministry amended the policy and procedures on the Online Resource to broaden the number of forms for which prescribed professionals and other government staff may witness. Two additional related updates have also been made: the ministry's Consent to Disclosure of Information form is now available publicly on the Online Resource so that anyone can witness this form; and, the witness requirement has been removed from the Child in the Home of a Relative Screen consent form. The above changes resulting from the review that was undertaken by the ministry have reduced the number of circumstances where applicants and clients must sign forms in person.
<u>Recommendation 21(B):</u> The ministry develop a policy allowing the acceptance of documents	The ministry amended its policy to broaden ministry witness groups to include other government staff and health professionals. This amendment was

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notarized in B.C., or other equally effective and reliable mechanisms, in lieu of requiring documents to be signed in person at a ministry, government agent or trusted third party office. The ministry develop this policy by March 31, 2010.	introduced on the ministry's Online Resource on September 17, 2009.
<u>Recommendation 22:</u> The ministry expand its current arrangements with trusted third parties or develop other mechanisms for communities where there is no ministry office and it does not have an agreement with Service BC.	A new Service Level Agreement between the ministry and Service BC has been negotiated that expands the current arrangements to include additional offices – Kitimat and Fort Nelson (Service Counter Amalgamation Initiative – aimed at improving resource utilization and citizens' satisfaction with government services by consolidating service delivery within designated communities) as well as Nakusp (enhanced services including first level intake and use of both the Client Transaction System and Management Information System). The Service Level Agreement will be reviewed annually by both parties.
<u>Recommendation 24:</u> Ministry staff offer to provide clients with written reasons for all reviewable decisions, including eligibility for income assistance by October 1, 2009.	The ministry has developed new policy and procedures for ministry staff to offer written reasons when communicating decisions. The ministry's Online Resource was updated on September 29, 2009 to introduce these changes.

Total of 27 Ombudsperson Recommendations accepted by the ministry to be implemented following release of Public Report No. 45 in March 2009; Recommendation 23 not accepted

Cross Reference:

- **Note #91:** Ombudsperson Report – Reconsideration Timelines
- **Note #101:** Service Quality

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Ontario Social Assistance Review

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

- Ontario's social assistance model is similar to B.C.'s. Ontario Works is the equivalent to the B.C. Employment and Assistance Program, and is focussed on clients who have employment obligations. Ontario Disability Services Program (ODSP) is equivalent to B.C.'s Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Program, and is focussed on clients with a disability.
- The Commission for the Review of Social Assistance in Ontario was established to develop specific recommendations and a concrete action plan for reforming the social assistance system to improve client outcomes. Its mandate encompassed both income and disability assistance.
- The review began in January 2011 and the final report was submitted to the Minister of Community and Social Services on Oct 24, 2012.
- The report contained 108 recommendations – not all of which are relevant in the B.C. context. It is also important to note that there are several issues the report does not address. The most significant of these is the current definition of disability, as well as mandatory employment obligations for clients with a disability.
- The Ontario 2013/14 budget tabled in May recognized the Ontario Social Assistance Review and introduced some elements of the report into the budget. These changes are expected to come into effect in Sept/Oct 2013. They include:

ONTARIO SOCIAL ASSISTANCE REVIEW

- Rate increase of 1% for disability assistance clients;
- Rate increase of \$20 per month for single income assistance clients; 1% increase for all other income assistance families;
- Asset increases for all income assistance clients;
- Eliminating the asset level for the vehicle exemption for income assistance clients;
- Changes to the gifts policy for income assistance clients to mirror the current disability assistance gifts policy ;
- Changes to the earnings exemptions for both income and disability assistance – from a 50 percent exemption to a flat rate of \$200 plus a 50 percent exemption.

Additional Recommendations: Administration and Rate Structure

- The report suggests that the current system should be streamlined and a new rate structure, based on simple building blocks, should be introduced.
- The first building block would consist of a flat rate amount for shelter and support. The second building block would be a disability supplement that eligible clients would receive on top of the standard rate. The third building block would be uniform supplements for clients with children.
- The Report recommends that in future disability benefits, children's benefits, and extended health benefits be removed from social assistance and be made available entirely outside the welfare system and provided to all low income citizens.
- B.C. does not currently use this" building block" system. Shelter, support and supplements are treated as per a regulated schedule, based on client category and family unit type.
- In addition, in B.C. most supplementary assistance (e.g. extended health supports, Bus Pass) is integrated into the social assistance framework, and is not available to low-income individuals who are not on assistance.

Employment

- The report proposes that all recipients should develop a Pathway to Employment Plan identifying their employment goals, activities, and needed services and supports. However, the report stops short of recommending mandatory participation. Instead, it recommends that ODSP clients should be exempt from any consequences of not meeting the commitments set out in the employment plan.
- B.C. takes a similar approach in that although there is legislation that supports PWDs having Employment Plans, they are not required in practice/policy. PWD clients also are exempt from employment obligations by practice/policy. They are not currently sanctioned for failing to pursue employment.
- The Employment Program of B.C. has a range of pre and post employment services available to clients with disabilities. Some PWD clients may have a Voluntary

Participation Plan to participate in employment or training. Any PWD who is receiving EPBC case management will have an individualized Client Plan.

Health Supplements

- The report recommends that nutritional supplements for people with unintentional weight loss be provided by the Ministry of Health, instead of through the welfare system. It proposes eliminating the Special Diet Allowance (SDA) (which is similar to B.C.'s Monthly Nutritional Supplement) as a separate benefit and reinvesting the funding now spent on SDA into general assistance.
- In B.C., MSP Premium Assistance and Fair Pharmacare are available to all low-income people with a disability. Access to extended health benefits, including diet supplements, is only available to PWD clients. There is no disability health supplement program that is available to all low-income people with a disability.

Income and Asset Exemptions

- The report recommends changing Ontario's approach to earnings exemptions, which currently consists of a 50% exemption for all earned income for all clients. The proposal is to allow clients to earn \$200 a month plus an additional 57% - which keeps the overall average withdrawal rate at 50%.
- The 2013/14 Ontario budget introduced a \$200 flat rate in addition to the existing 50% earnings exemption structure.
- This approach is higher than B.C.'s current earnings exemptions for both income and disability assistance clients.
- The report also recommends that clients be given the option whether or not to pursue child support. If received, child support payments would be treated as earned income and eligible for the earnings exemption.
- Most other provinces, including B.C., fully deduct family maintenance and make pursuing maintenance a condition of eligibility.
- There were a number of recommendations aimed at increasing or safeguarding the assets of social assistance recipients. Liquid asset limits would be based on the current ODSP limits (\$5,000 for singles and \$7,500 for couples).
- The 2013 budget partially implemented this recommendation. The limits for liquid assets, including cash, increased for single adults receiving Ontario Works from \$606 to \$2,500, and from \$1,043 to \$5,000 for couples.
- These are higher than B.C.'s current asset limits for employable clients (\$2,000 for singles and \$4,000 for families and couples.)
- The report also recommended eliminating the \$10,000 value limit on an employable client's primary vehicle.

- The elimination of the vehicle asset limit for employable clients was announced in the 2013 budget, provided that the vehicle is used for employment. This is expected to come into effect in September 2013.
- B.C. recently raised its limit from \$5,000 to \$10,000 for non PWD clients. B.C. will be one of only three provinces with an asset limit on vehicles for employable clients.
- The report also recommends that all gifts received by social assistance recipients in the form of goods and services be fully exempt as income; infrequent or non-regular gifts of cash be exempt to a maximum of \$6,000 per year; and gifts of cash to cover an extraordinary cost (e.g. furniture replacement), be fully exempt and not count toward the \$6,000 limit.
- This change mirrors the ODSP gifts policy and was announced in the 2013 budget.
- Currently in B.C., gifts are treated as an asset and can be exempt on a one-time basis if they are under the asset limit. On-going gifts are considered unearned income and are not exempt.

Rate Setting

- The report does not recommend a specific rate setting approach. Instead, it recommends the province adopt a “rational methodology” to set rates as well as a Basic Measure of Adequacy (BMA) based on the cost of food, clothing and footwear, basic personal and household needs, transportation and shelter. It also indicates that the minimum wage can be used as an appropriate reference wage in the methodology for setting social assistance rates.
- In reviewing support rates in B.C., the ministry monitors the basic cost of nutritious food, as estimated by the Dietitians of Canada, and estimates of housing costs and other goods reported by Statistics Canada. Changes in the Consumer Price Index of basic goods and services are monitored.
- Rates for employable clients are for temporary assistance and are balanced to maintain a financial incentive to work. Rates reflect individual and family needs. Higher rates are provided to Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers and Persons with Disabilities, recognizing that they face additional costs of living with a disability and barriers to employment.

CROSS REFERENCE:

Note #47 – Employment Program of BC Overview

Note #131 – Cross-Jurisdictional Comparison

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
REGIONAL SERVICES DIVISION
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

OUTREACH

ISSUE: Outreach

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

Vancouver Island

- While Victoria has the most expansive outreach services in Region 1, many of those services are mirrored in other communities as well.
- In Victoria and Nanaimo, Outreach workers are stationed throughout the community at various locations where clients access other services. Some Outreach workers are also members of cross-agency, multi-disciplinary teams, such as the Victoria Integrated Community Outreach Team (VICOT) that provide holistic services to target populations.
- Outreach provides services that include but are not limited to: expedited intakes, expedited shelter and health requests, intensive case management, referrals, and inquiries from community partners and the coordination of services.
- Current Region 1 pilot projects include:
 - The very successful Guthrie House Project and the Homelessness Intervention Project, both of which won Premier's awards for Partnership
 - The Integrated Offender Management/Homelessness Intervention Project (IOM/HIP) pilot project which aims to provide comprehensive release planning

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and community supports to inmates identified as being at risk of homelessness upon release

- The Family and Youth Partnership (FYP) pilot project which aims to provide intensive case management and referrals for young families on income assistance to achieve greater self-sufficiency.

Vancouver Coastal

- Vancouver Coastal Region has a dedicated Integration and Outreach Team consisting of a supervisor, 11 employment and assistance workers and 2 investigation officers
- Outreach services are provided to citizens at various community agencies including: Insite/ Onsite Addiction Services, Harbour Light Detox, Vancouver Detox, Burnaby Centre for Mental Health and Addictions
- Outreach provides services that include but are not limited to:
 - Coordinated building inspections to ensure the integrity of income assistance shelter payments and to ensure that property owners adhere to tenancy and building code laws
 - Integrated justice programs with the goal of reducing criminal behavior, in collaboration with the Downtown Community Court, Vancouver Drug Court Treatment Centre, Vancouver Intensive Supervision Unit, and Probations West
 - Homelessness Initiatives and Partnerships, including: the At Home Program, the Urban Youth Project, the Integrated Offender Management/ Homelessness Intervention Project, supportive housing services, and the Canada-BC Cooperation Agreement on Official Languages
 - Services to support families and women such as the Family and Youth Partnership and SHEWAY.
- The Region also provides outreach and liaison services to a number of local hospitals including St. Paul's, Vancouver General and Lion's Gate.
- The Vancouver Coastal Integration and Outreach Team has been recognized for its service excellence having been selected as a provincial finalist for a 2013 Premier's Award

Fraser

- Region 3 Outreach services are provided to citizens via Outreach workers who serve as liaisons to various agencies, including: 12 hospitals, 5 licensed Drug and Alcohol homes and 23 Supportive Recovery Service Providers receiving per diem funding or 541 beds in five communities: Surrey, Abbotsford, Langley Mission and the Tri-Cities. Outreach EAWs also provide face-to-face services at designated SDSI offices, drug and alcohol recovery centres, community centres, and women's shelters.

- Outreach provides services that include but are not limited to:
 - Hospital Outreach services
 - Drug and Alcohol Facility outreach services
 - Mental Health, Addictions, and Community Corrections outreach
 - The Provincial Homelessness Intervention Project (HIP)
 - Gateway to Hope (Langley)
 - Housing and Integration Task Team and Housing Outreach
 - Integrated Offender Management
 - Phoenix Drug and Alcohol Recover Service Integration
 - Settlement Outreach for new immigrants applications
 - CLBC Liaison Outreach
 - KEYs Homeless Shelter
 - Outreach at Community Corrections Offices
 - Family and Youth partnerships.
 - Outreach at the Maxine Wright Women's Shelter
 - Mental Health workers situated in 6 of our Income Assistant Offices

Interior

- The Kelowna and Kamloops offices each have one Outreach Worker. The position was introduced to provide intake and case management services for vulnerable clients in the community who may be homeless or dealing with mental health and/or addiction issues.
- The Outreach worker in Kelowna has developed strong relationships with community stakeholders/partners, including Mission, City of Kelowna, the Kelowna RCMP, Probation, Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), Kelowna General Hospital (KGH), Cancer Clinic, John Howard Society and several independent drug & alcohol facilities.
- Kamloops's Outreach has been involved with Mental Health, Probation and RCMP, in identifying two core groups: the prolific offenders and mentally disturbed offenders. The Outreach worker along with Mental Health, Federal and Provincial parole and probation, provide a multi-faceted case management approach to prepare prisoners for release and successful integration into society.
- These relationships have collaborated to reduce homelessness, poverty and crime in the community by providing multi-disciplinary/multi-faceted services and supports. This culminated in a premier's award for the Homeless Initiative Program in 2012.

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North

- The region has developed extensive partnerships with community partners such as: Adult Community Corrections, Prince George Regional Correction Centre, Northern Health – Mental Health and Addictions Services, hospitals, BC Housing and First Nations Organizations.
- The regions first Outreach position was established in Prince George in 2008. The position's current responsibilities include Outreach services at Adult Community Corrections, Prince George Regional Correction Centre, Homelessness Intervention Project– Integrated Care Team, Family and Youth Partnerships Pilot, New Hope Society –Baldy Hughes and University Hospital of Northern B.C.
- In addition, the Prince George Outreach position provides a variety of “in-reach” services such as Homeless Outreach Project and local disaster deployment.
- The Region developed a second “virtual” outreach position to be located outside of Prince George in 2011. This position was developed to enhance service delivery to the hospitals and mental health facilities in the region, one of our key community partners.
- The “virtual” outreach position provides key contact and service navigation assistance to key community partners in the region e.g.: Hospital Social Workers, Band Social Development Workers, Mental Health Workers (outside of Prince George) and in some cases clients seeking assistance with accessing specific SDSI services.
- All outreach positions can be deployed for “as and when” required services to meet urgent service requests within their community. For example assistance can be provided to clients who have lost accommodations when buildings are closed or condemned due to fire or safety issues. Through a collaborative approach to service delivery with key community partners, the Outreach Worker assists homeless individuals find accommodation and access moving costs and security deposits.
- Establishment of outreach services in the region has improved service consistency and virtually eliminated service delivery complaints from key community partners such as hospital social workers.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #77** – Cash Off the Street – Direct Deposit
- **Note #79** – Channel Strategy
- **Note #83** – Downtown Eastside
- **Note #100** – Service Delivery Channels

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MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Policy Changes (October 2012)

KEY MESSAGES:

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POLICY CHANGES (OCTOBER 2012)

BACKGROUND:

Policy Changes

- In 2012, the Ministry of Social Development introduced a number of changes to income assistance policies to help clients lead more independent lives, achieve better outcomes, and where possible, avoid the cycle of income assistance (IA) dependence.
- The ministry also announced that income tax filing would become an eligibility requirement in 2013. The ministry is currently assessing options.

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Effective July 3, 2012

- Increased School Start-up Supplement :
 - from \$84 to \$100 for every child aged 5-11 years
 - from \$116 to \$175 for every child aged 12 and over

Effective October 1, 2012

- Changes to Earnings Exemptions:
 - Reinstated Earnings Exemption of \$200 per month for Expected to Work clients
 - Increased Earnings Exemptions for PWD clients
 - from \$500 to \$800 per month for families with one adult with PWD designation
 - from \$750 to \$1600 per month for families with two adults with PWD designation
 - Reduced waiting period for earnings exemption from three months to one month
 - Eliminated the waiting period for earnings exemption for clients with PWD designation who return to assistance
- Modest Increases to Personal Assets:
 - Increased the amount of general assets applicants and clients can keep and still be eligible for assistance
 - From \$1500 to \$2000 for IA singles
 - From \$2500 to \$4000 for IA clients with children or IA couples
 - From \$3000 to \$5000 for single PWD
 - From \$5000 to \$10,000 for PWD clients with children or DA couples
 - Removed the \$150 cash asset limit for applicants
 - Increased the vehicle asset limit for IA clients from \$5000 to \$10,000 for primary vehicle used for day to day transportation
- Improved financial outcomes for vulnerable families:
 - Extended basic dental coverage of \$1400/two years to dependent children of families receiving hardship assistance
 - Exempted Child Tax Benefits for families receiving hardship assistance. Includes the Universal Child Care Benefit, the BC Earned Income Benefit and the Child Tax Benefit
 - Exempted lump sum Federal Family Bonus (FB) payments paid retro-actively as income minus any funds provided via the Temporary FB Top-up Supplement. The maximum reduction will be the lesser of:
 - the amount of the FB retroactive payment, and
 - the amount advanced via the temporary FB Top-up Supplement

The maximum reduction will not exceed one month's assistance for the family unit.
 - Increased the amount of the Family Bonus (FB) Top-up Supplement to the current federal government's maximum national child benefit supplement (NCBS)

rate and committed to match any future increases to the NCBS. The FB Top-up Supplement rate increased from \$123.50 per child to:

- \$181.41 for one child
- \$341.91 for two children
- \$494.58 for three children
- Adding \$152.67 for each subsequent child after three
- Exempted Income Tax Refunds for income and disability assistance recipients
- Enabled the provision of income assistance for single parents without Canadian citizenship status who are fleeing abuse and cannot leave BC with their children because of child custody or health issues while they work with Citizenship and Immigration Canada to resolve their legal status.
- Introduced additional options for the provision of assistance for families on IA or DA when a dependent teen has a child of their own
 - When a teenage parent is under 16 and residing with their parent who is on IA, the ministry will allow both the teen and the teen's child to be added to the parent's file (three generations in one family unit)
 - When a teenage parent is between the ages of 16 and 18 and residing with their parent, the ministry will allow a choice between three generations on one file or the teen parent applying for assistance on their own file
- Restored funding for the following Medical Equipment and Supplies:
 - Ventilator supplies
 - Bariatric scooters
 - Standing frames
 - Positioning chairs
 - Non-conventional glucose meters
 - Inhaler accessory devices – “spacers”
 - Apnea monitors
 - Toe orthoses
 - Underliners for orthoses
 - Needles/syringes for medication delivery
 - A second floor to ceiling pole
 - Foot abduction orthosis
 - Positioning items on a bed
 - Transfer aids
 - Tracheostomy supplies
 - Nebulizers
 - Humidifiers for tracheostomy patients
- Assist individuals with disabilities to lead more independent lives:
 - Increased the limits for trust accounts and disbursements:
 - From \$100,000 maximum contribution to \$200,000
 - From \$5,484 to \$8,000 per year disbursement limit for costs related to promoting independence and opening up the limit to allow individuals to their own choices about how best to use these funds

- Exempt trust disbursements moved into other exempt assets – purchase of primary residence, RDSP and RESP
- Help individuals avoid the cycle of income assistance dependency:
 - Strengthened the work search requirements:
 - Introduced the requirement to complete a five-week work search for new clients
 - Maintained the requirement to complete a three-week work search for returning clients
 - Clients with an immediate need for food, shelter or urgent medical attention receive hardship assistance for up to 3 months while still being required to complete a three or five week work search
 - Eliminated time limits for income assistance
 - Enhanced employment planning through individualized employment plans that contain concrete actions with closer follow up to support clients to return to work

Effective January 1, 2013

- Further Enhancements to Earnings Exemption for PWD clients:
 - Introduced Phase 1 of Annualized Earnings Exemptions (AEE) by providing a selected group of PWD clients with the choice to use their earnings exemptions on an annual instead of monthly basis, better helping clients whose ability to earn fluctuates during the year due to medical conditions. The monitoring of Phase 1 AEE is underway. Phase 2 will expand the choice for AEE to all PWD clients in January 2014.
 - Introduced \$1200 monthly earnings exemption for families with two adults only one of whom has the PWD designation

BUDGET:

- The cost of these changes is estimated to be in the range of \$5 million a year.

STATISTICS:

- Thousands of income assistance families are going to be better off with these policy reforms.

INTERJURISDICTIONAL COMPARISONS:

- These "Family First" policy changes harmonized many of our programs and policies for individuals and families on income assistance here in B.C. with other jurisdictions across Canada. Policy changes that brought B.C. in line with other provinces include:
 - Match the Family Bonus top-up rate
 - Exempt lump sum Family Bonus refunds
 - Provide dental for children of families on hardship
 - Exempt child benefits for families on hardship
 - Exempt income tax refunds
 - Removing time limits
 - Earnings exemptions for employable clients
- The changes to earnings exemptions for employable clients align B.C. with other provinces. Previously, B.C. was the only province in Canada that did not have earnings exemptions for employable clients.
- The increases to asset limits made B.C. equal to or better than asset levels in other provinces. Removing cash assets and raising the vehicle asset limit for employable clients to \$10,000 better aligned B.C. with other provinces.
- Some of the policy changes made B.C. a leader across Canada. For example, changes to the school start up supplement also put B.C. in the top two across Canada.
- BC is one of the first jurisdictions to offer the option of annual earnings exemptions. The Yukon is the only other Canadian jurisdiction that provides an annual income exemption (\$3900 per year for clients with disabilities).

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #86** - Income and Assets
- **Note #111** - Eligibility - Work Search
- **Note #133** - Earnings Exemptions
- **Note #125** - Annualized Earnings Exemption
- **Note #106** - Trusts
- **Note #139** - Health Supplements – Overview
- **Note #136** - Health Supplements – Medical Equipment and Supplies
- **Note #135** - General Supplements
- **Note #108** - Citizenship Requirements for Income Assistance

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
RESEARCH BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

**ISSUE: Provincial Sales Tax (PST) and Low-Income Families
(Changing back from HST)**

KEY MESSAGES:

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**PST AND LOW-INCOME FAMILIES
(CHANGING BACK FROM HST)**

BACKGROUND:

- The Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) was implemented on July 1, 2010 and eliminated on March 31, 2013. The HST was a 12 per cent harmonized sales tax that combined the 7 per cent B.C. HST and the 5 per cent federal Goods and Service Tax (GST).
- The BC portion of the HST replaced the previous 7 percent Provincial Sales Tax (PST). The HST was a value-added tax that applies to a broader range of goods and services than the PST. As a result, the amount of sales tax paid by a household increased.

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- The refundable B.C. HST Credit was paid quarterly to low and modest income individuals and families, together with the federal GST Credit, to help offset the amount of B.C. HST they pay on purchases.
- The maximum annual HST Credit was \$230 per family member
- The PST replaced the BC HST on April 1, 2013.
- The BCST Credit was reinstated at the former rate of \$75 per year to each adult, with no child amount, to reimburse low-income adults for PST. It is reduced by 4 cents for each dollar of taxable income over \$15,000 for a single person and over \$20,000 for a family.
- The BCST Credit is paid to eligible persons annually as part of a refund of income tax. For 2013, low-income people will receive the full annual amount of \$75 per eligible adult when they file their 2013 tax return in Spring 2014. This is in addition to the HST Credit of \$57.50 per person they received for the first quarter of 2013.
- Both the HST Credit and the PST Credit are exempt when determining income assistance eligibility, the same as the GST and Low-Income Climate Action credits.
- Over a full year, the return to the BCST Credit will reduce the total before-tax income of low-income individuals and families by the amount of the difference in maximum amounts. For a single person this is a reduction of \$155 per year. For a single parent with two children, this will be a reduction of \$615 per year (from \$690 to \$75).
- While the HST applied to a broader range of goods and services than the PST, the actual increase in taxes paid by lower income families was modest because of exemptions for many basic goods and services and the elimination of sales tax on business inputs.
- For most lower-income families, the amount of the HST Credit exceeded any possible increase in tax burden on purchases compared to the PST. This means the return to the PST and BCST Credit will reduce their actual after-tax income. This reduction in real purchasing power will be greatest for low income families with children because of the lack of any sales tax credit for children under the BCST Credit.
- The elimination of the quarterly HST Credit and the absence of a child amount under the new BCST Credit may lead to an increase in crisis allowance requests for families on BCEA who have budgeted for this income. Some individuals and families will notice the decline in their quarterly combined GST/HST Credit on April 5, when the next cheques were issued.

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

- Six other provinces in Canada have an HST-type tax: New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Quebec, PEI and Ontario (implemented at the same time as B.C.). Alberta has no general provincial sales tax, while Saskatchewan and Manitoba have PST-type taxes.
- B.C. had the lowest HST rate (12 per cent) compared to 13 per cent in Ontario, New Brunswick and Newfoundland and Labrador, and 15 per cent in Nova Scotia. Quebec's value-added tax increased to 14.975 per cent on January 1, 2012.
- Ontario has a refundable Ontario Sales Tax Credit available to low-income individuals and families of \$278 per person per.
- Quebec doesn't provide a separate sales tax credit but rather provides a Solidarity Credit that includes the former Quebec Sales Tax Credit, property tax credits, and a northern allowance. Nova Scotia has an HST-type credit, the Affordable Living Tax Credit, which pays \$255 per household and \$60 per child in low-income households. Newfoundland and Labrador provides a refundable annual HST credit of up to \$40 per adult and \$60 per child to low-income families and individuals, in addition to the GST Credit. New Brunswick does not provide an additional credit for provincial HST. The HST and GST credits are exempted as income when calculating income assistance eligibility.

HST TAX CREDIT INQUIRIES

- Inquiries regarding the HST and PST should be directed to the Minister of Finance.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: PWD Absence from province - 30 Days

KEY MESSAGES:

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PWD ABSENCE FROM PROVINCE - 30 DAYS

BACKGROUND:

- Occasionally, disability assistance clients will request continued assistance when out of B.C. to avoid undue hardship. Sometimes these requests are to travel or reside with another person who may have a caregiver role with the client.
- Manager approval must be obtained to continue income assistance or disability assistance for recipients who leave the province for more than 30 days.
- Each request is considered on its own merits, based on the information provided by the client.
- Recipients who leave the province for 30 days or more must re-apply for assistance when they return.

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL:

- B.C.'s general residency requirement is consistent with other provinces. B.C.'s 30 day requirement and exemptions for PWD clients are comparable to Ontario. Alberta's AISH program permits recipients to be out-of-province for up to six months a year, provided they maintain a residence in Alberta.

Ontario Works

- If a recipient or member of the benefit unit is absent from Ontario for a period of more than seven days, assistance will be reduced or cancelled unless the Administrator has determined the absence to be necessary for health reasons or reasonable due to exceptional circumstances.

Ontario Disability Support Program

- Recipients are not eligible if absent from Ontario for more than 30 days, unless the absence is related to:
 - Reasons of health;
 - Enabling the person to attend a post-secondary institution;
 - Exceptional circumstances

Alberta AISH

- Recipients must be permanent residents of Alberta
- Clients who maintain a residence in Alberta may leave the province:
 - for a maximum of six months to vacation; or
 - to seek medical treatment or access educational programs not offered in Alberta, with prior approval by AISH

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
PROVINCIAL SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: PWD Application Processing Timelines

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

- During fiscal 2012/2013, the ministry averaged 970 applications for Persons with Disabilities designation in each month.
- There is no legislative timeline for processing new Persons with Disabilities designation applications.
- The ministry's service standard for making Persons with Disabilities designation determinations is within 90 business days.
- In the 12/13 ministry Service Plan the commitment was made to decrease processing time for Persons with Disabilities applications by 50% over the next three years.
- Health Assistance Branch staff have set the goal of reducing processing time from the current 90 business day standard to 45 business days

PWD APPLICATION PROCESSING TIMELINES

STATISTICS:

Provincial Service Statistics 2012/13 YTD (April to March 31 /13)

PWD Applications Received	11,636
Average Applications per Month	970
Total Files Awaiting Adjudication (as of March 31, 2013)	1526
Business Days Required to Process an Application (as of March 31, 2013)	42
PWD Decisions Completed	10,635
Percent Approved	67%
Percent Denied	33%

Data Source: ICM Service Request Tab

Applications Received and Adjudicated 2008/09 to 2012/13* (*April to March 2013)

Fiscal Year	Average Number of Applications/ Month	Total Applications Received	Percent Adjudicated within 90 Business Days
2008/09	1,022	12,268	99.6%
2009/10	1,182	14,182	99.4%
2010/11	1,048	12,574	99.2%
2011/12	977	11,719	99.2%
2012/13	970	11,636	99.4%

Data Source: ICM Service Request Tab

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #74** – Caseload – Key Information

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: PWD Comparison with Alberta (AISH), Ontario (ODSP), and Saskatchewan (SAID)

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

- All provinces, with the exception of Newfoundland, have a disability component to their income assistance program.
- Most provinces administer the disability assistance program within the income assistance program.
- B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario each have separate disability programs. In Saskatchewan and Alberta, the programs are completely separate from income assistance and have a focus on individuals with severe disabilities.

Definition

- The definitions all cover the severity of the disability, the expected duration and the impacts on daily living activities. Medical information must be verified by a professional.
- AISH and SAID reference permanent or enduring disability, whereas PWD and ODSP have shorter durations (two years in B.C. and one in Ontario).
- AISH and SAID also reference the impact on employment or ability to earn a livelihood. PWD and ODSP are only based on a functional assessment of impacts on daily living activities and do not reference employability.

PWD COMPARISON WITH AISH (ALBERTA), ODSP (ONTARIO), AND SAID (SASKATCHEWAN)

	PWD	AISH	SAID	ODSP
Nature of Impairment	Severe mental or physical impairment (includes mental disorder)	Severe handicap (impairment of mental or physical functioning, or both)	Can be physical, psychiatric, cognitive, or intellectual in nature.	Substantial physical or mental impairment that is continuous or recurrent
Duration	At least 2 years	Permanent	Enduring (expected to be permanent or indefinite)	Expected to last one year or more
Impact	Directly impacts the person's ability to perform daily living activities.	The condition must cause substantial limitation in the person's ability to earn a livelihood.	Significant – substantial impact on daily living activities. Not expected to attain long-term financial self-sufficiency through employment given available treatments or	The direct and cumulative effect of the impairment results in a substantial restriction in one or more activities of daily living.
Additional Requirements	As a result, assistance with daily living required.	No remedial therapy available to improve ability to earn a livelihood.	As a result, assistance with daily living is required. Have insufficient income from employment or other sources to permit self-sufficiency.	

Rates:

- Each program has a higher rate in the disability category than the income assistance rate.
- B.C.'s overall rate is the lowest of the four programs.
- Although AISH and SAID serve fewer clients proportionally than B.C., the ODSP caseload is larger than B.C.'s per capita.

PWD	AISH	SAID	ODSP
• Single: \$906.	• Single: \$1,588 • Recipients receive the same single rate independent of dependent family members.	• Single: \$1,167	• Single: \$1,075 but will increase by 1% in September 2013.

Current Caseload

	PWD	AISH	SAID	ODSP
Benefit Month	July 2012	July 2012	July 2012	July 2012
Cases	83,000	45,000	15,000	300,000
Per capita (per/100)	2.7	1.8	2.4	3.4

Population numbers from Statistics Canada as of July 2012 for the working population (age 18 to 64)

Supports:

- The provinces all provide a range of health and general supplements for persons with disabilities, in addition to the base rate. These include enhanced health services, health supplies, transportation needs, rent deposits, moving costs and many unexpected expenses.
- B.C.'s general supplements for PWD are consistent with the other provinces. B.C. is the only province to administer a discounted bus pass program through disability assistance and one of two (with AB) to cover camp fees.
- In general the health supplements provided are comparable between the programs, however Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario administer at least part of their health program as a low-income co-pay program through the provincial Health ministry.

Assets

- B.C. has the second highest amount for liquid assets and the highest trust amount in Canada.
- Assets held in Registered Disabilities Savings Plans are exempt from asset testing for disability benefits in all provinces and territories. In most provinces and territories, payments from RDSPs are completely exempt as income.

PWD	AISH	SAID	ODSP
• Asset limit \$5,000 single, \$10,000 couple • Exempts all assets held in RDSPs and up to \$200,000 held in legal trusts. • Payments from RDSPs exempt as income and an asset • Allows unlimited trust disbursements for a range of specified purposes like devices and medical aids, caregiver services, education and training and up to \$8,000 purely at the discretion of the client.	• General \$100,000 asset limit that includes trusts. • RDSPs are exempt as an asset • Payments from RDSPs exempt as income • Trust income falls under AISH's monthly partial income exemption along with other sources of partially exempt income: \$200 plus 25% for singles and \$775 plus 25% for families.	• The general asset limit is \$1,500 for singles and \$3,000 for couples. • SAID exempts RDSPs as well as up to \$100,000 from inheritances or life insurance. • Payments from RDSPs exempt as income	• The general asset limit is \$5,000 for singles and \$7,500 for couples. • ODSP exempts trusts up to \$100,000 and RDSPs. • Payments from RDSPs exempt as income

Earnings Exemptions

- B.C. ranks third for earnings exemptions for persons with disabilities.
- B.C. is the only province that has annualized earnings exemptions allowing greater flexibility for clients with sporadic income.

PWD	AISH	SAID	ODSP
• \$800 for singles. • \$1600 for a PWD couple. • \$1000 for a family	• \$800 per month plus 50% up to a maximum of \$1,500 for single clients	• \$200 + 25% to maximum of \$325 for singles • \$200 for families	• 50% • This will increase in September to \$200 + 50% on

with one PWD. • Annualized option: \$9,600/year.	• \$1,950 per month plus 50% up to a maximum of \$2,400 for clients with partners or children.	• \$250 + 25% to maximum of \$425 for couples without children	the remainder.
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CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #81** – Disability Supports
- **Note #131** – Cross-Jurisdictional Comparison
- **Note #93** – Ontario Social Assistance Review

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
REGIONAL OPERATIONS BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Service Delivery Channels

KEY MESSAGES:

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SERVICE DELIVERY CHANNELS

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Contact: Sharon Movsey, ADM, Regional Services Division
Cell phone: s.17
Date: June 20, 2013

BACKGROUND:

Internet - Self Serve Assessment and Application

- Applications are submitted through the Self Serve Assessment and Application tool. Applicants can apply online, but can also obtain support from ministry staff via phone or in person.
- The Self Serve Assessment and Application tool is available online 24/7.
- The ministry ran a pilot in September 2011 to provide group based, instructor led online application sessions for applicants who were not comfortable completing the Self Serve Assessment and Application Tool on their own. However, as uptake was minimal, no new sessions have been offered since the one-month pilot.
- Several enhancements to the Self Serve Assessment and Application tool have been made to respond to feedback e.g., improvements to functionality including applicant can now select a preferred call-back time, applicant e-mail auto populates, new Work BC links, improved language for clarity and enhanced progress bar that displays to show applicant progress with completing the application.
- As of October 2012, the ministry introduced an optional survey on the Self Serve Assessment and Application Tool, to offer applicants with the opportunity to provide feedback on the tool, and to gather information to support service delivery enhancement. The survey results are not (and cannot be) connected to the application in any way. Preliminary results, while they cannot be generalized to the population of applicants, are very positive.
- Government research indicates an increasing expectation by citizens for access to services online.
- As part of the Channel Strategy, the ministry is developing an online portal – which over time will function much like online banking. The online portal will allow clients the opportunity to access online self services at their convenience. Instead of waiting in line at an office during office hours, for example, to obtain, complete and submit a form, a client would be able to do this from the comfort of their home at the time of their choosing.
- This will also benefit staff, as it frees them up to spend more time on the substantive work that will support clients in transitioning towards independence.
- Consultations with advocacy organizations and clients have begun, to obtain external stakeholder input into the design and functionality of the online portal. Implementation will be multi-phased.

Telephone Service Delivery

- The ministry's toll-free 1-866 Automated Telephone Inquiry system directs callers to either a Contact Centre or the office nearest to their home.

- The ministry operates several Telephone Contact Centres, and is exploring opportunities for further integration of contact centres to distribute work and enhance consistency of service across the province.
- Approximately 125,000 calls per month are routed through the toll-free 1-866 number.
- Telephone contact is encouraged, where appropriate, rather than office visits without an appointment.
- Telephone service is often more convenient for clients as it allows them to access a variety of services without having to visit a ministry office, often experiencing long lineups.
- Due to high demand, wait times for callers using the telephone service channel can be lengthy and vary by location across the province.
- In response to increased call volumes, the ministry has introduced the following changes:
 - Calls on the 1-866 number can be routed to ministry call centres or to local offices.
 - Voicemail has been removed from all call centres and replaced with a message stating that the call centre is experiencing higher than normal call volumes.
 - Clients are provided with a time period they can choose to call back when call volumes are expected to be lower.
 - When clients phone, the next available worker addresses their needs so they don't have to wait to speak with a particular case worker.
 - Process changes to efficiently triage short and long calls, appears to be having a positive result as we see wait times drop significantly.
- In April 2012, hours for employment and assistance telephone contact centres were changed throughout B.C.. All contact centres are accessible by phone from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday to Friday (except statutory holidays). These changes will allow staff to have more time to resolve client issues, perform follow-ups prior to appointments with clients to confirm documentation requirements, review employment plans and process applications. The intent is for staff to focus on activities that will reduce the current number of repeat client follow-ups – both face-to-face and by telephone – which will help improve overall service delivery and help reduce wait times.

Face-to-Face Service

- Line triage has effectively addressed the line-ups which used to be common around cheque issue days, making waits for service manageable even at the busiest times.
- Clients are encouraged to use direct deposit to eliminate the need to visit the office on cheque issue day.
- In May 2012, office hours were changed for employment and assistance offices throughout B.C.. Offices are open to the public from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday to Friday (except statutory holidays), with closures between noon and 1 p.m. daily –

including during cheque issue week. Telephone services are available during the lunch period.

- These changes enable higher staffing levels between 11:00 a.m. and noon, and between 1:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m., which result in overall increases in service levels during these times. With the additional staff capacity gained during this time, as well as before 9 a.m. and after 4 p.m., ministry staff will be able to focus on activities that will reduce the current number of repeat client follow-ups – both face-to-face and by telephone – which will help improve overall service delivery and help reduce wait times.
- As part of the Channel Strategy, the ministry is committed to maintaining face-to-face office access. Increasingly, the province is moving to a “one stop” model, integrating government offices for a more integrated citizen experience.
- It is anticipated that demand for face-to-face service will reduce over time as the online/self serve channel develops and we realize continued enhancements with telephony. Reduced office traffic will allow better service to the clients who continue to need face-to-face support, and will reduce the stress and potential safety concerns for both staff and clients resulting from long line ups and extensive wait times.

Budget:

Regional Services Division	2013/14 Budget
Program Management	\$96.116M

Source: Business Support Team – Regional Operations.

Funding includes ADM office and Regional Operations. The 2013/14 Budget does not include funding for 120 additional staff that has been hired as per Treasury Board approval.

Service Delivery Full Time Equivalents (FTEs)

Region/Branch	Number of Staff
Region 1 Vancouver Island	251
Region 2 Vancouver Coastal	270
Region 3 Fraser	392
Region 4 Interior	261
Region 5 North	98
Prevention & Loss Management Services	200
Provincial Services	79
Total	1,551

Source: Business Support Team – Regional Operations, and Corporate Data Warehouse, Full Time Equivalent cube.

Note #100

Data as at December 29, 2012. Does not include ADM office or Regional Operations as they are not service delivery staff.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- Note #79 – Channel Strategy
- Note #94 – Outreach
- Note #101 – Service Quality
- Note #109 – Eligibility – Application Process and Orientation

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
REGIONAL OPERATIONS BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Service Quality

KEY MESSAGES:

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SERVICE QUALITY

BACKGROUND:

Accessibility

- Clients access ministry services in a number of ways:
 - Online (Self Serve Assessment and Application tool (SSAA))
 - Telephone

Contact: Sharon Moysey, ADM, Regional Services Division
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Date: June 6, 2013

- Face to face (at ministry offices, Service BC offices and via service providers and some community partners)
- Through outreach
- By mail
- By fax
- In limited circumstances, using email (ie. Bus Pass program)
- Recorded Information about ministry programs and services is available 24 hours a day, toll free at: 1-866-866-0800.
- In April 2012, hours for employment and assistance telephone contact centres were changed throughout B.C. All contact centres are accessible by phone from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday to Friday (except statutory holidays).
- In May 2012, office hours were changed for employment and assistance offices throughout B.C. Offices are open to the public from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday to Friday (except statutory holidays), with closures between noon and 1 p.m. daily – including during cheque issue week. Telephone services are available during the lunch period.
- All ministry offices meet or exceed the B.C. Building Code standards for accessibility.
- The ministry's Internet site and access to the online SSAA tool is available 24 hours a day at: www.gov.bc.ca/hsd.
- Several enhancements to the SSAA tool have been made to respond to feedback, e.g., improvements to functionality including: applicant can select a preferred call-back time, applicant's e-mail auto populates, new Work BC links, improved language for clarity, and an enhanced progress bar that shows the applicant their progress with completing the application.
- The ministry is planning on launching a new online portal. This new online portal will provide our clients with more choices in how they receive services from the ministry. When fully implemented, the portal will offer clients the flexibility of 24/7 access to their information, and the ability to submit questions from a place and time of their choosing.
- The ministry will begin piloting the first phase of the online portal by introducing some ministry service offerings that applicants/clients can choose to access online. With each phase, additional online functions will be available to clients, and the ministry will closely monitor the effectiveness and make appropriate adjustments based on feedback. [series of releases expected through to 2015].
- The ministry has consulted, through focus group sessions, with clients and advocacy organizations to obtain early feedback on the online portal to inform design requirements.
- Between January and March 2013, the ministry held focus groups to obtain feedback from clients and advocacy organizations that access ministry services. The feedback will be used to inform service channel improvements.

Service Quality:

- A number of tools/processes are being used to monitor the quality of service clients are receiving, including the following formal client complaint and decision review processes:
 - Service Commitment – Complaints Resolution Process
 - Reconsideration process
 - Appeal process
- Clients attending a ministry office are acknowledged at the first point of contact.
- Community Relations and Service Quality Managers (CRSQ) within each region monitor local and regional service quality issues, including complaints and incidents, and identify trends and training needs.
- The ministry is committed to ongoing dialogue with its external stakeholders about service delivery, and has maintained a robust network of provincial and regional meetings (since 2007) and regular communications. These external stakeholders provide a valuable source of feedback and information sharing about the effectiveness of ministry policies, programs and services for clients, and provide a forum for prioritizing and resolving issues of common concern. In addition, CRSQ Managers have developed good working relationships with external stakeholders that have resulted in timely resolution of local and regional issues.
- As of June 2012, Health Supplements and Persons with Disabilities denial letters were updated with plain English and thoughtful tone.
- As of October 2012, the ministry introduced an optional survey on the online SSAA tool to offer applicants the opportunity to provide feedback on the tool, and to gather information to support service delivery enhancements. Preliminary results, while they cannot be generalized to the population of applicants, are very positive.
- Service improvements in the last year: over the phone, up front caller messaging and triaging of calls (long call/short call approach, depending on complexity of request); introduction of an e-mail service option for Bus Pass requests; and faster processing times achieved through Hours of Contact changes.

Current Service Standards include:

- Responses
 - Immediate Need requests (food, shelter and/or urgent medical attention) will be addressed within the same business day.
 - Fleeing Abuse applicants will be scheduled for an expedited interview within one business day.
 - Service requests that are not immediate in nature will be actioned within five business days.

- Responses to ministerial correspondence will be provided within 14 business days.
- Decisions on the following programs and services will be provided upon the ministry receiving completed and signed applications, documentation and information:
 - Eligibility for income assistance within five business days.
 - Persons with Disabilities (PWD) designation determination within 90 business days.
 - Eligibility for Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers (PPMB) within 10 business days.
 - Reconsideration within 10 business days of receiving a Request for Reconsideration form.
 - Family Maintenance Referrals are reviewed and opened within 10 business days.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #79** - Channel Strategy
- **Note #94** - Outreach
- **Note #100** - Service Delivery Channels

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Services On-Reserve

KEY MESSAGES:

SERVICES ON-RESERVE

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BACKGROUND:

- Because of the inter-relationship between federally funded programs on-reserve and provincial programs off-reserve, any changes to provincial assistance legislation, regulations, policy or programs directly impacts federal budgets, programs and services as well as on-reserve recipients.
- Through the Tripartite Forum on Social Assistance Policy, the ministry, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and the First Nations Social Development Society work together to increase the coordination and alignment of social assistance

Contact: Molly Harrington, ADM, Policy and Research Division
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Date: June 17, 2013

programs, services and policies affecting First Nation communities. Examples of forum activities include:

- Development of a Persons with Disability Designation and implementation of comparable disability rates on-reserve;
 - Signing of a Persons with Disability Protocol Agreement to streamline services and policies affecting persons with disabilities who are moving on and off-reserve;
 - Implementation of the tube feed supplement and monthly nutritional supplement on-reserve; and
 - Sharing of information regarding provincial legislative and policy changes.
- While there are many areas where there is comparability, disparity still exists in the areas of shelter, health and general supplements and employment programs. Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada are working with the ministry to address these areas.
 - While parity of social assistance programs on-reserve is an objective, First Nations with treaties are not required to meet any comparability requirements and are free to design their own programs.
 - In March 2013, the federal budget announced an investment of \$241 million over five years to improve income assistance on-reserve to help ensure First Nations youth can access skills and training.
 - On June 12, 2013, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada released more details. The changes will provide First Nation youth between the ages of 18 and 24 with access to a wider, more personalized range of training, education and career counseling programs that will help them get jobs. The ministry is seeking further clarification through the Tripartite Forum process to fully understand how the changes will be implemented.

INTERJURISDICTIONAL COMPARISONS:

Income Assistance / Disability Assistance

- In most cases, provinces administer income assistance off-reserve while Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada funds First Nations bands to deliver on-reserve.
- In British Columbia, First Nation bands deliver both income assistance and disability assistance on-reserve with federal funds.

Ontario

- The federal government reimburses Ontario for the administration of income assistance on-reserve (93% reimbursement). This agreement does not include the

Ontario Disability Support Program, which is 100% funded and delivered by the province.

Newfoundland

- Newfoundland administers income assistance on two reserves with reimbursement from the federal government for actual and administrative costs. s.16

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Alberta

- In Alberta the federal government is responsible for delivery of income assistance on-reserve while Alberta delivers income assistance off-reserve. Disability assistance (Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped) is delivered both on and off-reserve and Alberta is reimbursed for Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped by the federal government.

Saskatchewan

- In Saskatchewan, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada funds bands to administer income assistance on-reserve and the province administers off-reserve. The Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability program is not available on-reserve. The federal government is aware of the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability program, but have not made similar changes to implement to date.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Spousal Relationships

KEY MESSAGES:

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SPOUSAL RELATIONSHIPS

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BACKGROUND:

- Married couples and those who acknowledge that they are residing in a marriage-like relationship do not have to meet additional criteria to be considered dependent spouses.
- To otherwise be considered spouses, individuals must have:
 - been living together for greater than three consecutive months (or nine out of 12);
 - financial inter-dependence consistent with that of a marital or “marriage-like” relationship; and,

- Social / familial aspects of the relationship that are consistent with that of a marital or “marriage-like” relationship.
- Gender and the intimate nature of the relationship are not considered.

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

- Under most provincial income assistance programs, couples are automatically considered spouses if they are legally married. Persons residing together are also considered to be spouses if they meet a marriage-like or ‘common law’ relationship test.
- Newfoundland considers only married people to be spouses.
- Saskatchewan allows for married persons to not be considered spouses if they are separate and living apart.
- Alberta’s Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped program is the only disability or income assistance program nationwide where a couple, if both are enrolled in AISH, receive twice as much as a single.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Students

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

Research on Education and Income Assistance

- The ministry has conducted numerous analyses of the impacts of education on the welfare dependence of Income Assistance clients. In fact, improving education has little impact on reducing welfare dependence for most clients.
- Studies found that Adult Basic Education increased income assistance dependency in the short-term and had no significant long-term impact.
- Independent research, such as a study released by Manpower Demonstration and Research Corporation, a world-respected independent research group, found that formal education has no impact on clients' income assistance dependency

- The evidence suggests that getting people quickly into employment is the best long-term approach. The Manpower Demonstration and Research Corporation study found that full-time employment led to greater wage growth, higher incomes and reduced future reliance on income assistance.
- The ministry encourages people to improve their education, but believes that for most clients, pursuing education should compliment, not replace, a job-search.
- Under certain circumstances, the ministry will approve Adult Basic Education for an employable client, but only if it can be demonstrated that education is a significant barrier to a client's employment and is necessary to achieve independence.
- Employable clients can participate in Adult Basic Education in a part-time evening or weekend courses without this interfering with their employment obligations.

Treatment of Funding

- For Persons with Disabilities, dependent children, and persons with no employment obligations (in part-time studies), funding from training allowances, Registered Education Savings Plans and student loans, grants, bursaries and scholarships are exempt, as long as it is used to cover eligible education related costs (i.e., tuition, books, fees, transportation and day care costs) for the semester.
- The exemption includes the education related costs for all semesters the funding is intended to cover and that the client is registered for.
- Income assistance is reduced by any amount that is received for a living allowance.

Funded/Unfunded Programs

- Funded programs of studies are programs for which student loans are available.
- Unfunded programs of studies are programs for which student loans are not available and include programs such as high school completion, Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language classes, developmental programs, direct purchase programs, post-secondary education sponsored under a provincial or federal training/education plan and skills-based training and job placement programs funded by the federal government.

Education Participation Eligibility Requirements

Client Category	Funded Full-time	Funded Part-time	Unfunded Full-time	Unfunded Part-time
Expected to Work	Not eligible for Income Assistance	Must be part of Employment Plan and not interfere with employment obligations	Must have prior ministry approval and be part of Employment Plan	Must have prior ministry approval and be part of Employment Plan
Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers	Not eligible for Income Assistance	Must have prior ministry approval*	Must have prior ministry approval	Must have prior ministry approval*
Single Parents with young children	No Employment Obligation students are not eligible for assistance	May attend post-secondary part-time school and remain eligible for income assistance	Must have prior ministry approval	May attend part-time as long as other eligibility requirements are met
Dependent children	No restrictions*	No restrictions*	No restrictions*	No restrictions*
Persons with Disabilities	No restrictions*	No restrictions*	No restrictions*	No restrictions*

*Exemptions apply to education-related unearned income

CROSS JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

- Restrictions on the eligibility of students to receive income assistance are common across Canada. Alberta and Ontario allow certain clients to receive assistance and attend school full time.
- Alberta Works has a Learners Category that allows clients to receive income assistance while attending school full – time. The student must be enrolled in an approved training program and demonstrate they need training to maintain or obtain employment. Approved programs include English as a Second Language and high school upgrading programs.
- The Ontario Works LEAP program (learning, earning and parenting) is for parents aged 16-25 who have not completed high school. In order to remain eligible for assistance, all LEAP participants must be striving to complete their high school diploma or equivalent.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Temporarily Reduced Family Unit

KEY MESSAGES:

TEMPORARILY REDUCED FAMILY UNIT

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BACKGROUND:

- Normally, the shelter rate is based on the number of people currently living in a household. When one or more members of a family unit leave the home, the support and shelter allowances must normally be decreased. The change in support takes effect immediately. The ministry recognizes that a transitional period is needed when someone unexpectedly leaves a household.
- The shelter rate may be temporarily maintained at the rate for the full family unit in the following instances:
 - when there is a death of a member of the recipient's family unit;
 - when a member of the recipient's family unit is in a hospital;
 - when a member of the recipient's family unit is out of the province with the approval of the ministry;
 - when a member of the recipient's family unit is in a residential alcohol or drug treatment facility;
 - when a member of the family unit is a warrant holder and leaves the province to resolve an outstanding warrant; and
 - when a child is being cared for out of the home under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*.
- Other than for children in care, the determination for this shelter top-up is made on a month-to-month basis for up to three months. As of May 2011, if extenuating circumstances occur, a supervisor may provide up to an additional three months, for a total of six months of shelter top-up allowance.
- When a child is taken into care, the shelter allowance may be maintained as long as the parent is actively working on the return of the child.

Children in Care under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*

- In November 2008, a human rights complaint represented by the BC Public Interest Advocacy Centre was filed against the former Ministry of Housing and Social Development and the Ministry of Children and Family Development with concerns over this policy, among other issues. The claim stated that the three month limitation made it difficult for the complainant to remain in her original home in preparation for

family reunification. In March 2010, the complaint was settled and the agreement included a commitment to make a policy change within 12 months to maintain the shelter beyond three months.

- In addition, advocates had raised concerns about families who cannot have their child returned due to inadequate housing. On May 12, 2010, Pivot Legal Society and other advocacy agencies filed a complaint with the Ombudsperson to investigate shelter allowance reductions for families with children in temporary foster care.
- Advocates alleged that the policy unfairly impacted poor families and women in particular and compromised the principle of family reunification. The complaint requested the ministry amend regulation to ensure that a parent's shelter payment is not reduced while a child is in the temporary care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development. This means that the shelter allowance should only be reduced following court orders that the Ministry of Children and Family Development will have permanent custody of the child. The ministry has not yet been contacted by the Ombudsperson.

May 2011 Changes

- The ministry took these concerns seriously and worked with the Ministry of Children and Family Development to develop a new policy that went into effect May 3, 2011.
- The previous policy provided a transitional period of three months. The ministry recognized that this time period was not meeting the needs of some clients and took action to change the policy.
- The Pivot Legal Society complaint was a factor, but the government had already been discussing the change to shelter allowance rules to better help families stay together.
- When a child is taken into care, the shelter allowance may be maintained as long as the parent is actively working on the return of the child. Confirmation is required every six months from a Ministry of Children and Family Development social worker to ensure the parent continues to require the shelter allowance and is actively working on the return of the child.
- The shelter rate will only be reduced if one of the following occurs:
 - The child is not returning to the parent's home. For example, a continuing custody order is granted that indicates the child will not return to the parent; or,
 - The parent is no longer actively working on the return of the child.
- On February 15, 2012, the ministry introduced new procedures and an information sharing agreement to support the policy. This improves coordination between ministries to ensure children are receiving appropriate supports. The Ministry of Children and Family Development notifies the ministry when a child is taken into care and provides updates on whether a parent is actively working on the return of their child.

- In addition, for the circumstances other than a child in care, the policy has been updated to allow up to an additional three months of shelter top-up in extenuating circumstances, bringing the total allowable time period to six months.

STATISTICS:

- In 2012/13, an average of 279 cases per month received the temporary assistance allowance when a child was in the Ministry of Children and Family Development care.

INTERJURISDICTIONAL COMPARISONS:

- Other provinces have a similar policy for maintaining full shelter payments for children when they are taken into government care:

Province	Maintain Shelter Rate For (months)
British Columbia	No limit
Alberta	1
Manitoba	Unknown
Saskatchewan	No limit
Ontario	No limit
Quebec	3
Prince Edward Island	12
New Brunswick	No limit
Nova Scotia	24
Newfoundland	Unknown

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Trusts

KEY MESSAGES:

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TRUSTS

BACKGROUND:

- There are two types of trusts, discretionary and non-discretionary:
 - Discretionary trusts are trusts where the client has no control over the funds held in trust or any payments from that trust. These types of trusts are not considered to be an asset and are exempt up to any amount.
 - Non-discretionary trusts are trusts where the client may have some control over the funds and payments. Non-discretionary trusts are viewed as an asset but exempted up to a lifetime maximum capital contribution limit of \$200,000. This amount may be set at a higher level for persons whose lifetime disability-related costs amount to more than \$200,000, with the approval of the Minister.

- Payments from either type of trust do not impact eligibility for assistance if the payment is used to meet disability-related costs or to contribute to an RDSP, an RESP, or to buy a place of residence for the client.
- In addition to trusts, individuals who are eligible for the federal Disability Tax Credit may also place monies into a RDSP. These monies are completely exempted as an asset, and monies withdrawn from a RDSP are completely exempted as income.

Eligibility

- In addition to clients with the Persons with Disabilities (PWD) designation, clients receiving accommodation or care in a private hospital or a special care facility (other than a drug or alcohol treatment centre), and clients or applicants awaiting a PWD adjudication decision or completing a PWD Application form can set up a trust without impacting eligibility for assistance. Almost all clients with trusts have the Persons with Disabilities designation.

STATISTICS:

- As of March 31, 2013 there were 1,456 disability assistance cases, and 329 non-disability cases, with trust activity such as payments or contributions. This represents approximately 1.5% of the total number of disability case files.
- The ministry receives between 300 and 330 trust applications a year, and approximately 99% of these are approved. There has been no discernible trend towards an increase in the number of trust applications since the Regulations were amended to increase the asset contribution limit to \$200,000.
- The vast majority of trusts, both discretionary and non-discretionary, have trust contributions of \$200,000 or less. The ministry receives approximately two applications a year to increase the asset contribution limit on non-discretionary trusts, and an increase has been refused only once since 2009.

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

Alberta Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped

- Trusts as assets are subject to the overall allowable non-exempt asset level of \$100,000.
- Trust income falls under the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped program's monthly partial income exemption along with other sources of partially exempt income: \$200 plus 25% of income for singles and \$775 plus 25% of income for families.

Saskatchewan

- Trust payments provided for items not covered by assistance are not considered when calculating entitlement. Payments from any trust fund for basic needs or needs that social assistance would cover are assessed as income.
- Trust funds that are not available for distribution are not assessed in calculating entitlement.
- Trusts or amounts received by a recipient and the recipient's dependants as a result of inheritances or bequests are exempt up to \$1,500 for a single person or \$3,000 for a recipient with one dependant + \$500 for each additional dependant.
- A trust up to \$100,000 can be set up when ordered by the court when inadequate provisions have been made for the support of a client in a will.

Manitoba

- Payments from a trust are not included in calculating financial resources when the payment is for:
 - the purchase of disability-related items or services;
 - savings, or the purchase of any item or service, provided the amount does not exceed the client's household exemption limit for liquid assets (up to \$4,000 per person, household maximum of \$16,000); and
 - reasonable administration and taxation costs.

Ontario

- Payments from a trust used for approved disability-related items or services or education or training expenses incurred because of a disability are exempt as income up to a maximum of \$6,000 for any twelve month period.
- The total combined amount of a trust plus the cash surrender value of any life insurance policies owned by a member of the benefit unit must not exceed \$100,000.

New Brunswick

- Trust funds are exempted for Persons with Disabilities up to \$200,000 total value.
- 75% of trust income should be applied to special needs benefits that may be required by the individual and is taken into account when considering requests for special benefits.
- 25% of trust income is exempt.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #39** – Registered Disability Savings Plan

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Women

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

Women are better off in the workforce

- By assisting clients with children to find sustainable employment, the ministry supports families in building a brighter future for their children.
- For example, a single parent with one child on income assistance is eligible for a maximum disposable income of \$1,431 per month. That same single parent if working full-time for the new minimum wage of \$10.25 would have approximately \$2,288 in disposable income. That is a difference of over \$850.
- Studies (see Reference section) show that children from families with parents working full-time are more likely to stay off assistance, prosper in school, and become self-reliant adults.

Exceptions to Accommodate Specific Circumstances

Single parent exemptions and women with young children looking for work.	• Single parents caring for a disabled child or a child under three are excused from seeking work while they are in receipt of assistance. • Single parents with a child under the age of three are also excused from completing a work search before accessing assistance.
Pregnant Women	• Pregnant women are exempt from the two-year independence requirement and work search requirements.
Women leaving abusive or violent situations	• Women leaving abusive or violent domestic situations receive an assessment for income assistance within one business day. They are exempt from the work search and the two-year independence test. • Women who have separated from an abusive spouse or relative within the previous six months are excused from employment obligations. • Single parents without citizenship status who are fleeing an abusive partner and cannot leave the country due to custody or

	health and safety considerations may be excused from citizenship requirements • Family maintenance action and sponsorship debt contact may be deferred for women fleeing abuse if pursuing would cause a health or safety risk.
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Single Mothers Without Status

- In October 2012, the ministry introduced an exemption from citizenship requirements to ensure assistance was available for single parent families without citizenship status, who are fleeing an abusive partner and cannot leave the country due to custody or health and safety considerations.
- To qualify for the exemption the parent must meet all the following criteria:
- Single person fleeing an abusive spouse;
- Are applying for Permanent Residence in Canada;
- Have at least one Canadian child; and
- Are unable to leave B.C. with child because of:
 - Child custody considerations OR
 - Leaving B.C. would result in a danger to the physical health of a family member.

Persons Fleeing Abuse

- See Note #82 - Domestic Violence/Fleeing Abuse.

Caseload Statistics for women and single parent families

- The number of single women on income assistance has risen from 37,824 in June 2001 to 44,478 in March 2013.
- Since 2001, there has been a steady decline in employable single parent families receiving income assistance (from nearly 24,500 cases in June 2001 to 6,282 cases in March 2013). This decline represents one of the most rapid declines of a caseload in the income assistance program history, many of which were women.
- In 2009, as a part of the Longitudinal Administrative Databank project, the ministry looked at the income level of former BC Employment and Assistance clients through tax records and found:
 - Clients are better off financially after leaving assistance.
 - Clients continue to improve their financial situation in the years after leaving assistance.
- In 2010, the percentage of children living in female single parent families with low income (below the Low Income Cut-Off) was 16.4%, the second lowest rate in Canada.

Natal Supplements and Infant Formula

- The ministry has budgeted \$1.3 million in fiscal year 2013/14 for expectant mothers in need and their babies on monthly natal supplements (\$45 each month) for pre and post-natal nutrition and enriched infant formula for dependent children under 12 months of age where a medical condition requires the use of specialized formula.

Pre-Natal Shelter Supplement

- In September 2008, the pre-natal shelter supplement was introduced to assist single pregnant recipients in meeting extra costs associated with securing or maintaining stable accommodation prior to the birth of their first child.
 - The amount of a pre-natal shelter supplement equals the difference between unit 1 maximum shelter assistance (\$375) and the actual total shelter costs exceeding that amount, up to a maximum of \$195 per month.
- In fiscal year 2011/12, an average of 205 clients per month received a pre-natal shelter supplement. In the fiscal year 2012/13 this number decreased to 147.

Employment Programs

- The Bridging Employment Program (BEP) was replaced by the Employment Program of British Columbia (EPBC) on April 2, 2012.
- Under EPBC, specialized populations are entitled to service delivery arrangements to access employment services in order to meet their unique needs and increase the likelihood of outcomes being achieved. Specialized populations includes aboriginal people, and women survivors of violence and/or abuse.

CROSS JURISDICTIONAL:

Exemptions from looking for work/seeking employment

- All other provinces give some type of work/employment exemption to single parents with dependent children, although the age of the child varies.

Province	Exemption	Age of Child
Manitoba	Do not have a work expectation	Six
Ontario	Temporary deferral of participation requirements	Before public education is available (typically age four)
Alberta	Considered	Under 12 months

	temporarily unable to work	
Saskatchewan	Considered partially employable	Up to 90 days – employability reassessed after 90 days.

Family Maintenance Exemption

- British Columbia is consistent with the majority of provinces by counting Family Maintenance payments as income.
- Only Quebec and Alberta's Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped program have exemptions for child support, and only Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped has exemptions for spousal support in very specific circumstances.

Province	Counted as Income - Child Support	Counted as Income - Spousal Support
Alberta	Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped clients - Child support is fully exempt	Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped clients - partially exempt if received by a cohabiting partner
Quebec	Exempt – up to \$100 per month per child	Yes

CROSS-REFERENCE:

- **Note #108** – Citizenship Requirements
- **Note #134** – Family Maintenance
- **Note #82** – Domestic Violence/Fleeing Abuse

REFERENCE SECTION:

1. MDRC: *How Welfare and Work Policies Affect Children: A Synthesis of Research*. March 2001.

- This report found that programs that increased employment outcomes and increased incomes of single parents, had positive effects on elementary school-age children:
 - Higher school achievement
 - Reduced behaviour problems
 - Increased positive social behaviour
 - Improved children's overall health
- Our research using the Longitudinal Administrative Databank supports that our policies have moved single parents to employment with higher incomes.

2. Science: *Mothers' Transitions from Welfare to Work and the Well-Being of Preschoolers and Adolescents*

- Results from a longitudinal study of 2,402 low-income families during the recent unprecedented era of welfare reform suggest that mothers' transitions off welfare and into employment are not associated with negative outcomes for preschoolers (ages 2 to 4 years) or young adolescents (ages 10 to 14 years). Indeed, no significant associations with mothers' welfare and employment transitions were found for preschoolers, and the dominant pattern was also of few statistically significant associations for adolescents.
- The associations that did occur provided slight evidence that mothers' entry into the labour force was related to improvements in adolescents' mental health; exits from employment were linked with teenagers' increased behaviour problems.

3. Pamela Morris, Lisa Gennetian, Greg Duncan: *Effects of Welfare and Employment Policies on Young Children: New Findings on Policy Experiments Conducted in the Early 1990s*. MDRC 2005.

- Report is limited to studying the impact on young children (pre-adolescent) of parents on income assistance attending employment programs.
- Findings are consistent with those from the MDRC report:
 - Young children (2-5) show small improvements in their school achievement when their parents participate in employment programs that improves their economic outcome (i.e. income).
 - Some of this impact may be linked to the increased use of center-based care.
- The author concludes that both policy-induced increases in income and policy-induced increases in use of center-based child care are important determinants of children's cognitive development through these employment-or income-based programs.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Citizenship Requirements for Income Assistance

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

- For a family unit to be eligible for assistance, at least one adult in the family unit must be either:
 - A Canadian citizen;
 - A permanent resident;
 - A protected person;
 - In Canada on a Temporary Resident Permit (formerly a Minister's Permit);
 - A refugee claimant; or
 - Under a removal order that cannot be executed.
- If a family unit is eligible for assistance but one of the adults does not meet the citizenship requirements, the ineligible person is excluded from the calculation of the assistance rate. His or her income and assets are still taken into consideration, which reflects the fact that families have an obligation to care for one another.
- In October 2012, the ministry introduced an exemption from citizenship requirements to ensure assistance was available for single parent families without citizenship status, who are typically caught in the middle of between custody and immigration proceedings.
- To qualify for the exemption the parent must meet all the following criteria:
 - Single person fleeing an abusive spouse

CITIZENSHIP REQUIREMENTS FOR INCOME ASSISTANCE

- Are applying for Permanent Residence in Canada
- Have at least one Canadian child
- Are unable to leave B.C. with child because of:
 - Child custody considerations OR
 - Leaving B.C. would result in a danger to the physical health of a family member

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

- B.C.'s citizenship requirements are largely consistent with other provinces.
- Some provinces, such as Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec, allow persons with an in-progress application for permanent residence to receive assistance, but only under certain circumstances.

Province	Key Differences
Manitoba	• Employment and Income Assistance may provide assistance if applicant has made it known he/she plans to continue to live in Manitoba, and remains financially eligible with no other sources of income or assets.
Ontario	• To be eligible for assistance, an applicant must be legally allowed to reside in Canada permanently. • In addition, refugee claimants whose claim is eligible to be heard by the Immigration and Refugee Board may be eligible for assistance.
Quebec	• Persons with an in-progress application for permanent residence are eligible only if they have a spouse who meets the citizenship requirements. • Persons with a removal order that cannot be executed are ineligible.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
REGIONAL OPERATIONS BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Eligibility – Application Process and Orientation

KEY MESSAGES:

s.13

BACKGROUND:

Application Process

- Applying for income assistance is a two stage process.
 - During stage 1, staff first determine whether applicants have an immediate need for food, shelter, urgent medical attention or are fleeing abuse. Staff assess whether applicants are required to complete a five week work search. During stage 1, applicants complete an orientation.
 - At stage 2 (the eligibility interview), staff review the applicant's work search, ensure they have an orientation completed, gather information about the family unit's situation, assess their eligibility for assistance, ask the applicant to

ELIGIBILITY – APPLICATION PROCESS AND ORIENTATION

complete the Aboriginal Self Identifier (if indicated), and assess the applicant for an employment plan.

- Applicants who are determined to have an immediate need for food, shelter, or urgent medical attention are not required to complete a work search prior to proceeding to stage 2 of the application and are provided with an expedited eligibility interview. If the immediate need item is required before an eligibility interview can be completed, the need will be met without delay through vouchers, shelter referrals, bus tickets, etc.
- Applicants who are determined to be fleeing abuse are exempt from work search requirements, the two year financial independence requirement, and employment-related obligations.

Lean Intake Pilot

- Due to the high number of new income assistance applications received by the ministry every year, the ministry is reviewing its intake process to identify improvement opportunities.
- Beginning June 17, 2013, the ministry is moving towards a centralized intake process, using a phased approach.
- Phase 1 starts in the Fraser Valley, Interior and the North. By fall 2013, the goal is to have these three regions working from a virtually centralized queue to manage applications.
- Subsequent phases will work to realign regional teams and processes in Vancouver and on Vancouver Island, incorporating learnings from phase 1. Based on positive evaluations from phases 1 and 2, the ministry will merge into a provincially centralized queue for income assistance applications.
- These processes respond to feedback received about timeliness and consistency in our service delivery.
- The ministry will closely monitor the effectiveness of the new intake process and will make appropriate adjustments in each phase, as required.

Orientation

- Completing an orientation is a legislated eligibility requirement. This requirement can be satisfied by:
 - using the Self Serve Assessment and Application Tool;
 - by ministry staff, in the office or by phone; and
 - by a contracted service provider as needed.
- Some applicants are not required to complete an orientation:
 - Persons aged 65 or over;
 - Persons who do not meet citizenship requirements; and

- Persons with a physical or mental condition that precludes completion of the orientation.

Access to Services and Supports

- Internet – In March 2010, a Self Serve Assessment and Application Tool, as well as accessible information on policies, procedures, programs and services, was launched by the ministry;
- Telephone – contact centre access, which is a toll-free Automated Telephone Inquiry system with live agents who handle approximately 1.5 millions calls per year (2012). After hours the system provides pre-recorded information about ministry programs and services;
- Face-to-Face - 59 ministry offices and 29 partnerships with Service BC offices, located around the province offering front desk services during regular business hours;
- After Hours access for urgent needs;
- Outreach and integration services provided by specialised staff; and
- Trusted third party partners.

Improving Access to Income Assistance

- In August 2011, the ministry broadened identification requirements to include the Secure Certificate of Indian Status card as primary identification.
- In February 2013, the BC Services Card (either with combined driver's license or as a stand alone card with photo) was added as an acceptable form of primary identification.
- The ministry provides information on applying for assistance in a variety of formats, such as on ministry websites and in brochures and fact sheets.
- Interpretation services are available for applicants who are unable to communicate through written or spoken English.

Online Self Serve Assessment and Application Tool

- On March 1, 2010, the Self Serve Assessment and Application tool was launched. This web-based tool provides citizens with 24/7 access to general program information, the ability to estimate their potential eligibility amount, and is a self-service channel for submitting their application for income assistance online.
- People have more time to complete Stage 1 of the application process should they need it, as the tool allows them to begin the process, save their information, and complete it at a later date.
- The tool provides additional information on why the ministry asks specific questions, thus giving greater visibility into program requirements and other resource options.

- Ongoing enhancements identified by staff, clients and the public are improving the functionality of the online tool.
- As of October 2012, the ministry introduced an optional survey on the online Self Serve Assessment and Application tool to offer applicants the opportunity to provide feedback on the tool, and to gather information to support service delivery enhancements. Preliminary results, while they cannot be generalized to the population of applicants, are very positive.
- In 2012, the ministry processed 79,937 applications with approximately 94% submitted through the online tool.
- Applicants continue to have options; if they cannot complete the Self Serve Assessment and Application tool online, they can call the ministry or attend an office where a worker will complete the application with the applicant.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #79:** Channel Strategy
- **Note #82:** Domestic Violence/ Fleeing Abuse
- **Note #100:** Service Delivery Channels

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Eligibility – Overview

KEY MESSAGES:

ELIGIBILITY – OVERVIEW

s.13

BACKGROUND:

Identification

- Potential clients must provide basic documentation to prove their identity. This includes two pieces of identification, one of which must be photo identification.
- All applicants and adult dependants must have a verified and valid Social Insurance Number.
- Hardship assistance may be available for a limited time while an applicant is awaiting identification or Social Insurance Number documentation.
- Applicants who are unable to provide the required identification may consent to having their picture taken. A digital photograph of the applicant is placed on file and the applicant may be granted assistance while pursuing the required identification.

Family Composition

- People in spousal relationships are expected to share income and support each other.
- All income and assets held by the parties in a dependent or marriage-like relationship are included in the eligibility assessment.

Income Assessment

- Applicants and clients are required to pursue all other income available to them. Those who fail or refuse to pursue other income may be ineligible for assistance or eligible at a reduced rate.
- Clients already in receipt of assistance who apply for other income may continue to receive assistance while awaiting the other income.
- New applicants who are awaiting other income may be eligible for repayable hardship assistance.
- All income that an income assistance client receives, whether earned or unearned, must be reported to the ministry as it may impact eligibility for assistance. Disability assistance clients must report any changes in income, whether earned or unearned.

Income Exemptions

- Certain forms of income may be fully or partially exempt, depending on the type of income, family status and type of assistance (income assistance, disability assistance or hardship assistance).

Asset Limits

- Assets include cash and any property that can be converted into cash. Asset levels vary by client type:
 - Single clients - \$2,000
 - Couples and families with children - \$4,000
 - Single clients with disabilities - \$5,000

- Couples with disabilities - \$10,000

Asset Exemptions

- Some types of assets do not impact eligibility for assistance. These include clothing, necessary household equipment, a primary place of residence, discretionary trusts, and Registered Disability Savings Plans.
- Some assets will impact eligibility for assistance unless the value of the asset is below exemption levels.
 - The vehicle equity limit is \$10,000. Some clients, such as persons with disabilities, are exempt from the vehicle asset limit.
 - Non-discretionary trusts are exempted up to a lifetime maximum capital contribution of \$200,000 (or a higher amount with approval of the Minister).
- One-time gifts are considered an asset. Periodic or ongoing cash gifts are considered unearned income.

Immediate Needs

- If an applicant has an immediate need, their eligibility for assistance will be determined on an urgent basis. An applicant who is exempt from work search requirements will proceed directly to Stage 2 of the application process to determine eligibility. Applicants who are not exempt from the work search requirement will be immediately assessed for hardship assistance, and if eligible will receive hardship assistance while they complete either a three- or five-week work search.
- The ministry provides immediate needs support for:
 - food, including someone who relies on community resources such as food banks for basic food needs;
 - shelter, including but not limited to, someone facing an existing or impending hydro disconnect, eviction notice, or staying in an emergency shelter, hostel or transition house with no suitable accommodation arranged in the immediate future and the applicant's ability to secure accommodation depends on receiving assistance; or
 - urgent medical attention, including but not limited to, someone needing a prescription from a medical doctor for medication or supplies, or who has voluntarily chosen or been recommended to attend an alcohol or drug treatment or rehabilitation centre.
- Applicants must have personal assets and available income below the allowable income and asset levels before they can access immediate needs support. Immediate needs is provided to help ensure that no one is at risk of homelessness, urgent medical attention or food.

Exemptions from Two Year Independence and Work Search

- There are a number of exemptions from two year independence and work search requirements. Exemplars include:

- For two-year independence: applicants under age 19, applicants who are pregnant, have dependent children, have a foster child, or have a child in the home of a relative (CIHR), and applicants who have or had a medical condition that prevented them from working.
- For work search: applicants who are fleeing an abusive spouse or relative; sole applicants with a dependent child under the age of three, and applicants with a physical or mental condition that precludes the applicant from completing a search for employment.

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL:

- An “employment first” focus is a key feature of most welfare programs in Canada.
- Income assistance systems are programs of last resort that establish maximum asset levels and require clients to pursue other income so that clients use their own resources to support themselves.
- Specific criteria vary between jurisdictions according to regional needs.
- B.C. uses a rigorous “Employment First” approach, which includes a work search, based on research on the relative improvements in a family’s income and well-being from working rather than being on income assistance.
- B.C. is the only province in Canada with the work search and two-year financial independence requirements.
- B.C.’s treatment of income and assets is generally consistent with income assistance programs across Canada.

CROSS REFERENCES:

- **Note #86** – Income and Assets
- **Note #84** – Employment Plans and Obligations
- **Note #131** – Cross Jurisdictional Comparison

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Eligibility – Work Search

KEY MESSAGES:

ELIGIBILITY - WORK SEARCH

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BACKGROUND:

Work Search Requirement

- The application process has two stages. During the first stage, applicants are assessed as to whether they have:
 - already completed a satisfactory work search,

- are required to complete a work search,
- are exempt from this requirement.
- New applicants are required to complete a five-week work search. Former recipients reapplying for assistance are required to complete a three-week work search.
- Applicants who have completed a reasonable work search or who are exempt from this initial work search requirement can proceed directly to Stage 2 of the application process.
- Applicants assessed as having an immediate need can proceed directly to Stage 2 of the application process and will be assessed for hardship assistance while they complete their work search requirement.

Complete list of exemptions

- An applicant is exempt from the work search if the applicant:
 - is fleeing from an abusive spouse or relative;
 - has a physical or mental condition that precludes the person from completing a search for employment;
 - any member of the applicant's family is a Person with Disabilities;
 - is a single parent with a child under three years of age;
 - is over the age of 65 years;
 - is unauthorized to work in Canada; or
 - is a Child in the Home of a Relative.
- If an applicant is fleeing from an abusive spouse or relative, an urgent eligibility review is given at the first possible opportunity. If an applicant meets any other exemption criteria, the ministry's service standard is to schedule an eligibility interview to take place within five business days.

Work Search for Applicants who have an Immediate Need:

- If the family unit has **not completed** the required work search, they will proceed directly to Stage 2 of the application process and be assessed for **hardship assistance**.
- Once they have been determined eligible for hardship assistance and have had their immediate need addressed, the recipient and spouse will be required to complete either a three- or five-week work search, while receiving hardship assistance.

Immediate Needs Criteria

The ministry provides immediate needs support for:

- **food**, including someone who relies on community resources such as food banks for basic food needs;

- **shelter**, including but not limited to, someone facing an existing or impending hydro disconnect, eviction notice, or staying in an emergency shelter, hostel or transition house with no suitable accommodation arranged in the immediate future and the applicant's ability to secure accommodation depends on receiving assistance; or
- **urgent medical attention**, including but not limited to, someone needing a prescription from a medical doctor for medication or supplies, or who has voluntarily chosen or been recommended to attend an alcohol or drug treatment or rehabilitation centre.
- Applicants must meet income and asset tests before they can access immediate needs support. Clients with immediate needs who have employment related obligations are required to complete an employment plan as a condition of ongoing eligibility.

A work search must be reasonable

- An applicant is not eligible for assistance until the ministry is satisfied that they have completed a reasonable work search. Factors that are considered in determining whether the work search is reasonable include:
 - The applicant consistently searched for work by submitting applications and resumes, answering internet and newspaper ads, and cold calling prospective employers;
 - documentation of search efforts;
 - availability of employment resources and employment opportunities in the applicant's community; and
 - family responsibilities and circumstances, which would preclude employment-seeking activities.
- Job searches must not be limited to specific types of job or wage ranges.
- The worker has discretion to adjust the amount of contacts/hours required to satisfy the work search requirement based on individual circumstances, such as limited work opportunities in isolated areas.

Work Search Supports

- Applicants are provided with the following tools to assist in the completion of their work search:
 - Work Search Activities Record;
 - Independent Work Search Toolkit; and
 - Work Search Guidelines.
- Ministry staff follow up with applicants 14 days into their work search to ensure the work search is on track.

- Applicants are also encouraged to visit their local WorkBC Employment Services Centre (ESC).

CROSS JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

- B.C. is the only province that requires applicants to complete or provide proof of a work search prior to applying for Income Assistance.

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- Other provinces do not require a work search until eligibility for assistance has been determined.
- Nova Scotia has a comparable immediate needs assessment. No other provinces have a comparable immediate needs assessment because they do not require a prior work search as a condition of eligibility.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME ASSISTANCE BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Eligibility – Two Year Financial Independence

KEY MESSAGES:

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ELIGIBILITY – TWO YEAR FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE

BACKGROUND:

General

- At least **one member in a family unit** must have been financially independent for at least **two consecutive years** prior to application.

Definition

- Financial independence is defined as:
 - having worked for 840 hours per year (less than 17 hours per week)
 - having earned \$7,000 per year (less than \$135 per week)
 - having worked a portion of two consecutive years and for the balance of two years, either served a waiting period for Employment Insurance (EI) or received income from a private or public income replacement program (e.g., Workers' Compensation Board, Canada Pension Plan or Disability Insurance).
- The period of financial independence may be any two consecutive years. It does not have to be the two consecutive years immediately preceding application for income assistance.
- Unearned income, such as student loans, training allowances, or income assistance (from any jurisdiction), does not satisfy the \$7,000 requirement.

Exemptions

- Exemptions from the Two-Year Independence rule are either based on the category of assistance, such as disability assistance, or situational factors, such as pregnancy or caring for children. Staff may use discretion in exceptional circumstances when a client cannot meet the two-year independence requirement for reasons beyond their control and denial of eligibility would result in undue hardship.
- Only one adult in the family unit has to meet the two-year independence requirement for the family unit to be eligible.
- Similarly, if one adult in the family unit meets an exemption criterion then the family unit is exempt.
- The following applicants are exempt from the Two-Year Independence rule:
 - persons with disabilities;
 - persons with persistent multiple barriers;
 - those who are pregnant or have dependent children, including foster children and children in the home of relatives (CIHR);
 - applicants under 19 years of age;

- those who have been supported by an employed spouse;
- those caring for a disabled spouse;
- applicants who have been incarcerated for at least six months of the two-year period immediately preceding the date of application;
- those who have been in care until their 19th birthday;
- those fleeing familial or spousal abuse;
- applicants who have a medical condition that prevents the applicant from working the next 30 days;
- those, who due to factors beyond their control, could not have achieved two consecutive years of financial independence and the applicant would experience undue hardship if eligibility were denied; or
- those who have been granted a two-year post-secondary diploma, bachelor degree or higher.
- Discretion exemption for exceptional circumstances include:
 - Long term incapacitating physical, social or mental health problems, such that two consecutive years of financial independence would not have been possible;
 - Long-term dependency on government assistance, such that two consecutive years of financial independence would not have been possible;
 - Chronic medical problems or addictions, which prevent two consecutive years of financial independence;
 - Extended periods of caring for dependent or disabled family members such that two consecutive years of financial independence would not have been possible;
 - Previously restricted to living in a community or country where the economic and/or social conditions prohibited or precluded the possibility of two consecutive years of financial independence

Returning to Income Assistance

- Individuals have to meet the two-year financial independence requirement only once in their lifetime.
- Applicants previously exempted must be reassessed upon reapplication to determine if they continue to meet the exemption criteria for the two-year independence requirement.

Verification

- Where verification is not possible (e.g., documents unavailable from another country), signed declarations from applicants may be accepted to confirm the applicant has been financially independent for two years and meets eligibility.

Other Resources

- Applicants who do not meet the two year independence test are referred to other resources, including housing and employment services.
- Those applicants who are ineligible are provided with a list of local community resources that provide free or low cost goods and services.
- The many exemptions, including those focused on youth, ensure that those who could not have achieved two consecutive years of financial independence do not face undue hardship.

STATISTICS:

Fiscal year	Total ineligible – two year independence	Ineligible – Number of youth (19-24)
2005/2006	822	356
2006/2007	414	163
2007/2008	356	171
2008/2009	430	260
2009/2010	529	373
2010/2011	484	361
2011/2012	517	368
2012/2013	162	114

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL:

- No other province requires applicants to have two-year financial independence before being eligible for assistance.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
PREVENTION AND LOSS MANAGEMENT SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Eligibility Reviews

KEY MESSAGES:

ELIGIBILITY REVIEWS

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BACKGROUND:

- The verification process used in eligibility reviews upholds the integrity of the B.C. Employment and Assistance program by ensuring that assistance is provided to those who meet the eligibility criteria and deters those who would abuse the system.
- Eligibility reviews confirm continued financial eligibility for assistance by focusing on income and assets, efforts to pursue all other sources of income and where appropriate, employment status and obligations.
- Documents and information provided at the time of the review are verified for accuracy, which may require further information from individuals or third parties such as Equifax Canada, Canada Revenue Agency or the Insurance Corporation of B.C.

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Contact: Sharon Movsev, ADM, Regional Services Division
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Date: June 20, 2013

- Reviews provide staff with an opportunity to ensure that individuals are receiving other supplements and supports for which they may be eligible and support clients with timely referrals to appropriate resources to enhance well-being and independence.
- In May 2008, annual eligibility reviews were deferred to accommodate the increased workload resulting from the economic downturn.
- Eligibility reviews have been reinstated and are completed where case circumstances warrant a closer review of eligibility factors.
- Eligibility reviews are an integral part of ongoing case management across frontline service delivery.
- In addition to eligibility reviews, the ministry's Prevention and Loss Management Services Branch continues to conduct reviews and investigations of files where there have been allegations of fraud or other risk factors are identified.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #116** – PLMS Roles and Responsibilities

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**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
PREVENTION AND LOSS MANAGEMENT SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Compliance Reviews – Why the Ministry Performs Them

KEY MESSAGES:

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**COMPLIANCE REVIEWS –
WHY THE MINISTRY PERFORMS THEM**

BACKGROUND:

- The branch focus is on prevention and loss management and directs its activities and resources toward cost avoidance.
- Cost avoidance focuses the ministry's efforts on current recipients of and applicants for assistance to prevent potential program losses and ensure only those who are eligible receive assistance.
- 123 Investigative Officers across the province conduct compliance reviews and audits to ensure compliance with eligibility requirements.
- Compliance reviews can result in an increase in, or reduction or discontinuance of assistance, overpayment identification, sanctions, or referral for further investigation which may result in criminal or civil charges.
- The branch works with ministry staff to address risks to program integrity and to ensure that training needs are identified.

Cross reference:

- **Note #115** – Fraud as it Relates to Criminal/Civil Action
- **Note #116** – PLMS Roles and Responsibilities

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
PREVENTION AND LOSS MANAGEMENT SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Fraud as it relates to Criminal or Civil Action

KEY MESSAGES:

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FRAUD AS IT RELATES TO CRIMINAL OR CIVIL ACTION

BACKGROUND:

- 25 ministry Investigators conduct the work of the enforcement component.
- Investigations are initiated as a result of information received from the public, other law enforcement agencies or from internal ministry sources.
- Allegations of fraud are tracked, prioritized and monitored in the Fraud Allegation and Reporting System.
- An investigation of fraud may result in a conviction under the Criminal Code of Canada, the *Employment and Assistance Act* or the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*.

- Files are assessed to determine whether to pursue action through the criminal process, civil process or both.
- Ministry Investigators assist other law enforcement agencies with investigations and collaborate for law enforcement purposes.

STATISTICS:

Enforcement Program Fraud Type	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Duplicate assistance	2.5%	0.9%	1.8%
ID/Personation	7.0%	4.2%	5.0%
Undeclared income	53.0%	35.2%	43.4%
Undeclared assets	4.4%	5.1%	5.9%
False address	2.5%	3.4%	3.0%
Stolen cheques	6.7%	13.8%	2.1%
Dependent status	5.4%	10.4%	12.4%
Spousal status	4.4%	0.6%	2.4%
Organized crime	0%	0%	0%
Multiple ID (individuals who received assistance on 2 or more files for the same time period)	1.9%	0.3%	0.6%
Assist Other Agencies	3.5%	14.4%	17.1%
Miscellaneous (includes special projects and investigations)	8.6%	11.8%	6.5%
Total*	100%	100%	100%

* Percentages are rounded to one decimal place and may not total exactly 100%.

Cross Reference:

- **Note #114:** Compliance Reviews – Why the Ministry Performs Them
- **Note #116:** PLMS Roles and Responsibilities

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
PREVENTION AND LOSS MANAGEMENT SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

**ISSUE: Prevention and Loss Management Services Branch Roles
and Responsibilities**

KEY MESSAGES:

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PLMS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

BACKGROUND:

- The branch focuses on prevention and loss management and directs its resources toward cost avoidance.
- Preventing program losses at the outset reduces client overpayment and subsequent debt recovery costs.
- The branch uses the following systems and strategies to meet its business objectives:
 - The File Review and Distribution System selects files for review based on statistically proven pre-determined risk factors;
 - The Fraud Allegation and Reporting System is an interactive web-based application accessible to all ministry staff used to record, track and prioritize all internal and external allegations of assistance abuse reported to the ministry;
 - Third-party database checks at the point of entry to assistance and as needed during the file review process including the Insurance Corporation of B.C., BC OnLine and Equifax Canada;
 - Data matched files from Canada Revenue Agency, Canada Pension Plan and BC Student Financial Aid; and
 - Special project audits to ensure quality control and monitoring and determine program trends or gaps.
- Branch action can result in an increase in, or reduction or discontinuance of assistance, overpayment identification, denial of assistance at application, sanctions or referral for further investigation which may result in criminal or civil charges.
- Sanctions, in the form of a period of ineligibility, or a temporary reduction in assistance, may be applied as a result of a review or investigation as a deterrent.
- The branch works with ministry staff to address risks to program integrity and to ensure that training needs are identified.
- The branch supports front line service delivery with 20 FTEs dedicated to the Strategic Third-Party checks Assist and Referral Team, which conducts third-party database checks on all applications for assistance.

STATISTICS:**Summary of Compliance Program Initiatives**

Initiatives	2010/11		2011/12		2012/13	
	Over-payments	Cost Avoidance	Over-payments	Cost Avoidance	Over-payments	Cost Avoidance
File Review and Distribution System	\$1.083M	\$0.624M	\$1.569M	\$0.771M	\$1.095M	\$0.465M
Fraud Allegation Reporting System	\$3.280M	\$0.638M	\$4.703M	\$0.900M	\$4.677M	\$0.820M
Fraud Allegations and File Review & Distribution	\$0.713M	\$0.148M	\$0.854M	\$0.213M	\$0.367M	\$0.089M
Canada Revenue Agency Data Match	\$3.250M	\$0.347M	\$3.132M	\$0.327M	\$4.249M	\$0.546M
Student Loan Data Match	\$0.778M	\$0.413M	\$0.642M	\$0.372M	\$0.440M	\$0.323M
Other (includes special projects)*	\$0.203M	\$0.070M	\$0.428M	\$0.243M	\$0.486M	\$0.568M
Total**	\$9.308M	\$2.240M	\$11.326M	\$2.826M	\$11.314M	\$2.812M

* Special projects in 2012/13 have impacted regular reviews such as File Review and Distribution System.

** Totals reflect actual numbers up to three decimal places and do not account for rounding.

Summary of Enforcement Program Initiatives⁺

Initiatives	2010/11		2011/12		2012/13	
	Number	Value	Number	Value	Number	Value
Criminal Convictions	37	\$0.492M	33	\$0.409M	46	\$0.836M
Repayment Agreement/Overpayment Notification	30	\$0.382M	57	\$0.227M	25	\$0.186M
Civil Court Orders	0	\$0	6	\$0.060M	3	\$0.016M
Income Assistance Decreased	31	\$0.022M	51	\$0.013M	35*	\$0.017M
Assist other Agencies	36	N/A	53	N/A	58	N/A
Total**	134	\$0.896M	200	\$0.759M	167	\$1.054M

* Amounts are under reported as reporting of decreased assistance is not available on the Integrated Case Management System.

** Totals reflect actual numbers up to three decimal places and do not account for rounding.

Enforcement Activities

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Files Opened	296	355	382
Files Closed	263	332	435

Criminal Prosecutions Concluded

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Include Convictions, Acquittals and Stays of Proceedings	49	41	85

* The enforcement unit totals are impacted by attrition, retention and ongoing training of new Ministry Investigators.

Cross Reference:

- **Note #114:** Compliance Reviews – Why the Ministry Performs Them
- **Note #115:** Fraud as it Relates to Criminal or Civil Action

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
RESEARCH BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Minimum Wage

KEY MESSAGES:

MINIMUM WAGE

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BACKGROUND

- The increase in the minimum wage in May 2011 was the first increase since 2001.
- It is estimated that there are 40,000 minimum wage earners in the province, with many more making above the former minimum wage of \$8 per hour but below \$10.25 and thus who also benefited from the increase.
- Almost half of these are considered as being part of the working poor, and now experience lower depths of low income, and in some cases have been able to move out of low income altogether.
- Two-thirds of minimum wage earners are women, and most minimum-wage jobs are part-time or short-duration jobs.
- The increase to the minimum wage also helped income assistance clients.
- By increasing the returns to working, the minimum wage increase improved the incentive for employable clients to leave income assistance for full-time work.
- Also, the increased income for the same amount of work means that some clients will be able to earn enough income to become independent.
- The recently-implemented changes to earnings exemptions means that clients will be able to take even greater advantage of the increase in the minimum wage by keeping more of their additional earnings.

Why Assistance Rates Won't Increase Along with the Minimum Wage

- The ministry does not adjust income assistance rates in response to changes in the minimum wage.
- When setting rates, the ministry is obligated to take a balanced approach – a realistic undertaking between what is fair to our clients and what is fair to working British Columbians.
- The government has to set rates that are adequate, sustainable and not fixed at a level that makes them a disincentive for clients to find and keep full-time jobs.

- In reviewing its rates, the ministry takes into consideration cost of living studies, inflation, welfare rates in other provinces, the Dietitians' report on the cost of eating and recommendations by community organizations.
- This was the first increase in the minimum wage since 2001, but the ministry has raised income assistance rates twice since 2001. In 2005, the support allowance for Persons with Disabilities was increased by \$70 or 15%. In 2007, there was a \$50 across-the-board increase to shelter allowances for all client groups, the first such increase since 1992. Also in 2007, support rates for employable clients were increased by 27%.
- The economic downturn of 2008-09 caused the caseload to rise and has put significant pressure on the ministry's budget, leaving no room to increase rates at this time.
- Increasing Disability Assistance rates to match the percentage increase in the minimum wage would cost the ministry over \$250 million per year.
- Increasing the minimum wage will act as an incentive for employable clients to leave assistance for employment. Increasing rates would negate much of this incentive effect, and actually keep many clients on assistance longer and keeping them in low income.
- Research shows that work is better than welfare, leading to higher incomes, lower poverty rates, better health outcomes, and better child outcomes. Raising the minimum wage supports clients to move off assistance to employment. Raising assistance rates will counter this and increase dependency.

STATISTICS / CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL:**Minimum Wage by Province**

	Current Rate	Ranking
British Columbia	\$10.25	2
Alberta	\$9.75	10
Saskatchewan	\$10.00	6
Manitoba	\$10.25	2
Ontario	\$10.25	2
Quebec	\$10.15	5
New Brunswick	\$10.00	6
Nova Scotia	\$10.30	1
Prince Edward Island	\$10.00	6
Newfoundland and Labrador	\$10.00	6

Source: Wikipedia, List of Minimum Wages in Canada. All citations to provincial websites verified.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_minimum_wages_in_Canada;

Monthly Total Income Assistance Rates by Province (as of June 2013)
(including federal and provincial child benefits)

	Employable				Temporarily Excused	Indefinitely Excused/PPMB	Disabled
	Single	Couple	1 parent & 1 child (age 4)*	2 parents & 2 children (age 10 & 13)	Single	Single	Single
British Columbia	610	877	1,336	1,661	610	658	906
Alberta	627	956	1,322	1,836	713	809	1,588
Saskatchewan	670	1,207	1,462	1,955	822	822	1,217
Manitoba	505	782	1,203	1,747	505	721	721
Ontario	606	1,043	1,430	1,907	606	606	1,075
Quebec	604	936	1,458	1,810	733	918	918
New Brunswick	537	827	1,313	1,611	537	537	710
PEI	575	1,047	1,446	2,112	762	762	762
Nova Scotia	538	1,046	1,259	1,793	538	773	773
Newfoundland	708	1,142	1,511	1,766	708	708	708

*The rates for families with children include federal and provincial child benefits in order to ensure consistency across jurisdictions and because some child benefits are a component of the income assistance support rate in many provinces (such as B.C.).

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
RESEARCH BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Ministry Research on Client Outcomes

KEY MESSAGES:

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MINISTRY RESEARCH ON CLIENT OUTCOMES

BACKGROUND:

- In 2002, the application process was changed from a one-stage process to a two-stage process. Applicants not exempted from the 3-week work search are asked to come back in three weeks with proof of completed satisfactory work search.
- 58% of applicants who were not exempted from the 3-week work search did not return for the second stage of the application process.

- The ministry conducted a study using tax records in Statistic Canada's Longitudinal Administrative Databank to examine the incomes of applicants that do not complete the income assistance application process.
- The study finds that:
 - After-tax income of non-returning applicants is higher than what they would have received on full-time, full-year income assistance.
 - In the year of application, median after-tax income was at least \$7,200 higher compared to full-year income assistance. By the end of two years, non-returning applicants had median after-tax income over \$12,000 higher compared to full-time assistance.
 - Income increases over the 2-year follow up period, indicating non-returning applicants are financially better off in the years following their uncompleted application.
 - Non-returning applicants post-2002 experienced equal or larger proportional increases in income compared to those who applied pre-2002.
 - 90% of non-returning applicants had employment income in the same year as their income assistance application.
 - As with total income, employment income increases over the two-year follow-up period.
 - Income in the year of application was smaller for more recent non-returning applicants but the latter cohorts exhibited equal or larger percentage increases in income than the earlier cohorts.
- Two previous studies have been completed and released publicly:
 - In 2007, a study using the Longitudinal Administrative Databank examined what happened to clients after they left income assistance. The study found:
 - Since 2002, 88% of Expected-to-Work clients who left income assistance were working, attending education or had other income.
 - Over one-quarter of Persons with Disabilities clients were working.
 - In a follow-up study in 2009, the ministry looked at the income level of former B.C. Employment and Assistance clients and found:
 - Clients are better off financially after leaving assistance.
 - Clients continue to improve their financial situation in the years after leaving assistance.
 - Median total family income of clients, defined as after-tax after-transfer income including employment income, is higher after clients leave income assistance and increases over time.
 - Clients who left income assistance have income significantly higher, in some cases two to three times higher, than they would have receiving income assistance for the entire year.
 - Most of the increase is attributable to increases in employment income.

- Persons with Disabilities clients who leave for employment experience

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
RESEARCH BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Poverty Reduction Strategy

KEY MESSAGES:

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POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY

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BACKGROUND:

- In 2011, the number of persons in B.C. earning income below the after-tax Low Income Cut-Offs decreased by 34,000 (6.7 per cent) to 476,000 from 510,000 in 2010 reducing the incidence of low income to 10.7 per cent, down from 11.5 per cent in 2010.
- Six provinces experienced a decline in the percentage of the population living below the Low Income Cut-Offs in 2011, led by 1.1 percentage point declines in both Newfoundland and Saskatchewan.
- The number of children living below the Low Income Cut-Offs rose by 6,000 (6.9 percent), from 87,000 to 93,000.
- While the proportion of B.C. children living in low-income families in 2011 was 11.3 per cent—up from 10.5 per cent in 2010—this was lower than any rate prior to 2008 since 1981 and a 41 per cent reduction since 2003.
- The percentage of children living in female single parent families with incomes below the Low Income Cut-Offs rose from 16.4 to 24.6 per cent.
- The percentage of males living below the Low Income Cut-Offs increased 0.1 percentage points from 10.6 percent in 2010 to 10.7 per cent in 2011.
- In contrast, the percentage of females living below the Low Income Cut-Offs declined from 12.4 percent in 2010 to 10.7 percent in 2011.
- The percentage of seniors living below the Low Income Cut-Offs fell to 6.5 percent from 7.1 percent, the lowest incidence since 2007.
- Among provinces, BC continued to have the highest rate of total people living below the Low Income Cut-Offs and, after dropping to the second highest rate of children living below the Low Income Cut-Offs in 2010, the increase in the incidence of low income among children has resulted in BC again having the highest rate of children living below the Low Income Cut-Offs in 2011 (tied with Manitoba).

- Having a poverty strategy does not mean that a province is more effective at reducing poverty.
- For instance, Quebec introduced a poverty strategy in 2003 but since then their total rate of low income has declined by 2.8 percentage points, compared to 4.7 percentage points for BC over the same period. Child low income rates have declined by 3.6 percentage points in Quebec compared to 7.9 in BC.

STATISTICS:

Incidence of Low Income by Province (2010 and 2011)

	After-tax Low Income Cut-Offs				Market Basket Measure			
	All Persons		Children's Low Income Rate		All Persons		Children's Low Income Rate	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
British Columbia	11.5	10.7	10.5	11.3	15.7	16.5	18.2	21.1
Alberta	6.8	7.0	6.1	6.8	9.2	9.4	10.1	10.4
Saskatchewan	6.4	5.3	7.9	6.2	10.1	9.8	11.9	12.5
Manitoba	9.2	8.9	11.1	11.3	10.7	11.5	15.4	17.4
Ontario	8.8	9.0	8.0	8.9	12.0	12.0	13.4	13.2
Quebec	10.0	9.5	8.2	7.3	10.1	10.7	8.8	10.7
New Brunswick	5.5	5.8	3.0	6.7	13.3	12.0	15.1	14.2
Nova Scotia	7.7	7.0	8.9	8.0	14.5	14.3	17.1	20.7
Prince Edward Island	3.9	4.4	2.3	4.6	13.7	13.0	22.5	17.2
Newfoundland & Labrador	6.4	5.3	9.0	6.0	13.0	11.8	16.9	15.9

CROSS JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

Comparison to Jurisdictions with Poverty Strategies

- Quebec (2003)
- Newfoundland and Labrador (2006)
- Nova Scotia (2009)
- Ontario (2009)
- Manitoba (2009)
- New Brunswick (2010)
- Prince Edward Island (2012)
- Alberta (announced intention in 2012)

APPENDIX: Canadian Provincial Poverty Reduction Strategies

	Established	Goals	Actions	Results
Alberta	Two weeks prior to Alberta's provincial election, Progressive Conservative Leader Alison Redford announced a Plan for Poverty Reduction.	No details yet available.	No details yet available.	Too early - no results to date.
Manitoba	Strategy announced 2009. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Act came into force in June 2011.	..."continuously reduce poverty and increase social inclusion." Merges 3 goals: stimulate the economy; support the workforce; and • tackle poverty.	Strengthen efforts on poverty reduction every year (from base of \$500M per year). Over \$212M in 2009. Priorities: housing, education, jobs, income support, family benefits, accessible/co-ordinated services.	Too early - no results to date. Will track key indicators in each of the priority areas. Main low income measure is Market Basket Measure.
Ontario	Strategy released 2008. Legislation 2009. First substantive actions, 2009.	Commits to reducing the number of children living in poverty by 25 per cent over 5 years (i.e., by 2014).	Major initiatives include increasing child benefits, increasing social and affordable housing, expanding after-school and pre-school programs, IA rate increase and a review of the IA system.	Too early - no results to date. The target is being set on Statistics Canada's LICO. Developed a new Standard of Living Indicator (Deprivation Index), and is developing a new Ontario Housing Measure.

	Established	Goals	Actions	Results
Quebec	Legislation 2002 enacted 2003. First substantive actions, 2005.	National Strategy to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion is intended to transform Québec, by 2013, into one of the industrialized societies with the least number of persons living in poverty.	First action plan covered 2004 – 2009 and budgeted \$2.5 billion. Extended by one year and budget increased to \$4.5 billion. Second plan implemented in 2010. Actions not yet published.	Unclear – first major actions introduced in 2005. Under MBM and LICO, Quebec's low income rate from 2005 to 2007 had the second smallest decline among provinces.
New Brunswick	5 year strategy released 2009. Economic and Social Inclusion Act introduced April 2010. Establishes the New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation.	By 2015, New Brunswick to have reduced income poverty by 25% and deep income poverty by 50% and to have made significant progress in achieving sustained economic and social inclusion.	A strong focus on process using a collaborative model. Priority areas include: overhaul social assistance system, introduction of a prescription drug plan, health benefits, minimum wage, early learning and child care and education.	Too early - no results to date.
Nova Scotia	Poverty Reduction Working Group Act 2007. Strategy released 2009. First substantive actions, 2009.	To break the cycle of poverty by creating opportunities for all to participate in the prosperity of the province and enjoy a better standard of living. Target date, 2020.	Focus is training low-skilled workers, increasing affordable housing and improving benefits for low income families.	Too early - no results to date. A small number of indicators have been adopted. Main low income measure is the LICO.

	Established	Goals	Actions	Results
Prince Edward Island	Social Action Plan to Reduce Poverty was released in May 2012.	Strengthening educational and economic opportunities and participation in the labour force and to protect and enhance the standard of living and quality of life for those unable to participate in the labour force.	Initiatives are in areas of housing, social assistance, persons with disabilities, early learning, literacy, support adult learning, training, work, minimum wage, tax policies, prescription drugs, mental health and addictions services and family supports.	Too early - no results to date.
Newfoundland and Labrador	Adopted poverty strategy in 2006. First substantive actions, 2006.	Poverty Reduction Strategy pledged in 2004 to transform Newfoundland and Labrador "from a province with the most poverty to a province with the least poverty over the next decade." (i.e. 2014).	Initiatives included low income tax reductions; enhancing supply and demand for labour; social and financial supports; affordable housing; access to health programs; early learning and child care programs; improving primary and secondary school system; greater access to post-secondary education, literacy, and adult basic education.	First progress report issued Dec 2009. Developed the Newfoundland and Labrador Market Basket Measure.

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
LEGISLATION, LITIGATION AND APPEALS
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Reconsiderations and Appeals

KEY MESSAGES:

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s.13

BACKGROUND:

- The BCEA legislation sets out a two-stage “appeal process”: reconsideration and appeal.
 1. Reconsideration: A client who is dissatisfied with an eligibility decision can request a reconsideration of the decision. The reconsideration is performed by a Reconsideration Officer, a ministry employee who was not involved in the original eligibility decision. The ministry conducts 4,000-5,000 reconsiderations per year. In 2012/13, 44% of reconsideration decisions approved the client’s request.
 2. Appeal: A client dissatisfied with a reconsideration decision can request a review by the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal (the Tribunal), an independent quasi-judicial body. The Tribunal hears approximately 900 appeals per year. In 2012/13, 13% of appeal decisions approved the client’s request.

Two step process:

- **Reconsideration - An internal ministry review of the original eligibility decision.**
 - Completed by Reconsideration Officers in the Legislation, Litigation and Appeals Branch.
 - New evidence can be submitted by the client.
 - The reconsideration decision is a new and “final” ministry decision.
- **Appeal - Review of the reconsideration decision by the Tribunal.**
 - Based on the information before the Minister when the reconsideration decision was made. No new evidence can be submitted.
 - The Tribunal confirms or rescinds the reconsideration decision.
 - Tribunal decisions are subject to judicial review.

RECONSIDERATIONS AND APPEALS

Reconsideration and Appeal Statistics

RECONSIDERATIONS			
Year	Total	Approved	Denied
2003	3,785	25%	75%
2004	4,314	28%	72%
2005	4,738	33%	67%
2006	3,117	31%	69%
2007	3,117	35%	65%
2008	2,843	37%	63%
2009	4,532	37%	63%
2010	5,195	44%	56%
2011	4,611	46%	54%
2012	4,151	46%	54%

APPEALS			
Year	# of Appeal decisions	Reconsideration decisions confirmed	Reconsideration decisions rescinded
2003	957	70.0%	30.0%
2004	1,095	69.4%	30.6%
2005	1,466	60.3%	39.7%
2006	963	61.7%	38.3%
2007	835	67.5%	32.5%
2008	544	74.1%	25.9%
2009	934	66.8%	33.2%
2010	1,031	69.8%	30.2%
2011	875	80.2%	19.8%
2012	751	85.6%	14.4%

Contact:
Cell phone:
Date:

Molly Harrington, Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy and Research Division
s.17
June 18, 2013

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
LEGISLATION, LITIGATION AND APPEALS BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Reconsideration and Appeals – Persons with Disability
approval rates over time

KEY MESSAGES:

s.13

BACKGROUND:

- Over the past four years, there has been an increase in applications for Persons with Disabilities designation due to the economic downturn. The increase in applications has resulted in an increase in the number of Persons with Disabilities adjudication decisions made by the Health Assistance Branch.
- If an individual is not satisfied with the Persons with Disabilities adjudication decision, they may submit a request for reconsideration within 20 business days from the date they received notice of the decision.
- If an individual is not satisfied with the results of the reconsideration, they may request an appeal by submitting a Notice of Appeal form to the Employment and

RECONSIDERATION AND APPEAL – PWD APPROVAL RATES OVER TIME

Assistance Appeal Tribunal within 7 business days of the receipt of the reconsideration decision.

- The Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal is an independent, quasi-judicial body established to determine appeals of Ministry decisions made under the *Employment and Assistance Act* and the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*.

STATISTICS:

PWD Adjudication: Reconsideration and Appeal Outcomes

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Percentage of PWD approvals at Adjudication	69%	53%	63%	67%	70%
Percentage of PWD approvals at Reconsideration	61%	67%	72%	71%	70%
Percentage of PWD denials approved at Appeal	31%	46%	39%	28%	9%

Reconsideration statistics from the ministry's Reconsideration and Appeal Tracking System
Appeal statistics from the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal CITAR System

PWD Decisions 2008-09 to 2012-13				
PWD Original Decisions	Approved	Denied	Total	% Approved
2008-2009	7,735	3,417	11,152	69%
2009-2010	6,695	5,975	12,670	53%
2010-2011	6,986	4,187	11,173	63%
2011-2012	8,300	4,141	12,441	67%
2012-2013	6,962	2,914	9,876	70%

PWD Reconsideration Decisions	Approved	Denied	Total	% Approved
2008-2009	616	386	1,002	61%
2009-2010	1,356	678	2,034	67%
2010-2011	1,538	587	2,125	72%
2011-2012	1,210	494	1,704	71%
2012-2013	1,063	451	1,514	70%

PWD Appeal Decisions	Approved	Denied	Total	% Approved
2008-2009	46	104	150	31%
2009-2010	171	201	372	46%
2010-2011	108	171	279	39%
2011-2012	70	183	253	28%
2012-2013	14	148	162	9%

Overall PWD Decisions	Total Applications	Total Approved	Total	% Approved
2008-2009	11,152	8,397	19,549	75%
2009-2010	12,670	8,222	20,892	65%
2010-2011	11,173	8,632	19,805	77%
2011-2012	12,441	9,580	22,021	77%
2012-2013	9,876	8,039	17,915	81%

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Alcohol and Drug Treatment

KEY MESSAGES:

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ALCOHOL AND DRUG TREATMENT

BACKGROUND:

- The ministry may pay per diems directly to facilities licensed or registered under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*.
- Facilities that are not licensed or registered under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* or approved by the Minister are considered the client's residence of choice, and shelter rates are made available to eligible clients based on the ministry's rate tables.
- Clients can either self-discharge or be discharged by the facility. The ministry does not decide whether or not a client continues treatment in a facility.
- If a client is undergoing treatment in a facility to which the ministry is paying per diems, the ministry will also provide the client with a monthly comforts allowance of \$95 to clients to assist with their personal needs while in treatment.

BUDGET:

Daily User Fees for Alcohol and Drug Treatment

2011/12		2012/13		2013/14
Budget	Expenditures	Budget	Expenditures	Budget
\$12.6M	\$12.8M	\$12.6M	\$12.2M	\$12.6M

Budget and Expenditures figures include:

- Per diem payments to residential alcohol and drug facilities and approved supportive and recovery homes
- Alcohol and drug supplement, and
- Transportation to alcohol and drug facilities

FACILITY TYPES:

Alcohol and Drug Residential Treatment Facilities (Licensed)

- The ministry will pay a \$40 per diem to residential alcohol and drug treatment facilities that are licensed by Ministry of Health under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* in which a ministry client resides.
- In order to obtain licensing as an alcohol and drug facility under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*, facilities must satisfy clearly defined operational regulations and maintain a high standard of care for residents.

Supportive Recovery Homes

- Effective October 2008, the ministry began paying a per diem of \$30.90 to certain Supportive Recovery Homes (SRHs) that offered a high level of service to clients, subject to approval by the Minister. Providing a rate of \$30.90 to unlicensed facilities allowed the ministry to support these homes and provide housing for clients who might otherwise be without shelter.

- The ministry approving SRHs was an interim measure while Ministry of Health developed the required policy and procedures to support the registration of SRHs as Assisted Living Residences under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*.
- The Ministry of Health began registering SRHs in November 2012.
- The ministry pays \$30.90 per day for clients who reside in SRHs registered with the Ministry of Health.

Additional Assistance for Clients Undergoing Alcohol and Drug Treatment

Maintaining a Stable Shelter

- To help maintain a stable place of residence while receiving treatment in a licensed residential facility a client may be eligible for the shelter allowance for their usual place of residence for up to three months.

Supplement for Non-Residential Alcohol and Drug Treatment (Counselling)

- The ministry may provide a supplement for non-residential alcohol or drug treatment, counseling or related services to eligible clients and their dependent children, to a maximum of \$500 per 12 consecutive calendar months.

Transportation to Drug and Alcohol Facilities

- The ministry will provide a supplement to meet the costs for transportation to an approved residential alcohol and drug treatment facility in B.C. The supplement is provided to recipients of income assistance and disability assistance when no other funds are available.
- This supplement covers the least expensive appropriate mode of transportation to and from the facility. Under normal circumstances, vehicle transportation costs are limited to \$0.20 per kilometre. In exceptional cases, where circumstances warrant a meal, an additional \$4.00 can be provided.

CROSS JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

- Provision of funding for those in addictions treatment varies; Alberta Works provides a \$40 per diem similar to British Columbia. Saskatchewan provides funding for addictions treatment through the Ministry of Health and a comforts allowance. Ontario provides a comforts allowance if room and board is provided by the facility and provides room and board if not provided by the facility.

Alberta

- An applicant or a recipient of income assistance who requires alcohol or drug treatment in an eligible facility may be funded for a per diem of \$40 under the Alberta Works Program. Shelter maintenance and transportation costs are also covered.

Saskatchewan

- Saskatchewan Health offers a full range of recovery services for individuals and their families. These services are administered and delivered by district health boards and are accessible to all Saskatchewan residents. The Ministry of Social Services does not provide per diems or any other financial support to addiction treatment centres on behalf of income assistance clients.
- A personal living allowance of \$115 per month is provided to adults in residential care facilities (which includes alcohol and drug treatment centres)
- Shelter and utility allowances may be provided during the period of admission if required to maintain permanent accommodation.

Ontario

- Applicants or recipients who reside in a facility for the purpose of participating in an addiction treatment program may receive:
 - an amount for basic needs and shelter (to maintain an existing community residence) where room and board without charge are provided by the facility; or
 - the Ontario Works board and lodging rate where room and board are charged by the facility.
- In situations where a member of the benefit unit enters a residential program for the treatment of substance abuse (that provides room and board without charge), retains community accommodation, and has financial commitments related to that accommodation, the full amount of income assistance is issued for the first three full calendar months of residence in the facility.
- In situations where a member of the benefit unit enters a residential program for the treatment of substance abuse and is *not* retaining community accommodation, the amount of assistance issued is set at or reduced to \$134 per month, unless other non-exempt income exceeds this amount.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #147** – Supportive Recovery Homes Per Diems

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Annualized Earnings Exemptions

KEY MESSAGES:

ANNUALIZED EARNINGS EXEMPTIONS

s.13

BACKGROUND:

- The annualized exemption allows individuals on disability assistance to use their earnings exemptions on an annual instead of monthly basis, better helping clients whose ability to earn fluctuates during the year due to medical conditions.
- The annual earnings exemption supports employment, which can be a particular challenge for persons with disabilities – especially those with episodic conditions who are more likely to work only for part of the year.
- The annual exemption allows individuals who can earn income in only one or two months the flexibility to earn the same amount annually as those who are able to earn steadily over the entire year.
- Annualized earnings exemptions, which will cover earnings from January 1 to December 31, are:
 - \$9,600 for families with one individual who has the Persons with Disabilities (PWD) designation,
 - \$19,200 for families where both adults have the PWD designation, and
 - \$12,000 for families with two adults only one of which has the PWD designation.
- These amounts are equivalent to 12 times the monthly exemption limit for the calendar year.
- The AEE is being phased in and the first phase focused on disability assistance clients whose past earnings pattern showed they were most likely to benefit from annualized earnings exemptions. Clients chosen for the first phase of implementation for annualized earnings exemptions must have:
 - had the PWD designation for at least the past 12 months;
 - received disability assistance in at least the past two consecutive months; and
 - in at least one of the past 12 months, had earnings over \$500 for families with one adult with a PWD designation and \$750 for families where both adults have PWD designations.
- Invitations for participation in AEE for 2013 were sent to approximately 5,300 clients in early December, 2012. Only those clients who meet the criteria and responded by the January 14, 2013 deadline were able to participate in 2013. About 1600 families chose this new exemption option for 2013.
- This phased approach allows the ministry to monitor the program and make necessary adjustments before opening the program up to all British Columbians on disability assistance in January 2014.
- Choosing the AEE, rather than monthly earnings exemption for 2013 was optional.
- If an individual chose not to participate or did not return their form, their earnings exemptions continued to be applied monthly.
- AEE started January 1st and the 2013 exemption will be based on money earned from January to December 2013. Due to the income reporting process, this timeframe impacts benefit months from March 2013 to February 2014.

- If there is a change in family circumstances during the exemption year, the amount of the family unit's AEE limit will be adjusted based on the circumstances of that change.
- Examples of changes in family circumstances that will impact the amount of the AEE include:
 - leaving assistance and returning in during the same exemption year
 - marriage or the addition of a common-law spouse
 - separation from a spouse
- As with the monthly earnings exemption, if a client reaches their AEE limit, earnings will be deducted dollar for dollar from their disability assistance. If these earnings are over the monthly assistance rate, they will not receive a disability assistance cheque but would be eligible for Medical Services Only (MSO) coverage.

STATISTICS:

Registration Data for Annualized Earnings Exemption

All cases		
Region	1	325
Region	2	406
Region	3	428
Region	4	346
Region	5	85
Total		1589

Data Source: SSISD - May 29, 2013

INTERJURISDICTIONAL COMPARISONS:

- B.C. is one of the first jurisdictions to offer the option of annual earnings exemptions.
- The Yukon is the only other Canadian jurisdiction that provides an annual income exemption (\$3900 per year for clients with disabilities).

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #133** – Earnings Exemptions

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Benefits for Families with Children

KEY MESSAGES:

BENEFITS FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

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BACKGROUND:

Family Bonus

- The BC Basic Family Bonus is part of the monthly child benefit payment administered by the Canada Revenue Agency, which includes the federal National Child Benefit Supplement, base Canada Child Tax Benefit, the Child Disability Benefit and the BC Earned Income Benefit.
- The combined BC Basic Family Bonus and National Child Benefit Supplement constitutes the child support allowance under BC Income Assistance and BC Disability Assistance legislation.
- In setting the BC Basic Family Bonus amounts, the Province treats the federal National Child Benefit Supplement as a portion of an integrated child benefit. As a result, with federal National Child Benefit Supplement increases over the past years, the portion of the payment funded by BC (the BC Basic Family Bonus) has substantially decreased.
- The BC Basic Family Bonus has been eliminated for most families. Only a small number of larger families continue to receive a small amount.

National Child Benefit (NCB)

- The National Child Benefit is a federal/provincial/territorial initiative to reduce child poverty, encourage low-income parents to work and reduce program overlap and duplication.
- Under the National Child Benefit framework, B.C. has offset much of the National Child Benefit Supplement by reducing the BC Basic Family Bonus portion of the combined child payment. The resulting savings are reinvested in provincial programs benefiting children in low-income families.
- Estimated total B.C. reinvestment expenditure on National Child Benefit initiatives in 2008/2009 was \$373.2 M (the latest data available). This includes:
 - the BC Earned Income Benefit;
 - increases in the combined BC Basic Family Bonus/National Child Benefit Supplement;

- child care;
- Healthy Kids dental and optical benefits;
- social housing; and,
- early childhood, children at risk and youth services.
- Additional National Child Benefit reinvestments are made in Aboriginal communities within the province – for example, \$6.6 M was estimated for First Nations' reinvestments in B.C. for 2008/2009 (the latest data available).
- With the elimination of the BC Basic Family Bonus for almost all low-income families, National Child Benefit Supplement increases are now fully passed through to low-income families.
- The National Child Benefit Progress Report: 2008 (the latest, released in May 2013) reports that the National Child Benefit has directly increased the income of over 1.5 million Canadian families, with 2.7 million children, and significantly reduced the poverty rate of Canadian families.

Canada Child Tax Benefit

- The federal government pays monthly the Basic Child Tax Benefit (currently \$119.41 per child, plus \$8.33 for each third and additional child) to low and middle-income families, plus an additional National Child Benefit Supplement (\$185.08 for the first child, \$163.66 for the second child and \$155.77 for each additional child) for low-income families. Combined this currently provides a basic child benefit of up to \$304.49 per month per child for low-income families, including those on income assistance. The amounts are indexed to increases in inflation each July.

Universal Child Care Benefit

- The Universal Child Care Benefit is a direct payment to all Canadian families by the federal government of \$1,200 annually (\$100 per month) for each child under age six regardless of their child care needs.
- Canada Revenue Agency delivers the payment as a separate payment from the monthly Canada Child Tax Benefit. Eligibility is automatically determined with the application for the Canada Child Tax Benefit. The allowance is taxable income.

B.C. Earned Income Benefit

- For low-income working families with children, the BC Earned Income Benefit provides a monthly payment based on the amount of earnings (to a maximum). It is paid together with the monthly child benefits administered by Canada Revenue Agency.

- The benefit provides an earnings supplement for families with working income above \$3,750 per year. The maximum benefit is available for families with working income over \$10,000 per year and whose net income is less than \$22,680.
- The BC Earned Income Benefit is being gradually phased out, together with the BC Basic Family Bonus. It is being replaced by the federal Working Income Tax Benefit, which pays a larger earnings supplement to all low-income families, including singles and couples without children.

Healthy Kids

- B.C. children aged 18 and under whose families receive Medical Services Plan Premium Assistance are eligible to receive basic dental and optical services through BC Healthy Kids. Premium Assistance levels are tied to family annual income. The income thresholds were increased by \$2,000 effective January 2010, extending the benefit to more low-income families. For example, a family of three is now eligible with an annual income of up to \$36,000 (after adjustments) (\$30,000 plus \$3,000 for each child/spouse).
- Healthy Kids helps ensure children have access to basic dental and optical care and assists families in remaining independent of income assistance. Healthy Kids includes a maximum of \$118 coverage towards optical frames and lenses once a year. Effective April 1, 2010, dental coverage was enhanced. The annual limit on basic dental services is being replaced by a \$1,400 two-year limit to allow complex dental needs to be addressed more effectively, and children will be eligible for an additional \$1,000 (up from \$500) in treatment over and above their basic dental limit if the treatment requires general anaesthesia.

Treatment of Child Benefits for Income Assistance Eligibility

- The Canada Child Tax Benefit, National Child Benefit Supplement, Child Disability Benefit, Universal Child Care Benefit, BC Basic Family Bonus and B.C. Earned Income Benefit are not deducted in the calculation of Income Assistance and Disability Assistance.
- In October 2012, the ministry also exempted child tax benefits for families receiving hardship assistance.
- The ministry tops up families who do not receive, or receive less than, the maximum amount of combined BC Basic Family Bonus and National Child Benefit Supplement per child each month to the equivalent of the NCBS amounts - as of July 2013, \$185.08 for the first child, \$163.66 for the second child and \$155.77 for each additional child.
- Effective October 2012, retroactive lump sum BC Basic Family Bonus /National Child Benefit Supplement payments are exempt as income minus any funds provided via

the Temporary Family Bonus Top-up Supplement. The maximum reduction will be the lesser of:

- o the amount of the retroactive payment, and
- o the amount advanced via the temporary Family Bonus Top-up Supplement

The maximum reduction will not exceed one month's assistance for the family unit.

STATISTICS:

Total Monthly Child Benefits Received by Low-income Families

(Effective July 2013)

Program	Single Parent with 4 year old	Single Parent with 2 year old and 4 year old
Base Child Tax Benefit	\$119.41	\$238.82
NCB Supplement	\$185.08	\$348.74
Universal Child Care Benefit	\$100.00	\$200.00
GST Credit (child portion)	\$33.67	\$45.25
Climate Action Credit (child portion)	\$9.63	\$12.50
Total Child Benefits	\$447.79	\$845.31

- Base Child Tax Benefit, NCB Supplement and GST Credit increase each July due to inflation indexation.
- Additional amounts may also be paid for families with children under the federal Working Income Tax Benefit, Child Disability Benefit, provincial BC Earned Income Benefit and Rental Assistance Plan.

INTERJURISDICTIONAL COMPARISONS:

- Ontario, Manitoba, Quebec, Saskatchewan, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Nova Scotia have all joined B.C. in replacing basic child support amounts on income assistance with the National Child Benefit Supplement plus provincial child benefits.
- All provinces are now fully passing through the National Child Benefit Supplement increases to all low-income families each July, with the exception of Prince Edward Island, which passes through most of the increases through its Child Health Benefit for children in families on income assistance.
- Currently, only B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island do not have a provincial child benefit paid in addition to the federal child benefits for low-income families.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
PROVINCIAL SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Bus Pass Program

KEY MESSAGES:

BUS PASS PROGRAM

s.13

BACKGROUND:

- The following individuals may be eligible for the Bus Pass Program:
 - Individuals receiving federal Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement;
 - Individuals aged 60 and over who are receiving the federal Spouse's Allowance to Old Age Security;

- Immigrants aged 65 and older who meet all of the eligibility requirements for the federal Guaranteed Income Supplement except the 10 year residency, requirement;
- Individuals aged 60 or older receiving income assistance;
- Individuals in receipt of disability assistance under the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*;
- Individuals with the Persons with Disabilities designation or those aged 60 and over who are in special care facilities where the ministry is paying either the facility user charge or a comforts allowance; and
- Individuals with the Persons with Disabilities designation who live on reserve and receive assistance from the agency that issues assistance on the reserve.

STATISTICS:

Program Uptake

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Monthly Average number of Low Income Seniors	40,811	42,897	44,474	50,437	53,711
Monthly Average number of Persons with Disabilities	27,750	29,134	29,609	30,646	32,811
Monthly Average number of Immigrants	3,570	3,771	3,825	3,863	3,909
TOTAL	72,131	75,802	77,908	84,946	86,522

BUDGET:

2011/12		2012/13*		2013/14 Budget
Budget	Expenditures	Budget	Expenditures	
\$43.2M	\$41.9M	43.2M	44.9	43.2M

Cross Reference:

- **Note #135:** General Supplements

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Camp Fees

KEY MESSAGES:

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CAMP FEES

BACKGROUND:

Eligibility

- The camp fees supplement is limited to the lesser of the actual cost of the camp fee or \$200 maximum. Only one camp fee supplement for each eligible child or adult in the family unit may be provided within a fiscal year.
- The amount of camp fees supplements issued per year is subject to budgets. Supplements are issued in the following order of priority:
 1. Children with mental or physical disabilities
 2. Dependent children of long-term assistance recipients
 3. Adults with developmental disabilities who are living in a residential care facility

2009

- In 2009, the policy on camp fees was amended to ensure the supplement is provided for children as the priority. A \$200 maximum for the supplement and guidelines on how to identify a "recognized camp" were also introduced.

Types of Camps

- The following principles must be applied by ministry field staff when determining whether a camp is “recognised” or not:
 - The camp must be located in British Columbia;
 - Camps can be day or overnight and may be offered by community centres, neighbourhood houses or other;
 - Themed camps are acceptable and may relate to faith-based, music, arts, sports or other similar camps; and,
 - Camping experiences where parents accompany children will **not** qualify for a camp supplement.

BUDGET:

Camp Fees	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14 Budget
	Budget	Expenditures	Budget	Expenditures	
	\$225,000	\$227,181	\$225,000	\$202,710	

*Q3 Forecast

STATISTICS:

2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		2012/2013	
Issues	Cases	Issues	Cases	Issues	Cases	Issues	Cases
963	943	865	842	941	914	866	845

Issues are the number of individuals provided funding and cases are the number of family units

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

Ontario

- No comparable supplement
- Policy notes that a child who is living away from the home while attending a summer camp is still included in the benefit unit as a dependent child.

Saskatchewan

- No comparable supplement.
- Policy notes that there is no change in benefits when clients who receive level of care allowances attend summer camp or are on vacation for a period up to 30 days. The actual cost or mileage rate may be provided for travel to Camp Easter Seal.

Prince Edward Island

- Have the ability to include the cost of camp fees into respite care.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Community Volunteer Supplement

KEY MESSAGES:

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COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER SUPPLEMENT

BACKGROUND:

- A community volunteer supplement may be provided to persons registered in the program who participate in a volunteer placement with a non-profit community agency in a designated volunteer position. Eligible persons are those who were either:
 - receiving a community volunteer supplement as of October 31, 2011; or
 - on the community volunteer supplement waitlist as of August 8, 2011 and submitted a completed application for the community volunteer supplement between that date and October 31, 2011.

- People receiving the Community Volunteer Supplement include:
 - Persons with Disabilities;
 - Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers;
 - Single parents with a child under three years of age; and
 - Dependent children over 15 years of age.

August 2011 Changes

- In August 2011, the ministry announced additional funding for Community Volunteer Supplement Program. People who were on the waitlist were given until October 31 to apply and be assessed for eligibility for the supplement. In July 2011, there were 7,935 people on the waitlist for the program.
- The high end of the estimated cost to clear the waitlist and fund existing CVS participants was \$15 million, but not as many people applied as was anticipated.
- The number of people who moved into the program increased the budget by \$2 million

BUDGET:

Community Volunteer Supplement	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14 Budget
	Budget	Expenditures	Budget	Expenditures	
	\$5.4M	\$6.9M	\$7.3M	\$7.1M	\$6.9M

STATISTICS:

Community Volunteer Caseload	2009/10 (actual)	2010/11 (actual)	2011/12 (actual)	2012/13 (actual)
Number of cases in receipt of CVS any time during fiscal year	6,467	5,027	6,988	6,279

CROSS JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

- Only Alberta, Manitoba, and Nova Scotia provide supports for volunteering.

Province	Supplement	Eligible Clients	Amount
Alberta	Actual cost of most economical means of transportation	Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped	Public transport costs OR \$0.30 per kilometer OR taxi fare
Manitoba	Monthly benefit	Persons with disabilities only.	\$50 (4 – 7 activities per month) OR \$100 (8+ activities)
Nova Scotia	Actual cost of most economical means of transportation	All clients	Actual transport cost (max. \$150 per month)

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Crisis Supplement

KEY MESSAGES:

CRISIS SUPPLEMENTS

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BACKGROUND:

- The following crisis supplements are available:
 - Food, up to \$20 per person per month;
 - Shelter, restricted to the actual cost, up to the maximum shelter allowance;
 - Clothing, up to \$100 for each family member in a 12 month period and \$400 for a family of four or more in a 12 month period;
 - Essential utilities, to re-establish or prevent disconnection of service;

- Emergency/disaster, when an identified local, regional or provincial emergency or disaster occurs; and,
- Other items or expenses including furniture, utilities, home repairs, household items, property tax, gas, transportation, and fuel for heating and cooking.
- The cumulative amount of crisis supplements provided in a 12 month period must not exceed twice the maximum monthly amount of support and shelter that is available to a family. For example, a family on income assistance consisting of two employable parents and two children is eligible for \$1,101.06 in income assistance. For this family, the maximum cost of crisis supplements that may be provided in a year is \$2,202.12.
- When a local emergency like an evacuation or loss of asset due to forest fires or flooding occurs, clients have access to the same services as other citizens through Emergency Services BC. The ministry can also designate crisis supplements paid as a result of these events so that they do not count towards the annual maximum.

BUDGET:

Crisis Supplements	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14 Budget
	Budget	Expenditures	Budget	Expenditures	
	\$13.0M	\$9.4M	\$9.5M	\$6.9M	

*Budget adjusted internally to reflect 12/13 actual costs

STATISTICS:

Supplement Type	2011/12		2012/13		
	Issued	Cases	Issued	Cases	Expenditures
Food	43,127	23,679	35,560	20,070	\$1,099,982
Shelter	5,678	5,260	4,396	4,128	\$1,599,755
Clothing	22,267	19,473	15,559	13,678	\$1,283,161
Utilities	3,953	3,640	3,365	3,120	\$1,016,346
Furniture	9,876	8,714	7,958	7,065	\$1,657,359
Home Repairs	320	273	267	229	\$140,261
Essential Utilities	563	542	82	77	\$44,377
Other (including emergency disaster)	2,831	2,512	1,342	1,230	\$97,243
All Crisis Supplements	88,615	42,132	68,529	34,218	\$6,938,484

- In 2012/13 fiscal the average crisis supplement issued was \$100. Over the same time period in 2011/12, the average crisis supplement issued was \$101.
- In 2012/13, an average of 2,744 cases received the maximum monthly food crisis supplement each month (maximum food crisis supplement calculated at \$20 per month, per person).
- Very few cases reached or exceeded the maximum cumulative dollar amount allowed for crisis supplements in a 12 month period (34 between April 2012 and March 2013).
- Most families are managing within the prescribed amounts for support. The percentage of recipient families who use crisis grants has decreased year-over-year since 2008.
- Factors that contribute to low crisis supplement use:
 - Earnings exemptions that allow eligible clients to supplement their assistance payments
 - The majority of clients on the caseload are Persons with Disabilities and receive a higher rate of assistance
 - More clients are having their benefits deposited directly into a bank account, which helps with budgeting
 - When necessary, the ministry administers a portion of a client's assistance by paying a client's rent and utilities directly.

CROSS JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

- The ministry's crisis supplement program is comparable to Manitoba and Alberta. In these provinces, clients can receive additional financial assistance (over and above support and shelter payments) in certain crisis situations. In Saskatchewan, additional funds are issued as an advance on next month's cheque only.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

**ISSUE: BC Employment and Assistance Program: Cross
Jurisdictional Comparison**

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

“Employment First”

- The BC Employment and Assistance Program is intended to temporarily assist employable people as they look for work while at the same time helping individuals who may be unable to fully participate in the workforce to reach their social and economic potential and to participate in the community as they are able.
- In 2002, the Province launched a comprehensive “Employment First” approach and introduced a broad range of measures to get employable people back to work and reduce their dependency on income assistance by:
 - introducing the three-week work search, two year independence and time limits;
 - eliminating the earnings exemption for expected to work clients; and

BCEA: CROSS JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON

- making income assistance conditional on employable clients meeting employment-related obligations.
- Today, an “Employment First” model is a key feature of modern welfare programs in Canada and internationally.
- B.C. is one of eight provinces that have mandatory employment plans for expected to work clients.
- B.C. is the only province with work search and two year independence requirements.

October 2012 Changes

- In October 2012, government made a number of balanced changes to income assistance policies. Many of these changes made B.C. more comparable to other provinces or made B.C.’s policies the best in Canada.
- Changes to support families included:
 - Increasing the school start-up supplement to \$100 for every child aged 5-11, and \$175 for every child 12 and over (raised B.C. to second in Canada);
 - Increasing asset limits for all clients and family types (raised B.C. to top three in each category across Canada); and
 - Increasing the maximum top up to the Family Bonus Supplement, matching future federal increases and exempting retroactive payments (made B.C. more consistent with other provinces).
- Changes to help get people back into the workforce included:
 - Instituting a \$200 monthly earnings exemption for all expected-to-work clients (made B.C. more consistent with other provinces);
 - Increasing earning exemptions for persons with disabilities to \$800 per month (put B.C. in the top three in Canada); and
 - Removing time limits and replacing with intensified work supports (made B.C. more consistent with other provinces).
- Changes to improve supplements for Persons with Disabilities included:
 - Increases to trust limits and increased flexibility for trust withdrawals (made B.C. first in Canada for allowable trust limits);
 - Providing the flexibility to calculate earnings on an annual basis, rather than monthly (implemented January 2013 – made B.C. the only province with this option for PWD clients).

Clients without employment obligations

- Some clients have restrictions which can limit their ability to work or look for work, either temporarily or for lengthy periods.

- These restrictions may be situational such as a single parent with a child under three years of age, or due to a disability, or multiple barriers to employment; or a temporary medical condition.
- Like other provinces, B.C. has exemptions to excuse clients in these situations from employment obligations.

Rates

- B.C.'s income assistance rates are comparable to other provincial programs; however most other provinces are making incremental rate increases as budgets allow. Ontario, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Quebec and Nova Scotia all announced incremental increases in their 2013 budgets.
- B.C.'s basic income assistance rate for single employable is fourth highest in Canada while the rate for a single person receiving disability assistance is fifth highest in Canada.
 - In September 2013, Ontario will increase their income and disability assistance rates by 1%.
 - The increase to income assistance rates in Ontario is expected to move B.C. to fifth for basic rates for a single employable individual.
- B.C.'s basic income assistance rates for couples, families with children and singles who are not expected to work are below the average of other provinces.

Eligibility Criteria

- Residency, citizenship, age and family status are some of the general criteria upon which Canadian income assistance programs assess basic eligibility and determine benefits.
- B.C. has implemented more rigorous "Employment First" criteria (work search, two-year financial independence).

Income/Assets

- All provinces provide income assistance and disability assistance based on income and asset testing and require clients to access all other sources of income before relying on income assistance (e.g. Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance).
- B.C.'s treatment of income and assets is generally consistent with other provinces.

Treatment of Canada Pension Plan

- The ministry "tops up" other income sources, such as Canada Pension Plan, to ensure that a client's total monthly income is equal to current assistance rates.

- When a client is receiving income from other support programs, any increase to that amount, even if it is a result of a cost of living adjustment, will reduce the income assistance amount dollar-for-dollar.
- This is consistent across Canada.
- Like Manitoba, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, B.C. requires clients to access early Canada Pension Plan benefits at age 60. Alberta also requires it if receiving it would make the client better off.

Treatment of Earned Income

- All provinces have an earning exemption for clients who are expected to work.
- Only B.C. and Quebec have earnings exemptions that consist solely of a flat rate (\$200 in both jurisdictions).
- Most other provinces have a combination of a flat rate exemption plus a percentage. This ranges from \$75 plus 10% in PEI to \$230 plus 25% in Alberta. Saskatchewan is \$50 plus 25% with a cap at \$200.
- Currently Ontario is the only province with an earnings exemption that is a percentage (50%). This will change to a flat rate plus a percentage in September 2013 (\$200 plus 50%). This impacts both income and disability clients.
- Taking into account the impacts of the flat rate and the percentage, B.C.'s overall earnings exemption for employable clients is tied for sixth in Canada with Saskatchewan and Quebec.
- All provinces also have earnings exemptions for PWD clients.
- B.C. and the Yukon Territory are the only jurisdictions that offer an annualized earnings exception to PWD clients (\$9,600 in B.C. and \$3,900 in Yukon).
- Only B.C. and Quebec have earnings exemptions for PWD that consist solely of a flat rate (\$100 in Quebec and \$800 in B.C.)
- Most other provinces have a combination of a flat rate exemption plus a percentage. This ranges from \$75 plus 10% in PEI to \$800 plus 50% in Alberta for AISH clients.
- Taking into account the impacts of the flat rate and the percentage, B.C.'s overall earnings exemption for PWD clients is 3rd, after ODSP and AISH. The top three are much higher than the exemptions in the rest of the country.

Treatment of Family Maintenance Payments

- The majority of provinces, including B.C., treat family maintenance payments (both child and spousal support) as income.
- The exceptions are Quebec and Alberta's AISH program, which have partial exemptions for child support only.

Assets

- All jurisdictions have restrictions on assets, but the limits and types of assets tested vary depending on client category and family type.
- All provinces exempt a client's primary residence.
- B.C., Alberta, Ontario and Quebec restrict the value of a primary motor vehicle to \$10,000 for clients expected to work, the rest have no limit.
 - Ontario will remove their vehicle asset limit in September 2013
- B.C. has no limit on the value of a vehicle for Persons with Disabilities. This is consistent across Canada.
- B.C.'s asset limits for single employable clients are third highest in Canada at \$2,000. (Behind Manitoba at \$4,000 and Newfoundland and Labrador at \$3,000. Ontario is expected to raise theirs to \$2,500 in September 2013, which will make B.C. fourth).
- B.C.'s asset limits for single PWD clients (\$5,000) are comparable to other provinces. Although Alberta has a \$100,000 limit, this includes trusts.
- Several other provinces also build in an additional asset amount for each dependent child on a file for both income and disability assistance clients.
- B.C.'s trust exemption limit of \$200,000 is the highest along with Manitoba.
- In addition, like all provinces in Canada, B.C. fully exempts Registered Disability Savings Plans as assets. B.C. is also one of eight provinces to fully exempt disbursements from Registered Disability Savings Plans.

Health Supplements

- B.C.'s health supplement regime is similar to that of other provinces in Canada.
- B.C. is consistent with other provinces in that income assistance recipients have access to a limited health supplements (e.g. MSP, Pharmacare, emergency dental). PWD clients have access to a larger range of health supplements. This is also consistent with other provinces.
- A key difference is that the bulk of health supplements in some other provinces, such as Alberta and Ontario, are provided through a health/community supports type program rather than their income/disability assistance type program. These provinces also utilize a cost shared model.

General Supplements and Bus Pass

- In general, B.C.'s supplements are comparable to those provided by other provinces (e.g. support for moving, confirmed job, school start-up)
- British Columbia is the only province that provides a province wide annual subsidized bus pass to disability clients and low-income seniors. The bus pass allows travel in all BC Transit zones.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #99** - PWD Comparison with AISH, ODSP, SAID
- **Note #93** - Ontario Social Assistance Review

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Dental Coverage

KEY MESSAGES:

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DENTAL COVERAGE

BACKGROUND:

- The intent of the ministry's dental program is to provide assistance with the cost of dental treatment.
- All ministry clients can receive emergency dental coverage. Basic dental services are covered for eligible clients and children of low-income British Columbians through the Healthy Kids program.
 - Eligible adults have access to \$1000 of basic dental services every two years
 - Eligible children have access to \$1400 of basic dental services every two years

- Orthodontic services are offered to dependent children of income and disability assistance clients and Persons with Disabilities clients, and are only considered in the most severe cases.
- The ministry also provides coverage for crown and bridgework for PPMB and PWD clients with dental conditions that cannot be corrected through the provision of basic dental services.
- Children and adults with the PWD designation may be eligible for an additional \$1000 in dental treatment over and above their basic dental limit, if dental treatment is required to be performed under general anaesthesia in hospital or an approved private facility.

Amendments to dental supplements: Effective April 1, 2010:

- Increased fees paid for dentures to improve service and access for ministry clients.
- Expanded access to dental services by allowing dental hygienists to bill the ministry's dental plan.
- Introduction of a \$1400 2-year limit (replacing the \$700 annual limit) for children which allows complex dental needs to be addressed more effectively resulting in better long term outcomes for children.
- Increased the limit for additional dental services to \$1000 (from \$500) when treatment is required to be performed under general anaesthetic.
- Changes to preventative services including limiting checkups and cleanings to once per year and reducing x-ray coverage.
- With the exception of the limitations in preventative services, the BC Dental Association (BCDA) has been supportive of these changes.
- These changes were difficult but were required to ensure these important programs for low-income British Columbians are sustainable and provide benefits to as many as possible.

Amendments to dental supplements: Effective October 1, 2012:

- Expanded access to dental coverage to dependent children of families receiving hardship assistance who now have access to \$1400/two years of basic dental treatment

Fees

- Dental supplements are paid at the rate set by the ministry. The ministry has regulated dental fee schedules which outline the eligible services and rates paid for treatment completed by a dentist, denturist or dental hygienist.
- Fees for dentures were last increased in 2010 and fees for other dental services were last increased in 2007. As a percentage of the corresponding provincial dental

association fee guide, B.C.'s dental fees (approximately 57%) are lower than most other provinces.

- The BCDA continues to ask the ministry to raise dental fees as they advise the rates are no longer covering dentists' fixed costs for some services.

Not for Profit Dental Clinics

- Not for Profit and community clinics play a crucial role in providing access to dental care for low income British Columbians. For some of the province's most vulnerable citizens, including those with mental health or addictions issues, they can be the only source of dental care. SDSI supports these clinics through fee-for-service billings for ministry clients.
- From 2006-2008, the ministry provided over \$1.2M in grants for dental equipment and capital costs to support low cost dental clinics in communities across the province.
- The BCDA has raised the issue that higher rates would help these clinics remain viable. While clinics who have not received ministry funding grants continue to open in other areas of B.C., most recently in Nanaimo, the BCDA has asked the ministry to re-establish grant funds to assist with equipment and lab fees for dentures.

Seniors Dental Program

- The BCDA supports the introduction of a government funded dental program for low-income seniors. Although the Ministry of Health is responsible for seniors, there may be an expectation that SDSI participate in the proposed program since the ministry currently provides dental coverage to approximately 15,000 seniors (former SDSI clients) through Medical Services Only dental coverage.
- The Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues estimates it would cost \$24M to extend basic dental care to all low income seniors. The BCDA has proposed an alternate dental plan that would provide dental coverage for seniors in long-term care facilities which they estimate would cost \$6M annually.
- In 1981, government instituted a universal program under the auspices of the Ministry of Health, the Dental Care Plan of British Columbia (DCP), which provided dental insurance for all British Columbians, including seniors, on a universal basis. At that time, fees were set at market value. When the universal DCP was suspended after 18 months due to escalating costs, the responsibility for dental care for income assistance was transferred to SDSI. No universal dental plan for seniors has been available in B.C. since that time.

Dental Coverage for People with Severe Developmental Disabilities

- Government has been lobbied in the past to provide a specific fully funded program for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) that would provide coverage beyond what is covered under the basic dental program. An initial analysis by SDSI and HLTH staff of services for PDD indicated two key service provision issues:

- Waitlists for procedures requiring general anaesthetic, and
- Dental rates and funding for the range and frequency of dental services that these clients require to address their needs.
- Surgical waitlists are under the jurisdiction of HLTH. SDSI remains committed to working with HLTH to provide services to adults with developmental disabilities.

Eligibility for Dental Services

Description of Recipient Category	Emergency Dental	Basic Dental	Dentures	Crown & Bridge	Orthodontic
Expected to Work Adult Family Members	Yes	No	Full dentures following extractions	No	No
Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers (PPMB) Adult Family Members	Yes	Yes Up to \$1,000 every two years	Both full and partial dentures	Only the client with PPMB status (spouses who are not PPMB are not covered)	No
Persons With Disabilities (PWD) Adult family Members	Yes	Yes Up to \$1,000 every two years	Both full and partial dentures	Only the client with PWD designation (spouses who are not PWD not covered)	Only the client with PWD designation (spouses who are not PWD not covered)
Adults in a <i>special care facility (e.g., health care facility)</i> and their adult dependants	Yes	Only if the person has PPMB or PWD designation Up to \$1,000 every two years	Full dentures If person has PPMB or PWD designation, both full and partial dentures	Only for the person with PPMB or PWD designation	Only for the person with PWD designation
Medical Services Only (provided to former clients with PWD designation who leave assistance for employment or PPMB or PWD clients who leave for	Yes	Up to \$1,000 every two years	Both full and partial dentures	Only if the person has PWD designation	No

Description of Recipient Category	Emergency Dental	Basic Dental	Dentures	Crown & Bridge	Orthodontic
federal benefits)					
Dependent children of income assistance, hardship assistance or disability assistance clients	Yes	Yes Up to \$1400 every two years	Both full and partial dentures	No	Yes
Healthy Kids Program Dependent children of families who are receiving MSP Premium Assistance	Yes	Yes Up to \$1400 every two years	Both full and partial dentures	No	No

BUDGET:

	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14 Budget
	Budget	Expenditures	Budget	Expenditures	
Dental and Orthodontic (including Healthy Kids Program)	\$49.3M	\$56.9M	\$55.5M	\$55.4M	\$55.2M

Data Source: FASB

STATISTICS:

Supplement	Clients / Cases Served 2009/10	Clients / Cases Served 2010/11	Clients / Cases Served 2011/12	Clients / Cases Served 2012/13
Dental and Orthodontic Services (including Healthy Kids Program)	134,954	137,379	140,309	138,018

Data Source: Pacific Blue Cross Dental Program Reports

INTERJURISDICTIONAL COMPARISONS:**Provincial Rankings**

Province	Percentage of provincial fee guide paid	Approximate Rank
British Columbia	60% (2012)	9
Alberta	80% (2012)	5
Saskatchewan	90% (2012)	1
Manitoba	90% (2012)	1
Ontario	50% (2012)	10
Quebec	67% (2012)	8
New Brunswick	75% (2012)	7
Nova Scotia	80% (2008)	6
PEI	90% (2012)	1
Newfoundland	90% (2012)	1

Figures are based on each province's 2012 dental fee guide with the exception of Nova Scotia

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #139 – Health Supplements – Overview**

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
RESEARCH BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Earnings Exemptions

KEY MESSAGES:

EARNINGS EXEMPTIONS

s.13

BACKGROUND:

Earnings Exemptions

Client Group	Exemption Amount
Expected to Work Clients	\$200
Single client designated as Persons with Disabilities	\$800
Family unit with two adult recipients where only one recipient is designated as Persons with Disabilities	\$1000

Family unit where both adult clients are designated as Persons with Disabilities	\$1600
Family unit where at least one client is designated Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers	\$500
Single parents providing care for a child with disabilities	\$300

Annualized Earnings Exemptions

- Annualized earning exemptions for selected individuals on disability assistance began on January 1, 2013.
- The AEE is being phased in and the first phase focused on disability assistance clients whose past earnings pattern showed they were most likely to benefit from annualized earnings exemptions. Clients chosen for the first phase of implementation for annualized earnings exemptions must have:
 - had the PWD designation for at least the past 12 months;
 - received disability assistance in at least the past two consecutive months; and
 - in at least one of the past 12 months, had earnings over \$500 for families with one adult with a PWD designation and \$750 for families where both adults have PWD designations.
- This phased approach allows the ministry to monitor the program and make necessary changes based on what it learnt from 2013 before opening the program up to all individuals on disability assistance in January 2014.
- Annualized earning exemption amounts are equivalent to 12 times the monthly exemption limit for the calendar year.
- We have consulted with a number of disability groups and they are supportive of the annualized earnings exemption and a phased approach.

STATISTICS:

- In fiscal year 2012/2013 4.3% of Income Assistance Clients declared Income. The average amount declared was \$358 per month
- In fiscal year 2012/2013 14.3% of Disability Assistance Clients declared Income. The average amount declared was \$420 per month
- About 1600 individuals chose to participate in the new annualized earnings exemption option for 2013. 5,300 were given the option to participate
- The October 2012 policy reforms (that included the earnings exemption increases), had a positive impact on client incomes, especially families with children:
 - Temporary Assistance families with children receive an average of \$19.34 per month more, while Disability Assistance families receive an average of \$22 per month more in benefits

- For children, the higher average benefits means \$11 per child more in total assistance each month for families on Temporary Assistance, and an average of \$13.70 per child each month for families on Disability Assistance.

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

Expected to Work

BC's Expected to Work flat rate exemption is comparable to other provinces but other provinces include a percentage exemption

AB	Single \$230 + 25% of remaining net earnings; family \$115 per adult + 25% of remaining net earning
SK	\$125
MB	\$200 + 30% of remaining net earnings
ON	s.16
QU	\$200
NB	\$150
NS	\$150 + \$30% of net wages
PE	\$125 + 10% of earned income
NF	\$75 + 20% of income in excess of \$75

Persons with Disabilities

Alberta has the largest earnings exemption in Canada for disability assistance clients.

AB	\$800 + 50% up to \$1150 maximum exemption; family \$1950 + 50% up to a maximum of \$2225
SK	\$50 + 25% of next \$500
MB	\$200 + 30% of remaining net earnings
ON	s.16
QU	\$100
NB	\$250
NS	\$300 plus 30% of net wages
PE	\$75 + 10%
NF	\$150 + 20%

- B.C. is one of the first jurisdictions to offer the option of annual earnings exemptions.
- The Yukon is the only other Canadian jurisdiction that provides an annual income exemption (\$3900 per year for clients with disabilities).

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #86** – Income and assets
- **Note #125** – Annualized Earnings Exemptions

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
REGIONAL OPERATIONS BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Family Maintenance Program

KEY MESSAGES:

FAMILY MAINTENANCE

s.13

BACKGROUND:

- The Family Maintenance Program focuses on cost savings for the ministry while supporting clients to independence.
- All applicants for assistance who may have a legal right to child or spousal support payments are required to assign their maintenance rights to the ministry and Family Maintenance Workers review the cases for maintenance action.
- Currently there are about 7,000 Family Maintenance cases with support orders. The average monthly order amount for the 2012 calendar year was \$350.

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Contact: Sharon Moysey, ADM, Regional Services Division
Cell phone: s.17
Date: June 20, 2013

- In the 2012 calendar year, approximately \$24 million in support payments was due to the ministry; of this, \$17.9 million was paid and offset costs of providing assistance.
- Safety is a high priority in the family maintenance process. When a client wishes to pursue support payments and safety is a concern, the ministry can return the assigned rights to the client to seek maintenance on their own behalf; however, if there is evidence that a child may be at risk as a result of maintenance action, the ministry retains the right not to pursue maintenance.
- All maintenance orders and agreements are filed with the Family Maintenance Enforcement Program to ensure that support payments are made where the payor has an ability to pay.

Policy Prior to BCEA

- Prior to 2002, exemptions were available as an incentive to encourage clients to seek family maintenance support.
 - A maximum \$50 exemption was in place for singles (spousal support or "alimony")
 - A maximum \$100 exemption was in place for families with children (for child and spousal support). The amount of the exemption did not increase for larger families.
- The incentive was removed in 2002 because the province pursues maintenance orders free-of-charge, and an incentive for clients to pursue an order is not necessary.

Inconsistent Payments

- The ministry is reviewing options for managing situations where support payments are not consistent which presents hardship to impacted families living with fluctuating monthly income.

Advocacy for Exemption

- Family maintenance exemptions have been proposed by advocates as a measure to help reduce poverty for single parent families.
- In April 2013, a \$300 child support income exemption was proposed by several advocacy groups, including First Call.
- Such an exemption would cost approximately \$11 million per year.
- Introducing an exemption on maintenance income may result in families remaining dependent on assistance longer.

INTERJURISDICTIONAL COMPARISONS:

- Deducting maintenance from income and disability assistance is consistent with the majority of provinces, with the exception of Quebec and Alberta.
- Quebec provides a \$100 per child exemption for child support payments.
- Alberta provides a full exemption for the child support portion of family maintenance, but only for those families who have the designation of "Assured Income for Severely Handicapped"; Alberta advises not many of these cases are in receipt of child support. All other clients in receipt of assistance in Alberta do not have an exemption for child or spousal support.
- Provinces have provisions for inconsistent maintenance payments in which the province pays the client a consistent amount of assistance, while the accrued arrears are collected from the payor.

Cross Reference:

- **Note #116:** PLMS Roles and Responsibilities

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: General Supplements

KEY MESSAGES:

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GENERAL SUPPLEMENTS

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BACKGROUND:

- Supplements are available through the ministry to assist with specified needs and circumstances.

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Date: June 17, 2013

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- Eligibility for supplements may vary depending on family type (persons with disabilities, for example), age, or individual's needs.
- Eligibility is generally determined through consultation with ministry staff.
- Some citizens other than income assistance clients can be eligible for the funeral supplement, senior's supplement and the bus pass program.
- Eligibility for these programs is based on financial need and in the case of the senior's supplement and the bus pass, age.

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

- In general, B.C.'s supplements are comparable to those provided by other provinces (e.g. support for moving, confirmed job and school start up).
- B.C. is the only province that provides a province-wide annual subsidized bus pass to disability clients and low-income seniors.

CROSS REFERENCES:

- **Note #127** - Bus Pass Program
- **Note #129**- Community Volunteer Supplement
- **Note #130** – Crisis Supplements
- **Note #146** – Security Deposit and Utility Security Deposit Supplements
- **Note #141** - Online Optical Pilot Program

Supplement	Intent	Allowance Details	Issued 2011/12	Issued 2012/13
Bus Pass	To assist eligible individuals to participate in their communities (work, volunteer) as they are able.	Annual Fee: \$45 Replacement Fees: • First lost pass: \$10 • Second lost pass: \$20 • Third lost pass: \$50	85,046	90,440
Camp Fees	To fully or partially cover the cost of attending a recognized camp	Up to \$200 per year. Payable on behalf of dependent children or adult recipients of disability assistance.	941	866
Christmas Supplement	To assist with additional costs at Christmas.	Single: \$35 per calendar year Couple: \$70 per calendar year Single or two-parent family with dependent children: \$70 per calendar year plus \$10 for each dependent child	132,010	131,352
Clothing for Special Care Facilities	To assist individuals in obtaining necessary clothing that is not provided through their care facility.	Eligible only if no other resources available to family unit	1,601	1,416
Community Volunteer Supplement	To cover required clothing, transportation, and other expenses for a client with no employment obligations to participate in a community volunteer program. Effective October 31, 2011, the CVS waitlist was eliminated and no new applicants are being accepted.	Per eligible recipient or dependent child 15 years of age or over: • Up to \$100 per calendar month	64,030	68,265

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Supplement	Intent	Allowance Details	Issued 2011/12	Issued 2012/13
Confirmed Job Supplement	To allow recipients with a confirmed offer of employment to purchase the essential transportation and work-related items they need to begin a job that will enable the family to leave assistance.	Eligible only if no other resources available to family unit	2,124	1,433
Co-op Share Purchase	The ministry may assist a client to purchase cooperative housing membership shares.	Limited to the lesser of following: \$850 or 50% of cost of membership shares	30	34
Crisis Supplement	To aid the client in an emergency of an unexpected nature when all other resources have been exhausted.	Food: Up to \$20 per person per month Clothing: Up to \$100 per person per year or \$400 per family of four or more per year Shelter: Restricted to the actual cost up to the maximum shelter allowance The cumulative amount of crisis supplements over 12 consecutive months must not exceed twice the maximum amount of support and shelter that would be available to the family at the time the request is made.	88,615	68,529
Family Bonus Top Up	To cover financial needs when a Family Bonus payment has been delayed, suspended, cancelled, or requires adjustment.	An adjustment may be issued for families who do not receive the maximum Family Bonus per dependent child because: their income was too high the previous year, or they have a newborn, or an 18 year old child	26,033	21,621

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Supplement	Intent	Allowance Details	Issued 2011/12	Issued 2012/13
Funeral Costs	To assist with basic funeral costs when no other resources are available to the estate of the deceased person or certain responsible persons.	The supplement pays an amount for specific funeral goods and services as outlined in regulation	6,634	8,481
Guide Animal Supplement	To assist with the costs of a certified Guide Animal.	\$95 per calendar month	1,165	1,205
Identification Supplement	To cover the cost of obtaining the necessary ID to establish identity for the purpose of determining eligibility.	The ministry may pay for birth certificates, SIN cards, BCID cards and BC driver's licenses	5,846	3,149
Moving, Transportation and Living Costs	To cover necessary moving, transportation, and living expenses in certain situations when no other resources are available.	Reasons for issuing the supplement include: • Confirmed job • Threats to physical safety • Child protection hearing • Court hearing • DNA paternity testing • Special transportation subsidy	17,757	18,480
Pre-Natal Shelter Supplement	To assist single pregnant recipients in meeting extra costs associated with securing or maintaining stable accommodation prior to the birth of their child.	Issued to single pregnant recipients (with no spouse and no dependent child) upon confirmation of pregnancy and shelter costs above \$375 / month. Maximum of \$195 / month for up to 8 months.	2,456	1,755
Lost or Stolen Cheques	To replace an unendorsed cheque that has been stolen.		7,598	7,275

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Supplement	Intent	Allowance Details	Issued 2011/12	Issued 2012/13
School Start-up	To cover the extra costs associated with a dependent child's schooling.	Child aged 5 to 11: \$84 per calendar year Child aged 12 and over: \$116 per calendar year	15,313	14,930
Security Deposits	To assist in securing rental accommodation.	Supplement is repayable. Clients are limited to a maximum of two outstanding security deposits unless they are fleeing an abusive relationship; or are required to move because their rental premises are being sold, demolished or condemned; or are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness.	37,115	32,373
Utility Security Deposit	To assist with the cost of securing service for electricity or natural gas.	Supplement is repayable and is the minimum amount necessary to obtain service	2,360	2,066
Seniors Supplement	To provide a minimum income for low-income seniors on Old Age Security / Guaranteed Income Supplement (OAS/GIS).	Maximum rate for a single senior - \$49.30 Maximum rate for a senior couple - \$120.50	49,249	50,516
Special Transportation Subsidy	To cover the costs of transportation for those who would otherwise be eligible for a Bus Pass but are unable to take public transit due to their disability.	For disability assistance recipients who reside in an area where the bus pass program is available. Supplement is equivalent to the highest bus pass subsidy in the province.	13,335	15,030
Transportation to Alcohol and Drug Facilities	To meet the costs of transportation to and from an approved special care facility for residential alcohol and drug treatment in B.C.	Eligible only if no other resources or alternative travel options available	1,420	659

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Supplement	Intent	Allowance Details	Issued 2011/12	Issued 2012/13
Travel Supplement	To assist with the cost of attending a self-help skill program or supported work-placement program approved by Community Living British Columbia.	Up to \$46 for each calendar month may be provided	24,187	24,004

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	2010/11		2011/12		2012/13		2013/14 Budget
	Budget	Expenditures	Budget	Expenditures	Budget	Expenditures	
Bus Passes	\$43.2M	\$42.7M	\$43.2M	\$41.9M	\$43.2M	\$45.4M	\$43.2M
Camp Fees	\$0.2M	\$0.2M	\$0.2M	\$0.2M	\$0.2M	\$0.2M	\$0.2M
Christmas Supplement	\$5.0M	\$5.9M	\$5.5M	\$5.9M	\$6.1M	\$5.8M	\$6.0M
Community Volunteer Supplement	\$5.3M	\$5.5M	\$5.4M	\$6.9M	\$7.3M	\$7.1M	\$6.9M
Confirmed Job Supplement	\$0.5M	\$0.5M	\$0.4M	\$0.4M	\$0.4M	\$0.3M	\$0.4M
Co-op Share Purchase Supplement	\$0.05M	\$0.03M	\$0.05M	\$0.03M	\$0.03M	\$0.02M	\$0.03M
Crisis Supplement	\$13.6M	\$10.5M	\$13M	\$9.4M	\$9.6M	\$6.9M	\$7.0M
Funeral Costs	\$4.0M	\$3.3M	\$4.0M	\$3.3M	\$3.5M	\$3.6M	\$3.5M
Identification Supplement	\$0.4M	\$0.3M	\$0.3M	\$0.2M	\$0.3M	\$0.1M	\$0.2M
School Start-Up Supplement	\$2.4M	\$2.7M	\$2.5M	\$2.6M	\$2.6M	\$3.4M	\$2.6M
Seniors Supplement	\$23.0M	\$23.5M	\$23.0M	\$23.8M	\$25.0M	\$25.0M	\$25.4M
Transportation/Moving Supplement Note: Includes Special Transportation Supplement	\$7.3M	\$10.0M	\$8.9M	\$11.6M	\$11.7M	\$12.8M	\$11.7M

Active passes at Dec 31 2011
 Active passes at Dec 31 2012

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MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Health Supplements – Medical Equipment and Supplies

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

Eligibility

- Through the BC Employment and Assistance Program, the ministry provides medical equipment and supplies for eligible clients to meet specific health needs. Clients who are eligible for general health supplements are eligible for medical equipment and supplies funding. Eligible clients include Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers, Persons with Disabilities and all dependent children. Some citizens other than BC Employment and Assistance clients may also be eligible for

HEALTH SUPPLEMENTS – MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

medical equipment and supplies provided through the ministry. These citizens include former clients who qualify for "Medical Services Only" coverage, and low-income individuals who have a life-threatening health need.

Medical Equipment and Devices

- The least expensive, appropriate medical equipment and devices may be provided to specific recipients to assist with a medically essential need. There must be no other resources available to the client to provide the medical equipment requested.
- Medical equipment and devices include only the following types of items:
 - Canes
 - Crutches
 - Walkers
 - Manual and power wheelchairs
 - Wheelchair seating systems
 - Scooters
 - Bathing and toileting aids
 - Hospital beds
 - Pressure relief mattresses
 - Positioning items on a hospital beds
 - Floor or ceiling lift devices
 - Positive airway pressure devices
 - Suction machines and related supplies
 - Apnea monitors
 - Medical humidifiers for tracheostomy patients
 - Non-conventional glucose meters
 - Percussors, nebulizers and inhalers
- See "Health Supplements – Orthotics" estimates notes for information on orthotics.

Medical Supplies

- The least expensive, appropriate medical or surgical supplies may be provided to eligible clients in order to avoid an imminent and substantial danger to health.
- Medical supplies can be considered only for the following:
 - Wound care
 - Ongoing bowel care required due to loss of muscle function
 - Catheterization
 - Incontinence
 - Skin parasite care
 - Limb circulation
 - Food thickeners
 - Lancets
 - Needles and syringes

- Ventilator supplies
- Tracheostomy supplies

April 2010 Policy Changes

In 2010 the ministry reviewed the medical equipment and supplies program and a number of policy changes were made:

Medical Equipment

- Prior regulations were broad and lacked clarity on the types of medical equipment that could be provided
- Regulatory amendments strengthened eligibility criteria to provide the most basic, least costly items to meet a medically essential need which resulted in a number of items being removed from coverage.
- Introduction of clear eligibility criteria outlining specific items that can be considered and appropriate cost limits and replacement periods
- Criteria for foot orthotics changed in order to focus funding on those clients with the most pressing medical needs. Under the revised criteria, clients would only receive funding for foot orthotics if failure to provide custom-made foot orthotics was likely to result in partial or complete amputation of the foot. The changes also eliminated funding for off-the-shelf orthopaedic footwear and off-the-shelf foot orthotics
 - See “Health Supplements – Orthotics” estimates notes for more information on orthotics.

Medical Supplies

- Prior regulations lacked clarity on what types of supplies clients could receive.
- Regulatory amendments expanded eligible items to include reusable medical supplies where appropriate.
- Detailed eligibility criteria were introduced outlining the specific items that can be considered for coverage and eliminating duplication of services where they existed.
 - For example: Blood glucose test strips are covered through the Province’s PharmaCare program for individuals with diabetes who have taken a training/counselling session at their local clinic. Conventional glucometers are provided free of charge from glucose testing companies and can also be obtained through community pharmacies.
 - Under MSP and PharmaCare, low-income individuals receive full coverage under MSP and PharmaCare for medically necessary services. This includes oral contraceptives by prescription and other types (such as IUD’s) where there is a medical need. Basic contraceptives are also available for free at many public health clinics and other venues.
- Efficiencies were implemented in the area of purchasing the least costly appropriate medical supplies, including allowing for reusable items over disposable.

Monitoring of April 2010 changes and October 2012 Policy Changes

- The ministry closely monitored the effects of the April 2010 changes.
- The ministry broadened foot orthotics and footwear coverage in August 2011.
 - See “Health Supplements – Orthotics” estimates notes for more information on orthotics.
- In October 2012, the ministry restored coverage to some equipment and supplies that were previously eligible, including:
 - Ventilator supplies
 - Bariatric scooters
 - Standing frames
 - Positioning chairs
 - Non-conventional glucose monitors
 - Inhaler accessory devices
 - Apnea monitors
 - Toe orthoses
 - Underliners foot orthoses
 - Needles/syringes for medication delivery
 - A second floor to ceiling pole
 - Foot abduction orthoses
 - Transfer aids
 - Position items on a bed
 - Tracheostomy supplies
 - nebulizers
- The ministry worked with the Ministry of Health on these changes. The Ministry of Health supported the reinstatement of these items.

STATISTICS:

Supplement	Clients / Cases Served – 2009/10	Clients / Cases Served – 2010/11	Clients / Cases Served – 2011/12	Clients / Cases Served – 2012/13
Medical Equipment ¹	4,742	4,458	4,560	4,129
Medical Supplies ¹	2,321	2,876	3,537	3,870

¹Clients served represents data from HAB - regional data is not available)

EXPENDITURES

Supplement	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Medical Equipment (including Hearing Aids and Orthoses)	\$15.4M	\$17.0M	\$15.3M	\$17.9M	\$15.9M
Medical Supplies (including Nutritional Supplements)	\$10.0M	\$11.2M	\$11.5M	\$11.8M	\$11.7M

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

- BC is consistent with other provinces in that income assistance recipients have access to a range of different types of medical equipment and supplies.
- However, there is a difference in service delivery as Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario primarily provide items through a universal health/community supports type program for all citizens. These universal health programs have a cost share component
- The general BC population only has access to medical equipment and supplies if they have a life threatening health need.
- In addition, both Alberta and Ontario have discretionary or personal benefit clauses within their income and/or disability assistance regimes that allow coverage of some health-related items (including medical equipment and supplies) not covered by the universal programs, where BC does not.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #138** – Health Supplements – Orthotics
- **Note #139** – Health Supplements – Overview

Cross-Jurisdictional Comparison of Aids to Daily Living Program Type	British Columbia		Alberta		Saskatchewan		Manitoba		Ontario	
	Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation	Ministry of Health Services/ Health Authorities	Ministry of Seniors & Community Supports - AISH	Ministry of Health - AADL	Ministry of Social Services - SAID	Ministry of Health – SHP or SAIL	Ministry of Family Services and Labour	Ministry of Health – Home Care Program	Ministry of Community & Social Services - OSDP	Ministry of Health & Long Term Care - ADP
Universal access program with a cost share requirement (also see footnotes for more details)	No	Yes, specific programs only ^{2,7} have 70% coverage once deductible reached, IA recipients exempt	No	Yes, 25% to \$500/yr Exempt if under \$21,000 for singles, \$39,250 for families with children	No	Yes, specific programs only*	No	Universal access, no cost share portion	No	Yes, up 25% for mobility & positioning aids, paid by MCSS for ODSP recipients
Diabetic supplies	X ¹	X ¹	X	X ¹		X				X
Medical supplies (incontinence supplies, wound care, etc.)	X	X ²		X		X	X [#]	X		X
Mobility devices (canes, walkers, wheelchairs, scooters, etc.)	X			X ¹	X*	X	X [#]	X		X
Positioning devices (w/c seating, transfer aids, hospital beds, bathing/toileting aids, etc.)	X			X		X	X [#]	X		X
Respiratory devices (CPAPs, apnea monitors, nebulizers)	X ³	X ⁴		X		X		X		X
General Orthoses and Bracing	X	X ⁵		X		X		X		X
Foot orthotics	X		X ¹				X		X [%]	
Footwear - Custom & off the shelf	X			X		X	X			
Prosthetics		X		X		X		X		X
Hearing aids	X			X		X	X			X
Visual Communication aids ⁶				X	X*	X*				X
Insulin Pumps and supplies		X ^{7,8}				X*				X [%]

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Home Enteral Feeding (tube feed)	X	X ⁹		X		X*		X		X [%]
Discretionary Benefit			X		X		X		X	

Footnotes:

1. SDSI only covers lancets. HLTH covers blood glucose test strips, needles and syringes are covered for recipients of IA [Plan C] and At Home children [Plan F] or Fair PharmaCare. HLTH covers insulin for recipients covered under Fair PharmaCare, Plan B [residential Care], Plan C, Plan F or Plan P [Palliative Care Drug Program].
2. Limited to ostomy supplies for recipients covered under Plan B [residential Care], Plan C, Plan F. Fair PharmaCare recipients also covered subject to any deductible requirements (70% coverage once deductible reached. \$0 deductible with less than \$15,000 net income. 100% coverage once family maximum reached – equivalent to 2% of net income)
3. Positive airway pressure device only
4. Limited to home oxygen, ventilators
5. Limited to children with congenital conditions
6. Visual Aids include items such as magnifiers, specialized watches, talking clocks, etc.
7. In BC, insulin pumps are covered for children 18 year of age and under. 100% coverage provided under Plan C and Plan F. Families covered under Fair PharmaCare receive 70% coverage of costs above deductible, and 100% cost above family maximum.
8. Supplies for insulin pumps are covered for children and adults covered under Plan C, Plan F or Fair PharmaCare
9. HLTH only covers tube feeding supplies and equipment individuals with gastrointestinal conditions only from the PHSA

! The Alberta Aids to Daily Living (AADL) program does not cover scooter and recycles major medical equipment. Grant provided to Canadian Diabetes Association to administer diabetic supplies. Assured Income for Severely Handicapped (AISH) provides foot orthotics under its discretionary benefit clause.

* The Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living (SAIL) program is a loan program for mobility aids and equipment. Co-payment charges apply for some programs: visual aids (ex. client pays 1st \$25 for calculator or watch), insulin pump supplies and therapeutic nutrition products program. Custom footwear is only covered when required in conjunction with a leg brace. Foot orthotics are not a covered benefit. Saskatchewan's Assured Income for Disability (SAID) will pay for repairs to equipment if no other resources available (i.e.: SAIL). SAID may pay for some minor items under a discretionary benefit such as crutches, medic-alert bracelet, or door alarms for hearing impaired clients.

MFSL covers the cost for basic and essential medical equipment and supplies that are not covered under Home Care or any other health plan. Also covers the cost of custom seating, wheelchair elevators, lifts and ramps.

% ODSP recipients are covered at 100%. ADP pays up to 75 per cent of the cost of equipment, such as artificial limbs, orthopaedic braces, wheelchairs and breathing aids. For others, such as hearing aids, the ADP contributes a fixed amount. ADP pays a grant directly to the person for ostomy supplies, breast prostheses and needles and syringes for insulin dependent seniors. Cost share information - In most cases, the client pays a share of the cost at time of purchase and the vendor bills ADP the balance. For ADP supply categories where grants are paid,

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the client pays 100 per cent of the cost to the vendor. There are many sources of funding for the client's share of the cost including: clients, voluntary/charitable organizations (e.g. March of Dimes, The Easter Seals Society, Kiwanis, Lions Clubs), social assistance, DVA, insurance companies, relatives/friends. Ontario Disability Supports Program (ODSP) covers the remaining costs for lancets and blood glucose monitors not covered by the Canadian Diabetes Association, Ontario division. ODSP may cover foot orthotics under a discretionary benefit clause. ADP only covers insulin pumps for adults and children with type 1 diabetes and provides an annual grant of \$2,400 for supplies which is paid directly to the recipient in four equal payments. Ontario's Assistive Devices Program (ADP) provides: pump: a grant of \$549.75 (portable pump) or \$355.50 (stationary pump) and supplies: a grant of \$1500 annually in four equal installments.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Health Supplements - Medical Services Only

KEY MESSAGES:

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HEALTH SUPPLEMENTS - MEDICAL SERVICES ONLY

BACKGROUND:

Medical Services Only

- Through Medical Services Only, the ministry provides specific health supplements to certain categories of former clients who no longer receive income or disability assistance.
- Continued access to health supplements for former clients depends on individual circumstances, including income (see chart on next page).
- Income testing to confirm ongoing eligibility ensures that supplements are provided only to those most in need.
- Medical Services Only clients who no longer meet the income test receive one-year transitional coverage.

Client Type	Reason for Leaving Assistance	Eligibility Criteria	Rationale
Persons with Disabilities and Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers to Employment	Federal Benefits	Clients over 65 continue to receive MSO benefits as long as they meet the GIS income test. PWD clients under 65 transitioning to CPP Disability pension benefits continue to receive MSO as long as they continue to meet the CPPD income test.	Ensures that services are provided only to those most in need. Clients accessing income sources over the federal low income tests will become ineligible.
Persons with Disabilities	Employment Income	As long as they continue to meet the income test for Medical Services Plan premium assistance	Incentivizes employment by allowing clients to retain access to health supplements when they transition to employment. Income testing ensures that supplements are provided only to those most in need. Income testing based on MSP premium assistance aligns eligibility with existing government programs.
All client types	Crime Victims Assistance (Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General)	As long as they continue to meet the income test for Medical Services Plan Premium Assistance	Income testing ensures that supplements are provided only to those most in need. Income testing based on MSP premium assistance aligns eligibility with existing government programs.
Persons with Disabilities	Agreement with Young Adults (Ministry of Children and Family Development)	For the term of their agreement	Allows clients to take advantage of personal and professional development opportunities without requiring clients to forfeit access to health supplements.

- Medical Services Only provides former clients access to specific Health Supplements including:
 - medical supplies
 - medical equipment and devices
 - dental services
 - optical (basic eyewear and repairs)
 - eye examinations (if under age 65)
 - infant formula
 - extended medical therapies
 - medical transportation
 - Premium free Medical Services Plan (MSP) coverage
 - No deductible PharmaCare coverage
 - tube feed supplement (if the person is in receipt of the tube feed supplement at the time their family unit transitions to Medical Services Only)

Impact of Leaving Assistance for Other Income Sources

- Medical Services Only is intended to help clients transition into the federal system or employment. It is not intended to be a comprehensive medical services plan.
- As Medical Services Only clients have more income, they are no longer eligible for financial assistance and general supplements such as guide animal, school start up and crisis supplements.
- While Medical Services Only clients maintain access to many health supplements, they are not eligible for:
 - Monthly nutritional supplement
 - Diet supplement
 - Short term nutritional supplement
 - Natal supplement
 - Orthodontic coverage
- Persons with Disabilities clients who leave assistance prior to the age of 65 also lose access to the subsidized annual bus pass. Access to the bus pass program would resume at age 65 if they are low income.
- While clients leave for assistance due higher income, the amount they receive can vary based on their circumstances. For instance, clients who leave at age 65 for Old Age Security/Guaranteed Income Supplement may have significantly more income than clients who leave for CPP Disability benefits. In some cases, income from CPP-Disability may be just above disability assistance rates.

BUDGET:

Expenditures on health supplements provided to Medical Services Only clients are included in the health supplement expenditures. (see Health Supplements – Overview)

STATISTICS:

Over 23,200 former clients have access to health supplements through Medical Services Only coverage.

INTERJURISDICTIONAL COMPARISONS:

- B.C.'s Medical Services Only coverage for Persons with Disabilities is comparable to other jurisdictions in Canada, such as Alberta and Ontario, who provide limited access to medical benefits when a client transitions to employment or federal benefits.
- Some jurisdictions, including Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario, also extend limited benefits to employable clients who leave income assistance for employment. Length of coverage for former clients may be time limited or dependent on income levels and/or high health care costs.
- No other provincial jurisdiction in Canada has a provincial bus pass program that is comparable to B.C.'s.

Alberta

- Persons who leave Income Support or Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped and have income from employment, self-employment, or the Canada Pension Plan Disability program that meet financial qualifications are provided with extended medical benefits through the Alberta Adult Health Benefit program.

Manitoba:

- Single parents and persons with disabilities who have found employment may be eligible for up to 12 months of Extended Health Services Assistance which provides for a monthly allowance for Health Services costs, calculated as the greater of:
 - \$50.00 per person to a maximum of \$150.00 per family; or
 - the average Health Services costs for the three months in which these costs were the highest during the past 12-month period
- Manitoba also has programs for Single Grant (immediate need) and Health Services Only (ongoing need) coverage where the applicant's resources are sufficient to meet all basic living costs but they are unable to meet either an immediate or ongoing health care costs.

Saskatchewan:

- Supplementary health benefits are available to people with disabilities (and their dependents) who exit assistance for employment, for a period of 12 months following commencement of employment. Further coverage may be available if a person has ongoing high health-related costs.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #139** - Health Supplements - Overview
- **Note #144** - Retained Benefits
- **Note #81** - Disability Supports
- **Note #127** - Bus Pass Program
- **Note #73** - Canada Pension Plan and Canada Pension Plan Disability

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Health Supplements - Orthotics

KEY MESSAGES:

s.13

HEALTH SUPPLEMENTS - ORTHOTICS

BACKGROUND:

Eligibility

- Through the BC Employment and Assistance Program, the ministry provides orthotics for eligible clients to meet specific health needs. Clients who are eligible for general health supplements are eligible for medical equipment and supplies funding. Eligible clients include Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers, Persons with Disabilities and all dependent children.
- Some citizens other than BC Employment and Assistance clients may also be eligible for orthotics provided through the ministry. These citizens include former

clients who qualify for "Medical Services Only" coverage, and low-income individuals who have a life-threatening health need.

- The orthotics supplement provides medically essential orthotics to assist with basic functionality if required to prevent surgery, for post-surgical care, to assist in healing from injury or disease or to improve functioning that has been impaired due to a neuro-muscular-skeletal condition.
- The ministry provides a range of different types of orthotics, including:
 - a custom-made foot orthotic
 - an off-the-shelf foot orthotic
 - custom-made footwear
 - off-the-shelf orthopaedic footwear
 - off-the-shelf footwear
 - a permanent modification to footwear
 - an ankle brace
 - an ankle-foot orthosis
 - a knee-ankle-foot orthosis
 - a knee brace
 - a hip brace
 - an upper extremity brace
 - a cranial helmet
 - a torso or spine brace
 - a foot abduction orthosis
 - a toe orthosis

April 2010 Policy Changes

- Prior regulations did not have controls in place to manage high cost items such as custom foot orthotics and custom footwear. There was no guidance on what could be requested as an "orthotic or brace."
- Regulatory amendments strengthened eligibility criteria to provide the most basic, least costly items to meet a medically essential need, and introduced clear eligibility criteria outlining specific items that can be considered and appropriate cost limits and replacement periods.
- Under the revised criteria, clients would only receive funding for foot orthotics if failure to provide custom-made foot orthotics was likely to result in partial or complete amputation of the foot.
- The changes also eliminated funding for off-the-shelf orthopaedic footwear and off-the-shelf foot orthotics.

August 2011 Policy Changes

- In the spring of 2011, a number of clients, parents and advocates complained publicly that the new April 2010 policy for foot orthotics was too restrictive, especially when clients needed replacements.
- Based on a joint review with the Ministry of Health (HLTH), the ministry revised the policy to accommodate a wider range of medical footwear and orthotic needs to support disabled clients to perform their day-to-day activities.
- HLTH's senior medical consultant and Pharmacare staff aided in developing the changes, which were also reviewed by an expert physiatrist (a medical specialist in physical and rehabilitation medicine) who provides advice to PharmaCare's prosthetic and orthotics program. Members of the BC Podiatric Association were also consulted with on the changes.
- The revised program has the following standards:
 - Items must be "medically essential to achieve or maintain basic functionality;"
 - A prescription from a physician or nurse practitioner is always required for orthotics items;
 - Items must be the least expensive while still being appropriate;
 - The client has no other resources available to pay for the orthotics, such as private medical insurance;
 - For custom foot orthotics, there is no longer the need to prove a risk of partial or complete amputation of the foot;
 - Increase the \$375 cost limit for custom foot orthotics to \$450 and decrease the replacement period from one pair in four years to one pair in three years, which is consistent with other provinces;
 - Allow a broader range of foot orthotics/footwear that meet medical needs while being cost effective, such as:
 - off-the-shelf foot orthotics with no cost limit and no replacement period;
 - off-the-shelf orthopaedic footwear with a cost limit of \$250 and a one-year replacement period per pair;
 - off-the-shelf footwear with a cost limit of \$125 and a one-year replacement period only when required to accommodate a custom-made orthotic or brace.
- The ministry continues to monitor orthotics requests to ensure the medically essential needs of clients are being met.

Summary of Policy Changes:

Pre-April 2010 Policy	Changes Made April 2010	Changes Made August 2011
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Eligibility Criteria: - Ministry provided funding for orthotics and bracing to specific clients who have no other resources to pay for these items. - Medically essential for basic mobility - Required for one or more of the following: - Prevent surgery - Post surgical care - Assist in physical healing from surgery, injury or disease - Improve physical functioning that has been impaired by neuro-musculo-skeletal condition	Must be Least Expensive: The item must be the least expensive that is appropriate for the purpose.	No Changes Made
	Types of Items Covered are Specified: - Introduced revised eligibility criteria specifying the types of items that may be considered. - Off the shelf shoes and off the shelf foot orthotics are no longer considered. - Custom made foot orthotics now only considered where failure to provide is likely to result in partial or complete amputation of the foot.	Expanded the Types of Items to Include: - Off-the-shelf foot orthotics - Off-the-shelf orthopaedic footwear - Off-the-shelf footwear only when required to accommodate a custom made orthotic or brace - For custom made foot orthotics, eliminated the "likely to result in partial or complete amputation of the foot" criterion.
	Replacement Criteria Established: Replacement criteria moved from policy to regulations.	Revised Replacement Periods: - Off-the-shelf foot orthotics: None - Off-the-shelf orthopaedic footwear: One year - Off-the-shelf footwear: One year - Custom made foot orthotics: Decreased from one pair in four years to one pair in three
	Funding Limits Established: - Custom made foot orthotics: \$375 - Custom made footwear: \$1650 - These limits include assessment fees	Revised Funding Limits: - Off-the-shelf foot orthotics: None - Off-the-shelf orthopaedic footwear: \$250 - Off-the-shelf footwear: \$125 - Custom made foot orthotics: Increased to \$450

CASELOAD:

Supplement	Clients / Cases Served – 2008/09	Clients / Cases Served – 2009/10	Clients / Cases Served – 2010/11	Clients / Cases Served – 2011/12	Clients / Cases Served – 2012/13
Orthotics	3,287	3,303	944	2379	2221

EXPENDITURES:

Supplement	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Orthotics	\$1.8M	\$0.8M	\$1.1M	\$1.3M

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

- B.C. is consistent with other provinces in that income assistance recipients have access to a range of different types of orthotics.
- However, there is a difference in service delivery as Alberta and Ontario primarily provide orthotics through a universal health/community supports type program for all citizens.
- The general B.C. population only has access to orthotics if they have a life threatening health need. The Ministry of Health provides some types of orthotics but with limited access for children only.
- In addition, both Alberta and Ontario have discretionary or personal benefit clauses within their income and/or disability assistance regimes that allow coverage of some health-related items (including orthotics) not covered by the universal programs, where B.C. does not.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #139** – Health Supplements – Overview
- **Note #136** – Health Supplements – Medical Equipment and Supplies

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Health Supplements - Overview

KEY MESSAGES:

s.13

HEALTH SUPPLEMENTS - OVERVIEW

BACKGROUND:

Eligibility

- Through the BC Employment and Assistance Program, the ministry provides health supplements for eligible clients to meet specific health needs.
- Some low income British Columbians who are not income or disability assistance clients may also be eligible for a limited number of the health supplements

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provided through the ministry. These citizens include former clients who qualify for "Medical Services Only" coverage, and low-income individuals who have a life-threatening health need.

- Eligibility for specific health supplements varies and can be dependent on family type (Employable or PWD, for example), age and individual circumstances.
- Each of these supplements has its own eligibility criteria. Some general rules apply including:
 - the item must be medically necessary;
 - the item is the least expensive available to meet the need;
 - the client has no other resources available to pay for the orthotics, such as private medical insurance; and
 - a prescription from a health professional may be required.

Supplements

- The following is a list of the health supplements available through the ministry:
 - Premium free medical coverage through Ministry of Health's Medical Services Plan
 - No deductible PharmaCare through Ministry of Health
 - Dental Supplements
 - Diet supplement
 - Extended medical therapies
 - Hearing aids
 - Infant formula
 - Medical equipment
 - Medical supplies
 - Medical transportation
 - Monthly nutritional supplement
 - Natal supplement
 - Nutritional supplements
 - Optical supplements
 - Orthoses (orthotics and bracing)
 - Supplement for Alcohol and Drug Treatment
 - Tube Feed Supplement

Medical Services Only

- Through Medical Services Only (MSO), the ministry may provide specific health supplements to certain categories of former clients who no longer receive income or disability assistance.
- Continued access to health supplements for former clients depend on individual circumstances, including income.

- Income testing to confirm ongoing eligibility helps to ensure that supplements are provided only to those most in need.
- To support employment for Persons with Disabilities clients, former clients retain access to health supplements while they work as long as they receive Medical Services Plan premium assistance.
- Former BC Employment and Assistance clients who no longer meet the eligibility criteria for Medical Services Only receive one-year transitional coverage.
- See Note - Medical Services Only

Life-Threatening Health Needs

- The ministry may provide specific health supplements for any person, including non-clients, demonstrating a direct and imminent life-threatening health need and who has no other resources available to meet that need. The supplements available to address a specific life-threatening need are medical equipment, medical supplies and medical transportation.
- Persons demonstrating a life-threatening health need must meet the eligibility requirements of the requested supplement.
- Income testing based on the Medical Services Plan premium assistance income thresholds is completed for non-clients which ensures that supplements are provided only to those most in need.

Available Health Supplements

Health Supplement	Intent
Medical Services Plan (MSP) and PharmaCare	To assist eligible clients and their families to access Ministry of Health premium free medical coverage through the MSP and no deductible PharmaCare coverage. This medical coverage is provided to recipients of income assistance, hardship assistance, disability assistance, and refugee claimants who meet the MSP residency criteria and in the case of refugee claimants, a valid work permit.
Dental and Orthodontic Supplements	To provide assistance with the cost of dental treatment. All ministry clients can receive emergency dental coverage. Basic dental services are covered for eligible clients and children of low-income British Columbians through the Healthy Kids program. • Eligible adults have access to \$1000 of basic dental services every two years • Eligible children have access to \$1400 of basic dental services every two years. Dental supplements are paid at the rate set by the ministry. The ministry has regulated dental fee schedules which outline the eligible services and rates paid for treatment completed by either a dentist, denturist or dental hygienist. Orthodontic services are offered to dependent children of income and disability assistance clients and Persons with Disabilities clients, and are only considered in the most severe cases. See Dental Coverage
Diet Supplements	To provide assistance with the cost of unusually expensive therapeutic diets required as a result of a specific medical condition or a special dietary need. Amounts range from \$10 to \$50 per month. Examples of conditions that require additional diet supplements include cystic fibrosis and diabetes, as well as gluten-free and high protein diet requirements.
Extended Medical Therapies	To assist with the cost of additional medical therapies when required to meet an acute need. The Medical Services Plan (MSP) through Ministry of Health Services covers acupuncture, physiotherapy, massage therapy, naturopathy, chiropractic and non-surgical podiatry treatments to a combined limit of 10 visits per calendar year for all clients. For eligible clients, the ministry may provide up to an additional 12 combined visits of these treatments after the 10 MSP visits have been exhausted.

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Health Supplement	Intent
Hearing Aids	To provide hearing aids and associated repairs and supplies, based on a confirmed need that is supported by a prescription and assessment from an appropriate health professional.
Infant Formula	To provide specialized infant formula to a child who has a medical condition that requires specialized formula to treat the condition. Regular infant formula will be provided during the child's first 12 months if the child is at risk from contracting a disease through breastfeeding.
Medical Equipment	To provide basic medically essential equipment and devices such as canes, crutches, walkers, manual and power wheelchairs, scooters, wheelchair seating systems, ceiling and floor lifts, bathing and toileting devices, hospital beds and pressure relief mattresses, positive airway pressure devices, percussors, and suction units. See Health Supplements – Medical Equipment and Supplies
Medical Supplies	To provide essential prescribed medical supplies in order to prevent medical and health deterioration. This includes supplies for the following: wound care, bowel care, catheterization, incontinence, skin parasite care, limb circulation, food thickeners, and lancets. See Health Supplements – Medical Equipment and Supplies
Medical Transportation	To assist with meeting extraordinary transportation, accommodation, meals, and other costs associated with essential medical treatment.

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Health Supplement	Intent
Monthly Nutritional Supplement	To provide support to Persons with Disabilities clients whose severe medical conditions have progressed to the point that nutritional intervention is required to reverse or slow further deterioration of health. Without such intervention, there will be an imminent danger to their life. The Monthly Nutritional Supplement may be provided for Persons with Disabilities clients if it is confirmed that they have chronic, progressive health deterioration with wasting symptoms. The Monthly Nutritional Supplement items are: 1. nutritional items (up to \$165/month); 2. vitamin & mineral supplements (up to \$40/month). The ministry may find that a client is eligible for one or both supplements.
Natal Supplement	A supplement of \$45 per month is provided to pregnant clients for single births, and to family units in which there is a child under the age of seven months, to assist with meeting the extra costs associated with prenatal and postnatal periods. For multiple pregnancies or multiple births, the supplement may be increased to \$90. Hardship and Medical Services Only clients are not eligible for a natal supplement.
Nutritional Supplements	To provide nutritional supplements (e.g., Ensure, Boost, etc.) as a short-term supplementation to regular dietary intake to aid in recovery from surgery, severe injury, serious disease or the side effects of medical treatment. Nutritional supplement products are limited to three months.
Optical Supplements	To provide prescription eyeglasses (frames, lenses) and repairs for all ministry clients (children and adults) and also children in low-income families through the Healthy Kids Program. Optical supplements are paid at the rate set by the ministry. The ministry also covers routine eye examinations once every two years for eligible adults aged 19 to 64. Routine eye examinations for children and seniors are covered under the Medical Services Plan, as are medically necessary eye exams, regardless of age.

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Health Supplement	Intent
Orthoses	To provide medically essential orthotics and bracing devices to assist with basic functionality if required to prevent surgery, for post-surgical care, to assist in healing from injury or disease or to improve functioning that has been impaired due to a neuro-muscular-skeletal condition. Examples of items covered include Ankle-Foot Orthoses (AFO), wrist splints, knee braces and back braces. See Health Supplements - Orthotics
Supplement for Alcohol and Drug Treatment	To provide a supplement of up to \$500 per year for alcohol and drug counselling services available to eligible recipients and their dependent children Alcohol and drug counselling in British Columbia is provided through the Mental Health and Addictions Branch of the Ministry of Health Services. This program funds both residential and non-residential services throughout the province. Counselling services are free to the public, and may be used by the ministry's recipients on a self-referral basis.
Tube Feed Supplement	To provide liquid nutritional product, medical equipment and supplies to eligible clients who are unable to take food orally or process it through the gastrointestinal system.

Supplement	Clients / Cases Served 2009/10	Clients / Cases Served 2010/11	Clients / Cases Served 2011/12	Clients / Cases Served 2012/13
Supplement for Alcohol and Drug Treatment	5,217	5,854	6,392	6,680
Transportation for Alcohol and Drug Treatment	1,198	1,122	964	555
Dental and Orthodontic Services (including Healthy Kids Program)	134,954	137,379	140,309	138,018
Diet Supplements	22,966	23,342	23,040	21,473
Medical Equipment (Clients served represents data from HAB - regional data is not available)	4,742	4,458	4,560	4,129
Orthoses	3,303	944	2,379	2,221
Medical Supplies	2,321	2,876	3,537	3,870
Medical Transportation	10,476	9,374	8,956	6,244
Monthly Nutritional Supplement (MNS) *distinct clients receiving MNS	9,209	9,390	9,591	10,107
Dietary Items	6,747	6,952	7,313	7,792
Bottled Water (discontinued July 2010)	4,094	3,700	N/A	N/A
Vitamins/Minerals	7,273	7,515	7,837	8,377
Grand-parented Schedule 'C' Awards	421	396	377	356
Natal Supplement	4,935	4,963	4,586	3,711
Optical Services (including Healthy Kids Program)	33,307	34,450	34,895	33,257
Extended Medical Therapies *approved for calendar year	115*	100*	209*	164*

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BUDGET/EXPENDITURES:Health Supplements, including Healthy Kids

Supplement	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Alcohol and Drug Residential Treatment (including supplement for alcohol and drug treatment and transportation for alcohol and drug treatment)	\$12.6M	\$12.8M	\$12.6M	\$12.2M	\$12.6M
Dental and Orthodontic (including Healthy Kids Program)	\$49.3M	\$56.9M	\$55.5M	\$55.4M	\$55.2M
Diet Supplement	\$9.0M	\$9.0M	\$9.2M	\$8.3M	\$8.6M
Medical Equipment (including Hearing Aids and Orthoses)	\$15.4M	\$17.0M	\$15.3M	\$17.9M	\$15.9M
Medical Supplies (including Nutritional Supplements)	\$10.0M	\$11.2M	\$11.5M	\$11.8M	\$11.7M
Medical Transportation	\$4.4M	\$4.1M	\$4.4M	\$3.8M	\$4.0M
Monthly Nutritional Supplement	\$18.0M	\$18.6M	\$18.9M	\$19.4M	\$19.3M
Natal Supplement	\$1.4M	\$1.3M	\$1.4M	\$1.1M	\$1.2M
Optical Services (including Healthy Kids Program)	\$4.7M	\$5.2M	\$5.0M	\$5.0M	\$5.0M
Total	\$124.9M	\$136.1M	\$133.7M	\$134.9M	\$133.5M

Healthy Kids Program:

Supplement	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Healthy Kids Program (Optical and Dental) Note: these expenditures are also reported in the above table as part of the optical and dental budgets	\$18.2M	\$20.0M	\$19.8M	\$19.8M	\$19.8M

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

- B.C. is consistent with other provinces in that income assistance recipients have access to a range of health supplements.
- B.C., Alberta, and Ontario provide health supplements through two separate programs: an income/disability assistance type program and a health/community supports type program.
- The key difference between B.C. and Alberta and Ontario is that a considerable amount of health supplements in Alberta and Ontario are not provided through their income/disability assistance type program. Rather, they are provided through a separate health/community supports type program which includes a cost share model.
- All Albertans and Ontarians have access to these health supplements and are required to pay a portion of the cost based on their income. Generally, the cost share ratio for both Alberta and Ontario is the province funds 75% of the cost and the person is responsible for 25%. If a person is on an income/disability assistance type program, that program will pay their portion.
- In addition, both Alberta and Ontario have discretionary or personal benefit clauses within their income and/or disability assistance regimes that allow coverage of some health-related items not covered by the universal programs, where B.C. does not.
- In B.C., numerous health supplements are provided by the ministry specifically for ministry clients. A cost share model does not exist and the ministry will fund the entire cost unless the client has other resources available.
- The general B.C. population only has access to these health supplements if they have a life threatening health need. The Ministry of Health provides some health supplements but with limited access, such as children only in some cases.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #137**- Health supplements - Medical Services Only
- **Note #136** - Health Supplements - Medical Equipment and Supplies
- **Note #138** - Health Supplements – Orthotics
- **Note #140** – Nutritional Supplements
- **Note #132** – Dental Coverage
- **Note #126** – Benefits for Families with Children

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Nutritional Supplements

KEY MESSAGES:

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s.13

NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS

BACKGROUND:

- There are five supplements intended for different purposes and delivered by either product or additional funds on monthly assistance cheque:

Supplement	Intent	Provision and amounts
Diet Supplement	For ongoing extraordinary nutritional needs	Funds Amounts range from \$10 to \$50/mo
Short Term Nutritional (STN)	For acute situations (up to three months) when recovering from surgery or undergoing treatment	Product
Monthly Nutritional Supplement (MNS)	For chronic, deteriorating and end of life situations	Funds \$40/mo for vitamins/minerals, \$165/mo for nutritional products and food items, or \$205/mo for both
Infant Formula	Provides basic or additional nutrition for infants	Product
Tube Feeding	Provides primary nutrition when food cannot be processed orally	Product

Review of Nutritional Supplements

- In May 2012, former Minister of Social Development, the Honourable Stephanie Cadieux, committed the ministry to a review of its nutritional supplements and criteria. This review is close to completion.

STATISTICS:

Supplement	Clients / Cases Served – 2010/11	Clients / Cases Served – 2011/12	Clients / Cases Served – 2012/13
Diet Supplements	23,342	23,040	21,473
Monthly Nutritional Supplement (MNS) (# of distinct cases)	9,390	9,591	10,107
Dietary Items	6,952	7,313	7,792
Bottled Water (discontinued July 2010)	3,700	n/a	n/a
Vitamins/Minerals	7,515	7,837	8,377
Grand-parented Schedule 'C' Awards	396	377	356
Short Term Nutritional Supplement	n/a	591	577
Infant Formula	n/a	71	61
Tube Feed Supplement		177	242

Data Source: RB and HAB

BUDGET/EXPENDITURES:

Supplement*	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14 Budget
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	
Diet Supplement	\$9.0M	\$9.0 M	\$9.2M	\$8.3M	\$8.6M
Monthly Nutritional Supplement	\$18.0M	\$18.6M	\$18.9M	\$19.4M	\$19.3M

*Separate budget and expenditures are not available for STNS, Infant Formula and Tube Feeding as they are captured under Medical Supplies

Data Source: FASB

INTERJURISDICTIONAL COMPARISONS:

- In general, the range of Nutritional Supplements provided in B.C. under an income assistance program is comparable or better than most other provinces in Canada.
- Through their assistance programs, most provinces and territories provide nutritional supplements to eligible people in need for a same or similar list of medical conditions and diseases that British Columbia does.
- Some jurisdictions, including Alberta, Saskatchewan and PEI, have a discretionary benefit within policy to cover nutritional needs not specifically named in policy or regulation.

- No other province has a supplement comparable to B.C.'s MNS. Ontario's Special Diet Allowance (SDA) is the closest in terms of monetary value. The SDA provides up to \$242 per month when a medical condition results in weight loss of more than 10% of usual body weight.

Diet Supplement rate comparisons:

- A direct rate comparison is difficult since jurisdictions differ in how they define diet supplements.
- Generally, B.C.'s cash amounts (from \$10 to \$50 per month) for diet supplements are comparable or lower than other provinces when compared directly dollar for dollar.
- For example, B.C.'s rate for diabetic diet (\$35) is comparable to AB (\$40) but roughly half as much as ON (\$81).
- Of the provinces reporting a specific diet supplement for kidney dialysis (\$30), B.C. has the lowest and ON has the highest at \$191.
- B.C. is one of two provinces that offers a dietary supplement specifically for PKU diet, with B.C. providing \$40 per month and NF providing \$60 per month
- In B.C., recipients with more than one medical condition are only eligible to receive the diet supplement with the highest dollar value. In the AB, ON and NS, more than one diet supplement may be issued. While AB does not have a maximum monthly amount, NS does not exceed \$150 per month and ON's monthly maximum is \$250.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #139** – Health Supplements - Overview

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION
PROVINCIAL SERVICES BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Online Optical Pilot Program

KEY MESSAGES:

s.13

ONLINE OPTICAL PILOT PROGRAM

BACKGROUND:

- The ministry provides funding for basic eyewear and repairs for eligible clients. Regulations define the types of items that are available, indicate they must be the least expensive and appropriate to meet the need and stipulate they must be provided by an optometrist, ophthalmologist or optician.

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- Adult clients are eligible for glasses once every three years and children are eligible once a year. Lenses may be replaced within that timeframe when there is a change in prescription. The program pays from \$118 to just over \$179 toward each pair of eyeglasses depending on the prescription. Claims payments are pre-authorized direct to the provider for dollar amounts allowable under the fee guide, which enables out of pocket expenses for clients (if applicable) to be kept to a minimum. Following supply of eyeglasses, providers submit claim forms to PBC for payment via mail.
- In addition to lenses and frames, adult clients are eligible for eye examinations once every 24 months at a rate of \$44.83 while eligible children can have eye examinations performed once every 12 months.
- In the fall of 2012, the ministry commenced evaluating the feasibility of providing clients the option of obtaining eyeglasses through online suppliers. In doing so, officials consulted with Pacific Blue Cross, Clearly Contacts, the Ministry of Health, and the British Columbia Association of Optometrists (BCAO).
- In March 2013, the ministry launched a six month pilot program that gives clients on income and disability assistance the option to purchase eyeglasses online and have the claims submitted to Pacific Blue Cross for payment by the ministry.
- The ministry has identified Clearly Contacts as a service provider for the pilot project, as the company has the credentialed professional on staff, as required under ministry regulations, and is able to meet other criteria, such as appropriate licensing to do business in the province. If the program is expanded, other online eyewear companies will have the opportunity to participate as suppliers, provided they meet criteria for registration as service providers.
- Choice, ease of service, and accessibility will probably be the main drivers of uptake. Even so, the option of obtaining prescription eyeglasses online is unlikely to appeal to all ministry clients and is not without its complexity and challenges.
- Entering accurate prescription details, determining pupillary distance and fit measurements are challenging for some people. Inevitably, fitting and repair issues will surface. However, these may be few and largely mitigated by the supplier's return/replacement policies.
- Although the pilot was promoted via news release and communications with stakeholders, such as advocates working with ministry clients, since launching at the end of March 2013, uptake has been minimal with just 65 enquiries (for client eligibility verification) and 3 completed online claims for basic eyewear.
- Ministry staff are working closely with Pacific Blue Cross during the pilot to understand, investigate and resolve issues as they arise.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: **Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers**

KEY MESSAGES:

s.13

PERSONS WITH PERSISTENT MULTIPLE BARRIERS

BACKGROUND:

Eligibility Criteria

- Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers clients are those individuals who have received income assistance for 12 of the last 15 months and meets one of the following criteria:
 - The person has multiple barriers to employment based on the result of an employability screen assessment and has taken all reasonable steps to overcome those barriers, and the person has a medical condition, other than an addiction, that is confirmed by a medical practitioner to have lasted or recurred frequently for at least one year and is likely to continue for at least two years, which, in the Minister's opinion, **seriously impedes** their ability to search for, accept or continue employment; or

- The person has a medical condition, other than an addiction, that is confirmed by a medical practitioner to have lasted or recurred frequently for at least one year and is likely to continue for at least two years, which, in the Minister's opinion, by itself, **precludes** their ability to search for, accept or continue employment.
- Eligibility for Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers is reviewed every two years.
- Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers clients do not have employment obligations but are eligible for employment programs and an earnings exemption

Employability Screen

- The employability screen is a mandatory requirement for most clients.
- Ministry staff complete the employability screen in consultation with each client as the first step in the employment planning process.
- The screen identifies clients who are expected to work and assists in identifying whether barriers to employment exist.
- To be eligible for Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers, clients whose medical condition seriously impedes employment must take the employability screen and have a score that indicates multiple barriers.
- The employability screen is not a factor when determining eligibility for anyone who has a medical condition that precludes employment.
- The employability screen contains statistically validated, weighted questions designed to measure all of the following:
 - history of income assistance dependency;
 - age;
 - recent work history;
 - education level; and,
 - English proficiency and literacy.

Addictions and Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers

- Persons with an addiction may be eligible for Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers if they meet the eligibility criteria, including having a medical condition in addition to their addiction.
- A drug or alcohol condition on its own does not exempt clients from employment related obligations, as many people with addictions who are getting treatment can obtain and maintain employment.
- Clients with temporary medical, alcohol or drug, and mental health conditions are assisted through the Expected to Work-Medical Condition category.
- This category is the best place for clients whose addiction interferes with their ability to seek employment.
- This allows clients to continue to receive employment supports as well as treatment for their addiction.
- Clients with the most severe addictions usually have other medical conditions, for example mental health issues, Hepatitis C, or HIV, that would seriously impede or

preclude employment. These clients may be eligible for the Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers category.

- We are committed to ensuring that clients have sufficient support to be responsible for their lives and help to overcome addictions. We provide daily user fees for licensed residential alcohol or drug treatment facilities and certain support recovery homes, and assistance with transportation costs to these facilities. A supplement for non-residential alcohol or drug treatment, counselling or related services is also available.

Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers clients reapplying for BC Employment and Assistance

- To encourage recipients of Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers to work towards employment if they are able, the ministry waives the 12 month requirement if the person reapplies for assistance within 12 months of their file being closed.

Ombudsperson's Report:

- In March 2009, the Ombudsperson released the final public report titled "*Last Resort: Improving Fairness and Accountability in British Columbia's Income Assistance Program*".
- The 2009 report made 28 recommendations, including 6 recommendations regarding Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers (PPMB) that have not yet been implemented.
- The Ombudsperson continues to monitor the implementation of ministry commitments and post updates publicly. The Ombudsperson's 2012/13 Annual Report, publicly released on June 18, 2013, provided an update on the ministry's progress in implementing the recommendations.
- The Ombudsperson report criticizes the ministry for not moving more quickly to implement recommendations, including the 6 recommendations accepted regarding the PPMB program. The ministry, more than three years after accepting the recommendations, reports that it continues to review the PPMB program as a whole.
- The ministry has been responsive to requests from the Ombudsperson's office to provide progress updates.
- The ministry has made significant progress in implementing the 27 recommendations of the report and has focused staff time on ensuring the needs of all of our clients are being met, in the face of increased demand for services.
- The ministry continues to work on the PPMB program recommendations.

CASELOAD DATA:

- An analysis of the Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers caseload determined that the decline in the Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers caseload between 2004

and 2005 was caused by a policy change which clarified eligibility requirements, while the decline from 2006 through 2009 was the result of the strong economy.

- After four years of decline, the Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers caseload increased in 2009, 2010 and 2011 in response to the economic downturn.
- From March 2011 to March 2013, the Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers caseload decreased 10.5%.
- As of March 2013, Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers accounted for 5.0% of the total caseload.

PPMB Cases (Monthly Average)	
2004	12,282
2005	9,780
2006	7,752
2007	7,250
2008	6,897
2009	6,946
2010	7,897
2011	8,136
2012	7,716
2013*	7,283

* January – March 2013

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

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 Date: June 20, 2013

Province	Comparable Program	Rate difference between an employable single person and a PPMB comparable
British Columbia	Yes	\$48
Alberta	Yes	\$182
Saskatchewan	Yes	\$162
Manitoba	No	N/A
Ontario	No	N/A
Quebec	Yes	\$129
Newfoundland /Labrador	No	N/A
New Brunswick	No	N/A

CROSS REFERENCE:

Note #92 - Ombudsperson Report – Income Assistance

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Residential Care Facilities

KEY MESSAGES:

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RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES

BACKGROUND:

Rates

- Effective February 2010, the Ministry of Health introduced an individualized income-based rate structure that requires residential care clients to pay a monthly charge of 80% of their after-tax income.
- Following the Ministry of Health announcement of the new income-based client rate structure, the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation adjusted from daily rates to reflect the new monthly structure.
- The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation currently pays the Ministry of Health minimum rate (\$958.90 per month for 2013) for clients residing in home and community care residential care facilities or family care homes.
- The minimum rate is adjusted annually based on the maximum monthly total amount of Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplements as of July 1, the previous year. The first increase took place on January 1, 2011 when the new minimum monthly rate increased from \$894.40 to \$897.90. The most recent increase took place

on January 1, 2013 when the new minimum monthly rate increased from \$932.30 to \$958.90.

- Previously, the ministry paid a daily rate of \$30.90 for clients residing in residential care facilities, totaling approximately \$940 per month.
- When the Ministry of Health introduced its new rate structure in 2010, it did not change the amount it charged for mental health facilities. The Ministry of Health continues to charge \$30.90 per day.
- Note: Monthly user fees are paid to residential care and family care homes only. For rates and information on alcohol and drug facility rates, please refer to alcohol and drug treatment facilities estimates note.

Eligibility Requirements

- BC Employment and Assistance clients residing in residential care facilities or family care homes are subject to the same eligibility requirements as other BC Employment and Assistance clients (e.g. clients in facilities or homes are income and asset tested to determine if they are eligible for monthly user fees).

Comforts Allowance

- A client residing in a Ministry of Health residential care facility or family care home may also receive a comforts allowance of \$95 per month.

Involuntary Separation

- In order to support the changing needs of families, when an applicant or recipient of income assistance has separated involuntarily from a spouse (partner) because they are entering a care facility (unlikely to return home in the near future), their income and assets will be treated as if the person is a single person.
- The family home (primary residence) is treated as an exempt asset. There is no requirement for the applicant to remove their name from title.
- The total value of all shared assets (meaning assets where both parties are owners of the asset) will be divided by two and the applicant or recipient's share will be treated as an asset. This means if the total value is over the allowable asset level for a single person they will be ineligible.
- If the applicant is sole owner of the asset, it is not divided; likewise if the spouse is the sole owner the asset, it is not considered.

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

- Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario provide a comforts allowance. All provinces surveyed assist with the costs of residential care facilities.

Alberta

- Per diem rates are charged for long term accommodation.
- Alberta works will cover Long Term Care Accommodation through the shelter allowance. Alberta Works clients may be eligible for a comforts allowance of \$56 per month.
- The province will cover the adjustment for Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) clients, meaning that these residents will continue to have a minimum of \$315 in monthly disposable income.

Saskatchewan

- Clients living in Special Care Homes are required to pay a resident charge as determined by Health. The resident charge is adjusted quarterly and changes are made automatically. Saskatchewan assistance is paid under a client family budget deficit model – so assistance clients will be assisted with paying resident charges insofar as they contribute to a budget deficit.
- A personal living allowance of \$115 per month is provided to adults in residential care facilities.

Manitoba

- Under the Employment and Income Assistance Program, A per diem residential charge of \$31.30 shall be paid on behalf of income assistance participants in personal care homes, companion care homes, palliative care hospices, chronic care facilities and mental health centres.

Ontario

- Under the Ontario Disability Support Program, recipients who reside in an institution are provided with a monthly amount, depending on the type of institution (\$906 or \$914), to assist with the cost of residential services and a monthly amount for personal needs (personal needs allowance of \$128).

STATISTICS/BUDGET:**For Monthly User Fees**

Actuals 2009/10	Actuals 2010/11	Budget 2011/12	Actuals 2011/12	Budget 2012/13	Actuals 2012/13	Budget 2013/14
\$21.9M	\$20.6M	\$20.5M	\$21.1M	\$20.5M	\$21.1M	\$20.5M

The ministry pays monthly user fees through a direct billing form. This billing/payment method is not compatible with tracking and reporting the total number of BC Employment and Assistance clients residing in facilities or the total number of treatment days paid.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
RESEARCH BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Retained Benefits

KEY MESSAGES:

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RETAINED BENEFITS

BACKGROUND:

- Advocates often claim that people are trapped on welfare because low-wage work does not pay enough to make them better off than when they are on assistance. In addition, some claim that when people leave welfare they lose health and other benefits that may leave them worse off than on assistance.
- Over the past two decades, federal and provincial social policy reforms have eliminated most of this “welfare wall” to make work a much better deal than welfare.

Work Pays Better Than Welfare:

- Currently a single employable person working full-time at the new minimum wage of \$10.25 per hour will earn \$1,507 a month after taxes –more than double what they receive on income assistance. For a single parent with one young child, the advantage to working is almost as large.
- After factoring in cash benefits and taxes, they would receive \$2,288 each month working full-time at the new minimum wage, compared to \$1,431 on income assistance. In 2011, the ministry's BC Employment Program service providers reported the average starting wage for a client placed into a job through the program was \$14.30 an hour.
- Even working at a \$10.25 per hour minimum wage job, most employable clients would become independent of income assistance and be much better off.
- After factoring in all cash benefits and all taxes, employable single clients who work full time at \$10.25 per hour have a monthly total after-tax income of \$1,507, compared to \$648 if they were on welfare. An employable single parent with one young child would have monthly after-tax income of \$2,288 working full-time at minimum wage, compared to \$1,431 on welfare.
- Clients keep most provincial and federal benefits, other than cash assistance, when they leave welfare for work. In addition, they may become eligible for other valuable benefits, such as the Rental Assistance Program, the Working Income Tax Benefit and the BC Earned Income Benefit.
- The amount of these other benefits increases for most clients who go off assistance to full-time work. For example:
 - Single clients who go off assistance to full-time work receive higher non-Income Assistance benefits for full-time earnings up to \$11.50 per hour;
 - A single PWD would receive more up to \$13 per hour,
 - A single PWD with children would receive more up to \$15.50 per hour,
 - A single parent with one or two children and a one-earner couple with one child would receive more up to \$14.50 per hour, and
 - A one-earner couple with two children may receive higher non-Income Assistance benefits when they go off to full-time work at up to about \$16 per hour.
- Most clients go to jobs that pay well above minimum wage. On average, clients who leave welfare through the Employment Program of BC are earning \$14.30 per hour.

Their child and other benefits are only gradually reduced with higher earnings, leaving them much better off in total family income.

- The new BC Agreement for the Working Income Tax Benefit, negotiated with the federal government, roughly doubled the earned income supplement for low-income workers in 2009. This provides additional incentive for income assistance clients to leave assistance for work by effectively increasing the wage rate for low-income earners.
- For families with children who leave income assistance, the Rental Assistance Program is available to assist them with rental costs. This program subsidizes rental expenses by up to \$765 per month for families who earn less than \$35,000 per year. It is available only to low-income families with children who are not in receipt of income assistance or living in subsidized housing.
- PWD clients who go off income assistance to work retain full medical benefits, including medical equipment, medical supplies, optical and dental services and medical transportation, as long as they remain eligible for MSP Premium Assistance. For a single PWD this is for up to \$33,000 of total annual income (if they are eligible for the Disability Tax Credit for income tax) and this threshold increases with family size. For a single PWD, this threshold is equivalent to working full-time at over \$17 per hour.

Benefits clients retain when they leave Income Assistance:

In addition to their earnings, clients working full-time retain the following benefits when they leave assistance (most are reduced at higher earnings):

Expected-to-Work, Expected-to Work Medical Condition and Temporarily Excused Clients

	No Children		With Children	
	On Welfare	Off Welfare	On Welfare	Off Welfare
Provincial Programs				
Rental Assistance Plan				X
BC Child Care Subsidy			X	X
Free Medical Services Plan	X	X	X	X
Pharmacare - prescription costs paid	100%	70%	100%	70%
Healthy Kids (Dental & Optical)			X	X
BC Earned Income Benefit			X	X
Climate Action Tax Credit	X	X	X	X
BC Sales Tax Credit	X	X	X	X
Federal Programs				
Base Canada Child Tax Benefit			X	X
National Child Benefit Supplement			X	X
Universal Child Care Benefit			X	X
Working Income Tax Benefit	X	X	X	X
GST Credit	X	X	X	X

Assumes clients leave for full-time work at wages of –up to \$11.50 / hour for a childless single or up to \$14.50 / hour for families with children. All benefits are income-tested except Universal Child Care Benefit.

Disability Assistance Clients

	No Children		With Children	
	On Welfare	Off Welfare	On Welfare	Off Welfare
Provincial Programs				
Rental Assistance Plan				X
BC Child Care Subsidy			X	X
Free Medical Services Plan	X	X	X	X
Pharmacare - prescription costs paid	100%	100%	100%	100%
Healthy Kids (Dental & Optical)			X	X
Medical Equipment and Supplies	X	X	X	X
Basic Dental and Orthodontic	X	X	X	X
Employment Services (EPPD)	X	X	X	X
BC Earned Income Benefit			X	X
Climate Action Tax Credit	X	X	X	X
BC Sales Tax Credit	X	X	X	X
Federal Programs				
Base Canada Child Tax Benefit			X	X
National Child Benefit Supplement			X	X
Universal Child Care Benefit			X	X
Working Income Tax Benefit + Disability Supplement	X	X	X	X
GST Credit	X	X	X	X

Assumes clients leave for full-time work at wages of –up to \$13 / hour for a single PWD or \$15.50 / hour for families with children. All benefits are income-tested except Universal Child Care Benefit and EPPD employment services.

**Comparison of Income on Welfare and Working Full-Time, July to December 2013
Expected to Work Clients (Total Monthly After-Tax Income)**

		On Welfare	Off Welfare Working Full-Time		
		Not Working	\$10.25/ hr	\$12/ hr	\$14/ hr
No Children					
Single		648	1,507	1,695	1,899
Couple - 1 Earner		953	1,740	1,949	2,115
Couple - 2 Earners		953	2,826	3,210	3,667
1 Child (4 yrs)					
Single		1,431	2,288	2,435	2,598
Couple - 1 Earner		1,556	2,266	2,472	2,598
Couple - 2 Earners		1,556	3,101	3,430	3,861
2 Children (4, 7 yrs)					
Single		1,819	2,551	2,763	2,909
Couple - 1 Earner		1,927893	2,803	2,923	3,028
Couple - 2 Earners		1,893	3,308	3,591	3,991

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Sanctions

KEY MESSAGES:

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SANCTIONS

BACKGROUND:

- Sanctions exist to ensure that clients accurately and completely report their circumstances relating to eligibility and follow their employment plans as they are able.
- Periods of ineligibility vary in duration from one month to lifetime ban depending upon the reason for the sanction, the frequency and severity of the behaviour.
- Rate reductions vary in amounts from \$25 to \$300 and may be applied for one month to several months to lifetime depending on the circumstances.
- In 2009, supervisory approval for all sanctions that could lead to ineligibility was added to policy in response to a request from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. Before applying such sanctions, the supervisor must review the ineligibility decision and indicate their support for the sanction decision on the client's file.
- When applying sanctions, discretion is used in situations where there are legitimate mitigating circumstances or the non-compliance is a one-time occurrence.

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL:

- All jurisdictions have sanctions or consequences for non-compliance and fraud. Enforcement effort varies across provinces, as does the strictness of policy provisions employing periods of ineligibility or reductions in assistance.

STATISTICS:**Number of Sanctions Applied for Fiscal Year 2012/13**

Sanction Reason	Sanctions Initiated	Per cent of Total
04 - Fraud Conviction - Criminal Code	53	1.20%
05 - Fraud Conviction - Statute	3	0.10%
11 - Failed to accept employment	11	0.20%
12 - Quit Work - Left employment without just cause	156	3.50%
13 - Fired - Dismissed with just cause	142	3.20%
14 - Fail to search for employment	13	0.30%
15 - Non-compliance with employment plan	240	5.40%
16 - Fail to pursue available income/assets	14	0.30%
17 - Fail to pursue income/assets	20	0.40%
18 - Disposed assets for inadequate amount	11	0.20%
19 - Disposed property to reduce assets	5	0.10%
20 - Non-reporting	3,780	85.00%
Total	4,448	100.00%

Data source: research database 'sanctini' table. Note 'sanctini' is the correct table name, not 'sanction'.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
STRATEGIC POLICY BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Security Deposit and Utility Deposit Supplements

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

Repayment

- Security deposits issued after April 1, 2002, become repayable immediately through a monthly cheque reduction of \$20 per month.
- Security deposits issued between August 1, 1997 and March 31, 2002, become repayable when the recipient's current tenancy ends or the recipient is no longer in receipt of assistance.
- Utility deposits are repayable to the ministry and are recaptured at a minimum of \$20 per month.

Number of security deposits and utility security deposits allowed

- Clients are generally limited to a maximum of two outstanding security deposits. There is no limit on utility deposits.
- Additional security deposits may be issued if clients are fleeing an abusive relationship, have to move because their rental unit is being sold, demolished or condemned, or are homeless and need a security deposit to secure housing.
- Prior to April 1, 2002, there was no limit to the number of security deposits that could be issued and the ministry recaptured \$5-15 per month from client's cheques. The ministry was only able to recover approximately 28% of the total value of the security

Page 1 of 2

deposits issued. By February 2012, the ten-year cumulative rate of collection totalled 69%.

Client responsibility under the Residential Tenancy Act

- As is true for all citizens, income assistance clients have a responsibility to respect the conditions of the rental agreement.
- If landlords are unfairly retaining security deposits, clients may be able to take action through the Residential Tenancy Branch.

STATISTICS:

Security Deposits / Utility Security Deposits							
	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/2013
Number of deposits issued	31,757	33,773	39,470	50,107	47,641	44,348	40,412
Amount paid out	\$7.4M	\$8.4M	\$10.3M	\$13.2M	\$12.6M	\$11.9M	\$11.0M
Amount recovered	\$8.5M	\$8.2M	\$8.2M	\$8.8M	\$9.5M	\$9.3M	\$8.9M
Cumulative rate of collection	63.1%	66.2%	70.2%	71.2%	69.7%	69.1%	69.0%

CROSS JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON:

- Most other provinces provide assistance with security and utility deposits, but eligibility criteria, administration, and repayment policies vary widely.
- In general, B.C. has generous eligibility but more requirements for repayment.

Province	Policy	Repayable?
Alberta	Security deposits provided only if family is escaping an abusive situation and requires a damage deposit to obtain accommodation. Utility deposits provided if necessary.	No (except for the 2 nd or more utility deposit)
Manitoba	Security deposits provided once per case. Additional deposits may be issued if needed between tenancies.	First one is not repayable, additional security deposits are repayable

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
REGIONAL OPERATIONS BRANCH
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Supportive Recovery Homes – Per Diem

KEY MESSAGES:

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SUPPORTIVE RECOVERY HOMES – PER DIEM

BACKGROUND:

- In October 2008, the ministry introduced a per diem of \$30.90 to Supportive Recovery Homes that had received ministry approval. At that time, the Ministry of Health had not yet implemented their registration system for Assisted Living Residences.
- To qualify for the Supportive Recovery Home per diem, facility operators submitted an application to the ministry for approval.
- Applications were assessed using a set of criteria that assessed the safety of the housing structure and the health and safety of the support recovery programs and services provided.
- In addition to these assessments, consideration was given to the reputation in the community and with the Health Authority, municipal licensing requirements, and capacity or need in the community.
- Per diems help cover the cost of food, shelter and programs or services on behalf of our clients.
- Eligible BC Employment and Assistance clients receive a \$95 comforts allowance each month for incidentals.
- The Supportive Recovery Home program was an interim measure while Ministry of Health developed the required policy and procedures to support the registration of Supportive Recovery Homes as Assisted Living Residences under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*.
- The ministry put a hold on approving Supportive Recovery Homes in April 2011. A review was commissioned. The June 30, 2011, report highlighted that Supportive Recovery Homes should be registered as Assisted Living Residences under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*.
- The Ministry of Health's Assisted Living Registry began registering Supportive Recovery Homes in November 2012.
- Operators of ministry approved Supportive Recovery Homes were required to submit a completed registration package to the Assisted Living Registry by March 31, 2013, in order to continue to be eligible for ministry per diem payments for ministry clients.
- The ministry has indicated that it will no longer fund Supportive Recovery Homes that have not been registered with the Assisted Living Registry by July 31, 2013. This deadline is now under review, as the Assisted Living Registry is unlikely to process all applications within that timeframe.
- The ministry spent \$4,079,107 and \$3,250,740 in grandparented, non-licensed Supportive Recovery per diems in the 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 fiscal years, respectively. The ministry spent \$4,013,821 in new, approved Supportive Recovery per diems in the 2011/2012 fiscal year and \$3,801,759 in 2012/2013. The total program cost is \$15.1 million (gross amount).

*Numbers provided by Regional Operations Business Support Team.

Elizabeth Fry Society – Per Diems for Children

- In 2012, the Elizabeth Fry Society requested that the ministry provide per diems for children who reside with their parent while the parent receives care at the Firth Residence, a facility for single mothers operated by the Elizabeth Fry Society.
- The ministry requested validation from both MoH and MCFD that the Firth Residence place is an appropriate for children, and the Elizabeth Fry Society provided this. The ministry agreed to provide per diems for children staying with their parents at the facility.
- The ministry now provides per diems and the comforts allowance for eligible families staying at Firth Residence with their children.

Cross Reference:

- **Note #124:** Alcohol and Drug Treatment

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
INTEGRATED CASE MANAGEMENT PROJECT
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14**

ISSUE: Integrated Case Management Project – Overview

KEY MESSAGES:

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INTEGRATED CASE MANAGEMENT PROJECT – OVERVIEW

BACKGROUND:

- The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation (SDSI) and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (CFD) have a combined budget of \$3.8 billion in 2013/14 for key social programs such as child welfare, child care, services for children with special needs, income assistance, disability assistance and employment programs. These services are delivered by 4,000 front line workers and over 12,000 contracted service providers (including foster parents) and Delegated Aboriginal Agencies with over 25,000 employees. More than 200,000 individuals and families access these services every year.
- Information systems that were custom-built almost three decades ago have been modified, patched and extended over the years to meet changing business needs and are now struggling to support the complex range of services delivered by each ministry.
- By replacing aging computer systems, the ministries of SDSI and CFD will improve their ability to appropriately share and protect information and manage individual case files between ministries while laying the foundation for broader social sector information sharing.
- The goal is to provide better tools to front line staff and foster a more client-centered service delivery system to about 200,000 British Columbians, supporting better outcomes for the people we serve.
- The new system will enable us to link public spending to client outcomes—resulting in improved accountability and transparency in the social sector and provide crucial information to support social policy and program changes.
- Integrated Case Management responds to the repeated calls over the years to improve information sharing across government to ensure that its' most vulnerable citizens don't fall through the cracks:
 - **Ted Hughes Report, “BC Children and Youth Review” (2006):** “one of the key issues raised in this review has been the need, 10 years later, for better procedures for reporting and sharing information...”
 - **Child and Youth Officer (2006):** “Promoting the health and well-being of children means taking an integrated approach to the work of learning and acting in many different systems.”
 - **Honourable Judge Thomas Gove’s “Inquiry into Child Protection in British Columbia reports.” (1995):** “The Minister...should act immediately to implement the interim reform recommendations contained in this report, including... eliminate[ing] arbitrary rules and policies which inhibit the sharing of important case information among child welfare service providers.”

Project Approach:

- The project is planned in phases over five years; each phase is designed to implement a section of the overall solution, so that new functionality is delivered to the Province after each phase.
- This approach represents best practices and represents most recent thinking on large scale, multi-phased technology projects.
- Allows the Province to manage the vendor, control costs and scope, respond to government priorities, and ensure that expected outcomes are achieved.
- Allows the Province to consult with external stakeholders in conjunction with project phases and functionality to be delivered (i.e. self-service).

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
INTEGRATED CASE MANAGEMENT PROJECT
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Integrated Case Management (ICM) Project – Phase 2 and 3
Implementation

KEY MESSAGES:

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INTEGRATED CASE MANAGEMENT PROJECT – PHASE 2 AND 3 IMPLEMENTATION

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Contact:
Cell phone:
Date:

Jill Kot, ADM, Social Sector Information Services Division
s.17
June 21, 2013

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BACKGROUND:

- ICM has been up and running at this ministry for over two years now and is working well.
- As expected, there were some issues and challenges that arose during the implementation of Phase 2. During the first few months of implementation, staff and contracted service providers experienced challenges with the new system.
- Ministry staff were very diligent in addressing issues as they arose and made adjustments as needed to best support staff, as well as the individuals and families government serves.
- The Ministry of Children and Family Development (CFD) came online in April 2012. Although some challenges were anticipated and steps were taken to address them as they arose, the extent of the issues—particularly relating to the child protection components of ICM—was more significant than expected. ICM performed as expected for other program areas such as the Child Care Subsidy and Autism Funding.
- As a result of the challenges, an action plan was developed last summer.
- The Ministry of Children and Family Development is working with the Representative for Children and Youth to review child protection computer systems in other jurisdictions to see if there are best practices the ministry can use in B.C.
- While that work continues, CFD has extraordinary monitoring measures in place to ensure that no child is at risk, including close supervision to ensure that all child protection information is being entered accurately into the system.
- On September 24, 2012, government implemented scheduled enhancements to the ICM system.
- This was the largest update to ICM since Phase 2 launched on April 2, and this update follows the introduction of earlier enhancements to the system on July 3, 2012.
- Enhancements were based on feedback from staff and contractors during Phase 2 implementation, as well as required modifications to support recent policy changes to income and disability assistance in this ministry.
- The ICM changes support front-line workers and contractors by improving overall system functionality, including making it easier to produce reports, enter data and find information quickly.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
INTEGRATED CASE MANAGEMENT PROJECT
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Integrated Case Management (ICM) Project – Privacy and Security

KEY MESSAGES:

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INTEGRATED CASE MANAGEMENT (ICM) PROJECT – PRIVACY AND SECURITY

Contact:
Cell phone:
Date:

Jill Kot, ADM, Social Sector Information Services Division
June 17, 2013

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BACKGROUND:

- As in Phases 1 through 3, the Phase 4 Privacy Impact Assessment process will involve extensive consultations with the Office of the Government's Chief Information Officer, and the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner.
- The implementation of each phase of the Integrated Case Management system is supported by training, policy and practice that build privacy into the work processes.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
INTEGRATED CASE MANAGEMENT PROJECT
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Integrated Case Management Project – Project Approach

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

- The project follows a quality management plan that incorporates lessons learned from each phase, from other projects, recommendations from audits, and comprehensive deliverable acceptance criteria.

INTEGRATED CASE MANAGEMENT PROJECT – PROJECT APPROACH

- The software, selected through a competitive procurement, is a modern commercial software product (called Oracle/Siebel).
- The systems integrator, Deloitte Inc., was also selected through a competitive procurement; Deloitte Inc. has a proven track record through delivery of Social Services technology transformation projects globally within the last number of years.
- The Ministry Project Team of senior staff from Social Development and Social Innovation; Children and Family Development; and Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services, collectively bring extensive experience to the project.
- The project is governed by a DM Project Board and an Assistant Deputy Minister Committee representing the ministries of Social Development and Social Innovation; Children and Family Development; Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services; and Health, as well as executive leadership with proven track records.
- There is frequent reporting of expenditures against budget and regular progress reporting to Treasury Board.
- The contract with the systems integrator (Deloitte Inc.) is favorable to the province, and includes elements such as:
 - Manageable phases, which reduces overall delivery risk;
 - Each phase is negotiated based on the ministries' requirements;
 - Remedies in place to prevent the removal of key resources.
- This approach represents best practices and the most recent thinking on large scale, multi-phased technology projects and allows the Province to manage the vendor, control costs and scope, respond to government priorities, and ensure that expected outcomes are achieved.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION
INTEGRATED CASE MANAGEMENT PROJECT
ESTIMATES BRIEFING NOTE 2013/14

ISSUE: Integrated Case Management (ICM) Project – Project Completion

KEY MESSAGES:

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BACKGROUND:

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- The benefits of the work currently underway will be a more complete solution for Children and Family Development, supporting the ministry's practice direction.
- For Social Development and Social Innovation, the work currently underway will support the ministry direction for improved services for people through the Channel Strategy (e.g. self-service), add enhancements to aid the day-to-day work of ministry staff, and continue to prepare the ministry for future replacement of the legacy system (MIS).

CROSS REFERENCE:

- **Note #79** – Channel Strategy