

Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation (SDSI)

Application Orientation

Syrian Refugee Presentation

November 2016

What we will cover today

- General Information about Income Assistance
 - Rates
 - Your Rights and Responsibilities
 - Eligibility Criteria
 - Income and Assets
 - Your Employment Plan
 - Persons with Disabilities Designation
 - Other Benefits while on Income Assistance
- Meet with you individually
 - Review and sign your documents

What does the Ministry do?

The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation provides income assistance and other benefits to people who are eligible.

You may be eligible if you are over 19 years old and are:

- Out of work or earning very little
- Waiting for other income
- Unable to work

Income Assistance Rates

Family Unit	Maximum Rates
Single Person	\$610
Couple	\$877.22
Single parent with 1 child	\$945.58
Single parent with 3 children	\$1075.58
Couple with 1 child	\$1061.06
Couple with 3 children	\$1151.06
Couple with 5 children	\$1221.06
Additional children	\$35 per child

*Clients who become eligible for Persons with Disabilities receive higher rates

Your Rights

- Right to receive income assistance at the rates for your family size, if you meet conditions for eligibility
- Right to be treated respectfully
- Right to be given all benefits for which you qualify
- Right to access programs to enable you to return to employment if applicable.

How is Eligibility Determined?

Eligibility is based on assets and income

Some things the ministry will check include:

- Identification
- Immigration documents
- Bank statements
- All types of income (such as confirmation of federal funding and employment income)
- Vehicle registration
- Asset and property records
- Rental agreement

Workers may ask for additional documentation relating to your circumstances

Reasons You May Not Qualify

- Assets or income over the allowable limits
- You may be eligible for benefits or assistance from other sources and must use those resources before applying for income assistance.

Application Process

Applying for income assistance includes **two stages**:

1. Complete the application online
 - Complete the questions asked in the Self Serve Assessment and Application (SSAA) online tool (with your spouse)
 - Gather required documents for all family members
2. Attend an Eligibility Assessment with a ministry worker (with your spouse)

Identification (ID)

Each applicant should provide 3 pieces of ID

- **One Primary ID (Photo ID)**

- Passport, Canadian drivers license, BC Services Card with photo, Permanent Resident Card

- **One Secondary ID**

- Care Card, BC Services Card without photo, Birth Certificate, Immigration documents, credit cards
- You should also have a Birth Certificate, BC Services Card without photo or Permanent Resident Card for each child that will be included on your file

- **Valid Social Insurance Number (SIN)**

- You will also need to supply us with proof of your SIN number

Income examples include:

Income is any money the applicant receives from **any** source.

- Employment income
- Child or spousal support or maintenance
- Rental income/roomer/boarder
- Training allowance
- Employment Insurance
- Workers compensation (Work Safe BC)
- Private retirement/disability pension
- Child tax benefit
- Any other income from any source

Assets include:

Assets are anything of value that can be directly converted to cash or may be sold for cash. All applicants have an allowable asset level.

- Cash (in pocket or in bank account)
- All vehicles, including recreational vehicles
- Property (not including home you are living in)
- Life Insurance (cash surrender amount)
- Trust funds
- Stocks or bonds and other investments

We will also ask about any assets you have sold or given away in the last 2 years

Housing Expenses Considered:

- Monthly rent or room and board
- Additional rental costs:
 - Electricity (hydro)
 - Heat (gas)
 - Basic phone

Employment Plan

- Each adult in the family unit is expected to take steps to move toward financial independence and off income assistance.
- Each adult will sign and comply with an Employment Plan. This is an agreement which outlines the activities and expectations for each of you to find employment or become more employable.

This could include:

- Employment Program of BC – Work BC
- English classes
- Community Resources

*Where clients have a significant disability, they may also apply for Persons with Disability designation

Employment Planning

Depending on your circumstances you will be required to sign one of two Employment Plans:

- The first Employment Plan you may be required to sign includes a referral to the Employment Program of BC (Work BC).
- The second Employment Plan option has two parts. For the first 6 months, you will complete “Activities Toward Independence”. If you still require income assistance after 6 months, and are not designated as a Person with Disabilities, you must attend the Employment Program of BC (Work BC).

Review activities in Employment Plans, compliance and consequences

Employment Planning

Client Responsibilities and Obligations

- If you have children, you are expected to comply with your Employment Plan. It is your responsibility to make arrangements for the care of your children. For example , having a friend look after your children or sharing child care responsibilities with your spouse.
- If a client or spouse does not meet their employment obligations, the family unit may be ineligible for assistance.
- A client is considered to not 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.

When you find work

- Declare your net earnings on your Monthly Report and submit your pay stubs as verification
- Earnings exemptions based on your family unit
 - Singles and couples - \$200 monthly exemption
 - Families with children - \$400 monthly exemption
- Work BC may be able to assist with transportation, work clothes, safety equipment, etc.

Persons with a Disabilities Designation

- To apply for Persons with a Disabilities (PWD) designation, you must first complete the application process
- Applicants must meet the financial eligibility criteria for disability assistance before being provided the PWD designation application form
- Applicants may start the designation application process six months prior to their 18th birthday to ensure they can be assessed for the designation prior to requiring assistance

Person with Disabilities

- A person may be designated as a Person with Disabilities (PWD) if they have reached 18 years of age and have a severe mental (including a mental disorder) or physical impairment that meets **all** of the following criteria:
 - in the opinion of a *medical practitioner* or *nurse practitioner*, the impairment is likely to continue for at least two years
 - in the opinion of a *prescribed professional*, the impairment directly and significantly restricts the person's ability to perform *daily living activities* either continuously or periodically for extended periods
 - as a result of those restrictions, the person requires an *assistive device*, the significant help or supervision of another person, or the services of an assistance animal to perform daily living activities

Applying for the Persons with Disabilities Designation

- The ministry provides Persons with Disabilities (PWD) with higher assistance rates and a wide range of supports including supplements related to employment, transportation and health.
- The ministry takes approximately 65 business days to process an application for the Persons with Disabilities designation.

Medical Coverage

The ministry provides basic medical and dental coverage for income and disability assistance clients.

- While on income assistance, your BC Services Card/Care Card will cover:
 - Medical Service Plan (MSP) premiums
 - Most prescriptions
 - Emergency dental work for adults to relieve pain*
 - Children also get basic dental coverage (up to \$1400 every two years)*
 - Glasses*
 - 10 visits per year Extended Medical Therapies - Chiropractic, Physiotherapy, Massage, Acupuncture, Naturopathy, Podiatry*
- *Costs are paid up to the maximum Ministry rate. Clients are responsible for costs that exceed the rates.
- The Ministry does not reimburse for these costs, please ensure your supplier or medical practitioner confirms your eligibility
- Persons with Disabilities may receive additional coverage

Direct Deposit

- The ministry encourages the use of direct deposit as a safe, convenient, cost-effective and dependable method for clients to manage their funds.

Monthly Report

- You must complete your Monthly Report and submit to your office by the 5th of each month. It will come in the mail, attached to your cheque or Notice of Direct Deposit.
- You must report changes in your circumstances such as address, shelter/utility costs, number of dependents, changes in employability status, whether you are attending school, and any changes in assets.
- You are required to report all income received in the previous month. You must also submit verification of your income such as pay stubs.
- Failure to report changes may result in delays in determining eligibility for assistance, an overpayment and a requirement to repay. Inaccurate or incomplete reporting may also result in a sanction.
- You may complete your monthly report online through My Self Serve after you create an account.

Example of a Monthly Report:



Ministry of
Social Development
and Social Innovation

MONTHLY REPORT

TO CONTINUE TO RECEIVE ASSISTANCE: COMPLETE THIS FORM AND SUBMIT TO THE MINISTRY BY THE 5TH OF NEXT MONTH, OR ONLINE THROUGH YOUR MY SELF SERVE ACCOUNT (MYSELF.SERVE.GOV.BC.CA)

Notice: Information on this form is collected under the authority of the *Employment and Assistance Act* and Regulation and the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act* and Regulation and will be used for verification of continuing eligibility for assistance. The accuracy of the information provided on this form will be checked by comparing it against information held by other provincial, federal and private agencies. Collection, use and disclosure of the information is as authorized by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. If you have questions about the collection, use or disclosure of this information, contact the ministry.

Declaration: I understand that the ministry may disclose this information to verify continuing eligibility for assistance under the above Acts and Regulations. I declare that all of the information provided on this form to the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation is true and complete.

APPLICANT 1 SIGNATURE		DATE	APPLICANT 2 SIGNATURE		DATE
PRINT NAME			PRINT NAME		
TELEPHONE	SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER		TELEPHONE	SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER	

NEXT CHEQUE ISSUE

BENEFIT MONTH	TOTAL ALLOWANCE	SHELTER PORTION	INCOME DECLARED	INCOME DEDUCTED	OTHER DEDUCTIONS	TOTAL CHEQUE
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CASE ID CASELOAD

SINCE YOUR LAST DECLARATION:				ARE YOU STILL IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE?				YES	NO				
HAS YOUR FAMILY UNIT RECEIVED OR DISPOSED OF ANY ASSETS?				<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	ANY CHANGES TO YOUR SHELTER COSTS?				<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO		
				Applicant 1	Applicant 2	ANY CHANGES IN DEPENDANTS OR PERSONS LIVING IN THE HOME?				<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO		
ATTENDING / ENROLLED IN SCHOOL / TRAINING?				<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO						
ARE YOU LOOKING FOR WORK?				<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	Applicant 1	Applicant 2	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO		
HAVE YOU MOVED OR ENTERED A FACILITY?				<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	ANY OUTSTANDING WARRANTS FOR YOUR ARREST?				<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO

DECLARE ALL INCOME (Submit proof) ENTER "0" IF NONE

INCOME DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT		INCOME DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	
	Applicant 1	Applicant 2		Applicant 1	Applicant 2
EMPLOYMENT INCOME			WORKERS' COMPENSATION		
EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE			PRIVATE PENSIONS (EG: RETIREMENT, DISABILITY)		
SPOUSAL SUPPORT / ALIMONY			TRUST INCOME		
CHILD SUPPORT			OAS / GIS		
WORKBC FINANCIAL SUPPORT			CANADA PENSION PLAN (CPP)		
STUDENT FUNDING (EG: LOANS, BURSARIES)			TAX CREDITS (EG: GST CREDIT)		
ROOM / BOARD INCOME			CHILD TAX BENEFITS		
RENTAL INCOME			INCOME TAX REFUND		
ALL OTHER INCOME OR MONEY RECEIVED			INCOME OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN		

PLEASE EXPLAIN ALL CHANGES INCLUDING INCOME:

HR0081 (15/06/26)
OPC 7530903053 (250/Pk)

My Self Serve

- Registered portal clients can:
 - Submit your monthly report
 - Upload Documents
 - Receive and reply to messages from the ministry
 - Request select services online and see the status of your request
 - Review, sign and submit your Employment Plan
 - View and print your confirmation of assistance and tax information
- Visit myselfserve.gov.bc.ca to get started today!

Request for an Interpreter

- If you do not comprehend or communicate through written or spoken English, the ministry can provide access to interpretation services by telephone and, on a case-by-case basis, in person.
- The ministry works with professionally trained interpreters.
- The use of ministry contracted professional interpretation services is preferred.
- In cases where appropriate services are not available or the applicant or recipient declines the interpreter offered by the ministry, the applicant or recipient is permitted to use an interpreter of their choice.

Reconsiderations

- If you disagree with any decision the ministry makes, talk to a ministry worker about having the decision reconsidered and reviewed
- The worker will explain the steps and process to have the decision reviewed at a higher level

Once you are eligible:

- If you are eligible for assistance, you will be issued prorated assistance from the date your federal Resettlement Funding expires
- This money will be deposited in your bank account. If you do not have direct deposit, a cheque will be mailed to you.
- After your first cheque, you will receive your monthly assistance usually on the last Wednesday of the month.

Take away package:

You will be given a package today which includes:

- The address of your income assistance office
- The Ministry's phone and fax number
- "*My Self Serve*" information sheet
- Blank "Monthly Report/Stub"
- "*Completing your Monthly Report*" Information Sheet
- Community Resource List
- List of "Cheque Issue" dates

Documents you are signing today

- Application for Income Assistance Part 1
 - The Government's Responsibilities
 - Privacy
 - Your Rights and Responsibilities
 - Notification and Consents
 - Declaration
- Application for Income Assistance Part 2
 - Medical Services Plan (MSP) Release
 - Declaration
- Employment Plan