

March 26, 2010

Alberta Works benefits changed for income support clients

Edmonton...

Effective April 1, some Alberta Works income support benefits will be adjusted in order to improve fairness for clients and simplify administration.

There are three categories of income support recipients - Expected to Work (ETW), Not Expected to Work (NETW) and Learners. The adjustments will affect some core Learner benefits and some supplementary benefits available to all three categories. Benefits vary by family size and are responsive to individual situations. The benefits being adjusted include:

- equalizing benefits of three categories of Learners - Employment Insurance Learners, non-Employment Insurance Learners and Apprentices;
- aligning dental coverage for Expected to Work and Not Expected to Work clients;
- amalgamating the Employment Maintenance Allowance with a similar benefit, the Employment, Training and Transition Supports; and
- extending benefits to victims of human trafficking.

“It was conceivable that two different people, both with the same family size, could sit in one classroom, and each could get a different level of funding,” said Thomas Lukaszuk, Minister of Employment and Immigration. “We saw discrepancies in the benefits we provide and we took steps to fix them for this coming school year. These adjustments maximize our ability to help as many Albertans as possible, including victims of human trafficking.”

Overall, the changes represent a 2.8 per cent reduction, or \$12.5 million, to the income support program’s \$450 million budget.

Changes affecting learners are to grant funding. These grants allow learners to train without incurring debt. Learners can also earn income and still receive full benefits. Albertans attending job training on or after August 1, 2010 will receive the new benefit rates. Those learners who have funding agreements in place will continue to receive current benefits until the end of that funding agreement.

One of the changes includes providing benefits to victims of human trafficking. If someone has been declared a victim of human trafficking by the federal government, they now could be eligible for income support and health benefits.

Employment and Immigration continues to offer programs to help Albertans train and enter the workforce. Those programs include Employer Connections, part-time training grants, and skills training grants. In 2010-11, more than 20,000 Albertans will receive training through Alberta Works programs.

Backgrounder: Details of Alberta Works benefits

Media inquiries may be directed to:

Sally Stuike, Communications

Employment and Immigration

780-427-5585

780-918-5578 (cell)

Sally.stuike@gov.ab.ca

To call toll free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

March 26, 2010

Details of Alberta Works benefits

The following chart shows some examples of family compositions and the amount of funding they will receive with the new funding regulations, as well as a comparison with British Columbia and Saskatchewan.

Household Composition	Alberta Core Benefits for Learners			British Columbia	Saskatchewan	
	Current Alberta Works Learner (Non-EI)	Current EI/ Apprentice	New Non-EI / EI / Apprentice	Provincial Training Allowance (Comparable to Non-EI)	Provincial Training Allowance (Comparable to Non-EI)	Skills Training Benefit (Comparable to EI)
Single Adult	\$844	\$869	\$834	\$610	\$744	Up to \$907
Single Adult *	\$1,407	\$1,429	\$1,434	\$ 945	\$1,094	Up to \$1,624
One Child	\$1,636	\$1,764	\$1,514	\$1,061	\$1,226	Up to \$2,079
Two Children						
Couple *	\$1,539	\$1,967	\$1,759	\$1,061	\$1,315	Up to \$2,217
One Child	\$1,743	\$2,302	\$1,847	\$1,101	\$1,447	Up to \$2,672
Two Children						

* Families with children also receive benefits from the federal government, which average about \$330 per child per month. Clients may also receive additional provincial benefits such as prescription drug coverage, subsidized day care or housing, the Alberta Family Employment Tax Credit, and subsidies for medically-approved specialized diets.

Core Benefits for Income Support

Core Income Support benefits include two components: the Core Essential benefit and the Core Shelter benefit. The Core Essential benefit assists with costs for food, clothing, household supplies, personal needs, laundry, transportation and telephone. Core Essential rates vary based on the size of family, the ages of children and if accessing services as an Expected to Work or Not Expected to Work client, or Learner.

Core Shelter benefits assist with costs for rent, mortgage, utilities, heating fuel, municipal taxes, condominium fees, lot rental, homeowner's maintenance and damage deposit. Core Shelter benefit rates differ depending on a client's housing situation.

Supplemental Benefits

Supplemental benefits are additional benefits that Alberta Works clients could qualify for, such as funds for child care, transportation, or disability-related costs. There are also one-time benefits for items such as work clothing and emergency allowances.

Employment Maintenance Allowance

The Employment Maintenance Allowance, a supplemental benefit, is being amalgamated into the Employment and Training Transition Supports supplemental benefit, which assists with costs for items needed to work, such as work boots and bus passes. Both programs are similar in that they

provide financial supports to help clients remain employed. The Employment Maintenance Allowance provided \$120 a year to clients with children. Clients have access to a maximum of \$500 per calendar year under the Employment and Training Transition Supports benefit.

Victims of Human Trafficking

If a foreign national has documentation from the federal government declaring them to be victims of human trafficking, they may now qualify for income support and health benefits.

-30-

Media inquiries may be directed to:

Sally Stuike, Communications
Employment and Immigration
780-427-5585
780-918-5578 (cell)
Sally.stuike@gov.ab.ca

To call toll free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

[Alberta Government](#) | [Newsroom](#) | [Ministries Listing](#) | [Employment and Immigration Home Page](#) | [News Releases](#) | [Top of Page](#) |

[Send us your comments or questions](#)

Copyright(©) 2010 Government of Alberta

