# Manitoba First Nations Social Development: Enhancing Capacity

March 20 - 22, 2018



# Manitoba First Nations Social Development: Enhancing Capacity March 20 - 22, 2018

Published in 2018 by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council
Interlake Reserves Tribal Council Inc.
Island Lake Tribal Council
Southeast Resource Development Council
Swampy Cree Tribal Council
West Region Tribal Council















Photos by Jasmine Tara Final report compiled by LAHRK Consulting for AMC

# Manitoba First Nations Social Development: Enhancing Capacity 2018

# **Table of Contents**

Acronyms used in this report	4
Day 1	5
2017/18 Report: Indigenous Services Canada Manitoba Region – Income Assistance Program	6
Question and Answer	6
Program Administration	9
Question and Answer Session	10
Applicant and Recipient Redress	11
Question and Answer Session	11
Wellness & Self-care Dreamcatchers	13
Administering Authority Reports	13
Question and Answer Session	14
Day 2	15
Manitoba Hydro	16
Question and Answer Session	16
Funeral	19
Question and Answer Session	19
Financial Assessment	21
Question and Answer Session	21
Wellness and Self-care - Surrender the Me for We	23
Questions & Answers	23
Lunch and Presentation: First Nations Inuit Youth Employment Strategy	24
Pre-Employment and Employment	25
Question and Answer Session	26
Children Out of Parental Home:	28
Question and Answer Session	29
Shelter Allowance	31
Question and Answer Session	32

Provincial Employment and Income Assistance Program - Bill Backs and Help Desk	34
Question and Answer Session	34
Day 3	35
Administrative Authority	35
Special Needs	36
Question and Answer Session	37
Discussion	37
Compliance Reviews	38
Canada Revenue Agency / Service Canada	39
Jordan's Principle - Social Development	41
First Nation Youth at Work Project	43
Evaluations	44
Suggestions for next year	47
Comments on larger systemic / policy changes	47
Breakout Session Evaluation Comments	49
Evaluation: Program Administration	49
Evaluation: Applicant and Receipt Redress	50
Evaluation: Administration Authority Reports	51
Evaluation: Manitoba Hydro	52
Evaluation: Funerals	53
Evaluation: Financial Assessment	54
Evaluation: Pre-Employment and Employment	55
Evaluation: Children Out of Parental Home	56
Evaluation: Shelter Allowance	57
Evaluation: Provincial EIA Program: Bill Backs and Help Desk	58
Deliverables	59
Appendix A: Attendance	64
Trade Show Organizations	68

# Acronyms used in this report

AANDC - Aboriginal And Northern Development Canada

AFN - Assembly of First Nations

AMC - Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

ASARET - Aboriginal Social Assistance Recipient Employment Training

CFS - Child and Family Services

CMHC – Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

COPH - Children Out of Parental Home

CRA – Canada Revenue Agency

DOTC - Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council

EI – Employment Insurance for people who have lost employment.

EIA – Employment and Income Assistance for people living outside their First Nation.

FIPPA - Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

FNIHB - First Nations and Inuit Health Branch

FNCFS - First Nations Child and Family Services

HOD - Housing Occupancy Data

IA – Income Assistance for people living on the First Nation. Applications normally go through the First Nation

IAA - Income Assistance Administrator

ILTC - Island Lake Tribal Council

IMB - Manitoba Indian Brotherhood

INAC - Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada

IRTC - Interlake Reserves Tribal Council

ISC - Indigenous Services Canada

KTC - Keewatin Tribal Council

MKO - Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak

MLA - Member of the Legislative Assembly, Manitoba, Provincial

MP - Member of Parliament, Canada, Federal

MPI - Manitoba Public Insurance

NOA - Notice Of Assessment, a summary of a your income tax filing

OCN - Opaskwayak Cree Nation

PESP – Pre-Employment Support Program

PHIA - Personal Health Information Act

RRAP - Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program

SC - Service Canada

SCO - Southern Chiefs Organization

SCTC - Swampy Cree Tribal Council

SDATG - Social Development Advisory Technical Group

SERDC - Southeast Resource Development Council

WOP - Work Opportunity Program

WRTC - West Region Tribal Council

# Manitoba First Nations Social Development: Enhancing Capacity

Enhancing Capacity was held at Canad Inns, Polo Park at 1405 St Matthews Avenue in Winnipeg, Manitoba on March 20, 21 and 22, 2018.

# Day 1

The day began with a welcome song performed by the Buffalo Red Thunder Singers. This was followed by a opening prayer offered by Elder William G. Lathlin.

Jenna Brown introduced herself as the master of ceremonies and welcomed participants and presenters.

Opening comments were offered from five dignitaries:

- Regional Chief Kevin Hart Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Manitoba Region
- Grand Chief Sheila North Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO)
- Grand Chief Jerry Daniels Southern Chiefs Organization (SCO)
- Grand Chief Arlen Dumas Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC)
- Steven Traynor the Regional Director General Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)

There was a further introduction to the Social Development Advisory Technical Group (SDATG), offered by David Ironstand of the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council (DOTC)



# 2017/18 Report: Indigenous Services Canada Manitoba Region – Income Assistance Program

### Presented by Tina Kabestra Indigenous Services Canada

The 2017/2018 Manitoba Income Assistance (IA) regional activities included visits to 22 First Nation communities to discuss IA topics, and meetings with 5 tribal councils: West Region Tribal Council (WRTC), Island Lake Tribal Council (ILTC), Interlake Reserves Tribal Council (IRTC), Swampy Cree Tribal Council (SCTC), and Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council (DOTC).

The IA policy topics frequently discussed included:

- National Directive on the administration of Shelter Allowance to Income Assistance Clients on Reserve
- Child Out of Parental Home
- Special Needs Assistance

The presentation mentioned the 2017/2018 File Review presentation from 2017 Income Assistance forum, and the 2017/2018 Document Collection Instrument (DCI). This is an opportunity to have consistent data over a 2-year period to compare 2017/2018 to 2018/2019. Also mentioned was the Social Programs National Manual 2017-2018 and an excerpt from the section 6.0 Minimum Required Documentation for Funding Recipients.

Further highlights included mentions of:

- Pre-Employment Supports Program
- Social Development Advisors Technical Group (SDATG) Bilateral Meetings
- IA Forum Planning meetings with SDATG and AMC
- Monthly National DCI Working Group Task Force Conference calls where the following were discussed:
  - New 2019/2020 DCI Income Assistance Report
  - o DCI collaboration with Manitoba First Nation Income Assistance Administrators
  - o 2019/2020 DCI Survey Handout
  - Opportunity to collaborate on DCI and what works/what does not work for First Nation Income Assistance Administrators

#### Question and Answer

Question	Answer
Does anyone actually go to the communities to do a quality assurance review?	Some of the communities do have quality assurance reviews but the reviews are done informally, and only with the communities that are visited.  Case plans – Manitoba region does not require them – not everyone needs one.  In some communities case management is a regular part of their process: i.e. Brokenhead, Opaskwayak, etc.

Question	Answer	
Does ISC have staff available to visit a FN if requested?	Yes, visits take place because of an invitation.	
Pre-Employment Support Program  – what are the qualifications for each FN before being accepted into program?	PESP started in 2013/2014. It enhanced service delivery. Individual nations were assessed for readiness. PESP finished in 2016/2017. People have asked for more funding and there was a one year extension that was restricted to existing participants 2017/2018 saw 2 years worth of additional funding. We are waiting for 2018/2019, and 2019/2020 PESP is embedded in the IA program and intended to build commitment and support for IA clients. It is Focused on the 18-24 year old group.	
For PESP funding in 2018/2019 are we expanding the age group? Any change at all?	There is a want and need for age cohort to be expanded and this is under consideration. Not sure if funding will support the expansion in the age cohort or adding more communities. There is a need for a balanced approach with the limited amount of funds.  More discussion in breakout session on day 3.	
It is important to remember the fiduciary responsibility on reserve. Updates and changes do happen to programs. Please look to see if there is a policy change in the program you are applying to, or if it is a pilot program. Also be mindful of what our role at ISC is. There are many different departments and levels of government and each offer different opportunities. Your First Nation can navigate and coordinate different funding sources. Example: PESP should work alongside the Employment and Training department, because that department gets the funding to carry out these activities and work together in communities.  Manitoba job grants may also be available to you First Nation, which allows \$10,000 per		
employee to receive extra training, etc.		
Indicators show reducing poverty, etc. thanks to these programs? Where is the data?	There is no data online. The reduction in IA earlier this decade has been shown in the statistics with the 53% reliance rate declining to 47%.  Overall investments in active measures have increased, but there is no final data to report.	
Shipping rates are provided in the manual for north, south, and isolated communities. Peguis is concerned about the cost of their groceries - paying northern freight charges but considered a southern community. Groceries are getting more expensive and IA clients aren't making more than \$220 because the rates are based on the physical location of your	This is a very specific question. Please put together your First Nations information on this and send to Tina Kabestra at ISC for a more detailed follow up.	

Question	Answer
community. Do delivery trucks take this into consideration?	
Is there a study on why each province has such different rates? Are the basic rates ever going to change? How do you measure basic rate actually set? How do you calculate how much a person gets to live off?	The rates are established by each province. I understand there was a Province wide survey asking for feedback and this was used in setting the rates. The Federal government utilizes this information, although the IA rates match Provincial EIA rates.
Can a FN increase their IA rates and is it block or set funding?	If a First Nation has block funding and there is a surplus in the social development department at the end of the year - they can move the surplus anywhere within the Band. Bear in mind that it is more work for the First Nation to do this.  The Surplus could be be used this way to enhance the IA program.  Opaskwayak Cree Nation has done this through case planning, expanding PESP, etc.
Why are we limiting ourselves to provincial standards? How are these programs helping clients who have addictions, etc.?	Swan Lake is a block funded community. Programs can be modified to assist clients with various needs. ISC will have to look at how to better integrate approach to better work with First Nations. Everyone needs to participate when opportunities are presented.
A political discussion needs to take place. First Nations need assistance and apply for provincial funding but are told it's a federal responsibility. The federal IA program follows provincial rates.	Yes, there are many obstacles
What about the housing shortage crisis?	A rental regime is needed on First Nations. Once established a cost analysis can be done and funding can be provided.
Why can't ministers or government visit the First Nations and speak to the leaders there more often?	Social development advisors are having these discussions in your communities.

The afternoon saw the first four Break-Out Sessions

# **Program Administration**

## Presented by David Ironstand: Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council (DOTC)

More details and forms in IA Policy and Procedures Guide

Income Assistance (IA, also called welfare) is not a treaty right. It is a program of last resort for people on reserve. Established in 1964, it is intended to match provincial rates and eligibility for Employment and Income Assistance (EIA). The Social Development Advisory Technical Group was set up to assist. The federal government sets the rules. Your First Nation signs a contract called a funding contribution agreement that spells out exactly what federal funding can be used for, and how it must be reported. Leftover amounts must be returned. Unauthorized expenses must be reimbursed. If the First Nation does not follow policy and procedures, this can cause a huge outstanding debt to the community!

You have the right to apply for Income Assistance, and the right to appeal a decision by the administering authority. To be eligible you must live on reserve and have no other way to support yourself or your family. Married or common law couples must apply for IA together. The 3 categories for IA are: Health, Social, and Economic. People in the Economic Category have employment expectations. You may be eligible for assistance if the total cost of your family's monthly basic needs is more that your total financial resources. The IA amount is based on a basic allowance for the number of people in your family, their ages, and relationships to each other. It may also cover some costs for medical, shelter costs, utilities, user fees and other items.

You should apply for benefits when you believe you are in need. You must disclose and bring in all necessary documentation to make a proper application. Be respectful. You and your family must declare all sources of income and all your assets. Your married or common law partner must also sign the application at your intake appointment. The IA administrator (IAA) will ask a series of questions and help complete the application forms, and you must bring all the documentation and ID you are asked for. The IAA uses this information to test if you are eligible. You will be given the results in writing. If you are eligible and receive IA you will have to keep future appointments, go after other supports, and report significant changes in your life.

If you are not eligible for IA, you will be told why and given a letter explaining how to appeal using the redress system. There are three levels of redress: First Nation Council, Tribal Council Social Development Advisor, and the Director of Funding Services or designated person at Aboriginal Affairs Northern Development Canada. IA staff follow the rules of The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) and The Personal Health Information Act (PHIA).

# Question and Answer Session

Question	Answer
How would an administrator find out if someone is getting a Manitoba Public Insurance (MPI) claim?	Not really sure. You cannot call MPI and ask about a claim you are not part of. Word of mouth in community is how one usually finds out.
What is the scope of this change? What is the budget?	We don't know yet. That is a question that can be answered by government - ask a Federal Member of Parliament (MP) or a provincial Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA).
What about bank statements?	These can still be used as part of the application.
Is there a Notice Of Assessment (NOA) for those who don't file taxes?	You have to file taxes to receive a NOA. A person can show bank statements instead.
Can you obtain and use and Option C printout instead on an NOA?	The Option C is a simplified NOA and it is best to get an NOA.
Do we have to hand in our NOAs every year?	Yes.
Is compliance back on the table?	Be ready anytime.
When a person is Flying out for Dialysis. Should they get Income Assistance while they are away at treatment?	Yes. Cheques will continue during the time they are in the city.
What to do when clients are going to Chief & Council when refused Social Assistance?	Income assessment by IAA is done in these circumstances. If client is refused then their income was too high. Client can ask for copy of assessment and explanation, and use the redress process.
Look at the provincial rates in comparison, especially for health clients. IA offers only \$220 a month. This is unacceptable. Do we follow provincial or federal guidelines?	The federal IA rates are intended to match provincial EIA rates.

# Applicant and Recipient Redress

## Presented by Patricia Dorion, Swampy Cree Tribal Council

More details and forms in IA Policy and Procedures Guide, Section 2.6 and Appendices.

Income Assistance Administrators (IAA) follow published policies and guides set by Council and shared with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). This includes an appeal process called redress mechanism. Applicants or recipients of IA may disagree with a decision made about their IA. The IAA informs the applicant or recipient of the redress mechanism and procedures, and facilitates access to the redress process. Grounds for redress include: not being allowed to apply, applications take too long to decide, application was denied, IA amount was changed or is incorrect, and the IA issuing method.

Complaints, either verbal or written, start the redress process, which has three phases:

- 1. Review by the IAA should be within 5 days. If the applicant or recipient is not satisfied then the IAA gives them a Request for Redress form, as well as process and procedures information.
- 2. The Request for Redress goes to a person or committee agreed upon by the First Nation and ISC for review the arbiter. The review includes an interview with the applicant or recipient, contact with the IAA and other information gathering. A decision should be made within 5 days and communicated to the applicant or recipient. They should also receive the form, as well as the process and procedures information on how to redress (appeal) this decision to ISC.
- 3. The arbiters' decision can be appealed to the Regional Director of Funding Services Operations, Manitoba Region, and ISC. The Director reviews the information, the decisions, asks for additional information, and then makes a decision that is communicated to the applicant or recipient within 20 days of the end of step 2.

The IAA may issue an emergency food allowance to a person filing for redress to alleviate hardship.



# Question and Answer Session

Question	Answer
What are the grounds for Redress?	An applicant may seek redress from a decision made by an Administrator.  Every reserve has their own procedure for redress.  Clients are allowed to ask for the policy that shows why they were denied.  Clients should receive the decisions about their case in writing along with information on the redress process.
Emergency Food Allowance	An IAA may issue an emergency food allowance during the redress process. The client must live on the reserve to receive a food allowance.
Is any individual allowed to get help for social assistance?	The person must live on reserve to apply for and receive IA. A person can ask for help to complete the application or review process.
How often is the Policy Manual changed?	Not sure. Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) issued everything, and INAC changes the policies. Each First Nation is notified of policy changes.
How often do advisors meet?	Every 2 months.
Should a client be receiving a red slip from Hydro?	Hydro is prorated. A working person should be paying their bill.
Does a person pay the full amount for Hydro?	If they live alone, social assistance helps cover a percentage of the bill. This means it is prorated.
Asking about compliance. A doctor refused all applicants and the files got pulled, could the client use a different process?	Please inform ISC about cases like this, and also see the Compliance session by ISC.
If a person has a disability do they have to keep getting a form signed by a doctor?	Wherever/however the doctor signs the paper, they will have to get it signed again whenever the expiry date is.

# Wellness & Self-care Dreamcatchers

# **Facilitated by Marilyn Tanner-Spence**

Participants were guided through an activity and engaged in personal reflection.

# Administering Authority Reports

# Delivered by Jonathan Kornega, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)

More detail in the Policy and Procedures Guide. Section 2.4

The presentation was on how to complete a specific set of forms called the Data Collection Instrument or DCI 455897 (2018-2019) the Income Assistance Report - while avoiding common mistakes. The presentation showed the report page by page.

Question 5 - watch where children are recorded. If a couple have dependent children, then use the "Couple(s) with Children" columns. NOT the "Couple(s)" columns. The count for this page is ONLY the clients and excludes the dependents or children.

Question 6 - dependents age 16 or 17 are only counted if they are NOT attending school. The count is on the last day of the quarter of the report for all active cases or files, and includes all categories.

Question 7 - Active measures includes Work Opportunity Program (WOP) Project, Aboriginal Social Assistance Recipient Employment Training (ASARET) Project, or any income that triggers work Incentive Allowance such as: childcare, transportation, or clothing allowance. The count is on the last day of the quarter of the report for all active cases or files.

Question 8 - Exit means no longer receiving Income Assistance (IA), so they are working or in education. Count the exits for each month of the quarter.

Question 9 is asking if you have case plans with your clients.

Questions 10. a) Includes all basic needs expenditures, and includes Children Out of Parental Home (COPH) from Question 12. If not then inform ISC as not all software has been reporting it.

- 10. b) All special needs expenditures
- 10 (a) and (b) equals total IA budget
- 10. c) Service delivery, includes salaries and office supplies to run program. This is in the annual funding agreement
- 10. d) A subset of basic needs and/or Pre-Employment Support Program (PESP). Include all WOP/ASARET transfer amounts, and all work clothing allowances.
- 10. e) is pre-employment support funding.

Question 12. The total expenditure for COPH are a subset of the basic needs in 10 a)

Question 14. tracks PESP.

# Question and Answer Session

Question	Answer
Are there issues that come up in data collection?	Yes. An important one is when Children Out of Parental Home (COPH) not included in the basic needs report. Non-reporting for basic needs then affects cash flows to the FIrst Nation and then we find out later when the issue builds up.
For quality assurance testing Question 5: is this for the whole client file?	This helps with making sure computer is doing counts properly. If a First Nation has 100 clients and 50 are reported as economic, then 100-50 = 50. This means that the health category clients and social category should account for the other 50
Does Table 7 include casual labour or part time?	Yes, although it depends when the casual income is earned. For quarter 1 only report income earned in that quarter. April, May, June is Quarter 2. If they report income in May for 3 weeks employment – they wouldn't be active in the Quarter 1 report. Just the Quarter 2 report.
Some dads contract work out of community and may be working a few months.	Income earned needs to be reported, no matter if it short term or long term. The IAA visits the family to discuss when a person is getting paid. The person of family must disclose their income and financial information, and it is added to their file.
Are under the table payments included in income?	Yes, all income must be disclosed on how a person is able to support themselves.
Exits?	Means off welfare completely. An "exit" could mean a person is in post secondary education or full time employment.
Single person on basic needs?	The rate is \$220/month. The person receiving IA can sign up for a Work Opportunity Program (WOP). The IAA transfers the wage subsidy. The IAA also develops a case plans with the clients and lets ISC know.

Question	Answer
IAA report is given quarterly attendance for school. What if a student in grade 6 is not attending?	This issue needs to be taken on by CFS and is for the schools to address. When children are not attending school - call CFS to look into letters to parents.
Cost of living in isolated communities?	Make a case note that you've been directed to pay. File review rests with Chief and Council signing agreement. You may have a direction to pay form – this is a solution in a few FN.

# Day 2

Jenna Brown offered a brief summary of the previous day.

This was followed by the morning breakout sessions: 2017 Policy and Procedure Guide



# Manitoba Hydro

A Manitoba Hydro representative explained the First Nation Accounts social process:

- 1. Hydro will fax or email monthly spreadsheets to IA, at the same time every month.
- The list must be filled out and emailed back. The IAA emails a spreadsheet with the name, hydro number and amount paid. The most important information on the list is the 14 digit account number, the customer name and the amount covered by social assistance.
- 3. Payment should accompany the monthly list.
- 4. Supplemental requests should be accompanied by cheque unless the social holding account has a credit.
- 5. Keep updated every month It is important to notify Manitoba Hydro of any changes (i.e. people moving or coming off social assistance). If it is not up to date or information is improperly entered it could lead to problems (such as late fees or the wrong person getting charged). To ensure that the bills are accurate, attempt to do prompt readings.
- 6. If there are others in the house who aren't on assistance hydro will be prorated accordingly.

Spring is disconnection season.

#### Question and Answer Session

Question	Answer
If a new person moves in, is it possible to back date bills to the appropriate client?	<ul> <li>If a person moves and the account is in their name, the bill will follow the client.</li> <li>It's very important to get a meter reading once the person has moved out.</li> <li>Meter reading fee in self read communities are done to offset the cost to send out meter reader.</li> <li>Hydro has a phone reminder system.</li> <li>A person can an also get statements from billing or credits.</li> <li>Manitoba Hydro will only send out lists to IAA or Chief and Council to see who is up for disconnection.</li> </ul>
Can we apply for solar panels?	Your First Nation will need to check with Manitoba Hydro.

Question	Answer
How much is the fee for Meter readings?	Meter reading is \$50.00 or \$75.00 on Saturdays. Meter readings are not covered by social assistance. To avoid fees, send in the readings by taking a picture of the meter and emailing it in to Hydro.
What is the email to send pictures of the meter reading to?	Ask your Hydro representative.
Why is the current bill and the credit bill different?	Current bill is what was just consumed. Amount due would include previous amount that was unpaid or credited - the credit bill.  There are times that there may be credit on an account. When there is credit on the account, there is no need to make payment because a credit can happen if estimated amount on previous month is greater than actual consumption, credit will show on clients list.
How do we help people reading meters?	Many First Nations will hire people to read the meters. They can send a reading in 2 months. After 3 months Hydro will come out and read the meter for a charge. Sayise Dene is running off diesel. You can train one person to read meters.
In my community, we have a hard time getting people to read meters. How do other communities deal with this?	You can hire people from the community to go read meters- much cheaper for people.
Is there any way to find out if there's a boostage of hydro that could be crime related?	We will have to inspect and monitor the case.
What if a client brings in a bill (3 months) who is on social?	If you are going to clear the entire Bill then you can email to remove the late fee. If you make arrangements for late fees, and the customer doesn't follow through then power will get cut off. There is a reconnection fee that is not covered by social assistance.
Why do clients get removed from Band hydro list and we don't find out?	Whenever someone moves they get a new Hydro number and it is not connected to IA anymore. Housing is also separate.
Why such a high jump in bills from month to month?	It depends on whether meter readings are called in or it could be an error. If you think it is an error, call Hydro.

Question	Answer
There are many "other" charges on the bill. What are these?	Meter readings, geothermal, reconnection, Anything that is not electricity or taxes as "other". Call Hydro if you want breakdown.
With marijuana becoming legal- people may grow their own plants. Will this look like a spike in those bills? Is it a big difference?	We only notice this activity if it continues, but haven't seen this in a while.
What are disconnection times?	Around mid- April in the south when temperature is 0 or above for consecutive days.
IAA or housing coordinator responsible to update client info with Hydro?	Can be from either.
What limit of money do you cut off?	This amount is based on duration- anything after 60 days but for sure 90 days late. If it is over \$100, you can make payment arrangements.
What are arrangements?	Ask to have everything resolved by the fall - but if not then it is possible make arrangements around payday. Try to resolve the outstanding amount before the next heating season starts. It is important to follow arrangements.
Vacant house or new tenants, what is the process?	If the house is not metered, or disconnected for more than 6 months, there needs to be a safety inspection. Could cause fire. With a house under construction, Hydro is to be paid by construction company and once client moves in and client gets keys, then client or social is to pay.
What are the time period for readings?	3 months or more of estimate, then Hydro will read meter. System to automatically read meters. Manitoba Hydro is looking into technology. Need help with reminders to read meter.
Are the meters right?	If a suspected meter has issues, they will inspect old meter and change meter.

# **Funeral**

## Presented by Unice Ross and Darlene Bird (Interlake Reserve Tribal Council)

More details and checklist in IA Policy and Procedures Guide, Section 4.8, and Appendices. The rates table is H.3.

This presentation focused on the process for determining how much support can be offered by IA towards funeral costs.

Income Assistant Administrators (IAA) support the family arranging the funeral, determine eligible expenses, and may serve as the communication link with Chief and Council. Funeral homes work directly with families. One person should be in charge of the funeral; family member, designate, executor or estate administrator from Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). Intake process must be within 60 days of death and done by an IAA. For pre-approval ask for a detailed or itemized funeral home invoice prior to funeral, and a copy of the death certificate.

With the applicant complete: Record of Funeral Expenses Form, Income Assistance Application (SD01), Budget and Decision (SD04) – to determine what is covered. Contact Estates Unit at ISC to start an estates account form (SF11). Keep copies of all documents.

IA eligibility is restricted to persons who ordinarily resided on reserve at the time of death providing no other sources of funding are available. All financial resources of the deceased estate are considered in determining financial resources. IA will only cover some expenses, within limits, and the family or designate must cover the rest. Help those making funeral arrangements understand what is eligible. The family or designate must forward a copy of the death certificate to Band membership and to ISC Estates. Keep Chief and Council informed on coverage and shortfalls.

#### Question and Answer Session

Question	Answer
Is there a maximum limit on what IA will cover?	Opening/Closing Casket \$1080.00 Frost and Snow Removal \$120 Special Needs Program \$250. \$300.00 paid for wake service, to cover food and receipts must be kept See H.3
Does membership require a copy of the death certificate?	Yes.

Question	Answer
If an Elder passes away while being away from reserve, and not on pension, how does that work?	
What about babies – stillborn? And mothers on assistance, does it have to be a certain size like XX months?	Regular Funeral Service for children up to 2 years of age.
Why can't First Nations have upgraded Caskets?	IA will cover costs up to the eligible limit. Family can cover the cost of upgrades.
The changes of Funeral eligible expenses, what are the provincial rates?	See table H.3
Is Income Assistance suppose to pay for pensioners? (Elders on Pension)	Have to complete an eligibility form to determine if they are eligible. Pension would count as income on this form.
Does Interlake Reserves Tribal Council receive invoices?	
Remote island, Band members – own sources if they wanted to attend a funeral else where – are they eligible? Or any for people on assistance?	Transportation costs for a participant to attend the funeral of an immediate family member, up to \$250 (travel costs) once for each family member.
When funerals occur for people on assistance, where do the invoices go?	
So the people digging the grave, they eligible? Like resources.	
Why do funeral homes need the invoices before they release the body?	IA needs a detailed invoice. Funeral home needs to be clear on exactly what is being charged. No one wants an extra cost unexpectedly.
Unemployment, if one passes away is there Income Assistance?	
Oversize Caskets why isn't it available for First Nation? Why do we have to pay double?	An oversize casket is eligible. A double sized oversized casket is not eligible.

# Financial Assessment

## Presented by Gwen John Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)

More detail are in the Policy and Procedures Guide sections 3.6 to 3.9

The review and verification of income and assets is always required to determine eligibility for an individual to receive Income Assistance (IA). Application form includes consent to verify information. All information is confidential. The person applying must include all their assets and income. Supporting documents can include: bank statements, pay stubs, tax records, bills of sale, life insurance policies etc. The assets and income help determine if a person or family is eligible for IA. Assets include: Real Property - owned land and buildings - that are not essential to a person's residence. Personal Property is usually temporary and movable material possessions such as a recreational boat. Liquid Assets that are cash or easily converted to cash such as term deposits, savings bonds, Guaranteed Investment Certificates. Persons applying for IA can keep some allowable assets necessary to maintaining themselves, see Section 3.7. If they have too many assets they are required to convert the assets to cash to support themselves, and may then be eligible for IA. Trust Funds are common for people legally incapable of managing their affairs, such as children in care, and the trust fund may affect eligibility for IA.

The application also requires the applicant to list all their unearned income and earned income. Unearned income is money received that is NOT from employment, self employment or business. It includes: maintenance agreements, pensions, training allowances, employment insurance etc., which are deductible from IA payments. Some unearned income is exempt from IA eligibility calculations such as; Canada Child Benefit, GST, income tax refunds and others. The unearned income must also be categorized as final or ongoing. Earned income comes from employment, self employment or business. This includes wages, honoraria, and net earnings from farming, fishing, trapping, and self employment. Mandatory deductions such as EI, CPP, union dues and group insurance are excluded from earned income calculations. The Work Incentive encourages IA recipients to work by allowing them to receive some IA to supplement their earnings The supplement decreases as their earnings increase.

#### Question and Answer Session

Question	Answer
What are some ways to confirm income?	A person can show their pay stubs, Service Canada reports, payroll payments, bank statements, Notice of Assessment.
Why are we asking for a Certificate of Possession?	To show what they own, it is a provincial requirement.

Question	Answer
Having the bank statements or tax assessments, are they both required?	Either / or a person does not have to have both.
If a person doesn't do taxes for 4 years, are they allowed help?	Yes, for sure. There is always help.
Supplements with Hydro?	Full income assistance is used.
I don't understand the liquid assessment and the reporting of winnings. What are considered winnings?	Cash or money. Liquid Assets are cash or can be made into cash very quickly. A Guaranteed Income Certificate can be converted to cash very quickly and easily.
What will happen if someone wins the max in bingo and they are in debt? And only got a little left?	Money won at bingo is considered liquid assets - If they are below the maximum eligible assets then it isn't going to affect their income assistance.
If a person wins 10 thousand, spends 5 thousand and has 5 thousand left, are they not entitled to asset?	Until she shows that she spent all her winnings down to the asset threshold she should not be on income assistance.
What happens with the \$4,000 if someone has that?	It would be considered liquid assets (real property), and a person can keep assets up to that amount.
Who can manage a trust fund?	Child and Family Service agency, personal care homes, public trustee.
Maintenance orders, are they guaranteed the money?	Not necessarily guaranteed the money. Maintenance orders are not always paid.
Men who are fishing but are not making enough money?	Please follow up with INAC on this question.
A person with a mental illness, do the parents receive their money?	It doesn't have to go to the person.
Why do we ask for monthly statements?	Only when the IAA are holding it for a reason, this should be in the case file.
Is training available for understanding the proper steps?	Discuss with your social development advisor.
Financial Assessment form, is it required?	It is not a required documents but a useful tool.
What about when IAA does not know about drug dealing?	There isn't anything stopping anyone from going on income assistance unless they go under a Band Certified Resolution. People who are known drug dealers can be banned from living on reserve by a certified resolution passed by Chief and Council.

# Wellness and Self-care - Surrender the Me for We

#### Facilitated by Susan Swan

This interactive presentation was led by Susan Swan, retired police sergeant and the first Aboriginal female police officer. Swan commenced with a brief presentation on team building and emphasized the need to build a sense of team within your organization. She stated that this is done by showing compassion, having regular team discussions, building your team up (positive encouragement), treating fellow workers with compassion and working together. After the brief discussion a group activity "Zoom" occurred (available for purchase at Chapters). Every participant stood in a circle and had a picture. Then each participant was asked to describe the picture. Participants were then told to stand in a line as to which one was first/which one was last. The key takeaway from this exercise is that everyone is needed to make the team work. The participants included a variety of persons from supervisors to chiefs to councillors to income administrators. Many of the questions following focused on how to train workers - Susan indicated that we always train and never give up on a worker.

#### Questions & Answers

Question	Answer
What were some of the changes you saw in your police force?	A Wellness Crisis Unit. Working with community. Cecil Spence - Traditionalists.
How much support did you receive?	Presenter spoke of being the only Native and the only female in her department in her Police Team. Spoke about her experience. Worked hard inside the Police team and outside work.
Where are you from?	Lake Manitoba
When do you know "enough is enough" with a unskilled worker?	Train with them and give them the training to help them be skilled. Never give up on them.
How do you bring the weakest worker to bring up with skilled workers?	Give training, teach with knowledge, don't give up on them, mentor them and if needed give them extra training.
Where can I get a copy of picture booklet "zoom"?	You can do it in your workplace. You can buy it at Chapters. The booklet is called "ZOOM".
Workforce, what is something you had to bring in for your team? As to establish the culture in your team?	Simply say "Thank you". Holding family events and doing things to show thanks.  Team exercises at work should be once a month.
How do you build your team?	Just say thank you. Don't forget to be human. Ask about family. You are all leaders.

Lunch and Presentation: First Nations Inuit Youth Employment Strategy

Presented by Sheila Templeman, Indigenous Services Canada

This was followed by the afternoon Breakout Sessions







# Pre-Employment and Employment

# Presented by Amanda Kubrakovich, West Region Tribal Council and Patricia Dorion, Swampy Cree Tribal Council

More details in IA Policy and Procedures Guide section 3.5 and Appendices.

Employment Expectations apply to applicants and recipients in the Economic Category only. It also applies to partners, spouses and to single parents whose youngest child can attend school. Applicants and recipients must demonstrate that they are actively seeking employment, are not refusing employment or are in training. Income Assistance Administrators (IAA) may allow employment seeking to be deferred for 3 months at a time due to: temporarily unable to work, family violence, school age children with special needs, lack of transportation, lack child care, lack of training, or lack of employment opportunities.

Economic Category Recipients/Applicants may be penalized if they: quit work without cause, fail to meet reasonable job requirements, fail to apply or maintain Employment Insurance (EI) benefits. Administrators must deliver IA to eligible people with dependents. Administrators can reduce the amount of assistance when the person quits or refuses work. Administrators must record the reason in the case file, and advise the person of Council's redress policy and procedures.

IA Administrators should consider any extenuating circumstances relating to work refusals and terminations. These might include being fired without just cause, discrimination, harassment or organizing a union. Applicants may have quit work with just cause, change in health, change in work location or hours that make it extremely difficult to continue working. The applicant is expected to pursue available legal remedies in addition to applying for IA.

Children under the age of 18 are encouraged to remain in school. A dependent child who is 16 or 17 and not attending school is subject to the same employment expectations as an adult. Employment Expectations do not apply to children under 16 years of age who are not attending school and does not affect the recipients eligibility or entitlement unless the child is absent from the home for more than a month resulting in a change in family unit.

# Work Opportunity Program & Aboriginal Social Assistance Recipient Employment Training: WOP & ASARET

WOP and ASARET are two programs designed to assist income assistance (IA) recipients to move towards employment. In turn the recipients' monthly income assistance will be transferred to supplement their wage. While there are some similarities WOP focuses more on partnering with companies while ASARET must include job training. This presentation focused on how the two similar programs function.

#### **WOP**

The Work Opportunity Program is intended to assist those on Income Assistance by increasing employability, creating work experiences, developing skills all while helping provide community services. This program allows the use of IA funds to subsidize eligible work programs (see Section 5.2 for project eligibility and criteria). The types of projects that may be considered can be environmental improvement projects, social service project, community facility or an economic development and Band enterprise project (see section 5.2 pages 3 & 4 of IA Policy and Procedure Guide for a more detailed breakdown of project types).

Approval of the administering authority is required for any project. An application must be submitted which clearly outlines what the project is and how it will function. The IA must update the file in accordance with the Authority records and liaise with participants. The recipient must do any requirements of the program (i.e. reporting any changes) and must accept employment outside the project. There are additional funds available for work clothing under Special Needs Clothing Expenses.

#### **ASARET**

ASARET( Aboriginal Social Assistance Recipient Education and Training) is an initiative between ISC and Human Resources & Skills Development to direct IA funds toward active measures such as employment and skill training. Its goal is to assist recipients in moving from IA dependence to the labour force. Unlike WOP there is no time limit on the program length or the amounts being transferred. However, eligibility like WOP, is limited to those on reserve who are receiving IA. The project application procedure for administering authorities uses same processes and documentation required for WOP (advance review by Chief/ council & person at INAC). The administering authority must keep updated copies and records of monthly forms.

#### **Differences between WOP & ASARET**

ASARET projects must have training, whereas WOP do not necessarily have training. WOP funding is received from an employer and projects are approved by Chief & Council, whereas ASARET funding is received from programs sponsored by Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement (AHRDA) and projects must be approved by Funding Services Officer (FSO) or the Social Development Operational Specialist.

### Question and Answer Session

Question	Answer
Does Employment & Training help with funding?	If it is with Service Canada.

Question	Answer
Is clothing allowance still happening?	They took out the clothing allowance. But the \$100.00 is still there from the IA program.
Do you need to apply for WOP? Is it from E&T?	Sign an application, however every Employment & Training program may be different.
Can they fire their clients to come up with different planning and more events?	Yes, you can, as long as you stick with your policy.
Can a for-profit enterprise, where the Band is employer, participate in a WOP project?	Yes, all WOP documentation would identify the duties and employer for a WOP project.
Can a WOP participant get another job and still stay on the project?	Yes, however, the participant's income from another job will reduce the transfer of funds as the income may be deducted dollar for dollar. This depends on the IA recipient's income assistance category type (Economic, Health, Social) and if any exemptions for earnings are allowed. This would be considered a success as the recipient has found employment.
Can you WOP an apprenticeship position when an individual is doing his/her practicum?	No, not if the individual is receiving a living allowance from his/her funder.
Can you fire a WOP participant? If yes, what would you do with the vacant position?	Yes, a WOP participant can be fired similar to any other employee. As a replacement will need to be found immediately, advertising the position for another IA recipient will be required.
Can you use the WOP Project to provide an IA recipient experience and added training to complement what they already have in training?	Additional experience and training depends upon the WOP sources of funding. If a WOP source of funding includes an ASARETS, then the project will no longer be a WOP but an ASARET.

# Children Out of Parental Home:

# Presented by James McDougall, Island Lake Tribal Council

More details in the Policy and Procedures Guide section 4.4

Children out of the parental home (COPH) allowance was previously called guardian social allowance (GSA). It is paid on behalf of a child when they are in the care of a person other than a parent. A parent is a birth parent, adoptive parent or legal guardian. A child is a person under 18 years of age.

Guiding Principles: Parents are expected to financially support their children when able to do so. The Declaration of Principles in *The Child and Family Services Act* of Manitoba states that children have a right to a continuous family environment in which they can flourish. COPH allowances may be used to support cultural practices of customary care.

#### Eligible Children:

- When the parents are deceased or unable to provide adequate financial support.
- The child depends upon a specific person other than the parent for financial support.

Ineligible: A child should not be enrolled on COPH when:

- A parent is able but unwilling to provide for the child's maintenance
- There are child protection concerns
- A child and family services agency (CFS) is involved.

Procedure - CFS Agency involvement. The income assistance administrator (IAA) contacts the appropriate CFS agency, in writing, at the initial application **and** the annual re-application. IAA may also request the CFS conduct a file review.

Procedure - Enrollment. The child's current caregiver applies for income assistance (Application process is in Chapter 2.1 of the Policy and Procedure Guide). Complete and sign the required forms. The child's parents are required to give consent. Financial eligibility for assistance based on the financial resources of the parents and the child. IAA assists in applying for Canada Child Benefits, and also informs applicant about contacting CFS Agency and purpose.

Records and Reports: All claims must have supporting documentation included in the client file:

- Initial application (SD01).
- COPH application and authority form (SDCOPH).
- Notes confirming contact with CFS including the date, name of worker and agency involvement, if any.
- Current budget and decision sheets (SD04).
- Copy of COPH letter to applicant and CFS to prove notification to both parties and arrangement.

Benefits and Rates: Assess the financial resources of the child's parents based on Section 3.6. Complete the SD04. Less net resources, and there may be pro-rating. Benefits and rates are based on Manitoba provincial rates. Appendix G has a table to see maximum monthly rates. COPH Calculation. Examples are in Section 4.4

# Question and Answer Session

Question	Answer
Could the parent stay in the same residence as the child? Under special circumstances?	Yes, if provided the right documentation.
Is the birth certificate required for the child when applying for assistance?	Yes, it is required. You might not have it, you can start the application process.
If the current situation hasn't changed, do you need to redo the document every year?	Yes, unless the youth is in a permanent residence.
How long can we get COPH?	For however long the adult applies for it, unless there is a change in the household.
Is there a reason why children on reserve who aren't treaty get more money than the children who are treaty?	Need to change the mindset for IA government, to help the clients more.
They hurt the child more putting them into care (CFS), COPH is here to prevent CFS from getting involved.	Recommendation: Jordan's Principle government representative asks that conferences like these invite CFS staff to come speak about the upcoming changes to policy (there's a lot!).
What if the parent isn't there to sign documents?	Write "off of the reserve". It wouldn't hurt to have more detailed case notes.
What if the parent doesn't want to sign?	Ask to have a sit down with these individuals to make sure they understand the process. A lot of the time, resistance like this comes from lack of knowledge about COPH, etc.
What if a parent has to leave for 3-6 weeks (addictions, incarceration, etc.) and the child stays home? Under COPH?	If placed with the grandparents, then yes COPH - but as a special scenario.

Question	Answer
What if the grandmother is looking after the child but does not want IA from the Band?	If it's personal, the child has a right to receive this money. Have a sit down with the 2 parties and resolve the differences for the benefit of the child.
What if the child is 17 and has a child of their own?	Could be considered an adult, but age 16 is different.
Concern that Child and Family Services (CFS) approves placement of child in homes of those who lost their own children to CFS	



# Shelter Allowance

# Presented by Clarence Mason: Island Lake Tribal Council (ILTC)

The Treasury Board of Canada sets out the terms and conditions for Income Assistance (IA) – the Department of Indigenous Services has the authority to fund expenditures for shelter-related costs made on behalf of eligible income assistance recipients. The policy lays out who is eligible for assistance, what the client is responsible for, eligible claims, policy surrounding shared dwellings, children in care, community standards, ineligible periods and temporary absences.

The Income Assistance Administrator is responsible for:

- Carrying out home visits to determine number of persons living in a residence and their financial circumstances.
- Place long term recipients on equalized payments plans for utility.
- Advising Chief and Council of the above noted shelter and shelter related allowance policies.
- Advising clients of their responsibilities to submit utility accounts on a timely basis.
- Keep current housing occupancy data (HOD) and pro-ratio calculations on a client file when making a claim for a shelter / related items.

When completing a budget and decision form (SDO4) Income Assistance Administrators must enter all non-variable and variable allowances for shelter and shelter related costs, both non-variable and variable (hydro, fuel oil, wood allowance and propane).

For a home to be eligible for the shelter allowance the income assistance recipient must reside in a house constructed or renovated through the use of a loan under the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) or Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP). All tenants in house must be identified in the lease agreement or in the housing occupancy data. The monthly allowance for shelter cannot exceed the maximum monthly rates appropriate to family unit size. To collect shelter allowance on houses constructed or renovated with a Ministerial Loan Guarantee, a rental regime must be in place for all tenants of houses for which the guarantee applies. Appropriate housing should be used - so a single person should not be put in a 3 bedroom house. Housing need to meet health and safety standards of the First Nation or its housing authority to ensure utility costs are not too excessive.

#### **User Fees**

There may be fees associated with certain infrastructure services such as; water, sewer and garbage. In order to pay the user fees they must be approved in advance by the Funding Services Officer. In order for funding to continue on a yearly basis the audit must clearly indicate a payment rate by persons not on assistance of at least 80%. User fees are only payable to the head of the household and are limited to one payment per month / home.

#### **Utility and Fuel Allowance**

Hydro is based on actual eligible expenditures.

- Oil & Propane: community rates apply (but rates need to be consistent- those on assistance cannot be charged more than those not on assistance). Delivery tickets and invoices are required for funding of heating oil – propane requires a invoice.
- Telephone may be paid only when recipient requires a phone due to medical necessity/ chronic health problem.
- There is a budget for wood allowance.
- Some arrears are eligible for coverage while others are not.

A National Directive on the *Administration of Shelter Allowance to Income Assistance Clients on-Reserve* was made in 2016. It requires a rental regime for all Band owned homes in order to meet the principle of universal rent collection. All First Nations have access to funding for the development of a rental regime by a submission to the Capacity Development and Innovation fund.

# Question and Answer Session

Question	Answer
If the client is on IA and is a foster parent – do they have to claim maintenance?	All sources of income have to be reported.
How many times do you (IA) renew a file?	Once a year.
What about clients who are years behind on taxes? The cost is very high for someone living on a low income?	There are free tax services available.
Are hydro costs taken into account? Some community members pay \$700-\$1,000 per month.	
Secondary question: Why are FNs paying so much for hydro?	Solar panels coming out but hydro never talks about it or pushes it.
Is the wood allowance available for all First Nations?	See Section 4.3 Wood Allowances.
Fuel and wood – for every nation do we have to make a proposal to get fuel and wood? And too who? And how long?	Each First Nation negotiated wood allowances with the Funding Service Officer. The allowance considers the location of the community, weather conditions, the availability of wood supply and market pricing One allowance per month per housing unit for the heating season - normally October 1 to March 31.
They provide chainsaws, you can write a proposal for that?	
Do CMHC allow for remote island wood allowance?	

Question
Do you have to make a proposal to get a wood allowance
Wood allowance was never taken off? Where do you get the funding from?
How do INAC expect us to enter it in the report? For wood?
Can they use wood and electricity? Can people qualify for both?



# Provincial Employment and Income Assistance Program - Bill Backs and Help Desk

Presented by Sherry Beardy, Indigenous Services Canada and Gwen John, Southeast Resource Development Council

Health Benefits Help Desk is a Provincial Health Benefits support line that the Income Assistance Administrator (IAA) must contact to confirm whether requested health benefits from non-status recipients of Income Assistance (IA) are eligible. This workshop:

- 1. Laid out eligibility requirements for health benefits
- 2. Identified the steps for IAA when they receive a claim for a non-status recipient

Eligibility is determined by comparing whether the same request would be approved under the Provincial Employment and Income Assistance Program, health benefits for non-status are allocated to the special needs budget.

#### Process for IAA:

- 1. Ask client to provide recommendation or prescription from health care provider.
- 2. Contact help desk.
- 3. Identify yourself as the IAA and explain why you're calling (assess appropriate health service benefits for a non-status IA recipient on reserve).
- 4. Clearly state that the special needs program will cover the eligible health amount but you need help determining what the cost and allowable maximum is for the year.
- 5. Determine the net cost of the service and benefit and record on client file.
- 6. Obtain copies of receipts for all health benefits and place in file.
- 7. Complete the Special Needs Application identifying the cost as a non-insured health benefit.
- 8. Add cost to the current month's Budget and Decision Form under special needs.

#### Important notes:

- If you're asked for a code refer to the recommendation sheet to find the code.
- Help desk attendant will determine if the requested item is an eligible Health Benefit under the Provincial EIA Program and the maximum amount allowed for payment.
- Do not pay over amount indicated by the Help Desk.
- Any overage is the responsibility of the client.
- Over payments are subject to recapture in the event of a compliance review.

# Question and Answer Session

No questions from this session.

# Day 3

Jenna Brown offered a brief summary of the previous day and introduced the sessions in open plenary for all participants.

# Administrative Authority

#### Presented by Sherry Beardy, Indigenous Services Canada

This workshop reviewed the importance of the administrator role and what is within their purview to address. Sherry Beardy emphasized the importance of case notes as they can help show what is needed. A good relationship between worker and client can help identify what the needs are. In regards to health Beardy cautioned that administrators are not medical workers and that medical issues (especially mental health) are best left to the professionals. For COPH the letters are written to CFS and caregivers so they are important. For Hydro, administrators must submit monthly and be aware of changes and report to hydro. Funerals are another issue that fall under income administrator (see session on Funerals for more information as to what is covered). WOP/ ASARET has not changed this year (see session on WOP/ ASARET) for more information. Tenancy agreements are not the IAA's responsibility. Administrators must report quarterly (July, October, January & April).

### Special Needs

#### Presented by Tina Kabestra, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)

This presentation focused on the Special Needs Assistance provisions in the First Nations Income Assistance Policy and Procedure Guide. The Special Needs Assistance provides for needs that are not covered elsewhere and are essential to the clients well-being. These goods are typically above and beyond the day to day needs and are considered to be outliers to items that would be covered elsewhere. In order to qualify applicants must be eligible for basic needs assistance (could be subject to a home visit). Funding is limited to 3% of the basic needs budget, of the 3%, 2.4% can go towards special needs and the other 0.6% can go towards non-insured health benefits. It is recommended that the Income Assistance Administrator work with the Council Chief when dispersing funds under this provision to ensure that the fund is being appropriately used. ISC recommends that each First Nations group develop an internal policy for how the fund will be dispersed and how to ensure that everyone knows which items are eligible under this category. The procedure is as follows:

- Applicant and administrator identify and assess need.
- Applicant applies for special need (administrator will help with application and help explain to the applicant what they are applying for).
- Administrator determines eligibility.
- Administrator approves request.
- Administrator places copies of the approval on file.
- Administrator also completes a budget and decision report.
- Administrator obtains copy of receipt of purchase for the file.

Table 4.6-1 identifies items that can be considered under special needs funding. This includes a varied list of things such as documents (birth certificate), clothes for a new job or a kitchen table.

There are a couple of clarifications. First is a potential of reimbursement for appliance purchases made within the last 5 years. Purchases made on behalf of the client are the property of the Income Assistance Department, if they are removed the value of said good can be taken from clients assistance file. Finally housing costs (i.e. window repairs, door fixes) cannot be taken from this fund but must go through the department of housing. Any repair work being done on appliances (limited to fridge, stove, washer & dryer - other appliances fall under department of housing) must be accompanied by a receipt.

Special Need can also include travel costs such as:

- Travel to visit a critically sick immediate family member.
- Relocation for employment purposes.
- To attend a family member funeral in the case that death/ funeral are imminent funds can be administered immediately at the Administrators discretion.
- Administrators can also allocate funds for accommodation and meals.
- For more information on what is covered see Sections 3.9, 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8.

Installation of a telephone (if needed for medical purposes) can also be covered under special needs - but not the monthly bill as that would fall under shelter and related allowances. Clothing required for a employment or training can also be covered.

Special needs can also cover costs associated with a burn out (fire).

This fund can also include a one-time start up cost to go towards furniture using the list of eligible items. Freight costs will be covered even if it exceeds the maximum allowable amount.

### Question and Answer Session

Note that not all questions received clear answers.

Question	Answer	
What if there is an agreement between client and housing for repairs (i.e. windows, doors, etc.)?	These are not eligible under Special Needs. These repairs would not be paid for by IA program.	
Why aren't dryers covered?	This is determined on a case by case basis, rates have been set for north, south, and isolated.	
47% dependency rate – what is being done to lower the dependency rate? (\$7/day to live)	<ul> <li>a. Follow provincial rates. If you want to impact the rates then write a policy paper, do the research, and submit to Provincial government. There are opportunities to get involved with the government and make recommendations</li> <li>b. Reducing dependency? Assets program, investments in education, FN driven school divisions, welfare program is here to provide for basic needs.</li> </ul>	

### Discussion

Funding eligible for birth certificates but not rush order and only once. Workers can hold on to birth certificates for their clients, to prevent loss.

- Sprays, etc. for bedbugs covered by shelter-related costs.
- Addressing bedbugs involves 3 departments: Prevention and awareness, housing / chief and council, IA program. IA can contribute to the replacement of a bed, as long as there has been an investment from family and First Nation. Awareness and fumigation are to prevent incident from occurring again.
- We know the communities have special needs need some information provided to workers for proof and changes will be made.

# **Compliance Reviews**

### Presented by: Rhonda Howse, Indigenous Services Canada

The Income Assistance National Program Guidelines set out the program requirements for the Income Assistance (IA) program for Reserves who have entered into a funding agreement with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). People can apply for and receive funds to cover basic and special needs for themselves, and their dependents. IA also helps them to access services to transition into the workforce. Eligibility requires that the person live on reserve, complete an assessment, and show that they have no other sources of funding.

Proof of eligibility is based on documentation from the person applying for, or receiving IA. This documentation must be maintained on file and must be reviewed and updated regularly. See Section 5.3 Minimum Required Documentation for Funding Recipients.

The funding agreement requires ongoing management which may include: monitoring progress, cash flows, management of unexpended funding, reviewing of the financial and program reporting (DCI), regional audits, in person meetings and other steps. Capacity development may be a consideration.

Program Guidelines must meet national and regional policies, guidelines and procedures. The Programs and Partnership Directorate is giving presentations File Reviews and Data Collection Instrument (DCI).

Budget 2018 includes \$86.9M over two years to work with First Nations to make the program more responsive to the needs of individuals and families on reserve. It also includes funding for case management supports to help individuals and families better transition from income assistance to employment and education. An engagement strategy will be mapped out with the Assembly of First Nations.



# Canada Revenue Agency / Service Canada

### Presented by Cayla Linaker, CRA and Tanis Billington, SC

This presentation informed participants of the benefits and credits of which they may be eligible.

#### **Child Tax Benefit**

- Tax free
- Available for all families with children under 18
- Will also register child for related provincial/ territorial programs
- You are eligible if
  - o Live with a child under 18
  - Responsible for care and upbringing
  - Resident of canada (for tax purposes)
- Apply as soon as child is born or you meet the conditions
- Apply even if you share custody or the child is with you temporarily
- 3 ways to apply:
  - Automatic benefit application
  - Your online CRA Account
  - o Form RC66

You must do your taxes every year to qualify.

#### Disability tax credit

- Works to reduce the amount of tax a person with a disability pays
- Eligibility here can have more benefits
- Eligibility refers to the impact on the person not the diagnosis
- To apply fill out a Part A form T2201 get medical practitioner to fill our Part B then send completed form to the CRA
- Also is a child disability benefit
  - Tax free benefit for those caring for a child under 18
  - Medical practitioner fills out T2201 certifying that the child has prolonged and severe disability
  - Benefit paid monthly

#### Working income tax benefit

- Available to modest income earners
- To determine eligibility and how much you can claim fill out a Schedule 6

#### Goods and Services Tax/ Harmonized sales tax (GST/HST credit)

- Tax free payment designed to help modest income families offset the GST/HST that they pay
- No need to apply CRA does when taxes filed
- 4 payments throughout the year
- Eligibility determined by number of dependents and net income

CRA provided a list of items that would require you to contact them such as change in address, change in number of dependents, change in banking information. There is an online calculator to determine what you are eligible for. If you would like payments faster sign up for direct deposit.

Community Volunteer Income Tax Programs - provides free assistance for people to help prepare tax returns. This program is available based on a income needs basis. CRA offers training and assistance for community organizations who want to help provide tax preparation assistance to their clients.



# Jordan's Principle - Social Development

### Presented by Marcel Balfour, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

Jordan's Principle is a child-first principle. It seeks to remove the red tape that First Nations children are often caught between - causing services such as health, education, recreation, culture and language, and child care to not be provided in a timely manner. This principle improves access to these necessities by calling on the Government of first contact to pay for services, then seek reimbursement later so that the child does not get caught in the middle. In 2016 the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) identified a need to address how to implement Jordan's Principle in Manitoba and reform the First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS).

As such *Keewaywin: Our Way Home Manitoba First Nation Engagement* initiative was started. The engagement process spanned more than 6 months (from December 2016-June 2017) and utilized two key tools to actively seek engagement. The first tool was *Planning Alternative Tomorrows* which guides the reconciliation process. The second tool used was the PATH planning tool which is a data gathering tools that uses storytelling, analysis and active engagement to determine what participants want to see. After a broad series of engagement a report was put together. The final report clearly identifies how to implement Jordan's Principle in Manitoba. The recommendations from the report were:

- 1. Restore First Nation jurisdiction of Children
- 2. Deconstruct child welfare
- 3. First Nations led and designed Jordan's Principle system
- 4. Establish Jordan's Principle program, resource and medical centre
- 5. Education and training for First Nations in medicine and working with children
- 6. Creation of Educational awareness regarding special needs children
- 7. Basic human rights to First Nation Children and families
- 8. First Nation infrastructure funding
- 9. Creation of education awareness campaign regarding challenges special needs face
- 10. Funnel prevention dollars towards bodies independent of CFS system
- 11. Design new funding model to support model of care approach
- 12. Establish customary/ kinship care in all First Nations
- 13. Develop a range of First Nation led options to fully implement Jordan's Principle

These will be addressed by providing service coordination. Having designated groups/people that are trained and knowledgeable in providing services that follow Jordan's Principle. The Service Coordination work plan uses holistic, non-discriminative and self determination to implement Jordan's Principle.

The work plan includes an inclusive approach which is interconnected. The four key areas are:

- long term committed funding
- · access to services on reserve
- first nation capacity

### a holistic approach

Long term committed funding means that it is supported nation-to-nation and is First Nation-run. Access to services means that First Nations will not have to leave reserves to access services. First Nations capacity refers to the ability of First Nations to govern as well as build knowledge, education and ability internally. The holistic approach will keep the best interest of the child first, will seek to keep families together and to maintain traditional customs and values.

The timeline for the completion of the work plan and all its components is broken down into short, medium and long term brackets. By December 2017 the draft of Jordan's Principle Law will be completed, funding mechanism options and identification of service gaps will have been identified. Medium term goals are to: have the proposal going to the Treasury Board for Manitoba region as well as agreement and MOU's/ partnerships with existing service providers. The long term goals are to see the Jordan's Principle centre of excellence, and enhanced First Nation capacity and ongoing training and education.

The current process begins with an appointment with a Jordan's Principle Case Manager (on reserve) or a special needs advisor (off reserve). Then they are given a referral or an appointment with specialist. Then holistic care is provided, followed by a child centred care plan and finally an evaluation. The process is cyclical so it can begin again and will continue ensuring that the child's needs are adequately addressed. The special needs advisors will have access to and knowledge of a variety of programs and resources available. They will partner with existing groups and organization and maintain ongoing contact and ensure that the most optimal results are obtained.

This session was followed by a Motivational Speaker - Tchissakid Player, Sagkeeng First Nation

# First Nation Youth at Work Project

### Presented by Clarence Mason, Island Lake Tribal Council

This employment strategy is designed to provide youth the opportunity to explore the different careers and career opportunities they have in the Island Lake Region through First Nation Organizations. The goal is to show youth the benefit of going to school and finishing, as well as training them in work etiquette and securing them a paid internship. All of this will provide experience and foster a sense of self worth and confidence. As part of the project they have the opportunity to travel to Winnipeg and tour Red River Community College. This tour includes a series of presentation and introduces the workers to education, the supports that are there and training – which could further their education, career and employment goals.

There are four member First Nations involved in the project: Garden Hill, Red Sucker Lake, St. Teresa Point and Wasagamack.

Each affiliated First Nation had a local coordinator and from 4-9 youth workers. The total number of youth in the project was 42. Job placements ranged from finance to employment and training to child care to working with income assistance. Workers were paid every two weeks. This project is running on a budget of \$709,058 and is running efficiently with no major problems.

#### This was followed by a session on Wellness and Self-care

The Door Prize was announced, courtesy of SDATG

Closing Remarks were delivered by Kayla Frank, AMC

The Closing Prayer was led by Elder William G. Lathlin

The day ended with a performance by the Buffalo Red Thunder Singers.



# **Evaluations**

The three day forum, Manitoba First Nations Social Development: Enhancing Capacity, was intended to expand knowledge on the First Nations Income Assistance Policy and Procedure Guide, review changes to the Data Collection Instrument (DCI), to explain Best Practices for preparing file reviews on IA (and hopefully prevent future claw back) and to discuss Jordan's Principle and identify how it can be useful to fill gaps in service for First Nation on reserve. The forum spanned three days in late March and explored a number of topics through a variety of workshops, presentations and discussions.

### Methodology

Participants who attended the breakout sessions were asked to complete evaluation forms. Questions 1-6 asked participants to evaluate various elements of the conference by using a scale to indicate whether they strongly agreed, agreed, did not agree, strongly disagreed or had no answer. When calculating the responses, if there was no box checked or circled then it was considered as no answer and tabulated as a response under that category. Questions 1-6 were broken down at the responses tabulated.

Question 7 asked participants to identify for each breakout session and report what was useful and what needed to be covered. For Question 7 all responses received were recorded and similar comments within a Breakout Session were grouped together. The response content was analyzed and then placed into five categories that emerged from the results. A general "everything was good" category, a category for specific recommendations regarding this forum, an unanswered question category, a category for specific information that was useful and a category for broader policy changes. The summaries for each breakout session are included.

A total of 46 evaluation forms were received. Not all forms included answers to each question/

#### Overall

A significant number of positive comments were recorded about the forum itself from the presentations to the workshop format to the information learned and shared to the connections and contacts that were made. Many participants expressed great appreciation for the information that was shared with comments such as "I was very glad I was able to attend", "looking forward to attending more" and, "I now know a lot more from when I got here. Really loved this – thumbs up on this one thank you". Many people wanted to see more sessions, longer sessions and workshops occurring on a regular basis. "I learned about a lot of topics listed above and would like to learn about how to help our community members more".

**Question 1:** I learned something new about the First Nations Income Assistance Policy and Procedure Guide that helps me to better understand how I can support First Nation clients.

Strongly agree	Agree	Do Not Agree	Strongly Disagree	no answer
12	27	1		3

The positive comments were further verified on the evaluation sheets with an astounding 91% of responses indicating that they either agreed or strongly agreed that they learned something new about the Assistance Policy and Procedure Guide that helps them to better understand how to support First Nation clients. "it was very informative".

**Question 2:** I have built new relationships with other participants where I would be comfortable contacting them to continue conversation.

Strongly agree	Agree	Do Not Agree	Strongly Disagree	no answer
13	27	2		1

Another important intended outcome of the forum was to bring First Nation communities together to build relationships, make connections and disseminate information. It was clear from the data received that this was another positive outcome of the forum as 93% responded that they agreed or strongly agreed that they had built new relationships and would be comfortable contacting them. Respondents indicated that it is "always good to get together with other IA workers to discuss programs/ what works" and that they were able to "meet new people and find it more comfortable to network/ know who you're talking to".

**Question 3:** I understand the process of compliance reviews and how it may impact my first nation community.

Strongly agree	Agree	Do Not Agree	Strongly Disagree	no answer
9	27	4	1	2

Comprehending compliance review is a complex and complicated issue, but one that is a key component of the IAA role/ responsibility and a key in providing superior service to IA recipients. When asked if forum attendees understood compliance review more than ¾ of those who responded thought that they understood compliance review. A small percentage, 10%, did indicate that even after the forum and sessions they did not understand compliance review. However, when reviewing the related comments it appears as though those respondents who indicated they did not understand compliance review seemed to be against the compliance review process itself rather than not having gained of compliance reviews in these workshops. Making statements such as "compliance is for not" and "I disagree with compliance".

**Question 4**: I have a better understanding of Jordan's Principle and its implication to social development.

Strongly agree	Agree	Do Not Agree	Strongly Disagree	no answer
5	22	3	1	12

Another outcome of the forum was to increase knowledge and understanding of Jordan's Principle and how it can fill gaps in service for First Nations. About 2/3 of the attendees felt that they understood Jordan's Principle more following the workshop -"great presentation". Additional comments indicated that more or additional information is needed on this topic -"need more information" or "I need to learn more about Jordan's Principle" "more on how Jordan's Principle works together with IA". This is definitely an area where additional resources, presentations and information could be shared and explored.

**Question 5**: I participated and shared my thoughts in the breakout sessions throughout the three days.

Strongly agree	Agree	Do Not Agree	Strongly Disagree	no answer
12	30	1		

The forum also intended to review best practices for preparing file review. A key tool for determining best practices is to gather knowledge of those who are working directly with the Policy and Procedure guide. Through participation and discussion information was gathered that can be used to influence and impact and create a best practices guide. Further, along with identifying best practices knowledge is shared and participants can internalize information learned to influence how they do their job. The key to this is participation. The majority of participants were able to participate and share their thoughts talk with other attending "Absolutely participated in all ways" "lots of great questions First Nations community concerns are all similar" "networked with participants". Many positive comments were received about meeting other people. Cumulatively 98% of participants either agreed or strongly agreed that they participated.

**Question 6:** The topics for the breakout sessions were beneficial and covered the majority of the information in the Income Assistance Policy and Procedure Guide.

Strongly agree	Agree	Do Not Agree	Strongly Disagree	no answer
14	25	1		3

Altogether 91% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that the range of topics that were discussed throughout the forum covered the Income Assistance Policy and Procedure Guide. "yes, the forum covered a lot of information with all the information an IA holds" "I have a stronger understanding" "great use of time to take in and also to question"

### Suggestions for next year

The input and feedback gathered included many suggestions for next years' forum. One comment that came up many times what that participants would like to have more time for discussion and questions "not enough time for questions" and "all workshops were useful but I felt more time was needed".

There were a number of comments regarding how they would like the information shared such as; open mics, a sharing circle, more discussion, more scenarios and skits with case examples to provide a greater understanding of what IA's roles are, and how other First Nations are addressing the issues.

Additional comments were provided requesting specific sessions. These session are; more information and an update on Jordan's Principle, an Elder presentation on dependency, update on the revision to the special needs funding and a session on how to treat income supplements (as many communities are not doing this correctly).

For recommendations on who should present a suggestion was received to invite experienced IAA's to present to newer IAA's.

One IA noted that the timing of the conference is slightly problematic as it occurs right at the busiest time of the year, April 1<sup>st</sup>. As such a request was made to slightly move the date away from that potential conflict.

### Comments on larger systemic / policy changes

Some of the comments on the evaluation forms included policy changes or larger overarching goals that would impact many First Nations such as:

- Increasing service delivery funding
- More support for IA's
- Include oversized casket rates in the manual
- Make it mandatory that all First Nations have CRW system in their community (along with proper training)
- Removing the children column on the childless couple form (DCI administration authority reports)
- Have a Redress Policy in place for each community
- Self government
- Amend IA's pay to match Provincial salary pay scale
- Need for more resources (FN workers larger case loads)

Many of the comments surrounded tools or resources that would increase IA effectiveness, consistency between First Nations and the ability to increase the quality of service provision. A number of different tools were suggested by respondents such as:

Step-by-step guide

- Training for CRW
- More workshops for IA's
- More information about different funding that is available
- Create consistency between different regions

There were also general questions that were left unanswered in the sessions

- Housing on reserves, who selects the housing for size, room size, wood burning, First Nations need bigger homes
- What about community client members who leave the community to live in a personal care home?
- Do we still provide service to clients who leave for medical (i.e. dialysis treatments) out of community?
- If we follow Provincial guidelines why don't the IA workers get Provincial salary wages?
- Also why don't we get additional funds to increase service delivery? Provincial workers have 50 files and yet FNs have 300 to 1,500 files - need to increase to have more staff
- How do you read the tax assessment forms?
- Why on reserve are Manitobans not eligible for primary caregiver tax credit?

### **Breakout Session Evaluation Comments**

### Evaluation: Program Administration

A majority of the specific comments indicated that "all" of the information shared was useful, that it was "very informative" and that it "was really good". "Everything was useful, it's good to know what the administrators have to do". Participants indicated that in terms of what information was useful "they learned a lot from the policy" and that it was "good to know what the admins have to do." IA's also appreciated knowing that they can direct clients to additional service supports such as income tax preparation and budgeting. They appreciated the breakdown and information on how to organize information and how to do an intake of a client.

For next year suggestions for the forum included more discussions, more time, more examples/ scenarios and group sharing. There were also some recommendations for what could be addressed or amended in the next year to help admins including matching Provincial salary scales, reducing the caseload numbers, increasing resources and creating a step-by-step guide.

#### **Unanswered questions:**

• Who should an IA contact as per "need" i.e. FSO, SDATG

### Evaluation: Applicant and Receipt Redress

Approximately half of the responses received indicated that all of the information in the presentation was useful and contained a significant amount of information that some had not heard of before "did not hear of this learned a lot." Specific components that were identified from the presentation as being useful were that:

- Clarification that applicants can apply for redress when they're refused payment
- Clearly explaining the redress process participants appreciated having the process explained as well as the appeal process and the levels of redress

When asked what needed to be covered participants indicated that

- Going over the proper policy and where the funding comes from would be beneficial
- Redress limitations as an IA administrator on behalf of clients needs

### **More information** was requested for:

- Providing statistics for First Nations for that IA's can learn from other First Nations
- Having a policy on redress set for each community.
- The idea of self government

### **Unanswered questions:**

• "How to redress limitations as an IA administrator on behalf of client needs" – this could be something that should be addressed in next year's workshop.

# Evaluation: Administration Authority Reports

The majority of written comments indicated that everything in this workshop was useful and informative. Specific comments of what information was useful included:

- Knowledge that CRW systems are a must
- Specifics on reporting (how to fill out, submit, when to do reports and how).

### More information was requested for:

- More details and information about different funding
- Details and process for claimed recoveries
- Different software that had high compliance success

Participants suggested round table discussions and sharing at next year workshop.

### Evaluation: Manitoba Hydro

Many comments indicted that all of the information provided was useful. The information specifically identified as being useful was:

- Self meter readings/ estimated monthly bills & related discussion
- Pro-rating
- Emphasis on keeping track of changes/ importance of accurate information
- Maintenance enforcement
- Reviewing the spreadsheet

### **More information** was requested for:

- Solar power how does it work on Hydro's end for clients who have solar panels? How does it impact hydro costs?
- Need more training in how to deal with arrears

### **Unanswered questions:**

- The evaluation sheets contained a number of questions on solar power/impact of solar power on hydro bills. Many of these questions seemed to go unanswered.
- What happens to a non-active file when in fact the client is a client?
- Some communities have geothermal; where does this fit on calculations?

### Evaluation: Funerals

There were many comments about how much was learned throughout the funeral presentation. "very useful good information" and "very good presentation". When asked specifically what was good about this presentation the comments included:

- Identifying new information that IA's may not have known about (i.e. new rates)
- What is covered under funeral expenses (i.e. wakes, digging of graves, family travel)

Respondents identified that they would like to be provided with more scenarios, as each case seems to be different and it often opens up discussion.

### **More information** was requested for:

- flights for isolated communities
- overages
- application process
- stillbirths
- updates on changes
- oversized caskets

### **Unanswered questions:**

- Do we issue under special needs or basic needs?
- What about Bands that have their own policy how does this impact reports?

### Evaluation: Financial Assessment

Financial assessment was positively reviewed with about half respondents indicated that "all information was useful". Specifically noted as being useful were:

- Being allowed \$4000 for new applicants
- Needing signed permission from client
- Trustees ability to manage funds with ISC
- Changes in ISC rates for IA
- Eligibility
- Amount of money that can be earned

### More information was requested for:

Participants asked for a continual review of this topic. They also requested to hear about different software that had higher compliance.

More examples of how to do the paperwork as well as skits and discussion were requested.

### **Unanswered questions:**

• If a client has a vehicle/ skidoo what do we request? How do we conduct liability?

# Evaluation: Pre-Employment and Employment

Many participants enjoyed the videos that accompanied this presentation, finding them extremely informative. Specific items that were identified as being useful were:

- Need to connect with clients,
- The various funding opportunities,
- Contact lists
- The programs that are already established

### **More information** was requested for:

- More success stories
- Have HR coordinators determine what works in their area
- More videos

### **Unanswered questions:**

 Why is work clothing only available to people in the health category? Isn't health for disability and people with a disability are unable to work?

### Evaluation: Children Out of Parental Home

The information that was useful:

- The manual
- Not letting CFS getting involved
- Knowing the information that is needed to receive COPH (including guidelines and purpose and how to apply)
- CFS family enhancement program

### **More information** was requested for:

- The process (letters)
- Verification of CTB papers
- What ID is on file for children
- Address different rates
- Present information more clearly
- Timelines (how longs does COPH last before next step)
- What is required for file review

### **Unanswered questions:**

- If Grandparents looking after child since birth are they the legal guardian?
- Concern that Child and Family Services (CFS) approves placement of child in homes of those who lost their own children to CFS

### Evaluation: Shelter Allowance

#### What was useful:

- Learned that when loans mature the housing unit becomes a Band unit
- Need to change special needs bedding category to add bed bugs coverings, most clients cannot afford and do not have home housing department.
- Need to start housing regime
- Need to have CMHC tenancy agreement on file for compliance
- Shelter allowance policy
- Pro-rating household allowance.

### More information was requested for:

- Why can't a treaty rent from house owner
- Personal referral agreement for non-Band owned homes
- Impact on budgets
- More on pro-rating

### **Unanswered questions:**

- Why do provincial IA clients get to own their homes after 25 years?
- What are policy IA rates and CMHC rates not compatible?

# Evaluation: Provincial EIA Program: Bill Backs and Help Desk

### What was useful:

- Procedure for how bill back works (i.e. calling help desk)
- Good contact list

### What needs to be covered:

- Band member shop
- This information needs to be sent to all IAA's
- Need to address the gap between EIA and IA different regions do things differently
- Need requirements for those who leave reserve
- More information on what the province gives over what our clients are entitled to



### Deliverables

1. Provide feedback on the changes to the DCI; (Data Collection Instrument)

**Recommendation:** Black out sections of the form (Question 5) where people should not enter data.

"You need to take children off childless couples because it is confusing"

#### Section 1: Clients and Dependants 5. Clients and Dependants by family composition, age, sex and educational attainment (including clients/dependants in active measures and pre-employment supports) Single(s) with child(ren) Single(s) Couple(s) wit Education Sex Client Client Dependant Client Dependant Clien Age male 0-5 female male 6-15 female Did not complete secondary male (high) school digloma female Secondary (high) school diploma or equivalent male female Post-secondary, apprentice-ship or trades certificate, male diploma or degree from a college/CEGEP or university female Did not complete secondary (high) school diploma female optoma or degree from a college/CEGEP or university female male Did not complete secondary (high) school diploma female Secondary (high) school diploma or equivalent female Post-secondary, apprentice-ship or trades certificate, diploma or degree from a college/CEGEP or university male female

**Recommendation:** Edit forms to add more explanatory text, and/or plain language text, in sections that often have errors.

**Recommendation:** Offer regular CRW training for all First Nations.

Total

**Recommendation:** Develop a video that can be shared online that explains how to fill in the DCI, step by step, with plain language explanations - turn the presentation into a video.

### **More information** was requested:

- More details and information about different funding options and sources
- More details and process for claimed recoveries
- Different or better software that has high compliance success

2. Education materials on the Policy and Procedure Guide and feedback on it

Recommendations are drawn from notes, observations and comments from the entire three days.

**Recommendation:** That copies of the IA Policy and Procedure Guide be available for clients to review.

**Recommendation:** Creation of a series of online, or shareable, YouTube "how to" videos which will provide IA's with knowledge of how the forms are to be filled out and proper process.

**Recommendation:** Creation of a plain language "how to manual" to be provided to each IA. These manuals would clearly depict how the forms should be filled out, flowcharts for processes, examples and scenarios.

**Recommendation**: Creation of a plain language version of the Policy and Procedure Guide. "Have in layman terms".

**Recommendation:** Creation of a contact list including all IA's phone numbers and emails. The contact list should also include emails and phone numbers of the individual in charge of the program. This contact list should be updated on a regular ongoing basis.

**Recommendation:** Creation of group chats or a moderated online forum between IA's to encourage sharing of knowledge and consistency between First Nations. Share email addresses.

**Recommendation:** Creation of a funding checklist that would inform all IAA's of different types of funding available. This checklist would need to be updated regularly to ensure that the best service is being provided to clients.

**Recommendation:** Offer more workshops and training.

- 3. "Best Practices" options on how to prepare for file reviews on income assistance and prevent clawbacks
  - Have detailed Client Files or Case Files for each client
  - Take the necessary time with the initial application.
  - Use checklists to ensure all the documents that are needed are in the file at the time of the application and when the file is reviewed.
  - Help the client obtain their documentation if they need it.
  - Keep detailed notes and add them to the file. Every meeting, every communication related to IA.
  - More training

**Recommendation:** Work with government employees and IA's to prepare checklists that would be accompany each file to ensure all documents are included. Also prepare checklists that can be shared with clients on the documentation they need to provide.

**Recommendation:** Work with government employees and IA's to develop note taking guides for IA's. Clearly explaining what notes need to be added to case files.

**Recommendation:** Implementation of regular training sessions and workshops for IA. This could be online training sessions or having experienced IA's leading sessions. This can be timed on a monthly basis to refresh, review, and provide a forum for discussion around the numerous policy areas and necessary documentation covered under the Income Assistance.

**Recommendation**: Creation of a mentoring program where experienced IAA's could mentor less experienced IAA's.

**Recommendation:** Creation of an IAA support team. This team would include a staff member knowledgeable about all fundings, programs and forms and would be available to support all of the First Nations Communities. This position would seek to alleviate the workload and pressure that many IAA's are experiencing as well as providing consistency.

**Recommendation:** Creation of group chats or a moderated online forum between IA's to encourage sharing of knowledge and consistency between First Nations. Share email addresses.

**Recommendation:** More consistency between the different First Nations as not everyone is doing things the same (comment received during workshop) "compliance workers should be in agreement as to what they require – every compliance is different."

4. Expand the application of Jordan's Principle to ensure social development is discussed and ways to help fill the gaps in service for First Nations on-reserve.

This presentation was a very thorough explanation of Jordan's Principle, how it started, its goal, the process and where we are at today. Most evaluation comments indicated that participants learned a lot, knew more than they did before, and enjoyed the presentation. Some comments were received requesting additional information and further follow up. One comment was received asking to know *"how we could expand Jordans Principle."* A request was made to include an update on Jordan's Principle in next years conference.

**Recommendation:** Jordan's Principle government representative. Asks that conferences like these invite CFS staff to come speak about the upcoming changes to policy and have more discussion.

**Recommendation:** Offer additional workshops and training sessions specifically on Jordan's Principle to explain what is, how it works and its relationship for IA's.

**Recommendation**: Look for ways in which to expand Jordan's Principle to reach further and help more people.

**Recommendation:** Creation of a Jordan's Principle lens through which all programs can be viewed. This would ensure that people are provided services in a more timely and efficient manner if the service can get funding - provide now and sort out later which department is responsible for paying.

**Recommendation**: Lobby for larger policy and systemic changes to the system - rather than each department being only responsible for certain things. Move to a different set of funding arrangements that provide resources first then sort out where it is from later.

# Appendix A: Attendance

First Nation	Name	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Barren Lands First Nation	Darlene Clark	у	у	
Berens River First Nation	Elaine Prince	у	У	у
	Susanne McKay	у	у	у
Birdtail Sioux Dakota Nation	Мау Нара	у	у	у
	Carson Benn	у	у	у
	Chris Benn	у		
	Roxanne McKay			
	Tiffany Bunn	у	у	у
	Doug Hanska	у	у	
	Lindsay Bunn Jr.	у	у	
	Ronn Benn		у	
Black River First Nation	Milly Bird	у	У	у
Bloodvein First Nation	Kimberly Scott	у	у	у
	Ellen Young	у	У	у
	Elizabeth Fisher	у	у	у
Brokenhead Ojibway Nation	Jennifer Boulton	у	у	у
	Aliesha Desjarlais	у	у	у
Buffalo Point First Nation				
Bunibonibee Cree Nation	Roxanne Chubb	у	у	
	Sylvia Robinson	у	у	
Canupawakpa Dakota Nation	Joanne Bell	у	У	у
	Tamara Melville	у	у	
Chemawawin Cree Nation	Candace Chartier	у	У	у
Cross Lake (Pimicikamak)	Frances Frogg	у	у	у
	Jacqueline Ross	у	У	у
	Jamie Mason	у	У	у
	Jessica Halcrow	у	У	у
Dakota Plains Wahpeton Oyate	Sandra Smoke			
	Megan Johnson			
Dakota Tipi	Adrienne Pashe	у		
Dauphin River First Nation				
Ebb and Flow First Nation	Elaine Desjarlais	у	у	у
	Daren Mousseau	у	у	

First Nation	Name	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
	Joan Malcolm	у	У	У
Fisher River Cree Nation	Rachel Murdock	у	У	У
	Shirley Cochrane	у	У	У
Fox Lake Cree Nation	Gordon Anderson	у	У	У
Gamblers First Nation	Annette Ducharme	у	У	У
Garden Hill First Nation	Mary Knott	у	У	У
Gods Lake First Nation	Myra Anderson	у	У	
	Delores Andrews	у		
Hollow Water First Nation	Melvina Moneyas			
Keeseekoowenin Ojibway Nation	Dolores Blackbird	у	У	У
	Manuel Burns	у		У
	Allison McKay	у	У	У
	Muriel Twigge	у	У	
Kinonjeoshtegon First Nation	Candace Traverse			
Lake Manitoba	Cory Missayabit	у	У	У
	Beverly C. Paul	у	У	У
Lake St. Martin First Nation	Jane Sinclair	у		
	Teresa Kudding	у	У	У
Little Grand Rapids First Nation	Amanda Eaglestick	у	У	У
	Kitty Keeper	у		
Little Saskatchewan First Nation	Cherise Beardy	у		
	Leroy Thompson			
Long Plain First Nation	Joyce Perswain	у	У	
	Elizabeth Assiniboine			
Marcel Colomb First Nation	Noreena Dumas	у	У	у
Manto Sipi Cree Nation				
Mathias Colomb First Nation	Charlene Caribou	у	У	У
Misipawistik Cree Nation	Shirley Jensen	у		
	Anne Ferland	у	У	
Mosakahikan Cree Nation	Vinetta Umpherville			
	Katheryn Ettawakapow	у	У	У
Nisichawatasihk Cree Nation	Marilyn Spence	у	У	у
	Margaret Wood	у	У	у
	Lianna Anderson			
	Valdine Linklater	у	У	

First Nation	Name	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Northlands Denesuline	Marcel St. Pierre	у	У	у
	Gaberlie Tssessaze	у	У	у
Norway House Cree Nation	Donald Dixon	у	У	у
	Rachel McDonald	У	У	У
	Hubert Hart	У	У	
	Lorraine Munroe	У	У	У
	Henry More	У	У	у
O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi First Nation	Vania Dumas	У	У	
	Patrick McKay			
Opaskwayak Cree Nation	Flora Comeau	У	У	
	Alexandria O'Toole	У	У	У
	Corey Constant	У	У	у
	Ernestine Cowley	У	У	У
	Cythia Young	У	У	У
	Nikki Constant	У	У	у
	Karalee Constant	У	У	У
	Kendra Campeau	У	У	у
	Christine Bignell	У	У	У
O-Pipon-Na- Piwin Cree Nation	Renada Dysart	У	У	У
	Louis Spence		У	У
	Rainer Duck			
Pauingassi First Nation	Pierre R Leveque	У	У	У
Peguis First Nation	Martin Favel	У	У	У
	Ashley Starr	У	У	У
	Beverly Stranger	У		
	Kendrah Flett	У	У	У
	Sylvia McKay	У		У
	Annette Spence-Meeches	У	У	У
Pinaymootang First Nation	Krystal Marsden	У	У	У
	Xavier Gould	У	У	
	Patrick Anderson	У	У	
	Brian Sanderson	у		
	Mary Anderson	у		
Pine Creek First Nation	Sherry Chartrand	У	У	у
Poplar River First Nation	Juslin Bruce	У	У	У

First Nation	Name	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Red Sucker Lake First Nation	Noela Harper	У	У	У
Rolling River First Nation	Stacey McIvor			
Roseau River Anishinabe				
Sagkeeng First Nation	Theresa Bruyere	у	у	У
	Tchissakid Player	У		
Sandy Bay First Nation	Cheryl Roulette	У	у	У
	Hank Richard	У		
	Caitlyn Houle	У	У	У
Sapotaweyak Cree Nation	Anita	У	у	
Sayisi Dene First Nation	Jedrick Thorassie	У		У
	Clifford Anderson	У	у	
Shamattawa First Nation	Deanna Redhead	У	У	У
Sioux Valley	Kim McKay	У	У	У
	Harlene Hotain	У	У	У
Skownan First Nation	Melanie Marsden	У	У	У
	Jimmy Chartrand	У	у	
St Theresa Point First Nation	Rosie Flett	У	У	У
	Sylvia Wood		У	У
	Lily Harper	У	У	У
Swan Lake First Nation	Jennifer Esquash	У	У	У
	Tania Scott	У		
	Roberta Morrissette	У	У	У
Tataskweyak Cree Nation	Louis Spence	у	У	
	Sarah Cole			
	Charlene Spence	у		
Tootinaowaziibeeng	Cheryl McKay	у	У	
War Lake	Jennifer Bloomfield	у	У	У
Wasagamack	Olivia McDougall	У	У	У
	Michelle McDougall			
Waywayseecappo First Nation	Denise Mentock	у	У	У
	Brittan Cote	у	У	у
Wuskwi Sipihk First Nation	Bev Ready			
	Benjamin Young	у		
York Factory	Bonnie Redhead	у	у	

Additional Registrants	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Gwen John	у	у	
Ronald House	у		
William Lathlin	У	у	
Wanda Moore	у	у	у
Chris Woods	У		
Patrick McKay	у		
Jaydee Elk	у	у	у
Shauna Flett	у		

# Trade Show Organizations

Teekca's Boutique	Anishinabe Ikwe
AD Morrison & Associates Ltd.	Workplace Education MB
CRW Systems Inc.	Legacy Bowes Group
Circling Buffalo	SEED Winnipeg
Indigenous Services Canada	Eagle Urban Transition Centre
Service Canada	Get your Benefits - U of M
Revenue Canada	SERDC Economic Development & Training
Manitoba Hydro	Principle Supply
Featherstone Support Services	