



The First Nations Social Development Society

FNSDS Resource Centre

Field Communiqué # 1, March / 2008

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

- Q. I understand that the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance has made changes to the Child In Home of a Relative (CIHR) program, incorporating background screenings on all adults residing in the home of a relative. Does this mean the Guardian Financial Assistance (GFA) program will change too? If so, When?**
- A. Yes.** In order to maintain comparability between CIHR and GFA, INAC is required to implement similar provisions for screening checks on all adults living in the home or a relative as part of the GFA application process. The goal is to have a system for screening checks in place on July 1, 2008, at which time the caregivers of all new on-reserve applicants to GFA and adults living in their household—would undergo screening checks.
- Q. Will existing GFA cases have to undergo the screening process as well? If so, When?**
- A. Yes.** Screening checks will also be conducted for all cases previously approved before July 1, 2008, at a time yet to be determined.
- Q. Has consideration been given to the impacts that the new screening requirements might have for people living on reserve?**
- A. Yes.** INAC recognizes that the decision to require screenings for GFA could impact families and households on reserve. For this reason, INAC is working with the First Nations Social Development Society and the Province, and are planning a pilot project with some First Nations before July 1, 2008. The pilot project will allow First Nations to test the changes in their communities and provide input on the best way to implement the GFA screening process.
- Q. As part of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement, former IRS students have been receiving financial compensation (Common Experience Payments—CEP) for their attendance at an IRS. How does the CEP effect income assistance entitlement? What about the assets purchased with CEP/IRS monies?**
- A.** In accordance with INAC Social Development Program policy 4.9.16 (May 2007)—Income and Exemptions; money paid or payable to a person in settlement of a claim of abuse at an Indian Residential school is not considered income and is fully exempt. However, any funds paid as income replacement is considered unearned income and subject to deduction from income assistance entitlement. Assets accrued with exempt income are also deemed to be exempt. It is the responsibility of the client to clearly document that the funds used to purchase such assets originated directly from the exempt income.
- Q. I have IA clients that will be turning 65 this year. How and when do they apply for Old Age Security?**
- A.** An application for OAS benefits should be submitted about six months BEFORE the Senior/Elder 's 65th birthday. A Senior/Elder who has lived in Canada for at least 10 years or has lived in a country with which Canada has an international Social Security agreement may be eligible for benefits. For complete information and application forms contact Service Canada toll free at 1-800-277-9914. Information and applications are available for download on-line at www.servicecanada.gc.ca
- Q. Are there any other supplements Seniors/Elders could be eligible for?**
- A. Yes.** If the Senior/Elder is in receipt of an OAS pension and has low income, he/she may qualify for the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS). If the Senior/Elder has contributed to Canada Pension Plan (CPP) they may be eligible for CPP Retirement Pension. The Senior's supplement (SS) is a provincial top-up to the federal OAS/GIS payment which is paid to low-income residents of BC over 65 years of age who are receiving OAS/GIS. For full details on OAS, GIS and other financial programs for Seniors/Elders contact Service Canada toll free at 1-800-277-9914 or visit the website at www.servicecanada.gc.ca

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- Q. Does OAS/GIS/SS or other pension income effect income assistance?**
A. Yes. In accordance with INAC Social Development Policy 4.8.2—OAS/GIS/SS and any type or class of CPP are deemed to be unearned income and are subject to deduction from income assistance entitlement. Individuals aged 65 or older in receipt of OAS/GIS/SS/ CPP may be eligible for supplementary social assistance as outlined in policy 11.3.1 (August 2007) of the INAC Social Development policy and procedures manual.
- Q. I missed the January 2008 deadline for TESI, Family Violence and NCBR proposals. Can I still submit a proposal and receive funding for this year? What if I don't submit them at all?**
A. Proposals received after the deadline will be reviewed on an ongoing basis up until August 1, 2008. If a proposal is not submitted by August 1, 2008, you will not be eligible for funding in 2008/09.
- Q. When are the TESI, Family Violence and NCBR annual reports due and where do I get the report forms?**
A. Annual reports for TESI, Family Violence and NCBR are due May 31, 2008 for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2008. Annual Report forms can be found in the Recipient Reporting Guide 2007/08 under the Social Tab. Forms are available for download on-line by following the link:
http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/dci/dcilog_e.asp
When asked for the password, enter BC
Go to fiscal year 2007-2008
open *Recipient Reporting Forms*
scroll down to *Social Development*
select applicable report form for download in pdf format.
- Q. Where do I send my completed proposals and annual reports for TESI, Family Violence and NCBR?**
A. Completed proposals and annual can be mailed or faxed to:
- Allocation Officer
Resource Management Unit, Funding Services Directorate
Indian & Northern Affairs Canada
600 - 1138 Melville Street
VANCOUVER, BC V6E 4S3 Fax: (604) 775-7400
- Q. Do I have to provide my IA clients with a T5007 Statement of Benefits in order for them to complete their income tax returns?**
A. Yes and No. Status individuals in receipt of IA from the Band are **not required** to report this income on their income tax returns. As a recipient of IA on-reserve that income is 100% exempt from income tax. No information slip is needed. **Non-Status** individuals in receipt of IA directly from the Band **are** required to report this income on their income tax returns as it is taxable. A T5007 Statement of Benefits is required.
- Q. Will there be more BSDW Training sessions this year?**
A. Yes. FNSDS will continue to provide Level 1 and 2 training to BSDWs in the 2008/09 fiscal year. We are pleased to announce that BSDW Level I training will be provided Regionally with locations and dates to be announced. Watch for faxed advertisements with complete details coming soon to your Band office.
- Q. Our Band is facing a Social Development Program Compliance Review. Is there any assistance FNSDS can provide to help prepare?**
A. Yes. FNSDS has experienced field staff that are available to come to your community to complete a social development program assessment. This assessment is a cursory look at your Nation's social development program and is designed to provide feedback on the current status of your IA program, areas of concern and identify BSDW training needs. Requests for program assessments can be made directly to FNSDS:

FOR FURTHER INFO & SUPPORT CONTACT:

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