

# Income Assistance on Reserve in British Columbia

Income assistance benefits | Disability benefits | Other benefits



Legal  
Services  
Society

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**Editors:** Jay Istvanffy and Barbara Johnston

**Designers:** Gillian Boyd and Dan Daulby

**Legal reviewer:** Cliff Thorstenson

**Publications Development Coordinators:** Alex Peel and Patricia Lim

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This booklet may not be reproduced commercially, but copying for other purposes, with credit, is encouraged. This booklet explains social development policy in general. It is not intended to give you legal advice on your particular problem. Because each case is different, you may need to get legal help. This booklet is up to date as of March 2017.

See the back cover to find out how to get free copies of this booklet.





## If this is an emergency

If you don't have enough money for food, clothing, or shelter, *get help right away*. Don't wait until you have no money left, you've sold your belongings, or you lose your home.

You can:

- apply for income assistance immediately,
- find an advocate, and
- call 211 to find out about services in your community.

## Apply for income assistance immediately

Call your band social development worker to apply for income assistance immediately. You can reach your band's social development worker by calling the band office for the reserve you live on. It's a good idea to make an appointment.

If you don't know how to contact your band office, call Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (sometimes called **INAC**). The person you speak to can give you the contact information. They can also answer questions you may have about the benefits and services available.

Phone: **604-775-5100** (Greater Vancouver)  
**1-800-665-9320** (call no charge from anywhere in BC)

## Find an advocate

You can get help from an **advocate**. An advocate is someone who helps people protect their rights and get the benefits they're entitled to. An advocate can help you:

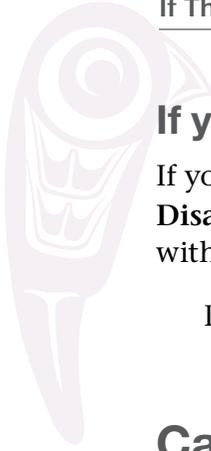
- apply for income assistance,
- learn about income assistance rights and benefits,
- prepare your monthly declarations, and
- appeal decisions made by your social development worker.

See page 57 for information on how to find an advocate.

Someone from your band office can also help you find the services you need. "Who can help" also has a list of community organizations that can help.

If you have Internet access, **PovNet** is an online service with information about poverty issues. The PovNet website has links to groups that deal with issues like income assistance and housing.

Website: **povnet.org**



## If you have a disability

If you have a disability and need help, you can contact the **BC Aboriginal Network on Disability Society**. The society provides a variety of support services to Aboriginal people with disabilities.

Phone: **250-381-7303** (Greater Victoria)

**1-888-815-5511** (call no charge outside Greater Victoria)

## Call 211

BC211 is an information and referral service. When you call 211, the person you speak to can let you know about services in your community that can help you. BC211 is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Your call will be kept private and confidential.

BC211 is available to:

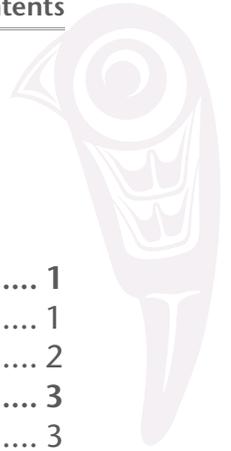
- Greater Vancouver,
- the Fraser Valley, and
- Squamish-Lillooet.

Phone: **211** (Greater Vancouver, the Fraser Valley, Squamish-Lillooet)

TTY: **604-875-0885** (if you're hard of hearing)

Text: **211** (text the name of your city to start a chat session)

Email: **help@bc211.ca** (all of BC)



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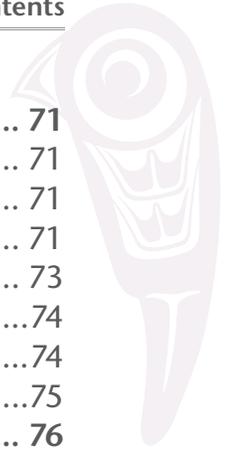
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# Introduction



1



## About this booklet

This booklet describes what you can do if you need financial help and you live on reserve in British Columbia. **Income assistance** is money and other benefits that can help you (page 3).

This booklet explains the following:

- How income assistance on reserve works
- What income assistance benefits you can get on reserve
- Who can get income assistance on reserve
- How to get income assistance on reserve
- What your rights and responsibilities are when you're applying for or getting income assistance benefits
- What to do if you're turned down for income assistance benefits

In this booklet, words that you might not know are **bold**. These words are defined or explained, usually within the same sentence or paragraph. Sometimes you will be referred to a different page, where the word is explained in more detail.

## Who this booklet is for

This booklet is for you if:

- you live on reserve in British Columbia, and
- you don't have enough money to meet your needs.

You don't have to be Aboriginal in order to get income assistance. *Anyone* who lives on reserve can get income assistance, even if they're not Aboriginal.



## If you live off reserve or plan to move off reserve

This booklet does *not* talk about income assistance off reserve. Income assistance off reserve is also known as **welfare**. If you're Aboriginal and don't live on reserve or plan to move off reserve, you must apply for income assistance through the BC Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation (sometimes called **MSDSI**).

### Applying for income assistance off reserve

You can apply for income assistance at the nearest office of the BC Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation. You need to fill out an online application before your intake interview. If you might be evicted from your home or need food or medicine right away, let the ministry know. You may be able to get an earlier appointment.

If you need help with your application off reserve, see our booklet *How to Apply for Welfare*. You can get a copy at the same place as where you got this booklet. Or go to [mylawbc.com/pubs](http://mylawbc.com/pubs). It can take a few weeks to receive income assistance off reserve.

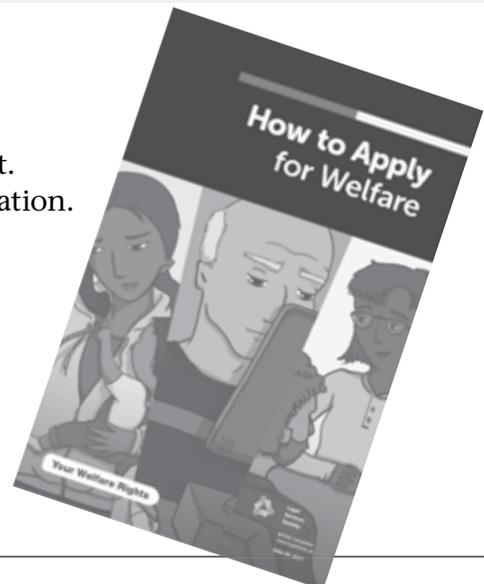
### If you move off reserve

If you're getting income assistance benefits on reserve and move off reserve, you have to re-apply for benefits at a Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation office. Before you move, speak with your band's social development worker. Or contact the ministry or an advocate for more information (page 57).

If you've been getting Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers benefits (often called **PPMB benefits**) on reserve and plan to move off reserve, talk to an advocate immediately. You may need to re-apply if you were on PPMB on reserve.

If you've been getting Persons with Disabilities benefits (often called **PWD benefits**) on reserve and you move off reserve, the ministry will ask you to sign a form. This is so they can check your file to make sure you can still get these benefits under their standards. Until they've finished checking your file, you will receive the basic income assistance rates. If this causes a problem, talk to an advocate right away.

If you move off reserve and need to apply for income assistance, pick up a copy of *How to Apply for Welfare* at the same place as where you got this booklet. *How to Apply for Welfare* can help you with your application.





# What is income assistance?

Income assistance is sometimes called **welfare** or **social assistance**. **Income assistance on reserve** is money and other benefits for people who:

- live on reserve,
- don't have enough money to meet their needs, and
- have no other reasonable way of getting money.

Income assistance benefits for people living on reserve include:

- monthly benefits (page 7), including:
  - **basic income assistance** benefits (page 11),
  - **Persons with Disabilities** benefits (often called **PWD benefits**; page 20),
  - **Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers** benefits (often called **PPMB benefits**; page 25),
  - **hardship assistance** (page 28), and
- a range of other benefits (page 35).

Each benefit has its own requirements for determining whether you can get that benefit. This means that you may be able to get some benefits but not others, depending on your circumstances. How you qualify for and apply for each benefit is described in the chapters that follow.

How much you get for each benefit is also described in the chapters that follow. How much you get depends on:

- your circumstances, and
- how many people are in your family.

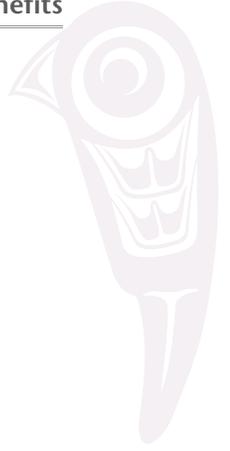
You have rights and responsibilities when you're applying for and getting income assistance. Your rights and responsibilities are explained in chapter 4 (see page 38).

## How can an advocate help?

An advocate can help and support you as you go through the process of applying for and getting income assistance. An advocate can also help you if you have any problems with your band social development worker. And they can help you with other problems you may have as a result of poverty. "Who can help" has information on who can help and how to find an advocate (page 57). It also has information on where you can go if you need legal help or information.

# Monthly Benefits





# What are monthly benefits?

There are four types of monthly benefits:

- Basic income assistance benefits (see page 11)
- Persons with Disabilities benefits (often called **PWD benefits** or **disability assistance**; see page 20)
- Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers benefits (often called **PPMB benefits**; see page 25)
- Hardship assistance (see page 28)

Even if you can't get monthly benefits, you may be able to get some other benefits through your band social development worker, or other federal and provincial programs (page 35).

The amount you get for each type of monthly benefit depends on how many people are in your **family unit** (below).

Each type of monthly benefit has:

- a shelter allowance (money to help you with your housing costs; see page 9), and
- a **support allowance** (also called a basic needs allowance; this is money to help you with the basic things you need, like food and clothing; see page 10).

## What is a family unit?

A family unit includes:

- a person who's applying for or getting income assistance, and
- that person's **dependants**.

Dependants can be children under 19 who live at home. Dependants can also be adults. (See "If you live with another adult" on the next page.)



A family unit can be:

-  a single person,
-  a couple without children,
-  a single parent with dependent children, or
-  a couple with dependent children.

If your dependent child turns 19 while they're still in school, they can still be considered a dependant until the end of the school year.

### If you live with another adult

If you live with another adult, you may be considered members of the same family unit if:

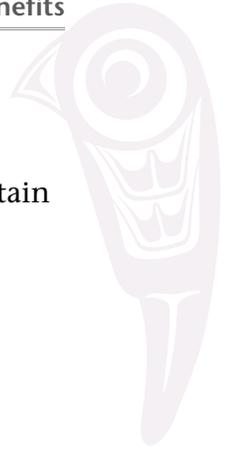
- you share **income** (money that comes into your home, usually your wages or salary),
- you're in a **dependent relationship** (one of you supports the other), or
- you're **spouses** (you're married or live together in a marriage-like relationship; this includes same-sex couples).

### How many people in a family unit can get income assistance?

Only one person in a family unit can get income assistance for the whole family. However, two or more people sharing a home can each be eligible for income assistance if:

- they're not spouses, and
- neither of them is a dependant of the other.

If you share a home with another adult who isn't your spouse or dependant and your worker decides to pay you as a single family unit, you can appeal. See page 49.



## What is the shelter allowance?

Your shelter allowance will cover your actual housing costs. But this is only up to a certain amount. Your costs may include:

- rent,
- heating and utility costs (including wood for heating),
- basic phone services, and
- if you own the home you live in, mortgage payments and house and contents insurance.

Sometimes other services may be included. For example:

- water,
- sewage disposal, and
- garbage pick-up.

The **maximum** (full) amount of your shelter allowance depends on how many people are in your family. If your family has more than seven people, add up to \$35 per month for each person. To have your shelter costs covered, you'll need to give your bills to your band social development worker.

Shelter allowance rates (March 2017)		
	Family size	Maximum shelter allowance
	Single person	\$375.00
	2 people	\$570.00
	3 people	\$660.00
	4 people	\$700.00
	5 people	\$750.00
	6 people	\$785.00
	7 people	\$820.00



If you share custody of a child whose **primary residence** (where they live most of the time) is with someone else, you may be able to include that child in your family unit for the shelter allowance. You must have a court order or a shared parenting agreement showing the child lives with you at least 40 percent of the month (at least 11 days). If the child stays with you for more than 50 percent of the month (at least 15 days), you can get shelter and support allowances that includes them in your family unit.

### What if there's more than one family unit in the same home?

If two or more family units share the same home, your band social development worker will give you what is called a **shared shelter allowance**. This means your worker will divide the total shelter costs between the total number of people living in the home. Your worker will then determine the shelter costs for your family.

### What is the basic support allowance?

Your support allowance is for the basic things you need that aren't included in your shelter allowance. For example:

- food,
- clothing, and
- transportation.

How much you get for a support allowance depends on:

- your age,
- the composition of your family unit, and
- whether adult members of your family have a PWD or PPMB designation.

Different rules apply if you receive room and board. (Room and board means both shelter and food.) Ask your band social development worker about these rules.



# What are income assistance benefits?

Income assistance is the monthly benefit most people get when they get assistance on reserve.

If you don't have enough money for food, clothing, or shelter, *get help right away*. Don't wait until you have no money left, you've sold your belongings, or you lose your home. Apply for income assistance immediately. An advocate can help you (page 57).

## How you qualify

To get income assistance benefits, you must:

- be an adult (19 or over), and
- live on reserve in BC.

You must also be:

- a Canadian citizen,
- a permanent resident,
- a protected person (Convention refugee or person in need of protection),
- a sponsored immigrant whose sponsor can't or won't provide support, or
- a refugee claimant.

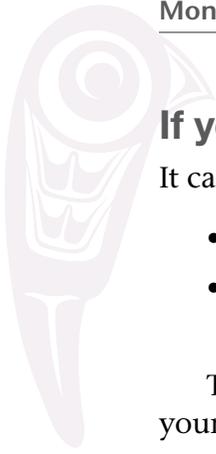
To get additional benefits for adult dependants, those adults must fit into one of the categories above or be:

- on a temporary resident's permit or a Minister's permit,
- waiting for a decision about an application for refugee status, or
- subject to a deportation order that Canada Immigration hasn't carried out or can't carry out.

Your band social development worker will also look at your **assets** (things you own) and income. You won't be able to get income assistance benefits if:

- your assets are worth too much,
- your monthly income is too high for your family unit, or
- you get rid of assets to make yourself eligible for income assistance.

See pages 12 – 16 for more information on assets and income.



## If you're under 19

It can be difficult to get income assistance. You may only be able to get assistance:

- in exceptional circumstances, and
- after every effort has been made to get your parents to take financial responsibility for you.

The band social development worker will get a child protection agency involved in your case if:

- **child protection** concerns arise (if your worker is concerned that it may not be safe for you to live with your family), or
- you live in a **marriage-like relationship** (you live with your boyfriend or girlfriend).

You have the right to appeal if:

- your worker turns you down for income assistance,
- your worker cuts off your benefits, or
- your worker cuts back your benefits.

See page 49 for information on how to appeal.

If you're a **child-in-care** (if you're in foster care or an approved independent living situation) and you have a baby, you may get help covering some of your baby's needs. If you have Indian status, you may also be able to get medical coverage through the First Nations Health Authority.

## Assets

Assets are things you own or have equity in, such as:

- money (your bank accounts),
- trust property,
- a house or land,
- livestock, and
- other possessions that you could sell for cash.

Your family won't qualify for income assistance if the total value of these assets is too high.



## Exempt assets

Some assets are called **exempt assets**. These are assets that your social development worker *should not* take into account when they decide if you can get income assistance.

For example:

- your family unit's place of residence
- necessary household furniture and equipment (such as kitchen appliances or appliances you use to heat your home)
- clothing, including work clothes
- commercial fishing boats (if you fish for a living)
- farming equipment (if you farm for a living)
- breeding stock
- Canada Child Benefit (includes BC Family Bonus and BC early childhood tax benefit) and
- Tax refunds (GST credits)

Your first vehicle is considered an excluded asset if you have \$10,000 or less of **equity** in it. Equity is the difference between how much you could get for your vehicle if you sold it and how much you owe on it. For example, if you owe \$5,000 on your vehicle but you could sell it for \$10,000, you would have \$5,000 of equity in it.

If you have more than \$10,000 of equity in your vehicle, you may have to sell it before you can get income assistance.

People applying for or getting PWD benefits have no limit on the amount of equity in their vehicle (page 20).

When you apply for income assistance, tell your worker about *all* of your assets. Do this whether you think they're excluded assets or not. If your worker includes assets you think should be excluded, you can appeal (page 49).

## What your assets can be worth

Your assets can't be worth more than a certain amount. The allowable amount depends on the number of people in your family unit and how old they are. Your worker will take into account the cash you have on hand, as well as your other assets. See the table on the next page for how much you can have in cash and total assets and still be able to get income assistance.



Assets allowed (March 2017)			
Family size	Maximum assets for people on basic income assistance or PPMB	Maximum assets for people on PWD	
Single person	\$2,000	\$100,000	
Single parent and 1 child	\$4,000	\$100,000	
Couple	\$4,000	\$200,000 if both are on PWD	
Couple and 1 child	\$4,000	\$100,000 if one adult is on PWD; \$200,000 if both adults are PWD	

## Income

Income is money that comes into your household. However, income *does not* include:

- income assistance benefits,
- GST credits,
- child tax benefits,
- post-adoption assistance payments, or
- compensation for abuse at Indian residential schools and other government institutions.

## Earned income

Some income is considered **earned income**. Generally speaking, this is money you get from working, such as your wages or salary.



## How much money can I earn without having it deducted?

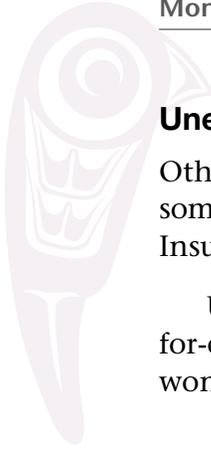
Some forms of earned income may be **exempt** for certain people. This means that this income won't be **deducted from** (taken out of) your benefits. You can claim earned income exemptions if you've been getting income assistance for more than one month immediately before the month in which you claim the exemption. See the table below for amounts.

Earned income exemptions (March 2017)		
	Family size	Earned income exemption
<b>If you're single</b>		
	Employable single person under 65	Up to \$200 per month
<b>If you're a single parent or a couple with children</b>		
	Single parent under 65 or couple, both under 65 with children	Up to \$400 per month
	Single parent under 65 with a disabled child* or couple, both under 65 with disabled child*	Up to \$500 per month
<b>If you and your spouse don't have children</b>		
	Employable couple, both under 65	Up to \$200 per month
<b>If your family unit has at least one person on PPMB</b>		
	Family unit with one adult on PPMB	Up to \$500 per month

\* This applies to parents who can't leave their home to work because they're caring for a:

- disabled and dependent child,
- relative's disabled child under Child Out of the Parental Home program, or
- disabled foster child.

Ask your worker for more information.



## Unearned income

Other income is considered **unearned income**. This is money that you get from something other than working. For example, child support payments and Employment Insurance benefits.

Usually, unearned income will be taken out of your income assistance cheque, dollar-for-dollar. However, some unearned income, such as certain child support payments won't be taken out of your monthly benefits.

When you apply for income assistance, tell your worker about *all* of your income: earned, unearned, exempt, or non-exempt. Your worker will decide what your income is for income assistance purposes. If you don't agree with your worker's decision about your income, you can appeal. See page 49.

## How you apply

Apply for income assistance when you or your family is short of money. Don't wait until you have no money left, you've sold your possessions, or you've lost your home.

## Where you apply

Apply for income assistance with the band social development worker *for the reserve you live on*. You can reach the worker by calling the band office for your reserve.

If you don't know how to contact your band office, call Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. The person you speak to can give you the contact information. They can also answer questions you may have about the benefits and services available.

Phone: 604-775-5100 (Greater Vancouver)

1-800-665-9320 (call no charge from anywhere in BC)



## What do band social development workers do?

Band social development workers make decisions about income assistance on reserve. They're employed by an **administering authority** of the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada Social Development Program. The administering authority is the group that's legally responsible for giving out income assistance. The administering authority is usually the band whose reserve you live on. It may also be a tribal council or other Aboriginal organization in your area.

Band social development workers must follow Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada policies when they make decisions about income assistance. It's important to remember that band social development workers don't make income assistance policy, they just follow it.

## What do I bring to my first appointment?

When you call the worker to make an appointment, ask what you need to bring with you. Before giving you income assistance, the worker will need you to prove:

- your **identity** (who you are), and
- your **financial situation** (how much money you have and what your expenses are).

To do this, they will want to see a lot of your papers, including:

- One piece of primary (photo) ID each for both you and your spouse (for example, driver's licence, BC ID, Indian status card)
- One piece of secondary ID each for both you and your spouse (for example, birth certificate, BC CareCard/BC Services Card, credit card, original citizenship papers)
- One piece of ID for each dependent child (for example, birth certificate or BC CareCard/BC Services Card)
- Social Insurance Number card (sometimes called a **SIN card**)
- An up-to-date bank book or bank statement (if you have a bank account)
- Recent rent, fuel, and utilities bills
- Statements showing recent income (pay stubs)
- Documents about your Workers' Compensation or Employment Insurance benefits
- Documents about your assets (things you own such as your car, house, or boat)

Take as many of these documents as possible with you to your appointment. If you can't find all of them before your appointment, apply anyway. But eventually you will need to give them to your worker.

You'll only be able to get income assistance after your worker checks your information. If your worker asks you for information that doesn't exist or that you can't reasonably get, tell your worker right away. This will help to avoid delays in getting your benefits.



Tell your worker if you need money immediately. For example, if you have no food or face losing your home. Your worker can sometimes provide assistance while checking your information.

If you're turned down for income assistance because you couldn't provide this information, you can appeal (page 49).

## If you're turned down for or cut off of income assistance

Your social development worker may turn you down for or cut off your income assistance benefits if you:

- don't have identification,
- quit a job without a good reason,
- were fired from a job because of something you did,
- aren't looking for work,
- turned down a job you could do,
- are on strike or locked out from your job,
- haven't looked for other sources of money, or
- are waiting for other benefits such as Employment Insurance or Workers' Compensation.

If you're turned down for or cut off the income assistance benefit you applied for, you might still be able to get hardship assistance (page 28) or other important benefits (page 35).

If your worker turns you down for income assistance or a particular benefit, you can appeal (page 49).

## How much you get each month

The amount you get depends on:

- whether you're **single** (live alone),
- if you're not single, the size of your family,
- whether you and/or your spouse are **employable** (able to work),
- whether you and/or your spouse are 65 or older, and
- whether you and /or your spouse are a PPMB or PWD.



Income assistance amounts (March 2017)				
	Family size	Shelter allowance maximum	Support (basic needs) allowance	Total payment maximum
<b>If you're single</b>				
	Employable single person under 65	\$375.00	\$235.00	\$610.00
	Single person 65 or over	\$375.00	\$531.42	\$906.42
<b>If you're a single parent</b> The support (basic needs) allowance <i>doesn't</i> increase if you have more than one child.*				
	Employable single parent under 65, and 1 child	\$570.00	\$375.58	\$945.58
	Single parent 65 or over, and 1 child	\$570.00	\$672.08	\$1,242.08
<b>If you and your spouse don't have children</b>				
	Employable couple under 65	\$570.00	\$307.22	\$877.22
	Couple, both 65 or over	\$570.00	\$949.06	\$1,519.06
	Couple, 1 person under 65, 1 65 or over	\$570.00	\$700.56	\$1,270.56
<b>If you and your spouse have children</b> The support (basic needs) allowance <i>doesn't</i> increase if you have more than one child.*				
	Employable couple under 65 and 1 child	\$660.00	\$401.06	\$1,061.06

\*If you have more than one child, the shelter allowance increases (see page 9).



## What are Persons with Disabilities benefits?

Persons with Disabilities benefits are monthly benefits for people with certain types of physical or mental disabilities. (Persons with Disabilities benefits are often called **PWD benefits**.) These benefits help people who can't work or look for work because of their disability.

Families on PWD benefits get a higher support (basic needs) allowance than families getting the basic income assistance benefit.

### How you qualify

You may be able to get PWD benefits if you live in BC and you:

- are 18 years of age or older, AND
- have a severe mental or physical disability that:
  - a doctor or nurse practitioner confirms will last for two years or longer, AND
  - a **prescribed health professional** (such as a doctor, registered nurse, or medical professional) says directly and significantly limits your ability to do daily activities.

You also have to show that, because of your disability, in order to manage your daily life you need help from:

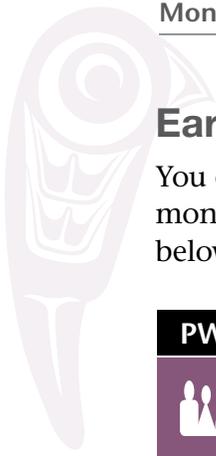
- another person,
- an **assistance animal** (such as a guide dog), or
- an **assistive device** (such as a wheelchair, cane, or scooter).



## What your assets can be worth

The amount of cash and assets you can have and still be able to get PWD benefits are different than what non-PWD applicants/recipients receive.

Assets allowed (March 2017)		
	Family size	Applicant/Recipient
	Single person on PWD	\$100,000
	Single parent on PWD, and 1 child	\$100,000
	Couple (both are on PWD)	\$200,000
	Couple (1 person is PWD)	\$100,000



## Earned income exemptions

You can claim earned income exemptions if you've been getting PWD benefits for one month immediately before the month in which you claim the exemption. See the table below for amounts.

PWD earned income exemptions (March 2017)		
	Family size	Earned income exemption
<b>If you're single</b>		
	Single person under 65 on PWD	Up to \$800 per month or \$9,600 per year
<b>If you're a single parent</b>		
	Single parent under 65 on PWD	Up to \$800 per month or \$9,600 per year
<b>If you and your spouse don't have children</b>		
	Couple, both under 65, 1 adult on PWD	Up to \$1,000 per month or \$12,000 per year
<b>If you and your spouse have children</b>		
	Couple, both under 65, 1 adult on PWD	Up to \$1,000 per month or \$12,000 per year
	Couple, both under 65, both adults on PWD	Up to \$1,600 per month or \$19,200 per year

Earned income exemption can be assessed monthly or annually for PWD, whichever benefits you more. Speak to your band social development worker to determine what is best for your individual situation.

## How you apply

Applying for PWD benefits can be very difficult. It's a good idea to talk to an advocate before starting your application (page 57).

To apply, you need to get a Persons with Disabilities Designation Application. Your band social development worker can help you get this form and provide information on how to complete it. Your worker will sign the cover page. Applications without this signature won't be processed.



The PWD application form is about 35 pages long. The application asks for a lot of information from:

- you,
- your doctor, and
- a person known as an **assessor** (the application form lists people who can fill this role).

**Your assessor must be a doctor or health care professional. Your advocate or your band social development worker can help you choose an assessor. Your band social development worker or someone employed by the administering authority can't be your assessor.**

Once you get the application form from your worker, make an appointment to see your doctor and/or assessor. Be prepared to talk about how your disability affects you on your bad days. You may also need to talk about how much help you need because of your disability. Even if this is difficult, you need to give details.

Once you, your doctor, and your assessor have completed the application, take it back to your band social development worker. Your worker will send it to BC Aboriginal Network on Disability Society (BCANDS), which decides if you can get PWD benefits. The whole process may take several months.

If your application is approved, you will get a letter telling you when your benefits will start.

## If you're turned down for or cut off of Persons with Disabilities benefits

You might still be able to get hardship assistance (page 28) or other important benefits (page 35).

If you don't agree with your worker's decision, you can appeal (page 49).

## How much you get each month

The amount you get depends on:

- whether you're single,
- if you're not single, the size of your family, and
- whether you and/or your spouse are 65 or older.

See the table on the next page.



<b>PWD amounts (April 1, 2017)</b>				
	<b>Family size</b>	<b>Shelter allowance maximum</b>	<b>Support (basic needs) allowance</b>	<b>Total payment maximum</b>
<b>If you're single</b>				
	Single person	\$375.00	\$606.42	\$981.42
<b>If you're a single parent</b> The support (basic needs) allowance <i>doesn't</i> increase if you have more than two children.				
	Single parent on PWD and 1 child	\$570.00	\$747.08	\$1,317.08
	Single parent on PWD and 2 children	\$660.00	\$747.08	\$1,407.08
<b>If you and your spouse don't have children</b>				
	Couple, 1 on PWD	\$570.00	\$775.56	\$1,345.56
	Couple, both on PWD	\$570.00	\$1,099.06	\$1,669.06
	Couple, 1 on PWD, the other 65 or over	\$570.00	\$1,024.06	\$1,594.06
<b>If you and your spouse have children</b> The support (basic needs) allowance <i>doesn't</i> increase if you have more than one child.				
	Couple, both on PWD and 1 child	\$660.00	\$1,193.06	\$1,853.06
	Couple, 1 on PWD, the other 65 or over, and 1 child	\$660.00	\$1,118.06	\$1,758.06



# What are Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers benefits?

Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers benefits are for people who have a medical condition that seriously affects their ability to find or keep a job. (Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers benefits are often called **PPMB benefits**.) But you can't get these benefits if your *only* condition is an addiction.

PPMB is a **temporary** benefit (short-term). It's only approved for up to two years at a time.

If you get PPMB benefits, you don't have to look for work.

## How you qualify

You may be able to get PPMB benefits if:

- you've been on income assistance (on or off reserve) for 12 out of the last 15 months, AND
- you have a medical condition (other than an addiction) that:
  - seriously affects your ability to look for, take, or keep a job, AND
  - has lasted for at least a year and will likely last for two more years, OR
  - has been a problem regularly in the last year and will likely continue for the next two years.

## What your assets can be worth

The amount of cash and assets you can have and still be able to get PPMB benefits is the same as for income assistance benefits. See the table on the next page.



Assets allowed (March 2017)			
Family size	Applicant — Total assets	PWD	
Single person	\$2,000	\$100,000	
Single parent and 1 child	\$4,000	\$100,000	
Couple	\$4,000	\$200,000 if both PWD; \$100,000 if only one adult is PWD	
Couple and 1 child	\$4,000	\$200,000 if both PWD; \$100,000 if only one adult is PWD	

## Earned income exemptions

You can claim earned income exemptions of up to \$500 each month if you're receiving PPMB benefits.

## How you apply

If you think you may be able to get PPMB benefits, contact your worker. Your worker will probably want to meet with you to talk about your medical condition and the PPMB criteria.

Your worker will then give you a medical report form. Your doctor must complete this form. Make sure to tell your doctor how your medical condition stops you from looking for or taking a job.

When the doctor has completed the form, return it to your worker. Your worker will look at it and decide if you can get PPMB benefits.

If you're approved for PPMB benefits, you will be given a **review date**. This is when your benefits will end. If you still need PPMB benefits after this date, you will have to apply again.



## If you're turned down for or cut off of Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers benefits

You might still be able to get hardship assistance (page 28) or other important benefits (page 35). If you don't agree with your worker's decision, you can appeal (page 49).

### How much you get each month

The amount you get depends on:

- whether you're single,
- if you're not single, the size of your family, and
- whether you and/or your spouse are 65 or older.

If all the adults in your family unit have PPMB status, your monthly support (basic needs) allowance will be higher than the allowance for people who get basic income assistance benefits.

Person with Persistent Multiple Barriers (PPMB) amounts (March 2017)				
	Family size	Shelter allowance maximum	Support (basic needs) allowance	Total payment maximum
<b>If you're single</b>				
	Single person under 65 and on PPMB	\$375.00	\$282.92	\$657.92
<b>If you're a single parent</b> The support (basic needs) allowance <i>doesn't</i> increase if you have more than one child.*				
	Single parent on PPMB and 1 child	\$570.00	\$423.58	\$993.58
<b>If you and your spouse don't have children</b>				
	Couple, both under 65 and on PPMB	\$570.00	\$452.06	\$1,022.06
<b>If you and your spouse have children</b> The support (basic needs) allowance <i>doesn't</i> increase if you have more than one child.*				
	Couple, both on PPMB, and 1 child	\$660.00	\$546.06	\$1,206.06

\*If you have more than one child, the shelter allowance increases (see page 9).

## What is hardship assistance?

Hardship assistance is a monthly benefit that only covers basic needs such as food and shelter. It's for people who will suffer **undue hardship** (such as hunger or eviction) without some financial help because they can't get:

- basic income assistance,
- Persons with Disabilities benefits (often called **PWD benefits**), or
- Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers benefits (often called **PPMB benefits**).

Hardship assistance is only meant to be short-term. You must reapply for each month you need it.

## How you qualify

To qualify for hardship assistance, you must:

- be unable to get other monthly benefits (not eligible for other income assistance), and
- live on reserve when you apply,
- have no other source of money, and
- be facing undue hardship if you don't get financial help.

For example, you may qualify for hardship assistance if you're:

- waiting for a Social Insurance Number or other documentation;
- waiting for money from other sources such as Employment Insurance (sometimes called **EI**);
- on strike or locked out and unable to support yourself; or
- supporting one or more dependent children and you have income or assets worth more than the allowable levels, but they're not available or enough to meet your basic needs.



You will need to show that you:

- can't afford to pay for your own or your family's basic needs (like food, clothing, and housing);
- don't qualify for other income assistance benefits;
- have tried to get money somewhere else and couldn't; and
- haven't recently spent money on unnecessary things.

## What your assets can be worth

The amount of cash and assets you can have and be able to get hardship assistance is the same as for income assistance (page 14). But how your worker assesses your assets is more complicated. Ask your worker for more information.

You may still be able to get hardship assistance if you have dependent children and your income or assets are over those levels, but aren't available or aren't enough to meet your basic needs.

## How you apply

Apply for hardship assistance as soon as you need financial help that you can't get somewhere else. You can apply for hardship assistance with the social development worker for the reserve you live on.

You must reapply for hardship assistance *each month* that you need it. Depending on the reason you are receiving hardship assistance, you may need to complete a repayment agreement.

## If you're turned down for hardship assistance

Your worker may turn you down for hardship assistance if:

- you lost your job because of something you did and you didn't fight the decision,
- you refused to take a job you could do,
- you used money or assets for something other than basic needs,
- you aren't looking for work,
- you haven't looked for other sources of money, or
- you haven't used up other sources of money.

You might still be able to get other benefits (page 35).

If your worker turns you down for hardship assistance or requires you to repay money you don't believe you should have to repay, you can appeal the decision (page 49).



## How much you get each month

Like other monthly benefits, hardship assistance has a shelter allowance and a support (basic needs) allowance. Hardship assistance is only for basic needs such as food and shelter. Some available income and assets are taken out of hardship assistance. Ask your band social development worker about which income and assets are exempt and which are not.

The amount you get depends on:

- whether you're single,
- if you're not single, the size of your family,
- whether you and/or your spouse have been designated as able to get PWD or PPMB benefits, and
- whether you and/or your spouse are 65 or older.

<b>Hardship assistance rates (March 2017)</b>				
	Family size	Shelter allowance maximum	Support (basic needs) allowance	Total payment maximum
<b>If you're single</b>				
	Single person under 65	\$375.00	\$235.00	\$610.00
	Single person under 65 on PPMB	\$375.00	\$282.92	\$657.92
	Single person 65 or over	\$375.00	\$531.42	\$906.42
<b>If you're a single parent</b>				
The support (basic needs) allowance <i>doesn't</i> increase if you have more than one child.				
	Single parent under 65, and 1 child	\$570.00	\$375.58	\$945.58
	Single parent under 65 on PPMB	\$570.00	\$423.58	\$993.58
	Single parent 65 or over, and 1 child	\$570.00	\$672.08	\$1,242.08

Continued on next page



### Hardship assistance rates (March 2017)

	Family size	Shelter allowance Maximum	Support (basic needs) allowance	Total payment Maximum
<b>If you and your spouse don't have children</b>				
	Couple, both under 65	\$570.00	\$307.22	\$877.22
	Couple, both under 65, both on PPMB	\$570.00	\$452.06	\$1,022.06
	Couple, 1 65 or over	\$570.00	\$700.56	\$1,270.56
	Couple, 1 on PPMB	\$570.00	\$396.22	\$966.22
	Couple, both on PWD	\$570.00	\$1,099.06	\$1,669.06
<b>If you and your spouse have children</b> The support (basic needs) allowance <i>doesn't</i> increase if you have more than one child.				
	Couple, both under 65 and 1 child	\$660.00	\$401.06	\$1,061.06
	Couple, 1 65 or over; other is on PWD, and 1 child	\$660.00	\$1,118.06	\$1,778.06
	Couple, both on PWD, and 1 child	\$660.00	\$1,193.06	\$1,853.06
	Couple, 1 on PPMB, and 1 child	\$660.00	\$490.06	\$1,150.06
	Couple, both on PPMB, and 1 child	\$660.00	\$546.06	\$1,206.06

## When you have to pay back hardship assistance

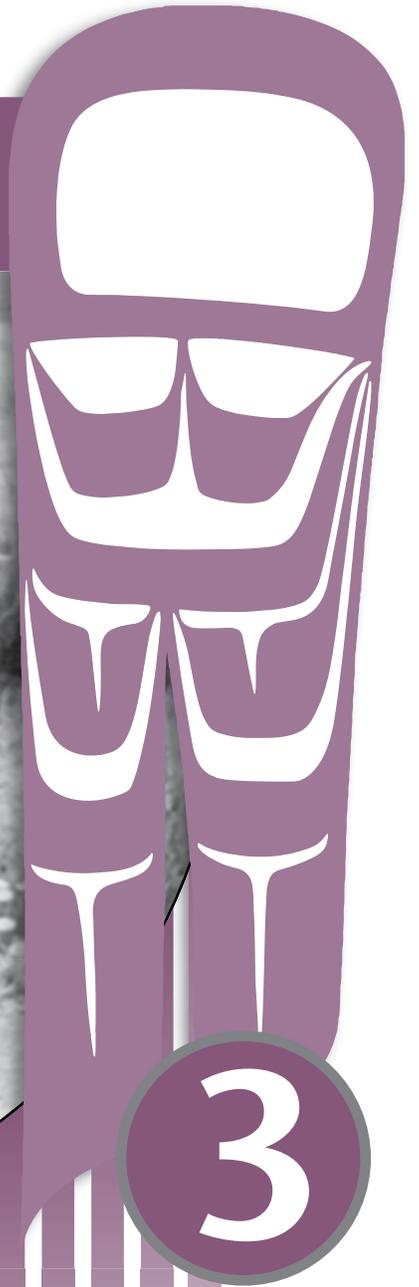
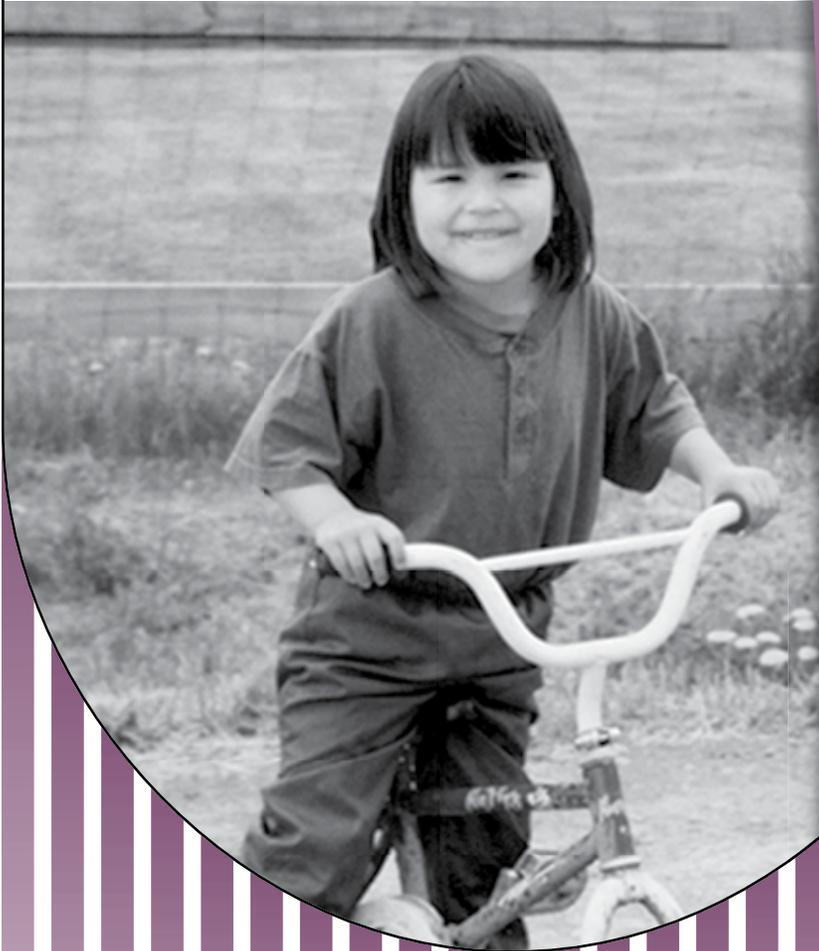
Depending on your circumstances, you may have to sign an agreement to pay back your hardship assistance. For example, if you expect to get money from another source in a few weeks (like Employment Insurance, Workers' Compensation, or an ICBC settlement), you will be expected to pay back the hardship assistance when that money arrives.

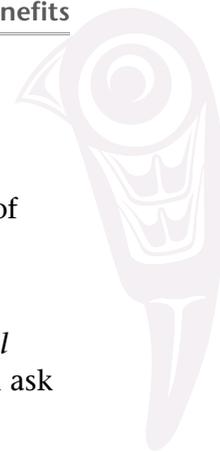
Sometimes you don't have to pay back hardship assistance. You *should not* have to pay back hardship assistance if:

- you're a victim of family violence and going after assets or support would likely lead to further violence against you,
- your sponsorship agreement broke down,
- you're on strike or locked out, or
- you don't have proper ID to get income assistance.

Ask your worker if you will have to pay back your hardship assistance.

## Other Benefits





## Are there other benefits I can get?

You may be able to get other benefits. This will depend on your needs and what kind of assistance you get.

Ask your band social development worker for more information about any of the benefits below. These benefits are also explained in more detail in *The BC Region Social Development Policy and Procedures Handbook (Vol. 1 Income Assistance Program)*. You can ask your band social development worker for a copy of this handbook.

### Special allowances

Special allowances are for people who get:

- income assistance,
- PWD benefits,
- PPMB benefits, or
- in some cases, hardship assistance.

The special allowances available include:

- **community volunteer supplement** for clothing, transportation, or other expenses to participate in a community volunteer program;
- **special needs allowance**, a one-time financial help for people who have emergency needs (to prevent danger to physical health or immediate protection of a child);
- **guide animal supplement** for looking after a certified guide animal;
- **camp fee supplement** to cover some registration costs of sending a child to camp;
- **school start-up supplement** for help with the extra costs of a dependent child's schooling;
- **confirmed job supplement** for essential transportation and work-related items to begin a job;
- **moving, transportation, and living costs supplements** to cover moving costs for a job or if a family must move to a new home. It also includes transportation costs to attend a child protection hearing; and
- **identification supplement** to cover the cost of getting identification for a person in the family for people on hardship assistance.

Ask your band social development worker for more information.

## Other benefits, supplements, and services

The following benefits, supplements, and services are available to people with low incomes. You may be able to get these benefits even if you're not getting or able to get income assistance.

The benefits include:

- **child tax benefits**, money from the federal and provincial governments available to families with children;
- **Family Bonus top-up supplement**, an advance for families with children if a Family Bonus payment is delayed, cancelled, or suspended;
- **BC bus pass program**, an annual bus pass for provincial transit; and
- **funeral costs**, a supplement to pay necessary funeral costs of any person who dies in BC when the estate or family have no resources to cover these costs.

Ask your band social development worker for more information.

The Child Out of Parental Home benefit (sometimes called **COPH**) was cancelled in April 2012. But if you qualified before April 1, 2012, you're still eligible for it.

## Health benefits for people who are status Indians

Status Indians get non-insured health benefits through the First Nations Health Authority (or FNHA). If you're status Indian, please contact the First Nations Health Authority for your health benefits.

Phone, general inquiries: **604-693-6500** (Greater Vancouver)  
**1-866-913-0033**

Phone, health benefits: **1-800-317-7878**



## Health benefits for people who aren't status Indians

If you (or a dependant) aren't a status Indian but you live on reserve and receive income assistance, you may be able to get benefits through the Social Development Program. These benefits may be insured or non-insured. For example, you may be able to get basic or enhanced Medical Service Plan coverage (sometimes called **MSP**). Or, if your doctor or dentist writes you a recommendation, you may be able to get non-insured health benefits such as:

- prescription drugs,
- eyeglasses,
- dental care,
- medical equipment (help for people who need medical equipment and devices for their health), and
- hearing aids.

You need to get pre-approval from your worker before you buy any non-insured items. Your worker may require you to bring in an invoice or note from your doctor.

You may also be able to get homemaker services (help with cleaning, laundry, and meal preparation) through the Assisted Living Program.

## PharmaCare

PharmaCare can help you pay for prescription drugs and medical supplies. Everyone getting income assistance can get PharmaCare coverage. The income assistance program only covers prescriptions regularly covered by PharmaCare. To have other prescriptions covered, your doctor will need to contact PharmaCare directly to make a Special Authority Request.

You need to register to get PharmaCare coverage. To register, you need to sign a consent form and return it to PharmaCare.

Phone: **604-683-7151** (Greater Vancouver)

**1-800-663-7100** (no charge outside Greater Vancouver)

You can also register — or check to see if you're registered — by going to the PharmaCare website at <https://pharmacare.moh.hnet.bc.ca>.

# Rights and Responsibilities



4



## What are my rights while on income assistance?

You have rights while you're applying for income assistance. You also have rights while you're on income assistance. Your social development worker must respect these rights.

### When you apply for income assistance

You have the right to:

- apply when you don't have enough money to meet your needs;
- get the information and help you need to make a proper application;
- have all of your personal information kept private and confidential;
- be treated fairly and with respect and not be judged by your race, gender, skin colour, faith, or political beliefs;
- get all the assistance and benefits for which you qualify;
- be told what your responsibilities are;
- be told what your responsibilities are once you're on income assistance so that you won't lose your benefits;
- be told in writing the reasons you've been turned down for a benefit; and
- be told in writing about the benefits you're able to get (if you ask).

### Once you're on income assistance

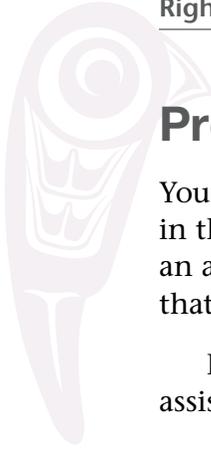
Your band social development worker must:

- give you quick, respectful, and efficient service;
- not consider your race, gender, skin colour, faith, or political beliefs when they process your application; and
- be **objective** (neutral) about the information you give them when they decide whether you can get income assistance.

After your application is processed, you have the right to:

- appeal if your worker turns down your application, and
- appeal if your worker cuts off a benefit.

See page 49.



## Protecting your rights

Your worker might make a mistake. Compare what your worker tells you with what it says in the *Social Development Policy and Procedures Handbook*. If you need help with this, contact an advocate (page 57). If you ask, your worker should show you the part of the handbook that they used to make their decision.

Here are some more suggestions that will help you get and keep your income assistance benefits:

- Learn as much as you can about income assistance
- Keep all documents and receipts
- Make notes
- Take a friend or advocate to meetings with your worker
- Appeal if you think a decision is wrong
- Reapply if your circumstances change

### Learn as much as you can about income assistance

Look at a copy of the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada *Social Development Policy and Procedures Handbook*. Read as much as you can about income assistance and your rights. Ask your worker to see a copy of this handbook.

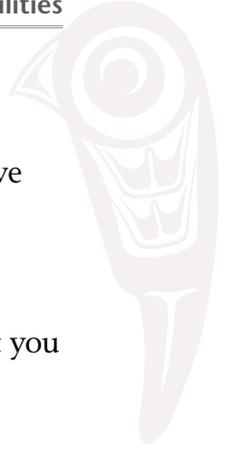
### Keep all documents and receipts

The income assistance world runs on paper. You often need **evidence** (proof) — on paper — to make your point or prove your case.

### Make notes

Make notes of all the conversations you have with your worker. Include in your notes what they tell you about benefits. These notes will help you if in the future you don't agree about a decision regarding your benefits.

If you appeal a decision, take notes on when, where, and to whom you send appeal documents.



## **Take a friend or advocate**

You're allowed to bring a friend or advocate to meetings with your worker. You also have the right to have your advocate come with you to your appeal hearing.

## **Appeal if you think a decision is wrong**

Appealing a decision doesn't mean you're insulting your worker. You're just saying that you don't agree with their decision.

## **Reapply if your circumstances change**

If you get turned down for an income assistance benefit and then your circumstances change, apply for income assistance again. You might qualify the next time. For example, apply for income assistance again if you:

- lose your job,
- suddenly have a lot of medical expenses, or
- have a baby and you become responsible for taking care of a family.

## **If you don't agree with your worker's decision — Appeals and complaints**

If you think that your worker didn't approve a benefit you believe you're entitled to, you have the right to appeal (page 49).

You can also file a complaint if you don't like the way your income assistance claim is handled (page 53).



## What are my responsibilities while on income assistance?

There are certain things you must do to keep your benefits while you're on income assistance. You must:

- look for work, unless you're exempt from doing so (see exemptions below),
- make monthly declarations,
- provide information about your monthly earned or unearned income to continue your benefits,
- fill out forms correctly,
- do everything you can to get off benefits and become independent, and
- let your band social development worker know about changes to your circumstances that affect your eligibility (change in income or change in the number of people in your household).

It's very important that you meet these responsibilities. If you don't, your worker may cut off your benefits. If your monthly declarations are false, you may be charged with fraud.

### Looking for work

Under most circumstances, you and your adult dependents must look for work while you're on income assistance. You may need to show your worker proof that you're looking for work. You may also have to take part in:

- training,
- education, or
- an employment preparation program.

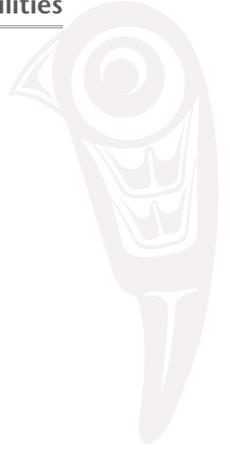
If you don't do these things, your income assistance benefits can be cut off.

### Exemptions to the requirement to look for work

Some people are **exempt from** looking for work. This means they don't have to look for work.

You're *not* required to look for work if:

- You or a family member has Persons with Disabilities status (often called **PWD status**).



- You qualify for Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers status (often called **PPMB status**).
- You're a single parent with a child under three.
- You're a single parent with a child who has a physical or mental condition that keeps you from leaving home for work.
- You're an adult dependent who doesn't meet the residency requirements for working.

If you're employable but can't look for work for a short period of time because of medical reasons or personal circumstances, you may be temporarily excused from looking for work. Tell your worker right away if you feel you should be temporarily excused. You may need to provide proof of your medical condition.

## Making monthly declarations

Each month that you get income assistance, you need to fill out a form called the Monthly Renewal Declaration (you may call this a welfare slip). On the Monthly Renewal Declaration, you need to list:

- all of your income,
- any changes in your assets and other financial circumstances, and
- any changes in your living situation.

You will have to sign a form that says you agree that all the information you've given is correct to the best of your knowledge.

These declarations are legal documents. *If you include false information in your declaration, you can be charged with fraud* (see below). This can happen even if you provided the false information by accident.

## How to protect yourself against charges of fraud

Talk to your band social development worker or an advocate right away if:

- you're not sure how to report something on your monthly declaration, or
- you need help with your monthly declaration.

See page 57 for how to find an advocate.

It's also important to keep:

- copies of any documents that you give to your worker,
- copies of any documents that your worker gives you, and
- records of any conversations that you have with your worker.



## What should I do if I'm charged with fraud?

Being charged with fraud because you provided false information on your monthly declaration is serious. Fraud is a criminal charge. You may lose your benefits for a period of time.

If you're charged with fraud, *get help from a lawyer right away*. See "Where to get legal help" for a list of organizations that can help you (page 68). For this type of case, you will need a lawyer who practises criminal law.

It's also very important to get an advocate to help you (page 57). An advocate will make sure you understand your lawyer's advice. They can support you during the legal process.

## What happens if I plead guilty to or am found guilty of fraud?

*Do not plead guilty without getting legal advice from a criminal law lawyer first.*

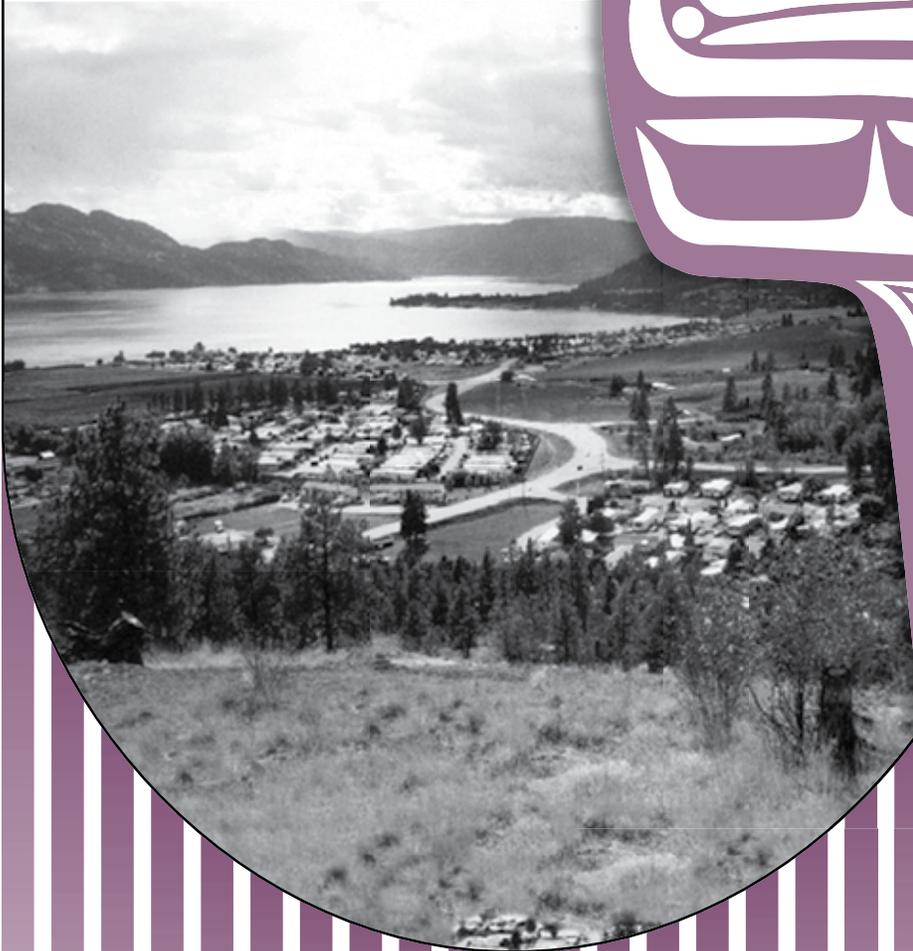
If you plead guilty or are found guilty of fraud in court, you could get a criminal sentence that includes jail time and:

- your benefits may be *cut back* for a period of time, or
- your benefits may be *cut off* for a period of time.

Make sure your lawyer knows that your benefits may be affected by your charges. An advocate can help you talk about this with your lawyer.

If your benefits are cut off for a period of time, you may be able to get hardship assistance (page 28). Talk to an advocate right away (page 57).

# Appeals and Complaints



5



# If you don't agree with your worker's decision — Appeals and complaints

Band social development workers must follow the *Social Development Program Policy and Procedures Handbook* when they make decisions about your case. For example, your worker must base whether you can get a benefit and how much money you get on what it says in the handbook.

If you think that your worker didn't approve benefits that you believe you're entitled to, you have the right to appeal.

You can also file a complaint if you don't like the way your income assistance application or claim is handled (see page 53).

It's a very good idea to get an advocate to help you file an appeal or complaint (page 57).

## Appeals

You may be able to appeal your worker's decision if they:

- turn you down for a benefit,
- cut back a benefit, or
- cut off a benefit.

The first step to appealing a decision is to ask for an **administrative review**. An administrative review is when someone from Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada goes over your worker's decision to see if they made a mistake.

## Administrative reviews

You have the right to ask for an administrative review of your band social development worker's decision if they:

- refuse your application,
- cut back an allowance or service,
- **suspend** (cuts off until further notice) an allowance or service, or
- cut off an allowance or service.



But you can't ask for a review of **non-discretionary** issues. These are issues that aren't optional. These issues are outlined in the *Social Development Program Policy and Procedures Handbook*. Non-discretionary issues include:

- General **eligibility requirements**. These are requirements you must meet in order to get income assistance. For example, you must complete an application and you must notify your worker about any changes in your circumstances.
- The amount of money you get
- Changes to the amount you get that are because of a policy change

### **How do I ask for an administrative review?**

First, tell your worker that you want to ask for an appeal of their decision. Ask for a Request for Administrative Review (SA 140) form.

Next, complete the Request for Administrative Review form. Your worker will fill out information about their decision, and you will fill out why you think they made a mistake. Mail or give the form to your worker *within 20 business days* of when you were told of the decision. (Business days are Monday to Friday, unless a holiday such as Christmas falls on one of those days.) Include any relevant documents and evidence you have to support your case.

If you ask for a review because your worker cut back or cut off a benefit you're already getting, your worker must pay you the full benefit until the review is completed. If you lose the review, you will have to pay this money back.

### **What happens during an administrative review?**

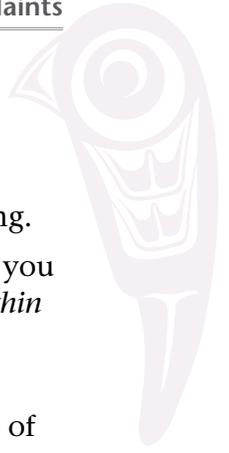
Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada will assign someone from their department to review your Request for Administrative Review form. The ministry will assign someone who wasn't involved in the original decision. They will make a decision within 20 business days to:

- **confirm** (agree with) your worker's decision,
- change your worker's decision, or
- turn down your request because the issue is one that can't be reviewed.

The administrative review decision will be written on an Administrative Review Decision and Request for Appeals Committee Hearing form. You will get a copy.

### **What if I don't like the results of the administrative review?**

If you aren't satisfied with the results of the administrative review, you can appeal. It's a good idea to get an advocate to help you with this (page 57).



To appeal:

1. Fill out section 2 of the Administrative Review Decision and the Request for Appeals Committee Hearing forms. Explain why you think the decision is wrong.
2. Return the form to your worker to fill out Section 1 of the form. Do this where you filled out your application for income assistance. Be sure to return the form *within seven business days* of when you got your copy of the review results.
3. Your worker must make sure that an appeal committee of three independent people is formed to hear your appeal. This must happen *within 14 business days* of when you gave your worker your completed Administrative Review Decision form. The three committee members must be:
  - Someone you choose. This person can't be a relative. You must name this person on the Administrative Review Decision and the Request for Appeals Committee Hearing forms.
  - Someone your band or tribal group chooses. This person can't be an employee of your band or tribal group. This person also can't be an employee of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada.
  - A chairperson. This person must be chosen by the committee member you suggested and the committee member your band or tribal group suggested. If these people can't agree on a chairperson, the band chief and the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada manager will choose someone together.

The chairperson must make sure the appeal hearing starts *within 10 business days* of when they were nominated.

They must also let you, the band manager, the chief and council, and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada know about the date, place, and time of the hearing.

They must do this at least *two business days* before the hearing is to take place.

Appeal committee members are paid back for their travel, accommodation, and meal costs.

## What happens at an appeal hearing?

You must go to the appeal hearing. If you can't go to the hearing, you must send a **representative** (someone who will speak for you). If you send a representative in your place, you must let the chairperson know about this in writing. You can send an advocate as your representative.

If you go to the hearing, you can bring an advocate with you for support.

**If you don't attend or send a representative, your appeal can be dismissed.**

At the hearing, you have the right to explain your reasons for appealing. You may need to show documents related to the decision and you may bring witnesses.

You also have the right to:

- see any documents that the appeal committee members looked at while reviewing your appeal (including the Request for Administrative Review form and Request for Appeals Committee Hearing form), and
- question any of their witnesses at the hearing.

Your band social development worker will have to explain their decision and answer your questions about it.

The appeals committee can only consider materials that were submitted to the Administrative Review, including:

- information that was used to make the original decision,
- information that was submitted at the administrative review, and
- any additional evidence, including **testimony** (what you or witnesses say) presented at the appeal hearing that supports information presented at the administrative review.

This means that you can't present new evidence at your appeal.

However, the Appeals Committee can consider any "relevant" information. Speak to an advocate about the evidence you should provide at an Appeals Committee Hearing.

If the hearing can't be finished in one day, the chairperson can **adjourn** (delay) it for up to 20 business days. This means the hearing will be finished later.

All information collected and shared during the hearing is confidential.



## What happens after the appeal hearing?

At the end of the hearing, the appeal committee members must vote on whether they want to accept or reject your worker's decision. When the committee makes its decision, it sends a report to Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. The appeal committee can also suggest changes to policy and procedures.

If the manager of the Social Development Unit at Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada agrees with the committee's decision, they will order your worker to carry out the decision.

If the manager of the Social Development Unit at Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada disagrees with the appeal committee's decision, they will meet with the chairperson of the committee to find a solution.

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada will let you and the committee chairperson know about the final decision.

## What if I don't like the appeal committee's decision?

You can ask for a judicial review by the Federal Court of Canada. If you decide to do this, contact an advocate or lawyer as soon as possible. See pages 57 and 68.

## What can I do if the appeal procedure is not followed?

If these procedures aren't followed, you can complain. Call Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada.

Phone: **604-775-5100** (Greater Vancouver)  
**1-800-665-9320** (no charge outside Greater Vancouver)

Ask to speak to the band social development specialist for your area. Or talk to your advocate about what to do.

## Complaints

If you have a complaint about the way you were treated by your worker or someone else who works for the administering authority, you can complain to their supervisor. (This doesn't include complaints about the decision they made.) The supervisor might be:

- a band social development manager,
- the band manager,
- the band administrator, or
- chief and council.

If you're still not satisfied, talk to an advocate (page 57).

# Who Can Help



6



## Who can help me with income assistance on reserve?

An **advocate** is someone who helps other people protect their rights and get the benefits they're entitled to. An advocate can help you:

- apply for income assistance,
- learn about income assistance rights and benefits,
- prepare your monthly declarations, and
- appeal decisions made by your social development worker.

There are advocates across BC who help people with income assistance. However, most advocates are more familiar with provincial income assistance legislation and rules than with income assistance on reserve. But all advocates can give you information and help.

Your advocate is on your side. They should treat you with respect and keep your case **confidential** (private).

### Where to find an advocate

Someone at the band office for the reserve you live on may be able to help you or tell you where you can go to get help.

As well, there are anti-poverty and income assistance/welfare advocacy groups in many communities across BC. People in these groups help each other deal with the basic survival issues of living in poverty. Many of them know what it's like to be on income assistance or welfare.

If you're having a problem, advocates can give you information. In some cases, they can also go with you to an appointment or to an appeal.

You can look for an advocate:

- at your local Aboriginal Friendship Centre (next page),
- in the *Guide to Aboriginal Organizations and Services in BC* (next page),
- if you have a disability, the BC Aboriginal Network on Disability Society or the Disability Alliance BC may be able to help you (page 59),
- online on the PovNet website (page 59), or
- by contacting one of the groups listed by community (page 61).



## BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres

The association is the main point of contact for all of the Aboriginal friendship centres across BC. Many friendship centres have resources and services that may be helpful to you. Most friendship centres are open to all people, even if you live on reserve. If you don't know where to find a friendship centre in your area, check the association's website, or call the numbers below.

Phone: **250-388-5522** (Greater Victoria)

Website: **bcaafc.com**

Some friendship centres are listed in the next section. This is because they have specific resources or services for people who are living in poverty, or who are having trouble with income assistance/welfare. Even if a friendship centre isn't listed for your community, there may be one near you that can help you. Call the association to find out.

## Guide to Aboriginal Organizations and Services in BC

The *Guide to Aboriginal Organizations and Services in British Columbia* has information on First Nations, Métis, and Aboriginal organizations across BC. The guide includes communities and community services. You can get the guide online:

1. Go to **www.gov.bc.ca/arr**.
2. On the panel on the left-hand side, under Related Links, click Guide to Aboriginal Organizations. The A Guide to Aboriginal Organizations page appears.
3. Click the image of the guide. A PDF copy of the guide opens.

If you don't have access to the Internet, you can call the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation and ask them to send you the guide.

Phone: **1-800-880-1022** (call no charge from anywhere in BC)



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## If you have a disability

### **BC Aboriginal Network on Disability Society (BCANDS)**

If you have a disability and need help, you can contact the BC Aboriginal Network on Disability Society. The society provides a variety of support services to Aboriginal people with disabilities:

Phone: **250-381-7303** (Greater Victoria)

**1-888-815-5511** (TTY if you're hard of hearing; call no charge outside Greater Victoria)

Website: **bcands.bc.ca**

### **Disability Alliance BC**

Disability Alliance BC provides support to people living with disabilities:

Phone: **604-872-1278** (Greater Vancouver)

**1-800-663-1278** (call no charge outside Greater Vancouver)

Website: **disabilityalliancebc.org**

### **PovNet**

PovNet is an online service with information about poverty issues. The PovNet website has a list of advocates in BC and links to groups that deal with issues like income assistance and housing.

Website: **povnet.org**

## **Anti-poverty and income assistance/welfare advocacy groups**

Many of the groups listed on the next several pages may be able to help you with your income assistance problem, or help you find someone who can. Other groups listed may be able to help you with problems that are common to living in poverty. For example, some groups provide food, clothing, and school supplies.

## How to use this section

The organizations are listed alphabetically, by town. Each organization has an icon or icons above it. These icons tell you what kinds of services the organization can provide.



### **Aboriginal**

The organization has supports and services for Aboriginal people



### **Advocacy**

The organization can provide you with general help, information, and referrals for income assistance problems, or for issues related to living in poverty



### **Food**

The organization has a food bank or meal program



### **Forms**

The organization has people who will help you fill out forms



### **Legal**

The organization can give you advice or legal representation (a lawyer or advocate to take your case) for issues related to poverty or welfare



## 100 Mile House



100 Mile House and District Women's  
Centre Society  
250-395-4093

## Abbotsford



Abbotsford Community Services  
604-859-7681



Abbotsford Community Services, Community  
Legal Advocacy Centre  
604-852-2141

## Agassiz



Seabird Island Band  
604-796-2177

## Alert Bay



Whe-La-La-U Area Council  
250-974-5501

## Bella Coola



Bella Coola Community Support Society  
250-799-5916



SHED Society, Legal Advocacy Program  
250-799-0044

## Boston Bar



Boston Bar First Nation  
604-867-8844

## Burns Lake



Elizabeth Fry Society (for women only)  
250-692-7559

## Campbell River



Opportunities Advocacy Services  
250-914-0272



Campbell River Area Women's Resource Centre  
250-287-3044

## Canim Lake



Canim Lake Family Wellness Centre  
250-397-2502

## Castlegar



The Advocacy Centre (in Nelson)  
250-352-5777  
1-877-352-5777 (call no charge)

## Cawston



Lower Similkameen Community  
Services Society  
250-499-2352  
1-855-499-2352 (call no charge)

## Chetwynd



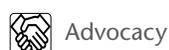
Saulteau First Nations  
250-788-3955



Tansi Friendship Centre  
250-788-2996



Aboriginal



Advocacy



Food



Forms



Legal

### Chilliwack



Abbotsford Community Services, Community Legal Advocacy Centre  
604-702-2907

### Courtenay



Wachiay Friendship Centre  
250-338-7793

### Creston



Kootenai Community Centre Society  
250-402-0068

### Dawson Creek



Nawican Friendship Centre  
250-782-5202

### Dease Lake



Tahltan Health and Social Services Society  
250-771-5577

### Delta



Atira Women's Resource Society, Aboriginal Women's Outreach  
604-584-7597

### Duncan



Hiiye'yu Lelum (House of Friendship) Society  
250-748-2242



Cowichan Valley Basket Society, The Duncan Food Bank  
250-746-1566

### Fort Nelson



Northern Rockies Aboriginal Women Society (NRAWS)  
250-233-8920

### Fort St. James



Fireweed Collective Society, Women's Outreach Services  
250-996-8089

### Fort St. John



Fort St. John Keeginaw Friendship Centre  
250-785-8566



Fort St. John Women's Resource Centre  
250-787-1121

### Hazelton



Upper Skeena Counselling and Legal Assistance Society  
250-842-5218  
1-877-842-5218 (call no charge)

### Hedley



Lower Similkameen Community Services Society  
250-499-2352  
1-855-499-2352 (call no charge)

### Hope



Trails Crossing Friendship Centre  
604-869-9042



Aboriginal



Advocacy



Food



Forms



Legal



## Kamloops



**Kamloops Aboriginal Friendship Society**  
250-376-1617



**Kamloops and District Elizabeth Fry Society**  
250-314-1900

## Kaslo



**North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society**  
250-353-7691

## Kelowna



**Central Okanagan Elizabeth Fry Society**  
250-763-4613



**Kelowna Community Resources — Community Services**  
Crisis line: 1-888-353-2273 (call no charge)  
250-763-8008



**Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society**  
250-763-4905



**Living Positive Resource Centre**  
778-753-5830

## Keremeos



**Lower Similkameen Community Services Society**  
250-499-2352  
1-855-499-2352

## Kitimat



**Tamitik Status of Women Association**  
250-632-8787

## Ladysmith



**Ladysmith Resources Centre Association**  
250-245-3079

## Langley



**Atira Women's Resource Help Society, Maxxine Wright Centre**  
(only for pregnant women and women with children under six months)  
604-584-7597



**Sources Langley Food Bank**  
778-875-8341

## Lillooet



**Lillooet Friendship Centre**  
250-256-4146

## Maple Ridge



**Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Community Services**  
604-467-6911

## Merritt



**Nicola Valley Advocacy Centre**  
250-378-9632

## Moberly Lake



**Saulteau First Nations**  
250-788-3955



Aboriginal



Advocacy



Food



Forms



Legal



### Nanaimo



Nanaimo Citizens Advocacy Association  
250-753-2321



Nanaimo Women's Centre  
250-753-0633

### Nelson



The Advocacy Centre  
250-352-5777  
1-877-352-5777 (call no charge)

### New Westminster



New Westminster Food Bank Society,  
Hospitality Project  
604-525-9628

### North Delta



Deltassist Family and Community Services  
604-594-3455

### North Vancouver



North Shore Community Resources Society,  
Legal Advocacy Program  
604-985-7138

### Olalla



Lower Similkameen Community  
Services Society  
250-499-2352  
1-855-499-2352 (call no charge)

### Penticton



Penticton and Area Access Centre  
250-493-6822  
1-866-493-6822 (call no charge)

### Pitt Meadows



Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows  
Community Services  
604-485-0922

### Port Alberni



Port Alberni Canadian Mental Health  
Association Advocacy Program  
250-724-7199



Port Alberni Friendship Centre  
250-723-8281

### Powell River



Powell River Community Resource Centre  
604-485-0992

### Prince George



Active Support Against Poverty  
250-563-6112



Canadian Mental Health Association  
250-564-8644



Prince George Native Friendship Centre  
250-564-3568



## Prince Rupert



Prince Rupert Friendship House  
250-627-1717



Unemployed Action Centre Society  
250-627-8776

## Quesnel



Quesnel Tillicum Society Native  
Friendship Centre  
250-992-8347

## Revelstoke



Community Connections  
250-837-2920

## Seabird Island



Seabird Island Band  
604-796-2177

## Skidegate



Gwaii Trust Society  
250-559-8883

## Smithers



Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Society  
250-847-5211

## Squamish



Howe Sound Women's Centre  
604-892-5748

## Surrey



Atira Women's Resource Society, Aboriginal  
Women's Outreach  
604-572-2405



Newton Resource Centre  
604-596-2311



Sources Women's Place Resource Centre  
604-536-9611



Sources South Surrey/White Rock Food Bank  
604-531-8168

## Telegraph Creek



Tahltan Health and Social Services Authority  
250-235-3276 (Ku-we-gahan justice program)



Tahltan Band  
250-235-3151

## Terrace



Kermode Friendship Society  
250-635-4906

## Tsawwassen



Deltassist Family and Community Services  
604-594-3455

## Ucluelet



West Coast Community Resources Society  
250-726-2343



Aboriginal



Advocacy



Food



Forms



Legal

## Vancouver



**411 Seniors Centre**  
604-684-8171



**AIDS Vancouver**  
604-893-2201



**Atira Women's Resource Society**  
604-331-1407



**Battered Women's Support Services**  
604-687-1867  
604-686-6732 (TTY, if you're hard of hearing)



**Disability Alliance BC**  
604-872-1278 (Greater Vancouver)  
1-800-663-1278 (call no charge outside  
Greater Vancouver)



**Downtown Eastside Women's Centre**  
604-681-8480



**First United Church**  
604-681-8365



**Kettle Friendship Society** (for people with  
mental illness)  
604-251-2801



**Positive Living Society of BC**  
604-893-2200



**St. Paul's Church, Advocacy Office**  
604-683-4287



**UBC Indigenous Community Legal Clinic**  
604-684-7334  
1-888-684-7874 (call no charge)



**Wilson Heights United Church Advocacy Office**  
604-325-9944

## Vernon



**Vernon Women's Transition House Society**  
250-558-3850, ext. 214

## Victoria



**Action Committee of People with Disabilities**  
250-383-4105



**BC Aboriginal Network on Disability  
Society (BCANDS)**  
250-381-7303  
1-888-815-5511 (call no charge, TTY if you're hard  
of hearing)



**Burnside/Gorge Community Centre**  
(for families only)  
250-388-5251



**Together Against Poverty Society (TAPS)**  
250-361-3521



**Victoria Native Friendship Centre**  
250-384-3211



Aboriginal



Advocacy



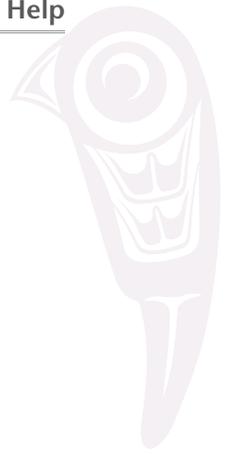
Food



Forms



Legal



## White Rock



Atira Women's Resource Society, Aboriginal  
Women's Outreach  
604-584-7597



Sources White Rock/South Surrey Food Bank  
604-531-8168

## Williams Lake



Cariboo Friendship Society  
250-398-6831



Women's Contact Society Advocacy Program  
250-392-4118



## Where to get legal help

The following services and organizations can give you legal help.

### Access Pro Bono

Access Pro Bono provides free legal advice to people who can't afford a lawyer. The society holds clinics at many locations around BC. Call for an appointment.

Phone: **604-878-7400** (Greater Vancouver)  
**1-877-762-6664** (call no charge outside Greater Vancouver)

Website: [accessprobono.ca](http://accessprobono.ca)

### BC Public Interest Advocacy Centre (BC PIAC)

BC PIAC is a non-profit organization with staff lawyers who work on consumer issues and social justice issues.

Phone: **604-687-3063** (Greater Vancouver)

Website: [bcpiac.com](http://bcpiac.com)

### Community Legal Assistance Society (CLAS)

CLAS offers legal advice, help, and **representation** (a lawyer to take your case) to people with low incomes and the groups that represent them.

Phone: **604-685-3425** (Greater Vancouver)  
**1-888-685-6222** (call no charge outside Greater Vancouver)

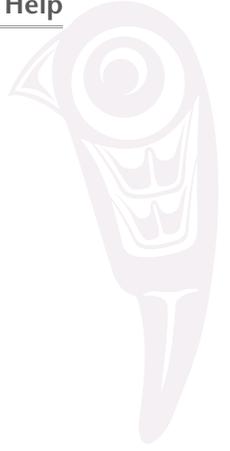
Website: [clasbc.net](http://clasbc.net)

### The Law Centre

Law students at The Law Centre (University of Victoria) provide free legal advice clinics in Victoria.

Phone: **250-385-1221** (Greater Victoria)

Website: [thelawcentre.ca](http://thelawcentre.ca)



## Law Students' Legal Advice Program (LSLAP)

Law students at the University of BC run free legal advice clinics throughout Greater Vancouver.

Phone: 604-822-5791 (Greater Vancouver)

Website: [lslap.bc.ca](http://lslap.bc.ca)

## Legal Aid BC (Legal Services Society)

The Legal Services Society provides legal aid in BC. We help people with low incomes with their legal problems, including **representation** (a lawyer) in certain cases.

Legal Aid *does not* provide legal representation to help people with welfare/income assistance problems. But you may find our other free services helpful, such as legal information and publications. You can get information and publications at your local legal aid office or online.

To find your local legal aid office, check our website (below). You can also call one of the phone numbers below.

Phone: 604-408-2172 (Greater Vancouver)

1-866-577-2525 (call no charge outside Greater Vancouver)

Website (general information): [legalaid.bc.ca](http://legalaid.bc.ca)

Website (Aboriginal information): [aboriginal.legalaid.bc.ca](http://aboriginal.legalaid.bc.ca)

Website (to find a publication): [mylawbc.com/pubs](http://mylawbc.com/pubs)

## Duty counsel

**Duty counsel** are legal aid lawyers who give free legal advice. Duty counsel help people with lower incomes with:

- family law problems,
- **child protection** issues (if the Ministry of Children and Family Development has concerns about your child's safety and well-being and looks into your family life and/or takes your child from your home),
- immigration hearings, and
- criminal charges.

Duty counsel may also speak on your behalf in court on simple matters.

Duty counsel is a drop-in service. People are helped on a first come, first served basis.

There's an income test for this service.

Duty counsel offices are located in more than 40 provincial courts across the province. To find these offices, see our website (below). Or call Legal Aid (see previous page).

Website (duty counsel): [legalaid.bc.ca](http://legalaid.bc.ca) (under Legal aid, click Advice)

## Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society

The Volunteer Legal Advocacy Program of the MS Society, BC Division, supports people with MS who:

- can't afford legal help, and
- aren't able to get a lawyer to take their case under any other program or service.

This program is available in:

- Greater Vancouver,
- Victoria, and
- Kamloops.

Phone: **604-689-3144** (Greater Vancouver)

**1-800-268-7582** (call no charge outside Greater Vancouver)

Website: [mssociety.ca](http://mssociety.ca) (click Support & Services, then on the left-hand navigation panel click Programs & Services — Volunteer Legal Advocacy Program)

## UBC Indigenous Community Legal Clinic

Law students at UBC give free legal services to Aboriginal clients with certain legal problems.

Phone: **604-684-7334** (Greater Vancouver)

**1-888-684-7874** (call no charge outside Greater Vancouver)

## Victoria Native Friendship Centre — Free legal clinic

The Victoria Native Friendship Centre hosts a weekly clinic where you can get free help with legal matters.

Phone: **250-384-3211** (Greater Victoria)

Website: [vnfc.ca](http://vnfc.ca)



## Where to get legal information

The following organizations can provide you with legal information.

### Disability Alliance BC

This organization has fact sheets about Persons with Disabilities (PWD) benefits and Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers (PPMB) benefits. Get free copies by contacting the coalition or download the fact sheets from their website.

They also help people to appeal decisions denying them disability benefits, such as Persons with Disabilities assistance and Canada Pension Plan.

Phone: **604-872-1278** (Greater Vancouver)

**1-800-663-1278** (call no charge outside Greater Vancouver)

Website (general information): **disabilityalliancebc.org**

Website (fact sheets): **disabilityalliancebc.org** (under Library, click Money & Income Supports; then click BC Disability Benefits Help Sheets)

### Clicklaw

Clicklaw has links that will take you to other websites that offer legal information, education, and help. You can:

- find out about your rights,
- find out about your options to solve legal problems,
- get free numbers for legal help, and
- learn about the law and the legal system.

Website: **clicklaw.bc.ca**

### Legal Aid BC (Legal Services Society)

#### Aboriginal community legal workers

Aboriginal community legal workers are legal aid staff who can give free legal information and limited advice about:

- family and child protection law,
- Indian residential schools,
- housing, and
- wills and estates.

Aboriginal community legal workers can also refer you to other services. For more information about how they can help you, see our website (below).

Aboriginal community legal workers are available in Duncan and Nanaimo.

Phone: **250-748-1160** (Duncan)  
**250-741-5529** or **250-753-6578** (Nanaimo)  
**1-800-578-8511** (call no charge)

Website: **legalaid.bc.ca** (Under Legal aid, click Information, then click Aboriginal community legal workers)

### **MyLawBC website**

This website has guided pathways on separation, divorce and family orders, abuse and family violence, missed mortgage payments, and wills and personal planning. It also has links to services that can help and a Dialogue Tool, an online negotiation platform that helps separating couples create a separation agreement.

Website: **mylawbc.com**

### **Family Law in BC website**

Legal Aid has a website all about family law. Visit the site for court forms, self-help guides, and general information about issues such as:

- family law,
- child protection/removal, and
- divorce and separation.

Website: **familylaw.lss.bc.ca**

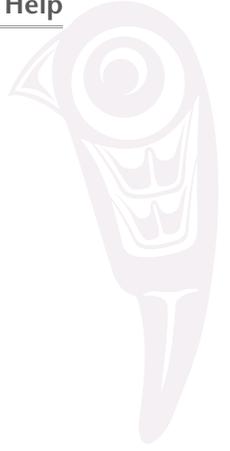
### **Aboriginal Legal Aid in BC website**

This website has information and publications about the issues important to Aboriginal people. It has information on:

- Aboriginal Gladue rights,
- First Nations Court,
- fishing, hunting, and gathering rights (**harvesting rights**),
- matrimonial property on reserve,
- child protection/removal, and
- the Indian residential schools settlement.

The Aboriginal website also has information about people and organizations that can help (see Who can help at the bottom of many pages).

Website: **aboriginal.legalaid.bc.ca**



## Legal information outreach workers

Legal information outreach workers are legal aid staff who can:

- give you legal information,
- help you find legal information and resources online, and
- refer you to other services.

Legal information outreach workers are available in:

- Prince Rupert,
- Terrace, and
- Vancouver.

Phone: **1-800-787-2511** (call no charge from anywhere in BC)

Website: **legalaid.bc.ca** (Under Legal aid, click Information; then click Legal information outreach workers)

## Native Courtworkers and Counselling Association of BC

Native courtworkers help Aboriginal people with the police or courts. They can:

- let you know your legal options,
- help with translation and interpretation, and
- refer you to other agencies that can help with your situation.

Native courtworkers are available in communities throughout BC. In some communities, Native courtworkers also provide support to people struggling with addiction and Aboriginal families.

Phone: **604-985-5355** (Greater Vancouver)  
**1-877-811-1190** (call no charge outside Greater Vancouver)

Website: **nccabc.ca**



## Parent Support Services Society

This organization offers resources and support circles to parents and to those caring for their relative's children. The society has locations across the province. The support circles are a confidential, non-judgmental space to:

- share stories,
- learn new parenting skills,
- discover community resources,
- discuss strategies to prevent or solve problems, and
- celebrate successes.

Phone: **604-669-1616** (Greater Vancouver)  
**250-384-8042** (Greater Victoria)  
**250-468-9658** (Mid/North Island)  
**250-962-0600** (Prince George)  
**1-877-345-9777** (call no charge from elsewhere in BC)

Website: [parentsupportbc.ca](http://parentsupportbc.ca)

### If you're caring for a relative's child

If you're caring for a relative's child, the society has a "Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Line" that you can call for help and information. You also might want to download or request a copy of their publication *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: A Legal Guide*.

#### Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Line

Phone: **604-558-4740** (Greater Vancouver)  
**1-855-474-9777** (call no charge outside Greater Vancouver)

Website: [parentsupportbc.ca](http://parentsupportbc.ca) (click Grandparents)

## PovNet

PovNet is an online service with information about poverty issues. The PovNet website has links to groups that deal with issues like income assistance and housing.

Website: [povnet.org](http://povnet.org)

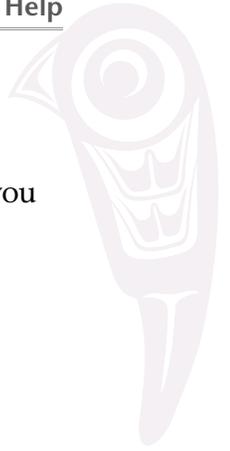
## **TRAC (Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre)**

TRAC runs a Tenant Infoline that can help you learn about your rights and options if you have problems with your landlord.

Phone: **604-255-0546** (Greater Vancouver)

**1-800-665-1185** (call no charge outside Greater Vancouver)

Website: **[tenants.bc.ca](http://tenants.bc.ca)**





## Other resources

The following resources may be able to help you with an on-reserve income assistance matter.

### Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada — BC Region

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada is the federal department mainly responsible for meeting the government's responsibilities to Aboriginal and northern people and communities. The department has a range of programs and services to support Aboriginal and Inuit communities.

Phone: **1-800-567-9604** (call no charge from anywhere in BC)

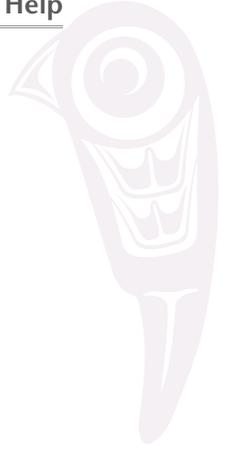
Email: **InfoPubs@aadnc-aandc.gc.ca**

Website: **[aadnc-aandc.gc.ca](http://aadnc-aandc.gc.ca)** (click English)

### Federal Programs and Services for British Columbia First Nations

This online guide outlines the federal government program and services available to BC's First Nations.

1. Go to **[aadnc-aandc.gc.ca](http://aadnc-aandc.gc.ca)**
2. Click English.
3. Under Regional Offices, click British Columbia Region. The British Columbia Region page appears.
4. On the left-hand panel, click Programs and Services for British Columbia First Nations. The Programs and Services for British Columbia First Nations page appears.
5. On the left-hand panel, click Information for BC First Nation Individuals. The Information for BC First Nation Individuals page appears. You can find out about the different types of programs by clicking on the categories that appear on the left-hand panel under Information for First Nation Individuals.



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## First Nations Health Authority

The First Nations Health Authority website has information about:

- the health issues facing Aboriginal people and communities, and
- the health-related services offered by the First Nations Health Authority.

Phone: **604-693-6500** (Greater Vancouver, for general inquiries)

**1-866-913-0033** (call no charge for general inquiries)

Phone: **1-855-550-5454** (for health benefits)

Email: **info@fnha.ca**

Website: **fnha.ca**

## First Nations in British Columbia

This website has information about the First Nations communities in BC, tribal councils, and First Nations organizations. The website includes contact information for these different groups.

Website: **fnbc.info**





## How to get this and other free Legal Aid BC publications

**Read:** [aboriginal.legalaid.bc.ca](http://aboriginal.legalaid.bc.ca)  
(click Find out more in a publication,  
then click Pensions, benefits, & welfare)

**Order:** [crownpub.bc.ca](http://crownpub.bc.ca)  
(under Quick Links, click BC Public Legal Education  
& Information)

### Questions about ordering?

Phone: 604-601-6000  
[distribution@lss.bc.ca](mailto:distribution@lss.bc.ca)

### Feedback on this publication?

[publications@lss.bc.ca](mailto:publications@lss.bc.ca)

  @ **legalaidbc**