

Saskatchewan Income Support Program



Policy Manual
January 2020

| Chapter Section | Update |
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| Chapter 7.1: Assets | Update: Applicant/client's verbal statement is accepted as Verification and Documentation Requirements for a bank account which has zero balance or is overdrawn. Funds in a bank account greater than \$100 must be verified by a bank statement while bank accounts with less than \$100 does not need verification. |
| Chapter 12.3: Children's Basic Benefit for Newborns | Update: The benefit may be provided to parents 30 calendar days in advance of the declared due date. |
| Chapter 15.4.1: Amount of Benefit, Short Term Emergency Benefit | Clarify: Expenditures over the specified \$500 per household can be exceeded, with the authority of the Service Centre Manager, for clients/families in a temporary housing arrangement that need more time and additional resources to stabilize and access permanent residence. |
| Chapter 15.4.1: Amount of Benefit, Short Term Emergency Benefit Chapter 15.5: After Hours Services, Transient Assistance | Removed: Language about covering actual costs of a hotel room as both policies state that if services are unavailable at Ministry provided rates, the minimal funding necessary to meet the emergent need may be provided. |
| Chapter 20.2: Continued Eligibility for Supplementary Health Services | Update: Clients and eligible household members continue to be eligible to receive Supplementary Health Services for a period of 6 months after losing SIS benefits if they have left SIS for employment. |

Saskatchewan Income Support Program

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 1 | Legislative Authority |
| Definitions | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 1-2 |

Definitions

Intent

Chapter 1 provides a list of definitions for terms used throughout the manual. Definitions are based, whenever possible, on *The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations* and are listed in alphabetical order.

Definitions

Act means *The Saskatchewan Assistance Act*.

Agreement for sale means a situation where rental payments are applied to the purchase price of a property for a specified period of time.

Appeal board means an appeal board established pursuant to subsection 10(2) of *The Social Services Administration Act*.

Appeal committee means an appeal committee established pursuant to subsection 10(1) of *The Social Services Administration Act*.

Applicant means the individual who applies on behalf of him or herself or on behalf of their household for SIS benefits.

Application means the form provided by the Ministry that an individual must complete in order to be considered eligible for SIS benefits.

Bankruptcy means the legal process under the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act*, by which someone may have their debts forgiven.

Benefits means a payment provided in accordance with *The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations*. Benefits are referred to as SIS benefits.

Client means an individual/household currently deemed eligible to receive or receiving SIS benefits.

Case planning means any activities determined by the Ministry that will assist clients to become as self-sufficient as possible. The case plan is called an individualized plan.

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Change in the client's circumstances means a change in:

- the client's financial resources;
- the client's address;
- relationship or spouse/partner status;
- the number of the client's dependants;
- the client's needs, or
- service level assessment.

Child means individual who is under 18 years of age. An individual who turns 18 years of age will be considered a child during the entire month of their birthdate.

Community Training Residence means a residence where a custodial sentence can be served outside of a secure facility.

Decision maker means the person authorized to make decisions respecting funeral arrangements (e.g. next of kin, other relative or friend).

Dependant means:

- the spouse/partner of a client, unless that spouse/partner is living separate and apart from the client; and
- any child of an individual or of his or her spouse/partner, unless that child is living separate and apart from the client or unless that child is not dependent on the client and his or her spouse/partner for support.

Disaster means an event made or caused by human beings such as a fire or sewage back-up or a natural event such as a flood, earthquake or tornado that causes damage or loss.

Endorsement means a signature or stamp on a cheque, which can be either the client, trustee, or third party.

Financial resources mean the monthly income, liquid assets and non-exempt assets as determined in accordance with the *Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations*.

Health services number means a unique number assigned to an individual who is registered as a beneficiary to receive insured services pursuant to *The Saskatchewan Medical Care Insurance Act*.

Household means:

- the applicant/client;
- the applicant/client's spouse/partner, if any; and

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 1 | Legislative Authority |
| Definitions | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 1-2 |

- the children, if any, of the client or their spouse/partner, including any children currently in the care of the eligible household member or their spouse/partner, but not including children who:
 - are living separate and apart from the eligible household member and their spouse/partner; or
 - are not dependant on the eligible household member and their spouse/partner for support; and
- any other children, who in the minister’s opinion, are living with the applicant/client and the applicant/client’s spouse/partner, if any, and are dependent on the applicant/client and the applicant/client’s spouse/partner, if any, for support.

Household member means a member of the household.

Immediate family member means a client’s grandfather, grandmother, mother, father, brother, sister, son, or daughter.

Liquid asset means:

- cash on hand;
- an amount on deposit in a financial institution or held by a third party that must be paid to a household member upon demand;
- a debt held by a third party that must be paid to a household member on demand;
- the realizable value of:
 - a stock, bond, share in a corporation or other security;
 - a mortgage or agreement for sale;
 - a bequest pursuant to a will;
 - an award of damages pursuant to a court decision;
 - a settlement of a claim;
 - an accessible pension fund (including RRSPs);
 - money held in trust which is accessible;
 - cryptocurrency
- the cash surrender value of a life insurance policy in excess of \$1500.

Maintenance means money that one spouse pays to the other spouse for their financial support or the support of their children following a separation or divorce. Maintenance is usually paid on a monthly basis, but it can be paid as a lump sum.

Net income means gross income minus mandatory deductions. Voluntary deductions are calculated as part of the net income.

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Non-exempt asset means:

- any real property of an applicant or eligible client other than the primary residence of an applicant or client;
- A second vehicle or a recreational vehicle with a total equity value exceeding \$5,000; and
- any assets valued over \$1,500 per member of the household that can be converted to cash.

Northern Saskatchewan Administration District means the area of Saskatchewan described in *The Northern Saskatchewan Administration District Boundaries Regulations*.

Personal assets means items such as vehicles, furniture, appliances, jewelry, computers.

Primary residence means a structure on a fixed permanent foundation where the client lives most of the time. A mobile home or trailer may also be considered a primary residence, if it is skirted and permanent on an owned lot or permanently located in a park for mobile homes.

Real property includes houses, cottages, hunting lodges, farmland, occupied or unoccupied lots/land, etc. whether or not that property is located in Saskatchewan. The only real property that is an exempt asset is the primary residence of the applicant/client.

Recurring income means income that does not fluctuate and is expected each month, such as government benefits.

Requisition means an official document provided by the Ministry that can be used in exchange for goods or services (e.g. groceries).

Resettled Refugees are refugees that are either “Government-assisted” or “Privately-sponsored” and brought to Canada to live as a permanent resident. These refugees receive financial benefits from Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) or the private sponsor for the first year in Canada or until they are placed in full-time employment.

Refugee Claimants means claimants that have arrived in Canada and apply for refugee status. They are allowed to remain in Canada until their refugee application is heard by IRCC.

Self employed means working for oneself as a freelancer or owner of a business. Income derived from this work or the business would be considered as self employment income.

Social insurance number means a valid social insurance number assigned pursuant to the authority of any Act of the Parliament of Canada.

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 1 | Legislative Authority |
| Definitions | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 1-2 |

Spouse/partner means the spouse/partner of an applicant/client as defined by *The Family Maintenance Act, 1997*; or,

- if the applicant/client does not have a spouse/partner in accordance with the above or is living separate and apart from his or her spouse/partner in accordance with the above, another individual who cohabitates with the client:
 - for a period of not less than three months and shares financial resources with the individual;
 - represents himself or herself as the spouse/partner of the applicant/client or as a parent of a child of the client;
 - is a parent of a child of the applicant/client; or
 - for any purpose identifies the applicant/client or a child of the applicant/client as his or her dependent.

Tenancy Agreement means an agreement between a property owner (or agent of the property owner) and tenant, where the tenant agrees to pay rent to occupy a rental unit.

Transient means an individual or household who is temporarily in the province and not receiving income assistance benefits from Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan residents without a fixed address, who lack the means to pay for their immediate needs, and are not already receiving income assistance, may also be considered transients.

Wages means a payment for work made by an employer to an employee.

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 2 | Legislative Authority |
| Format of the Manual | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> |

Format of the Manual

Intent

The manual is a companion document and is used in conjunction with the *Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations*. Italics are used to identify amendments.

2.1 Chapter Organization

Each chapter deals with a subject division of the *Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations*.

2.2 Numbering

The composition of the manual is sub-divided into:

| | |
|----------|---|
| Chapters | Chapters are divided into sections. |
| Sections | Sections are identified by numbers (e.g., 2.2, 2.3, 2.3.1). |

Ministry forms are numbered and are referred to by number in this manual.

2.3 Verification/Documentation Requirements

Each section, when required, will identify the verification/documentation requirements as follows:

| Policy | Verification/Documentation |
|--|---|
| Section that requires verification/documentation | Information that is required for the policy to be properly issued |

2.4 Delegation of Authority

Each section will identify the required delegate for approval beyond the worker level, if required

| Policy | Approval Required |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Section that requires approval | Delegate with authority to approve the SIS benefits (e.g. Supervisor, Manager) |

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 3 | Legislative Authority |
| Vision Statement and Intent | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> |

Vision Statement and Intent

Vision Statement

The Saskatchewan Income Support Program (SIS) is a program of last resort to provide financial assistance for people to meet their basic needs while they take steps to transition to self-sufficiency to the best of their abilities.

Intent

The intent of the SIS Policy Manual is to describe the Ministry's interpretation of *The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations* and the guidelines for how to deliver the program.

The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations provides the legislative authority to administer SIS, including the determination of eligibility, amount of SIS benefits, the conditions under which SIS benefits are ended or reduced and the conditions in which appeals can be made.

Act

The Saskatchewan Assistance Act is the legislative authority which provides for the granting of benefits to persons in need. The Act authorizes the SIS program as an income-tested program.

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 4 | Legislative Authority |
| Application for Benefits | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 2-1 and 3-5 |

Application for Benefits

Intent

This chapter describes the manner in how someone may apply for Saskatchewan Income Support (SIS) benefits and how the eligibility date of an applicant is determined.

Policy

The Ministry requires that someone wanting to apply for SIS benefits must complete an application to the Ministry in the manner described below. Applications are to be made online or by telephone. Applicants wishing to apply in-person at a local service centre will be directed to either apply online or over the phone. However, applicants may use a computer or telephone at the service centre to apply online or over the phone. Staff will be available to provide assistance in applying if the applicant requires.

In exceptional circumstances where internet and phone lines are not in service, a paper application can be taken in person at a local service centre.

4.1 Application Online – Regulations Section 2-1

To apply for SIS benefits online, an applicant must have a Saskatchewan.ca account. If an applicant does not have a Saskatchewan.ca account, they are not able to submit an online application and should apply over the phone through the Client Service Centre.

The application must be completed in full, submitted and authorized through the applicant's Saskatchewan.ca account. Applicants are not required to provide an in-person signature in order to authorize their application and receive SIS benefits.

4.2 Application Over the Phone – Regulations Section 2-1

To apply for SIS benefits over the phone, an applicant will contact the Client Service Centre. Applicants are required to provide information pertaining to their personal circumstances, provide consent, and authorize their application over the phone in order to receive SIS benefits.

All mandatory questions on the application must be completed in full and received by the Ministry in order to be eligible for SIS benefits.

4.3 Application Date – Regulations Section 3-5

An application is complete and able to be submitted when all of the mandatory fields are populated or all information is provided verbally, and the application is authorized. The

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 4 | Legislative Authority |
| Application for Benefits | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 2-1 and 3-5 |

application date is the date the authorized application is submitted as described in Chapter 4.1 and 4.2.

Once an application has been started online or over the telephone, the applicant is allowed 15 calendar days to complete and submit the application. After 15 calendar days, the application is considered stale-dated and a new application is required if the applicant chooses to seek SIS benefits. The Service Manager may approve an applicant or spouse submitting a signed consent form beyond the 15-day requirement when exceptional circumstances prevent the applicant or spouse from signing within the required time.

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 5 | Legislative Authority |
| Eligibility | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 2-1, 2-4, 2-5 and 3-5 |

Eligibility

Intent

This chapter outlines the requirements an applicant must meet to be eligible for the Saskatchewan Income Support (SIS) program.

Policy

The Ministry has certain criteria that an applicant must meet in order to be eligible to receive SIS benefits. Clients in receipt of SIS benefits must continue to meet these requirements to maintain eligibility.

5.1 Eligibility Criteria – Regulation Section 2-1 and 2-4

To be considered eligible an applicant must have submitted an authorized application form and:

- Be a Canadian citizen, permanent resident, a refugee claimant, or when refugee claim has been denied but is subject to a removal order that cannot be executed, or a privately sponsored immigrant/refugee if their sponsor defaults;
- Currently live in Saskatchewan;
- Be 18 years of age or older; and
- Have combined assets and income (see Chapter 6 Income and Chapter 7 Assets) less than the total of SIS benefits that would be available to that household.

In addition, applicants are required to:

- Provide their Social Insurance Number (SIN) and Saskatchewan Health Services Number (HSN) at application. If they do not possess a SIN or HSN they must confirm they have submitted an application for their SIN and HSN prior to SIS benefits being issued. Both SIN and HSN must be provided within 30 calendar days of submitting the application. If a SIN cannot be obtained in 30 calendar days, documentation from Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada must be provided to verify conditions of entry and residency status.
- Submit supporting documents (e.g. bank statement, rental contract, mortgage documents) as outlined in Chapter 6 Income and Chapter 7 Assets within 30 calendar days of submitting the application.
- Satisfy the Ministry they have explored every possibility of providing for their needs, including applying for any benefits provided by any other ministry or agency that they or their spouse/partner may be eligible for;
- Provide consent for the Ministry to obtain and verify documents confirming eligibility for any SIS benefits for themselves or their spouse/partner;
- Complete Service Level Screening (see Chapter 10 Service Level Screening); and
- Participate in individualized case planning.

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 5 | Legislative Authority |
| Eligibility | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 2-1, 2-4, 2-5 and 3-5 |

5.2 Ineligible Individuals – Regulation Section 2-5

Applicants not eligible for SIS benefits include:

- Individuals in federal/provincial jails/facilities or a Community Training Residence (CTR);
- Individuals who live on a Saskatchewan First Nation and/or are receiving financial assistance from the Band. For non-status Indians living on a Saskatchewan First Nation requiring health only coverage, see Chapter 20;
- Registered Indians and their registered dependents who normally reside on a Saskatchewan First Nation are not eligible when the primary reason for residing off the reserve is:
 - receiving medical treatment;
 - incarceration including residence in community training residences;
 - long-term placement in special care homes, group homes, approved homes, personal care homes and temporary residence in safe shelters, addiction rehabilitation centres, detox centres or similar facilities; or,
 - attending full-time education
- Individuals who are full-time post-secondary students;
- Resettled refugees in receipt of financial assistance from the federal government or a private sponsor;
- Individuals in receipt of Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP), Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID), Transitional Employment Allowance (TEA), or Provincial Training Allowance (PTA); and
- Individuals who are absent from the province for more than 30 calendar days.

5.3 Date of Eligibility – Regulation Section 3-5

The date of eligibility is the date in which the Ministry has determined an applicant has met all eligibility requirements. The date of eligibility can be as early as the date the authorized application is submitted as detailed in Chapter 4.

Verification/Documentation Requirements

| Policy | Verification/Documentation |
|---------------------------|---|
| 5.3 – Date of Eligibility | Date of Authorized Application submission |

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 6 | Legislative Authority |
| Income | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 2-1, 2-4, 2-6, 2-7 and 3-3 |

Income

Intent

This chapter details how income is assessed in determining eligibility requirements.

Policy

The Ministry will include all income received by SIS applicants/clients and their spouse/partners when determining eligibility unless it is specifically exempted in Regulations or by Minister's Order.

All money received by the applicant/client and their spouse/partner is income regardless of the form of that payment.

6.1 Requirement to Access all Available Resources – Regulations Section 2-4

As a condition of eligibility, applicants and clients are required to seek all available financial resources in order to meet their basic needs. Available sources of income include, but are not limited to, Canada Pension Plan early retirement benefits, Canada Child Benefit, Low-Income Tax Credit, Employment Insurance, Workers Compensation benefits, and spousal/child maintenance.

Applicants or clients who do not or refuse to pursue sources of income available to them are not eligible to receive SIS benefits.

In the following circumstances the Ministry may waive the requirement for a client to pursue spousal/child maintenance:

- the absent spouse or parent has no means to pay (e.g., is receiving income assistance benefits, a student or incarcerated);
- paternity cannot be established. Where more than one person may be the father, the court establishes paternity;
- potential abuse by the absent spouse or parent poses a serious threat to the individual and/or dependents;
- the whereabouts of the spouse or parent cannot be determined; or
- the spouse or parent is deceased and there is no estate.

Except for the death of the parent, the above cases are reviewed annually to assess the current situation and the potential for maintenance.

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 6 | Legislative Authority |
| Income | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 2-1, 2-4, 2-6, 2-7 and 3-3 |

6.2 Income – Regulations Section 2-1 and 2-6

Income Prior to Application – Regulations Section 2-6

When applying for SIS, applicants need to report to the Ministry all income they have received in the 30 calendar days before application. If the income was used for expenses related to shelter, food and other basic needs, the use of that income will not be considered in determining their eligibility and monthly SIS benefits.

Declaration of Income at Application – Regulations Section 2-1 and 2-6

All income a client has on hand or is expecting to receive, must be reported to the Ministry at time of application in order to determine SIS eligibility and the amount of SIS benefits. The reported income must be verified by income statement or other information provided by the applicant, unless the income is deemed to be exempt. The income statement or other information must be provided within 30 days of application.

Income After Application – Regulations Section 2-6

All income must be reported. Clients are expected to notify the Ministry when they receive income or become aware that they will receive income. Income must be verified by income statements or other information. All sources of non-exempt income received by the client and the client's spouse/partner, is considered a financial resource in the month following the date it was received.

Income of a Non-Eligible Household Member – Regulations Section 2-6

If a member of the household does not meet the eligibility requirements as stated in Chapter 5, no SIS benefits are provided for that individual, and the needs of the individual are not included in the calculation of the household budget. However, the income of that individual is included in the budget calculation to determine eligibility and amount of SIS benefits for the whole household.

6.3 Non-Earned Income – Regulations Section 2-7

Non-earned income is net income from sources other than employment such as:

- Government benefits (e.g. Canada Pension Plan benefits, Employment Insurance, Canada Child Benefit, Seniors Income Plan);
- Maintenance support payments (spousal or child), regardless of the form of payment;
- Pension and annuity payments;
- Rental income;
- Donations or gifts of cash;

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 6 | Legislative Authority |
| Income | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 2-1, 2-4, 2-6, 2-7 and 3-3 |

- Loans (e.g. lines of credit, credit card advances) are income unless the money is used to address a repair or maintenance need for the primary residence; and
- Inheritances.

Recurring Non-Earned Income – Regulations Section 2-7

Recurring income does not fluctuate and is expected each month, such as government benefits (e.g. Canada Pension Plan). Recurring non-earned income that has been declared and verified at application, or when it is initially received, does not need to be reported each month unless there is a change to the amount of the income. All changes to the amount of recurring income must be reported as soon as the change is expected to ensure the correct amount of SIS benefits are provided. All income, including recurring non-earned income, must be reviewed during each reassessment (see Chapter 17).

6.4 Income Exemptions – Regulations Section 2-7

Non-Earned Income Exemptions – Regulations Section 2-7

All non-earned income must be reported by applicants/clients. However, certain sources of non-earned income are exempt from the calculation of resources when determining eligibility and the benefit amount. These include:

- Payment from a municipal, provincial, federal government, or an agency or corporation associated with those levels of government as compensation for pain and suffering;
- Honoraria paid by the Ministry or agency of the Government of Saskatchewan, or a Crown Corporation;
- Canada Child Benefit (CCB) and Canada Child Disability Benefit;
- Goods & Services Tax Credit (GST);
- Working Income Tax Benefit;
- Income Tax Refunds;
- Climate Action Incentive (Carbon Tax Rebate)
- Amount received for the care of a relative in a family home pursuant to the Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP) or Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) Program;
- Foster care payments from the Government of Canada;
- Ministry of Social Services payments for the care of a child;
- Saskatchewan Employment Supplement (SES) payments;
- Provincial Disaster Assistance Program (PDAP) benefits;
- Scholarships, fellowships and non-government bursaries;
- Money withdrawn from a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) is only exempt if it is used for the benefit of the intended beneficiary;

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 6 | Legislative Authority |
| Income | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 2-1, 2-4, 2-6, 2-7 and 3-3 |

- Funds held or withdrawn from a Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP);
- Insurance payments if used to repair or replace the insured item; or
- Proceeds from the sale of the principal residence if it is used to purchase another primary residence within 90 days.

Earned Income Exemptions- Regulations Section 2-7

A households earned income; either the net income earned from wages (see Definitions) or, the gross income received from self-employment, will be exempted up to:

- \$325 per month for a single individual
- \$425 per month for a couple
- \$500 per month for a family

SIS benefits will be reduced dollar-for-dollar after the exemption amount is deducted from the income (see Chapter 8).

If the client’s wages are garnished, the client will have 30 days to seek a relief order.

6.5 Failure to Report Income – Regulations Section 2-1

When unreported income is found, the Ministry will suspend SIS benefits until the required information is received in order to determine eligibility.

When the Ministry receives new information related to a client’s income, their SIS benefits for that month and any previous months, if applicable, will be recalculated. If the income exceeds the amount of SIS benefits received, the excess income is carried over into the next month a client receives SIS benefits and their SIS benefits will be adjusted for that month. When the income exceeds the amount of SIS benefits for more than one month of future SIS benefits, a period of self-support is determined even if the income has already been spent or disposed (see Chapter 6.6).

When the income received is less than originally stated, SIS benefits will be adjusted the following month to reflect the change.

6.6 Calculating Period of Self-Support– Regulations Section 3-3

When income exceeds the amount of SIS benefits for more than one month of future SIS benefits, a period of self-support is determined even if the income has already been spent or disposed. The period of self-support shall be calculated using the following formula:

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 6 | Legislative Authority |
| Income | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 2-1, 2-4, 2-6, 2-7 and 3-3 |

$$T = \frac{L}{((115\% \times N) - I)}$$

where:

L is the amount of the income;

N is 115% of the total of the SIS benefits that the recipient would otherwise receive for a month;

I is the recipient's ongoing monthly income; and,

T is time for period of self-support in months.

The number of months calculated will be rounded down to a whole month (e.g. if the calculation results in 7.6 months of self support, it will be rounded down to 7 months).

Validation and Documentation Requirements

| Policy | Verification/Documentation |
|--|---|
| 6.2 and 6.4- Earned Income | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheque stub • Direct deposit statement • Client reported gross amount of income derived from self-employment for the previous month and the Assessment Notice from Canada Revenue Agency for the previous year |
| 6.3 - Provincial or Federal Programs, including Pension Programs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice of Assessment from Canada Revenue Agency for the previous year • Written statement or official documentation from source or financial institution showing amount and client's name • Cheque stub • Direct deposit statement |
| 6.3 - Private Pension, Insurance or Retirement Savings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice of Assessment from Canada Revenue Agency for the previous year • Statement of Investment Income (T5) for previous year • Written statement or official documentation from source or financial institution showing amount and client's name • Cheque stub • Direct deposit statement • Applicable policies and/or agreements |

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 6 | Legislative Authority |
| Income | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 2-1, 2-4, 2-6, 2-7 and 3-3 |

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| 6.3 - Maintenance Payments or Alimony | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separation Agreement • Divorce decree • Court Order • Written statement from payer and/or client • Voluntary agreement |
| 6.3 – Income Tax Refunds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice of Assessment from CRA for the previous year • Written statement or official documentation from source or financial institution showing amount and client’s name • Cheque stub • Direct deposit statement |
| 6.3 - Dividends, Interest, Royalties, or Investments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice of Assessment from CRA for the previous year • Statement of Investment Income (T5) for previous year • Written statement from source or financial institution showing amount and client’s name • Cheque stub • Direct Deposit statement • Deeds, agreements, warrants, certificates or vouchers |
| 6.3 - Rental Income | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment Notice from CRA for the previous year • Written statement from tenant or boarder • Rent book or receipts • Lease or rental agreement |
| 6.3 - Inheritances, Trust Funds or Trusts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written statement or official documentation from source or financial institution showing amount and client’s name • Written statement from lawyer or trustee • Copy of Will |
| 6.3 - Other | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written statement or official documentation from source or financial institution showing amount and client’s name • Written statement from client |
| 6.4 – Payments as compensation for pain and suffering, Canada Child Disability Benefit, RDSP withdrawals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written statement or official documentation from source or financial institution showing amount and client’s name • Cheque stub • Direct deposit statement • Written statement from client |
| 6.4 – Scholarships, fellowships, non-government bursaries and RESP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written statement or official documentation from source or financial institution showing amount and client’s name • Direct Deposit Statement • Bank statement |

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 6 | Legislative Authority |
| Income | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 2-1, 2-4, 2-6, 2-7 and 3-3 |

Delegation of Authority

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|---|--------------------------|
| The required delegate must indicate approval. | |
| Policy | Approval Required |
| 6.1 – Waiver of requirement to pursue child or spousal support for any reason | Supervisor |

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 7 | Legislative Authority |
| Assets | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 1-2, 2-6, 2-7, 2-8, 2-9, 2-10 and 3-2 |

Assets

Intent

This chapter outlines assets and exempt assets in relation to eligibility and SIS benefits.

Policy

The Ministry considers the equity value of real and personal assets after deducting the amount owing from the total value of the assets owned by an applicant or client as income available to the applicant or client unless they are specifically exempted in Regulations.

For the purposes of determining eligibility, proceeds from any non-exempt assets are considered an available financial resource and applied as income to the entitlement month after the date it is received.

7.1 Assets – Regulations Section 2-6

Applicants and clients, including the spouse of the applicant or client, must declare all assets to the Ministry.

Clients must declare all changes to their circumstances to the Ministry as changes occur, including assets.

After application, for the purposes of determining eligibility, proceeds from the disposal of any non-exempt asset of a client is considered an available financial resource and is applied as income to the month after the date it is received. This includes, but is not limited to, deposits in a financial institution within the sole or joint control of the client or spouse.

Money from the sale of an exempt asset remains exempted income, unless otherwise specified.

Money received from a loan is considered an asset except if the loan is being used to address home repairs or maintenance of a client's primary residence. The client must provide documentation to the Ministry verifying the expenditure is for home repairs or maintenance.

7.1.1 Liquid Assets – Regulations Section 1-2, 2-7 and 2-8

At time of application the household is allowed a Liquid Asset exemption of \$1,500 per person.

The following assets are not included when calculating the total liquid assets available to a household.

- Trust funds and assets of a dependant child, including the employment savings of a dependent child
- Registered Education Savings Plans (RESP) at the time of application
- Registered Disability Savings Plans (RDSP) at the time of application

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 7 | Legislative Authority |
| Assets | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 1-2, 2-6, 2-7, 2-8, 2-9, 2-10 and 3-2 |

Liquid assets above the exemption limit in a non-cash form that cannot be immediately accessed must begin to be converted to cash as soon as possible. The process to convert the non-exempt asset must be completed within 180 days from the date the application is submitted.

An applicant is allowed the liquid asset exemption at the time of the application only. A client that acquires income or other assets after an application is submitted, or if their household composition changes, cannot use the liquid asset exemption in order to exempt the income or asset; these assets/income are considered when assessing the client's SIS benefits.

7.1.2 Personal Assets – Regulations Section 1-2, 2-7 and 2-9

All personal assets and one vehicle per household are exempt. An applicant/client or applicant's/client's spouse/partner who owns a second or recreational vehicle with a total equity value exceeding \$5,000 will have 180 days after the date of application to convert the vehicle into cash. If the second or recreational vehicle with a total equity value exceeding \$5,000 is acquired post-application, the client/household has 180 days from the date of acquisition to convert the vehicle into cash.

A recreational vehicle that has total equity value of over \$5,000 and is used for the purposes of traditional activities in the Northern Administration District (e.g. trapping) will be exempt.

7.1.3 Real Property

The primary residence of the applicant/client is exempt. All other real property is considered a non-exempt asset at time of application.

The exempt primary residence includes the home and the land (lot, acre) upon which the home is situated. When the primary residence is a farm residence, the quarter section of farmland where the home is situated is exempt.

All non-exempt real property must be disposed of within 180 days of application, with the exception of farmland. In this instance, an applicant will have up to 24 months from the application date to dispose of the farmland.

If the primary residence is sold after the application for SIS has been submitted, then the resources derived from the sale of the residence shall be considered as income available to the client, except in the circumstances where that income is used to purchase another primary residence within 90 days.

All non-exempt real property acquired by the client or household after application must be reported to the Ministry. All non-exempt real property must be disposed of within 180 days of

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 7 | Legislative Authority |
| Assets | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 1-2, 2-6, 2-7, 2-8, 2-9, 2-10 and 3-2 |

the date of acquisition, with the exception of farmland which must be disposed of within 24 months of acquisition.

7.2 Disposal of Assets (Prior to Application) – Regulations Section 2-6 and 3-2

An applicant/client or spouse/partner of applicant/client cannot give away or dispose of non-exempt assets in order to make themselves eligible. The disposal of any assets they owned or in which they had an interest during the 180 days prior to application is considered (amount of asset, date received, sources and expenditures).

The applicant must submit information to the Ministry with details on the disposal. The Ministry will determine whether the payment received was adequate in relation to the market value minus any money owed on the asset.

Assets disposed of within 180 days prior to application are not considered a financial resource if in the opinion of the Ministry, the disposal was reasonable and not carried out for the purposes of causing the individual to be eligible, or in exceptional circumstances, in which immediate health and safety are at risk (e.g. death).

Any money received from the disposal of an asset during the 180-day period prior to application that is not approved of is considered income in the previous 30 days and used to determine if an applicant is eligible.

7.3 Time to Dispose of Assets (After Application) – Regulations Section 2-8 and 2-9

Applicants have 180 days from the date the application is submitted to redeem or sell all non-exempt assets, even if a loss is incurred. Pension plans that are locked in (vested) require verification to confirm they cannot be sold. The applicant is required to provide verification from a financial institution to provide the funds invested in financial tools such as Guaranteed Investment Certificates (GICs), even if the investment term has not been reached. An extension to the 180 days may be provided if the client has been making a reasonable effort to dispose of the asset.

7.3.1 Waiver of Non-Exempt Asset – Regulations Section 2-10

A non-exempt asset may be waived as a resource if disposal of the asset would create a health and safety issue for the applicant/client.

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 7 | Legislative Authority |
| Assets | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 1-2, 2-6, 2-7, 2-8, 2-9, 2-10 and 3-2 |

Verification and Documentation Requirements

| Policy | Verification/Documentation |
|---|---|
| 7.1 – Assets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation must be submitted with the application or within 30 days of submitting the application • Any additional information and documentation (e.g., agreements for sale, bill of sale, mortgage) determined necessary must be provided within 30 days of the request • Applicant/clients verbal statement accepted for a bank account with \$0 balance or is overdrawn. • Funds in a bank account greater than \$100 must be verified by a bank statement. • Funds in a bank accounts with less than \$100 do not need to be verified. |
| 7.1 - Changes to Assets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to assets must be declared through regular monthly reporting, the Change of Income, Assets, Needs Form. |
| 7.2 – Inappropriate Disposal of Assets (Prior to Application) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any documentation required to review the disposal of an excess asset within the six months (or any greater period considered appropriate) prior to the month of application is required to be submitted by the applicant. |
| 7.3 – Time to Dispose of Assets (After Application) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence from a source such as a bank manager, a mortgage broker, or real estate agent is produced if they are unable to dispose of the asset. • Verbal statement from client that secondary vehicle is listed for sale and documentation showing amount vehicle sold for. |
| 7.3.1- Waiver of an Non-Exempt Asset | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement from client explaining how the disposal of the asset would create a health safety issue |

Delegation of Authority

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 7 | Legislative Authority |
| Assets | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 1-2, 2-6, 2-7, 2-8, 2-9, 2-10 and 3-2 |

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| The required delegate must indicate approval. | |
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| Policy | Approval Required |
| 7.3 – Time to Dispose of Non-Exempt Asset (Extension) | Supervisor/Manager |
| 7.3.1 – Waiver of a Non-Exempt Asset | Manager |

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|---|--|
| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 8 | Legislative Authority |
| Approval or Denial and Calculation of Benefits | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 2-2 |

Approval or Denial and Calculation of Benefits

Intent

This chapter details the criteria for approving or denying SIS benefits and details how a client's monthly SIS benefits are calculated.

Policy

The Ministry will approve an applicant as eligible to receive the SIS benefits for which they are eligible as outlined in the SIS Policy Manual and Regulations if the applicant meets all eligibility criteria stated in Chapter 5. If applicants do not meet the eligibility criteria, they will be denied SIS benefits.

The Ministry will approve or deny SIS benefits within 15 calendar days after the applicant has submitted all required documentation to confirm eligibility.

Clients must continue to meet eligibility criteria in order to continue receiving SIS benefits.

The Ministry will notify the applicant of both the initial decision and of any change in their benefit/eligibility.

When granting SIS benefits, the following information is included in the notification:

- basis of assessment including the information relied on to make the decision and relevant reasons for making the decision;
- amount of benefit;
- what information or action is necessary to establish continuing eligibility;
- right to appeal a decision regarding SIS benefits and the process to appeal.

Applicants will be advised of their obligation to report all changes in circumstances.

Anyone who has been denied SIS benefits will be informed of the reasons for the denial and will have the right to appeal. Appeal provisions are outlined in Chapter 21.

Calculation of SIS benefits

The Ministry will calculate the amount of a client's monthly benefit based on the total of all SIS benefits a client is eligible to receive through SIS and reducing them by the amount of any non-exempt income and assets received by the client or any eligible household member in the previous month. All sources of non-exempt income or assets received by the applicant and applicant's spouse/partner is considered a resource in the month following the date it was received (e.g., wage received June 15 is applied to the July benefits).

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 9 | Legislative Authority |
| Payment of Benefits | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 3-6 |

Payment of Benefits

Intent

This chapter describes how the Ministry will pay SIS benefits.

Policy

The Ministry requires clients to have SIS benefits deposited electronically to a bank account, unless there is an exceptional circumstance that prevents the client from using direct deposit (see Chapter 9.2).

9.1 Direct Deposit

Clients are expected to have a bank account in their name and submit banking information at the time of application. Submitted banking information must match the client identity information on the application. If clients do not have an active bank account, they are required to open a bank account within 30 calendar days of the approval of their application. Bank accounts must be held with a Canadian financial institution regulated by the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada.

Clients may receive their first SIS benefits by cheque only, while direct deposit is being set up.

9.2 Waiving Direct Deposit Requirement If Garnishee in Place

Ongoing SIS benefits will be provided by direct deposit unless a client has a garnishee in place or garnishee proceedings have commenced. In this circumstance the Ministry will provide the client their SIS benefits by cheque.

Waiving or cancellation of direct deposit may only be approved by the Supervisor.

Clients are required to open a bank account within 30 calendar days after this situation no longer exists and apply for direct deposit.

9.3 Requisitions

Payments are made on the basis of an application or duly authorized requisition or Transient Aid form. Requisitions and Transient Aid forms are only valid in Saskatchewan.

9.4 Third Party Payments – Regulations Section 3-6

All SIS benefits are paid directly to the client. The only exception to this is when a payment is made to a trustee on behalf of a client (See Chapter 22), or to a vendor through a requisition.

In that case a third party payment may be used to make a direct payment to a trustee.

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 9 | Legislative Authority |
| Payment of Benefits | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 3-6 |

9.5 Payment Schedule

The payment schedule will be determined with the client and based on the client's needs. If a flexible payment schedule is not selected by the client, SIS benefits will be issued in a single monthly installment.

Payment schedule options include:

- one-time payment when the need is identified (e.g. relocation, travel);
- weekly;
- bi-weekly;
- semi-monthly; or
- monthly.

Documentation/Verification Requirements

| Policy | Documentation/Verification |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 9.2 – Garnishee or garnishee proceedings | Statement confirming garnishee |

Delegation of Authority

| The required delegate must indicate approval. | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Policy | Approval Required |
| 9.2 – Waiving or cancelling of direct deposit | Supervisor |

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 10 | Legislative Authority |
| Service Level Screening (SLS) | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 2-4 |

Service Level Screening (SLS)

Intent

This chapter describes the requirement for a client to complete a Service Level Screening as a condition of continued eligibility in order to determine the services that can best help them transition to self-sufficiency to the best of their ability.

Policy

The Ministry will require each adult eligible for SIS to complete a Service Level Screening (SLS). Completing the SLS is a requirement for each adult before the household may receive ongoing benefits.

The SLS is a set of questions used to determine which services would be most appropriate for each adult to receive while they are in receipt of SIS benefits. This can be completed over the phone or in person.

10.1 Requirement for Ongoing SIS Benefits

Once other eligibility requirements have been met, each household will be eligible to receive their first benefit without completing the SLS.

A SLS must be completed and received by the Ministry in order to receive ongoing benefits. If the SLS is not completed within 30 days of being deemed eligible for SIS, the household will no longer be eligible and will not receive ongoing benefits unless a Supervisor has provided an extension to the 30-day deadline in exceptional circumstances. Any benefits previously received will not be recovered.

If the SLS is not completed within the required time frame, a new SIS application would be required.

See Chapter 16, Reporting Changes in Circumstances and Changing or Ending SIS benefits.

10.2 SLS Review

Once a client completes the SLS requirement, the Ministry may require, at any time, that a SLS be completed again as part of a client or spouse/partner review.

Delegation of Authority

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| The required delegate must indicate approval. | |
| Policy | Approval Required |
| 10.1 –Extension of time to complete SLS if over 30 days | Supervisor |

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 11 | Legislative Authority |
| Adult Basic Benefit | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 4-2 and 4-7 |

Adult Basic Benefit

Intent

This chapter describes the Adult Basic Benefit for households both in and out of the Northern Administration District.

Policy

The Ministry will provide a monthly Adult Basic Benefit (ABB) to each adult in a household who meets the eligibility requirements for SIS (see Chapter 5 Eligibility).

The ABB is a monthly flat rate amount intended to provide for basic necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, personal and household items.

For information on SIS benefits for children, see Chapter 12 Children's Benefits.

11.1 Amount of Benefit – Regulations Section 4-2 and 4-7

The ABB is \$285 per month. The ABB for residents within the Northern Administration District (NAD) is \$350 per month (see Chapter 11.2). A prorated ABB will be provided in the month eligibility is determined from the day the application is approved.

A client's ABB is determined based on the location of their primary residence.

If a client moves from outside the NAD to within the NAD, or from inside the NAD to outside, the monthly ABB benefit will be pro-rated based on the date of the move. A month will be considered 30 days for purposes of calculating the pro-rated amount.

11.2 Northern Administration District (NAD) – Regulations Section 4-7

The Northern Administration District is defined in *The Northern Saskatchewan Administration District Boundaries Regulations*. Northern Administration District Communities are as follows:

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Air Ronge | Cole Bay | Four Portages | McLennan Lake | Sandy Bay | Uranium City |
| Bear Creek | Cree Lake | Garson Lake | Michel Village | Sled Lake | Wadin Bay |
| Beauval | Creighton | Grandmother's Bay | Missinipe | Southend | Wapachewunak |
| Black Lake | Cumberland House | Green Lake | Molanosa | St George's Hill | Weyakwin |
| Black Point | Denare Beach | Île-à-la-Crosse | Montreal Lake | Stanley Mission | Wollaston Lake |
| Brabant Lake | Dillon | Jan Lake | Patuanak | Stony Rapids | |
| Buffalo Narrows | Dore Lake | Jans Bay | Pelican Narrows | Sturgeon Landing | |
| Camsell Portage | Eldorado | Kinoosao | Pinehouse | Sucker River | |
| Canoe Narrows | Flin Flon | La Loche | Pinehouse Lake | Timber Bay | |
| Cluff Lake | Fond Du Lac | La Ronge | Potato River | Turnor Lake | |

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 12 | Legislative Authority |
| Children's Benefits | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 4-8 and 4-9 |

Children's Benefits

Intent

This chapter outlines the SIS benefits related to children available through SIS and the eligibility requirements to receive those SIS benefits.

Policy

The Ministry will provide a Children's Basic Benefit to a SIS client who is not eligible for the Canada Child Benefit for circumstances outlined in Chapter 12.1.

The Children's Basic Benefit is provided to cover food, clothing, household items, local transportation and other child related costs for a parent who is not eligible to receive the Canada Child Benefit.

The Ministry will provide a monthly Children's Basic Benefit for residents of the NAD in recognition of the higher cost of basic items in the NAD.

The Ministry will provide a Childcare Benefit to provide financial support to assist a client with short-term child care requirements.

12.1 Children's Basic Benefit Eligibility – Regulation Section 4-9

Eligibility for the Children's Basic Benefit is as follows:

- The first month a child is born (one-time benefit per child)
- The first month a child is returned to the client from the Ministry's care (one-time benefit per child)
- To a client who is a refugee claimant. This benefit will be ongoing until the client is eligible to receive the Canada Child Benefit.

The Children's Basic Benefit will not be provided to clients if another parent/caregiver is receiving the Canada Child Benefit.

With the exception of the Children's Basic Benefit for residents of the NAD, the Children's Basic Benefit will not be provided if a Canada Child Benefit requirement has not been met (e.g. caregiver has not filed their taxes, responded to a Canada Revenue Agency inquiry).

12.2 Children's Basic Benefit for Residents of the NAD – Regulation Section 4-9

The Children's Basic Benefit in the amount of \$65 per month will be provided for each child of a client determined to be residing within the NAD (see Chapter 11 Adult Basic Benefit) based on the date the client's application is submitted or the date of move to the NAD.

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 12 | Legislative Authority |
| Children's Benefits | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 4-8 and 4-9 |

12.3 Children's Basic Benefit for Newborns – Regulation Section 4-9

The Children's Basic Benefit of \$400 will be provided for one month from the first day of the month of the child/children's birth. The benefit can be paid 30 calendar days in advance of the declared due date.

12.4 Children's Basic Benefit for Child(ren) Returning from the Ministry's Care – Regulation Section 4-9

The Children's Basic Benefit of \$400 will be provided for one month from the first day of the month the child/children are returned to the client's care from the care of the Ministry, when the Ministry has been receiving the child/children's Canada Child Benefit.

12.5 Children's Basic Benefit for Clients who are Refugee Claimants/Subject to a Non-Executable Removal Order – Regulation Section 4-9

SIS clients who are refugee claimants, or whose refugee status been determined and is subject to a removal order that cannot be executed will receive a Children's Basic Benefit of \$400 per month for each child registered as part of the client's household not receiving Canada Child Benefit due to invalid refugee status (see Definition for Refugee Claimants). SIS benefits will be provided based on the date the client's application is submitted.

12.6 Eligibility for Child Care Benefit – Regulation Section 4-8

The Child Care Benefit is provided to clients whose child(ren) need care in the following situations:

- When client is pursuing actions in their individual plan (e.g. attend a job interview, attend a resume writing workshop),
- When client is attending appointments related to a client or household member's health, (e.g. medical appointment, hospital stay, AA/NA meetings),
- When participating in employment or training and licensed care is not available.

The child(ren) needing care must be currently registered as part of the client's household.

The Child Care Benefit is not provided in the following situations:

- When child care is required as part of a Child and Family Program plan,
- When child care is provided by an immediate household member (e.g. older sibling),
- When child care is provided by a Licensed Child Care Provider.

12.7 Amount of Benefit – Regulation Section 4-8

The Child Care Benefit is \$30 per day, regardless of the actual number of hours that care is required or the number of children requiring care. Receipts are not required.

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 12 | Legislative Authority |
| Children's Benefits | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 4-8 and 4-9 |

Documentation/Validation Requirements

| Policy | Verification/Documentation |
|--|--|
| 12.1 Newborn | Client's declaration including child's name, birthdate and provincial health number |
| 12.1 Child(ren) Returning from the Ministry's Care | Written or verbal notification from the Ministry's Child and Family Programs Division(CFP) |
| 12.1 Refugee Claimants | Documentation from IRCC verifying refugee status |
| 12.2 NAD Residency | See Chapter 11.2. |
| 12.6 Child Care Benefit | Verbal or written statement from client |

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 13 | Legislative Authority |
| Shelter Benefits | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 4-3, 4-4 and 4-5 |

Shelter Benefits

Intent

This chapter outlines shelter benefits, exceptional shelter support benefits and security deposit benefits.

Policy

The Ministry provides shelter benefits to cover the cost of shelter related items such as rent, mortgage, lot rental, utilities, utility hookups, municipal taxes, homeowners insurance, home repairs/maintenance, and security deposits for all households who provide verification of a shelter need.

13.1 Shelter Benefit – Regulations Section 4-3

The Shelter Benefit is monthly benefit. A prorated shelter benefit will be provided in the month eligibility is determined.

| Shelter Rates for Saskatchewan Income Support (SIS) Program | | | | |
|--|---------|---------|------------------------|--------------------|
| | Singles | Couples | Families (1 or 2 kids) | Families (3+ kids) |
| Saskatoon/Regina | \$575 | \$750 | \$975 | \$1,150 |
| Rest of the province | \$525 | \$650 | \$750 | \$850 |

Shelter benefits are paid to the client. The client is responsible for payment of their shelter and shelter related needs.

The Ministry assumes no responsibility for the relationship between the landlord and tenant. If there are concerns, the parties will be directed to the Office of Residential Tenancies (ORT).

In exceptional circumstances, where the client has demonstrated an inability to manage their Shelter Benefit, direct payments to a trustee may be required (See Chapter 22).

13.1.1 Renting – Regulations Section 4-3

Clients who are considered to be renting are those who have a tenancy agreement with the property owner or someone who is recognized by the owner as an agent on behalf of the property owner (caretaker, property management company). The shelter benefit for renters includes funds for rent and utilities. In some circumstances, the client may be eligible for Exceptional Shelter Support (see Chapter 13.4).

13.1.2 Shared Accommodations – Regulations Section 4-3

Single clients who share accommodations will each receive a shelter benefit if they are listed as a tenant in the tenancy agreement.

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| Shelter Benefits | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 4-3, 4-4 and 4-5 |

13.1.3 Home Ownership – Regulations Section 4-3

The Shelter Benefit is intended for home loan, interest on the home loan, municipal taxes, home owner’s insurance, home loan renewal fee, lot rental, home repairs/maintenance and equipment rentals for the primary residence.

For a home that is held in joint title with a former spouse/partner or with others, the Shelter Benefit is provided if documentation is provided confirming ownership and the client is residing in the home.

13.1.4 Shelter Benefit for Foster Parents, Persons of Sufficient Interest, Alternate Care– Regulations Section 4-3

The Shelter Benefit will be provided based on total household size if additional children, not in the permanent custody of the client, are added to the home. This includes foster homes, Persons of Sufficient Interest (PSI) and Alternate Care providers.

The Shelter Benefit will be adjusted, if required, at the time the children not in permanent custody of the client leave the home.

13.1.5 Shelter Benefit for Shared Custody – Regulations Section 4-3

Child(ren) are included in the calculation of the Shelter Benefit household size for each parent in a shared custody arrangement if both parents are in receipt of SIS benefits. The client must have a court ordered custody agreement or be eligible for the Canada Child Benefit.

13.2 Changes in Household Circumstance – Regulations Section 4-3

When a household size decreases for the following reasons:

- Death of spouse/partner or relationship breakdown
- Child leaving the household

The household’s Shelter Benefit will be maintained at its current rate for a period of 3 months including the month when the change in household circumstance occurred. Clients will be advised what their new Shelter Benefit rate will be after the 3-month period when the circumstance is first reported.

An additional 3 months may be provided with Manager’s approval. No further extensions are provided.

If a household size increases for the following reasons:

- Family reunification
- Pregnancy
- Other circumstances when a child is added to the household

The Shelter Benefit will be increased, if applicable, to reflect the new household’s size 3 months in advance of the addition of the new household member.

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13.3 Other Shelter Benefit Arrangements – Regulations Section 4-3

Clients who are in a rental arrangement with hotels, hostels, or other residential organizations will receive the Shelter Benefit. See Chapter 15.4 for further information on emergency shelter benefits.

13.4 Exceptional Shelter Support Benefits – Regulations Section 4-4

An Exceptional Shelter Support benefit is provided through two provisions:

1. Stabilization Benefit
2. Alternate Heating Benefit

Clients may be eligible to receive both Exceptional Shelter Support benefits at the same time.

13.4.1 Stabilization Benefit – Regulations Section 4-4

Clients who present ongoing unusual or challenging behaviour which creates difficulty obtaining stable housing may receive an additional \$150 in Exceptional Shelter Support.

This benefit may be in place as long as the unusual or challenging behaviour affects a client’s ability to obtain stable housing.

13.4.2 Alternate Heating Benefit – Regulations Section 4-4

Clients who reside in a household where natural gas is not accessible and are required to heat their home with an alternate source (heating fuel, propane, wood, electricity) will receive \$130 per month.

The Benefit is not to be used for clients who do not have natural gas services due to arrears/disconnections with the natural gas service provider (e.g. natural gas is available at the client’s residence but is not in service due to arrears/disconnection).

Shared Accommodation

All clients who reside in shared accommodations will receive the Alternate Heating Benefit and/or the Stabilization Benefit.

13.5 Recoverable Payment for Security Deposits – Regulations Section 4-5

Clients may request and receive a recoverable payment up to their shelter benefit once every two years. This two-year span would include the time when a client was not receiving SIS benefits. The security deposit will be recovered at a rate of \$50 per month.

A client may receive another recoverable payment for a security deposit within the two-year period in case of recoveries, or reasons beyond the client’s control (fire, home uninhabitable, imminent risk of homelessness). A client may also receive a recoverable payment within the two-year period if they have no outstanding SIS overpayment. Manager approval is required.

For the recovery of a payment for a Security Deposit, see Chapter 18 Recoveries.

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13.6 Exceptions to Recovering a Payment for a Security Deposit – Regulations Section 4-5

The payment for a security deposit will not be recoverable when the client is required to move due to inter-personal violence. In circumstances of inter-personal violence, the client will receive a non-recoverable payment for a security deposit up to the client’s shelter benefit, if needed, regardless of the once every two-year limit when they establish a new permanent residence.

13.7 Shared Accommodations – Regulations Section 4-5

In shared accommodations, the payment for a security deposit, up to the client’s shelter benefit rate, for each client, may be issued.

13.8 No Recoverable Payment for Security Deposit Provided – Regulations Section 4-5

A payment for a security deposit is not provided in the following situations:

- A security deposit for the client’s residence has already been paid prior to application to SIS.

Verification and Documentation Requirements

| Policy | Verification/Documentation |
|--|--|
| 13.1.1 – Renters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A copy of a tenancy agreement with the property owner or someone recognized at an agent on behalf of the property owner • If the tenancy agreement is not available, then a rent receipt (current or last month’s). |
| 13.1.2 – Shared Accommodations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenancy agreement or documentation from the property owner/agent of the property owner that the recipients are renting from them • If the tenancy agreement is not available, then a rent receipt (current or last month’s) |
| 13.1.3 – Homeowners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A copy of the title, or an agreement for sale/mortgage documents • If these documents are not available, then a current house insurance policy and property tax notice in the recipient’s name will be accepted |
| 13.1.3 - Homeowners (Agreement for Sale) | Copy of the agreement for sale |

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| 13.1.4 - Foster Parents, PSI or Alternate Care | Statement/documentation from CFP or copy of the court order |
| 13.1.5 – Shared Custody | A copy of the court ordered custody agreement or documentation confirming eligibility for the CCB |
| 13.4– Exceptional Shelter Support | Client must be in receipt of the Shelter Benefit |
| 13.4– Stabilization Benefit | Documentation from health care professional/social worker confirming the unusual or challenging behavior affecting living arrangements |
| 13.4 – Alternate Heating Benefit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation (tenancy agreement) confirming shelter need and declaration of heating source through the application or Change of Address Form. • Copy of most recent bill for the alternate heating source in the client’s name |
| 13.5– Security Deposit Issued | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of the tenancy agreement or rent receipt and address, phone number of property owner/property owner’s agent • Change of Address Form |
| 13.6 – Exception to Recoverable Security Deposit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client’s verbal statement or case worker’s knowledge of client’s circumstances • Record made on electronic file by worker |

Delegation of Authority

| The required delegate must indicate approval. | |
|--|-------------------|
| Policy | Approval Required |
| 13.2 – Change in Household Circumstance (Additional 3 Months Benefit) | Manager |
| 13.4.1 – Stabilization Benefit | Manager |
| 13.5 – Security Deposit Issued Within Two-Year Period (except for Interpersonal Violence Reason) | Manager |

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 14 | Legislative Authority |
| Change of Circumstances Benefits | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 4-10 and 4-11 |

Change of Circumstances Benefits

Intent

This chapter outlines the SIS benefits that may be provided to support clients entering the work force or beginning a training program or to assist clients when relocation is required.

Policy

The Ministry may provide SIS benefits to clients who report they are relocating, entering the work force or beginning a training program.

14.1 Employment and Training Benefit – Regulation Section 4-10

The Employment and Training Benefit may be provided when a client reports that they are entering the work force or beginning a training program.

The benefit will be provided at a flat rate of \$140.00 and may be provided once per calendar year.

No receipts are required to access the benefit.

14.2 Relocation Benefit – Regulation Section 4-11

The relocation benefit is to assist clients with relocation costs, including moving costs and utility hook ups. Clients are required to provide documentation to confirm the move.

The relocation benefit may be provided to address moving costs due to:

- fire;
- interpersonal violence;
- the client is required to access medical treatment in another municipality;
- client’s residence is placarded;
- client’s rental accommodations have been sold;
- starting a job outside of the municipality where the client lives in;
- finding a more affordable place to live within Ministry Shelter rates (see Shelter Benefits Chapter 13).

Clients who are evicted due to their own actions (e.g. rent arrears, damages) are not eligible for the relocation benefit.

14.2.1 Amount of Benefit – Regulation Section 4-11

The following amounts are provided:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|
| Singles and couples without children | \$200.00 |
| Families | \$300.00 |

Receipts are not required.

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| Change of Circumstances Benefits | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 4-10 and 4-11 |

Validation and Documentation Requirements

| Policy | Verification/Documentation |
|--|---|
| 14.1 Employment and training benefit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal statement for employment or training program including start date • Recording on system to show information provided by client regarding employment or training program |
| 14.2 – Relocation Benefit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal confirmation for relocation due to interpersonal violence, fire, etc. • Medical documentation supporting a treatment plan in a different municipality or condition requiring specific housing |
| 14.2 – Evictions for reasons beyond the client’s control | Verification of placarded residence or eviction due to sale of property |
| 14.2 – Start a job outside of the municipality client lives in | Verbal confirmation of job information including municipality |

Delegation of Authority

| The required delegate must indicate approval of the benefit. | |
|--|-------------------|
| Policy | Approval Required |
| 14.2 – Relocation Benefit | Supervisor |

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 15 | Legislative Authority |
| Health and Safety Benefits | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 4-6, 4-12, 4-13 and 4-14 |

Health and Safety Benefits

Intent

The chapter outlines SIS benefits that the Ministry may provide to clients for health and safety reasons including travel, prescribed diet, household health and safety and emergency.

Policy

The Ministry may provide SIS benefits to clients to assist with the minimal funding required to remove a client from imminent danger, replace household items (in specific situations), a diet for a specific diagnosis, and transportation (for specific reasons).

15.1 Household Health and Safety Benefit – Regulations Section 4-13

A Household Health and Safety Benefit of up to \$500 per case (not per household member) will be provided in instances when an extraordinary event has occurred.

The benefit is to assist with the purchase of household items in the following situations:

- Leaving an interpersonal violence situation and furniture has been damaged or left behind (as approved by the Supervisor);
- Replacing household items as a result of a disaster including, but not limited to, flooding, fire, sewage back-up or tornado, when not covered by another resource (as approved by the Supervisor);
- Other exceptional circumstances as approved by the Manager.

The benefit is not to be provided when the request is denied under another policy or when the client has access to other resources (e.g. home or tenant insurance).

The benefit is not provided in situations such as the following:

- upon a client's release from jail;
- replacing stolen goods;
- pest control or replacing furnishings damaged by pests;
- move from another location;
- when a family member is added to the client's file (e.g. when a child is returned from the Ministry's care or when a spouse/partner is added);
- to replace insurance; or
- to pay for non-furniture items (e.g. rent or utility arrears).

Supervisor/Manager approval is required each time the benefit is issued as outlined above.

15.2 Prescribed Diets Benefit – Regulations Section 4-6

The Prescribed Diet Benefit is for adults with prescribed dietary requirements due to a specific medical condition. Confirmation from a physician or nurse practitioner of the diagnosis is required prior to the benefit being issued.

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Prescribed diets are provided to pay for food or nutritional supplements only.

Clients may receive a maximum amount of \$150 per month from any one or combination of groups below.

Clients may receive one benefit from Group 1 or 2, as well as one from Group 3, at the same time, to a maximum of \$150 (regardless of the number of diagnoses) per month.

Clients eligible for Group 4 may only receive the \$150 benefit available for Group 4 (regardless of the number of diagnoses) per month.

The monthly benefit may be issued beginning in the month in which the documentation confirming the diagnosis is received by the Ministry.

Updated documentation confirming the diagnosis is required every three years, with the exception of Groups 2 and 3, which must be confirmed annually, and Group 4 which does not require updated confirmation.

| Group and Confirmation Update Period | Benefit Per Month |
|--|--------------------------|
| <p>Group 1 <i>Reconfirmation of diagnosis: Every 3 years</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) • Anorexia nervosa • Cancer or malignancy • Chronic bacterial infection • Chronic burns • Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (chronic bronchitis, emphysema) • Chronic renal disease (pre-dialysis & dialysis) • Chronic wound healing • Cirrhosis • Congenital heart defect • Class III obesity (BMI >40) • Diabetes • Dysphagia diet (need for thickened fluids as assessed by SLP, OT or RD) • Fatty liver disease • Gluten-free diet (celiac disease, non-celiac gluten sensitivity, IBS) • Heart healthy eating (dyslipidemia/hyperlipidemia, hypertension, heart failure) • Hepatitis (B or C) • Huntington’s disease • Hyperthyroidism • Inflammatory bowel disease (Crohn’s disease, ulcerative colitis) • Ketogenic diet (neurological conditions including epilepsy, brain tumors/cancer) • Low FODMAP diet (IBS) | \$50 |

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| | |
|---|-------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lupus • Metabolic syndrome • Multiple sclerosis • Muscular dystrophy • Osteoporosis or arthritis • Ostomies • Pancreatic insufficiency • Parkinson’s disease • Prader-willi syndrome • Rett syndrome (BMI <18.5) • Short bowel syndrome • Tuberculosis • Unintentional weight loss or body wasting | |
| <p>Group 2 <i>Confirmation of diagnosis required each pregnancy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnancy | \$50 |
| <p>Group 3-Nutritional Supplements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) • Cancer or malignancy • Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) • Chronic burns (third or fourth degree or >20% of total body surface area) • Chronic renal disease (pre-dialysis & dialysis) • Chronic wound healing (level 3 or 4 or unstageable) • Dysphagia • Huntington’s disease • Lupus • Muscular dystrophy • Ostomies • Rheumatoid arthritis • Short bowel syndrome | \$100 |
| <p>Group 4 <i>No updated confirmation required</i></p> <p>Human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS)</p> | \$150 |

15.3 Travel Benefit – Regulations Section 4-14

The travel benefit may be provided for travel outside of the client’s municipality of residence for only the following situations:

- Medical appointments for a service that cannot be provided in the client’s municipality of residence;
- Job interview or commencement of employment;
- Educational programming, training programs, support groups and AA counselling related to an approved client individual plan;

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- Attend a SAID disability assessment; or
- Exceptional circumstances for travel outside of the municipality the client lives in, as approved by Manager (e.g. attend a funeral service for an immediate family member).

Travel Benefits are not provided for travel within the municipality the client lives in. The client is expected to provide for their local travel through their Adult Basic Benefit.

Registered Indians (as per the *Indian Act*) who are SIS clients, receive benefits for accommodations, food, and travel costs outside of the municipality they live in from Health Canada for medical appointments. No SIS medical travel benefits are provided.

Travel in the NAD

In the case of medical travel for residents of the NAD, the Ministry of Health authorizes medical travel on the basis of eligibility for supplementary health. Upon authorization, the Ministry of Social Services is responsible for health-related local transportation and all meals and/or accommodation costs required as part of the medical trip. SIS benefits are not provided for any ambulance, medical or hospital charges.

When health services outside of the province are required, confirmation must be obtained from the Ministry of Health. Upon confirmation, travel benefits may be provided. SIS benefits for any ambulance, medical or hospital charges are not provided.

15.3.1 Amount of Benefit – Regulations Section 4-14

The benefit may be provided 30 days in advance or following the travel.

The following amounts may be provided if the client meets eligibility outlined in Chapter 15.3:

Mileage - \$0.27 per km per household

Meals - \$20 per day per household member

Shelter - \$95 per night (if required for medical reasons only) per household

Travel to attend a Funeral – Under exceptional circumstances, the Ministry may provide a benefit for travel to an immediate family member’s funeral. The benefit will use the above rates for mileage and meals, to a combined maximum of \$400 per circumstance per household.

15.4 Short-Term Emergency Support – Regulations Section 4-12

The Short Term Emergency benefit is provided to address emergency situations that are unforeseen and, when failing to do so would result in harm. Funding may be provided when all of the following criteria have been met:

- There is imminent harm to any member of the household;
- The client has been following their individual plan; and
- The client cannot wait, access other available resources, or make alternative arrangements.

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The Short Term Emergency benefit **will not** be provided to address rent or utility arrears. It is also not intended to be used to address situations where benefits are already provided for such as the Household Health and Safety benefit (e.g. house fire, or escaping inter-personal violence).

15.4.1 Amount of Benefit

Amount of Benefit

The minimal funding required to remove the immediate risk of harm or to address a specific event or unforeseen item of immediate need may be provided, to a maximum of \$500 per household. In instances where a client/family is in a temporary housing arrangement (emergency shelter or hotel) and the period of time to access a permanent residence requires additional resources, expenditures over \$500 per household are allowed with the authority of the Service Centre Manager.

The amount provided will be recovered if the benefit was used for purposes other than addressing the issue.

If an amount is provided for meals, emergency shelter and mileage it will adhere to Ministry established rates.

Meals – \$20 per day per household member.

Emergency Shelters – \$50 per night per household member for non-contracted Emergency Shelters. If no Emergency Shelter is available or is not suitable, the hotel rate of \$95 per night per household may be provided

Transportation- 27 cents per kilometre.

Other goods and services - minimal funding may be provided for other goods and services to remove the immediate risk of harm.

If services are unavailable at Ministry provided rates, the minimal funding necessary to meet the emergent need may be provided.

15.5 Transient Assistance

Transients are single individuals or households, who are temporarily in the province and not receiving income assistance benefits from Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan residents without a fixed address, who lack the means to pay for their immediate needs, and are not already receiving income assistance, may also be considered transients. If the individual or family unit requires ongoing income assistance, a full application for assistance is required. Transients, who normally reside out of province and wish to remain in Saskatchewan permanently, may complete a full SIS application. Transient aid can be provided for up to four days.

A short-term benefit for food, accommodation, travel or other goods and services of an emergent nature may be provided to individuals and members of their household when the following criteria has been met:

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- There is imminent harm to any member of the household;
- The applicant cannot wait until the next payment date, access other available resources, or make alternative arrangements; and
- The applicant has a plan for meeting future needs (e.g. is returning to home province where they have resources).

This benefit is not intended for SAP, SAID, or SIS clients/beneficiaries as there are emergency and crisis supports available in each of those programs.

Amount of Benefit

Meals - \$20 per day per household member.

Accommodation - \$50 per night per household member for non-contracted Emergency Shelters. If no Emergency Shelter is available or is not suitable, the hotel rate of \$95 per night per household may be provided.

Transportation – 27 cents per kilometer will be provided to enable a transient individual or household to travel to their final destination within Canada.

Other goods and services - minimal funding may be provided for other goods and services to remove the immediate risk of harm.

After-hour Services

- After-Hour service providers must complete a Transient Services Assessment form and ensure the eligibility criteria has been met prior to authorizing funding,
- After-Hour services providers may authorize benefits consistent with the amounts stated above in Chapter 15.5. If services are unavailable at Ministry provided rates, the minimal funding necessary to meet the emergent need until the next Ministry business day may be provided. If on-going supports are required, the client may make application for SIS benefits.

Health Benefits for Transients

- Individuals identifying an emergency health need will be referred to local health centers, pharmacies and the Ministry of Health, Drug Plan Branch to access services and funding.
- For non-emergency situations a nomination for extended health benefits (e.g. drugs, dental, etc.) may be completed through the Provincial Health Registration System (PHRS) when no other resources are available. If the nomination is accepted the benefits are limited to four days.

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Verification/Documentation Requirements

| Policy | Verification/Documentation |
|---|--|
| 15.1 – Interpersonal violence Situation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement from client |
| 15.1 – Disaster Situation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of denial from other sources (e.g. insurance), if required. |
| 15.2 – Prescribed Diets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The medical diagnosis must be confirmed by a physician or nurse practitioner on the client’s Medical Report Form; or • Letter or prescription outlining diagnosis from a physician or nurse practitioner. |
| 15.3 – Medical appointments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal confirmation of appointment including date, and length of stay (if applicable) • Written confirmation must be provided by client if requested by the Ministry, at any time |
| 15.3 – Job or job interview | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal confirmation of job or interview information |
| 15.3 – Approved individual plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal confirmation of appointment including date, reason, and length of stay (if applicable) • Written confirmation must be provided by client if requested by the Ministry, at any time |
| 15.3 – Exceptional circumstances | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal confirmation including date, reason, and length of stay (if applicable) • Written confirmation must be provided by client if requested by the Ministry, at any time |
| 15.4- Short Term Emergency Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client written or verbal statement describing the crisis. |
| 15.5 Transient Assistance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transient Aid Application |

Delegation of Authority

| The required delegate must indicate approval of the benefit. | |
|---|--------------------|
| Policy | Approval Required |
| 15.1 – Household Health & Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpersonal violence • Natural or Human Caused Disaster | Supervisor |
| 15.3 Exceptional Circumstance | Manager |
| 15.4 Issuing a Benefit | Supervisor |
| 15.4.1 and 15.5- Actual Costs of Hotel | Supervisor |
| 15.5 Approving Out of Province Travel | Supervisor/Manager |

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 16 | Legislative Authority |
| Reporting Changes in Circumstances and Changing or Ending Benefits | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 2-2, 2-5, 3-8, 3-9, 3-10, 4-2, 4-3, 4-9 and 4-12 |

Reporting Changes in Circumstances and Changing or Ending Benefits

Intent

This chapter describes the requirements for reporting a change in client circumstance for the purpose of calculating the client's SIS benefits.

Policy

The Ministry requires clients to report all changes in circumstances to the Ministry as they occur. The Ministry will make adjustments to the client's SIS benefits as a result of the reported changes in circumstances. The Ministry will advise the client regarding any changes to the SIS benefits.

16.1 Changes in Income – Regulations Section 2-2 and 3-8

Clients must report all income to the Ministry. If monthly income does not vary, the client must report the income to the Ministry when it is first received and as changes occur (see Chapter 6 Income).

16.2 Changes in Household Composition – Regulations Section 2-2 and 3-8

16.2.1 Children – Regulations Section 2-2, 3-8 and 4-9

When a child is added to the household or leaves the household, the client must provide this information to the Ministry (see Chapter 12.1 Children's Basic Benefit Eligibility).

When a child is no longer part of the household, SIS benefits, with the exception of Shelter Benefits, continue to the end of that month. See Chapter 13 for how the Shelter Benefit is applied.

16.2.2 Marital Status – Regulations Section 2-2 and 3-8

Clients are required to report changes in marital status to the Ministry as close as possible to the date when the change occurs. This requirement applies to the following changes: marriage; becoming common-law; divorce; reconciliation; separation; or death of spouse/partner.

In the case of separation, no SIS benefits changes related to marital status will occur for the client in the month of the separation. A recalculation of SIS benefits will occur for the following month. The separated spouse/partner may apply for SIS benefits if required.

If two separate clients marry, become common-law, or reconcile, no benefit changes related to marital status will occur during the month the change in marital status occurred.

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| Reporting Changes in Circumstances and Changing or Ending Benefits | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 2-2, 2-5, 3-8, 3-9, 3-10, 4-2, 4-3, 4-9 and 4-12 |

16.2.3 Incarceration – Regulations Section 2-5

No SIS benefits changes will occur for the month in which the incarceration occurred.

If a client is incarcerated for more than 30 days, the spouse/partner must complete an application if they require SIS benefits.

A trustee may be appointed to handle shelter benefits for up to 90 days for single parents incarcerated, if required to keep the family intact.

16.2.4 Death

SIS benefits, for which the client was eligible, issued in the month of the death do not need to be repaid.

16.3 Absence from Accommodation – Regulations Section 4-12

SIS benefits, for which the client was eligible, do not need to be repaid when a client temporarily (30 days or less) resides in short-term accommodation (hotel) or in a special facility (e.g. family shelter, addiction treatment centre, respite home, jail) and has already received SIS benefits during the month.

16.3.1 Clients Admitted to Hospital – Regulations Section 4-2

The Adult Basic Benefit and Shelter Benefit (if client was previously in receipt of a Shelter Benefit) will be provided during the course of a stay at a Hospital.

16.3.2 Addiction Treatment Centres, Emergency Accommodation or Family Shelters – Regulations Section 4-2 and 4-3

The Adult Basic Benefit and Shelter Benefit (if client was previously in receipt of a Shelter Benefit and is retaining their residence) will be provided during the course of a stay at these facilities.

16.4 Temporary Absence from Saskatchewan

SIS benefits may be provided with the Manager’s approval in situations such as:

- client participating in a training program as part of an approved plan;
- taking medical treatment not available locally; or
- other temporary absence up to 30 days.

16.5 Review with Client – Regulations Section 3-9

Before changing, suspending, ending, or reinstating SIS benefits, the circumstances should, whenever reasonably possible, be communicated to the client.

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 16 | Legislative Authority |
| Reporting Changes in Circumstances and Changing or Ending Benefits | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 2-2, 2-5, 3-8, 3-9, 3-10, 4-2, 4-3, 4-9 and 4-12 |

If it is not possible to discuss the client’s circumstances in person, inquiries may be made to obtain any information necessary to determine eligibility. These inquiries should be made with the client’s prior knowledge, if at all possible.

The client is notified in writing of any decision that results in a change of SIS benefits or impacts eligibility, and of the right to request a reconsideration of the decision or to appeal the decision.

16.6 Ending SIS benefits – Regulations Section 3-10

No further SIS benefits will be issued from the date on which the client becomes no longer eligible for SIS. SIS benefits, for which the client was eligible, provided during the month, do not need to be repaid.

Case closure may occur 30 calendar days from the last day of the month benefits were issued.

For ending of Supplementary Health Benefits, see Chapter 20.

16.7 Relocation – Regulations Section 3-8

The client must notify the Ministry when they relocate to a new permanent address.

Verification/Documentation Requirements

| Policy | Verification/Documentation |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 16.2.1- Adding/Removing Child | • Change of Household Membership Form |
| 16.2.2 – Divorce, separation, death or change of the head of household | • Change of Household Membership Form |
| 16.2.3 – Application by Spouse/Partner | • Change of Household Membership Form |
| 16.7 Relocation | • Change of Address Form |

Delegation of Authority

| The required delegate must indicate approval. | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Policy | Approval Required |
| 16.4 – Temporary Absence from Saskatchewan | Manager |

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 17 | Legislative Authority |
| Eligibility Review | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 3-9 |

Eligibility Review

Intent

This chapter establishes review periods and outlines the requirements of a review.

Policy

The Ministry may review client information and circumstances at any time to confirm eligibility. Clients are required to participate and provide information required to confirm eligibility. Failure to participate in the review or provide required information may result in the suspending or ending of SIS benefits.

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 18 | Legislative Authority |
| Recoveries | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 1-2 and 2-7 |

Recoveries

Intent

This chapter outlines recovery requirements for recoverable SIS benefits and overpayments.

Policy

The Ministry will recover the funds from a client's future SIS benefits when a client receives SIS benefits that they were not entitled to receive (an overpayment) or were given a benefit that is recoverable. If the client is no longer in receipt of SIS benefits, the Ministry may use other means to recover those funds.

18.1 Overpayment Defined – Regulations Section 1-2 and 2-7

The amount paid over and above the SIS benefits a client is eligible for is an overpayment when:

- SIS benefits were paid during a period when a client's income and assets were greater than the benefits they were eligible to receive;
- SIS benefits were paid beyond what the client was eligible to receive; or
- the client was ineligible for SIS benefits.

18.2 Recoverable SIS benefits

A recoverable benefit is a payment provided to a client that must be paid back.

18.3 Overpayment and Recoverable Benefit Recovery Rates – Act Section 29

Overpayments and recoverable SIS benefits are recovered from a client's SIS benefits at a flat rate of \$50 per month per household. A higher recovery rate may be used if requested by the client.

A supervisor/manager may approve a recovery rate of \$25 per month per case when an overpayment was the result of Ministry error. The reduced amount applies only for the time it takes to recover the amount that was created due to Ministry error. Once repaid, the recovery rate increases back to the \$50 recovery rate for the remaining overpayment balance.

18.4 Assignment of Recovery

When spouses/partners separate, the client is responsible for the full amount of the debt to the Ministry.

If the spouses/partners subsequently reconcile, the debt to the Ministry is recovered regardless of whether they had a different spouse/partner in the interim before the reconciliation.

If a person owes a debt to the Ministry and becomes a spouse/partner in a different household, the debt to the Ministry cannot be recovered from future SIS benefits without the written consent of their spouse/partner. The client remains responsible for the debt to the Ministry, if she or he subsequently leaves the household.

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 18 | Legislative Authority |
| Recoveries | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 1-2 and 2-7 |

18.5 Recovery Deferred

A supervisor may defer a recovery from future SIS benefits if clients:

- are appealing an overpayment; or
- declare bankruptcy.

The Ministry will collect on any debt to the Ministry that was created after the client was declared bankrupt.

Verification and Documentation Requirements

| Policy | Verification/Documentation |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 18.4 – Assignments of Recovery | Written consent from spouse/partner |
| 18.5 – Bankruptcy | Proofs of claim form |

Delegation of Authority

| The required delegate must indicate approval of the reduced rate. | |
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| Policy | Approval Required |
| 18.3 – Reduced Recovery Rate | Supervisor or Manager |

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 19 | Legislative Authority |
| Funerals | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 4-15 |

Funerals

Intent

This chapter outlines the eligibility requirements and SIS benefits available to assist with the cost of a funeral.

Policy

The Ministry may provide funeral benefits to support the costs of funeral services for a client who was in receipt of SIS benefits or a non-SIS client who has insufficient resources when they passed away. The request for Funeral Benefits shall be made by next of kin, a relative, or other responsible person. In the absence of these individuals a funeral director may make the application for funeral expenses. The applicant is required to complete the funeral application by phone.

If no applicant can be found (other than funeral director), then the Minister of Social Services may designate a decision maker as required through *The Funeral and Cremation Services Act*, through a Minister's Order. These cases must be referred to Central Office.

19.1 Eligibility – Regulations Section 4-15

Assets of the estate and financial resources, including the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) Death Benefit and the last Old Age Security (OAS) or Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), are considered when determining eligibility for funeral benefits.

The request for SIS benefits is denied if:

- financial resources and/or assets of the estate are sufficient to cover the cost of a funeral using Ministry rates;
- the funeral costs have already been paid; or
- the application was made beyond 90 days from the date of the burial and no exceptional circumstances were present (unless approved by Supervisor).

If there is eligibility for a funeral benefit, and there is no executor, the family or the funeral home shall be advised that the CPP Death Benefit will be collected by the Ministry to cover the expenses of the funeral if the Ministry pays for the funeral. If there is an executor, the executor shall inform the Ministry of the anticipated CPP Death Benefit and this amount is deducted from the funeral benefit.

Funds provided by an Indian Band, friend or relative (other than a member of the family unit), for funeral expenses not provided through this policy (e.g. tombstone, or a more expensive casket), are not considered a resource.

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 19 | Legislative Authority |
| Funerals | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 4-15 |

19.2 Amount of Benefit – Regulations Section 4-15

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| Basic Funeral Expenses (Adults and Children) | |
| The fee will cover the basic preparation of the deceased person's remains, a standard casket*, urn*, all required fees, all transfers of the body within 20km, and documentation. | \$2,100 |
| Additional Funeral Expenses (Adults and Children) | |
| Transportation – when travel beyond 20 km round trip is required for hearse and one other vehicle – travel per vehicle | Public Service Commission km rates (rounded to the nearest cent) |
| Embalming (when required or requested by family) | Actual cost not to exceed \$700 |
| Cremation (if requested by family) | Actual cost not to exceed \$925 |
| Funeral Ceremonial Services/Rituals (when family or friends are the applicant and requested) | Actual cost not to exceed \$700 |
| Grave liners (minimal vault or wood box) – when required by municipal bylaw | Actual cost |
| Oversize and/or hermetically sealed casket (cost in excess of basic fee) | Actual cost |
| Hermetically sealed body bags for cremations when required or requested by the decision maker (in lieu of hermetically sealed caskets) | Actual cost |
| Cemetery plot - opening and closing / grave set-up fees | Actual cost |

Basic Funeral Expenses

Services include all transfers from the place of death including use of hearse or other transfer vehicle (20 km), mandatory documentation, dressing, cosmetics, identification, transfer to cemetery or crematorium including equipment required to provide these services, and all planning through to the final disposition of remains.

*Standard casket for all burials: a casket of similar quality and not exceeding the cost of an Imperial #2 or Batesville #10. Use the wholesale cost of the Imperial #2 or Batesville #10 (plus 20% merchandise markup, PST and delivery charges) when determining extra cost for an oversize or hermetically sealed casket.

*Urn: for all cremations with a service and/or visitation or if requested by the decision maker. If an urn is not requested and there is no service or visitation, remains will remain in the container in which they are returned from the crematorium.

Hermetically sealed body bags may be provided instead of hermetically sealed caskets for cremations, if requested.

Funeral Services/Rituals

SIS benefits for funeral services/ rituals may be provided in addition to basic funeral expenses up to the maximum amount if requested by the family (not provided if application is submitted

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 19 | Legislative Authority |
| Funerals | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 4-15 |

by the funeral home). Funeral services may include visitations and ceremonial services in a chapel or church.

Cremation Fees

SIS benefits for cremation fees and all associated equipment may be provided in addition to basic funeral expenses, if cremation is requested by the family.

Embalming Fees

SIS benefits for embalming may be provided in addition to basic funeral expenses, if required by the funeral home or the requested by the family.

Other

Actual cost on manufacturer/supplier invoice, plus freight and PST when applicable (does not include GST). Actual costs billed to the Ministry should reflect the published prices as required under Part IV of the *Funeral and Cremation Services Regulations*.

The Ministry does not provide SIS benefits for any items not specified in the above allowable expenses. Examples include: clothing, flowers, guest register, “Thank You” cards, printed memorial folders, obituary, death certificates, limousines or sedans, fees for clergy, church fees, musicians, lunch receptions, vaults, crypts, niche columbarium, requested upgrades to casket, urn, etc.

The cemetery plot is provided at no charge by the city or municipality, and therefore, no SIS benefits may be provided for this expense.

Incidental Funeral Expenses

SIS benefits in the amount of \$100 for incidental funeral expenses may be provided to the client or surviving spouse/partner who receives SIS benefits when a member of the household (receiving SIS benefits) dies.

Transportation of the Deceased Person

Family and friends are a resource for transportation costs. Transportation is limited to the boundaries of the province except for the cities of Flin Flon and Lloydminster. Transportation costs for a funeral and burial to a location other than the municipality of residence at the time of death may be provided with prior approval (e.g., client passes away in hospital in a location other than his/her municipality of residence). Funds for costs to transport the deceased to a location other than that of the funeral, for burial, are not provided.

If authorized by a Coroner, fees related to the transportation of a body from the scene of death to a hospital (for autopsy) or to a holding facility (e.g., morgue, funeral home) are paid by the Office of the Chief Coroner in accordance with *The Coroners Regulations, 2000*. This would include paying for the cost related to the transportation of the body from the hospital or holding facility back to the scene of death. Charges for autopsies requested by the next-of-kin are not provided through SIS.

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 19 | Legislative Authority |
| Funerals | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 4-15 |

Ministry as the Decision Maker

In the rare instance when the Minister appoints a decision maker with respect to *The Funeral and Cremation Services Act*, no payments for ceremonial ritual/service or cremation shall be authorized (remains must be buried intact). The Ministry will apply for the CPP Death Benefit.

Verification/Documentation Requirements

| Policy | Verification/Documentation |
|--------------------|--|
| 19.1 – Eligibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funeral Application • Income and asset documentation, as required |
| 19.2 – Amount | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invoice from funeral home • Invoice from cemetery (grave liners, opening/closing) |

Delegation of Authority

| The required delegate must indicate approval. | |
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| Policy | Approval Required |
| 19.1 - Funeral expenses application after 90 days | Supervisor |

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 20 | Legislative Authority |
| Supplementary Health | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 4-17 |

Supplementary Health

Intent

This chapter outlines requirements for SIS applicants to be nominated for Supplementary Health benefits through the Ministry of Health.

Policy

The Ministry will nominate SIS clients and household members for Supplementary Health benefits. The Ministry may also nominate SIS applicants who are not eligible for SIS benefits but have declared high health related costs.

The Ministry will not provide funds for medical and therapeutic drugs whether or not they are provided through the Ministry of Health.

20.1 Cancellation of Supplementary Health Services

If a client is no longer eligible to receive SIS benefits, their nomination for Supplementary Health Benefits will be withdrawn.

20.2 Continued Eligibility for Supplementary Health Services

Clients and eligible household members will continue to be eligible to receive Supplementary Health Services for a period of 6 months after they no are longer eligible to receive SIS benefits if they have left SIS for employment.

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 21 | Legislative Authority |
| Reconsiderations and Appeals | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 3-12, 3-13 and 3-14 |

Reconsiderations and Appeals

Intent

This chapter outlines the process for a client to request a reconsideration of a Ministry decision affecting their SIS benefits.

Policy

Clients have the right to appeal Ministry decisions affecting their eligibility for SIS benefits and/or their SIS benefits levels.

The Ministry and/or the client has the right to appeal a decision made by the Regional Appeal Committee (RAC).

After receiving a notification of a decision from the Ministry, individuals have 15 calendar days to appeal the decision. Appeals are made, in writing- either through a letter or e-mail, to the Manager, Service Delivery.

Individuals may appeal only in these circumstances:

- they were not allowed to apply or reapply for income support;
- a decision about their application was not processed within a reasonable time;
- their application for income support was denied;
- their SIS benefits were cancelled, withheld or changed;
- they were assessed an overpayment/recovery; or
- they disagree with the amount of SIS benefits.

Appeals may be heard in person (with the individual in attendance), by teleconference or as determined by the Manager and Committee/Appeal Board Chairperson. Individuals who are not able to participate in a hearing may have someone do so on their behalf.

Individuals may withdraw an appeal verbally or in writing.

Clients/applicants may request temporary SIS benefits pending a Regional Appeal Committee or Social Services Appeal Board hearing. SIS benefits may be provided until the appeal is concluded except when the client/applicant has combined assets and income more than the total of SIS benefits that would be available to that household, or the applicant is ineligible under Chapter 5.2. Expenses related to preparation of an appeal or attendance at a hearing are not provided.

21.1 Level One - Reconsideration – Regulations Section 3-12

Individuals who are not satisfied with a decision may ask the Ministry to reconsider it within 15 calendar days of being notified. The Manager, Service Delivery must reconsider this request within 7 calendar days of receiving it. If the Manager cannot resolve the issue, then they must schedule a RAC hearing to review the matter within 15 calendar days of the reconsideration decision.

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 21 | Legislative Authority |
| Reconsiderations and Appeals | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 3-12, 3-13 and 3-14 |

21.2 Level Two – Appeal to Regional Appeal Committee – Regulations Section 3-13

The RAC must hear the appeal within 15 calendar days from the date they receive the request. Decisions made in writing by the RAC post hearing are binding unless overturned by the Social Services Appeal Board (SSAB).

21.3 Level Three – Appeal to Social Services Appeal Board - Regulations Section 3-14

If the client or Ministry is dissatisfied with the decision of the RAC, then either can appeal the decision to the SSAB within 15 days of the written RAC’s decision. The decision of the SSAB is final and binding unless subsequently overturned by the Court of Queen’s Bench on matters of law.

Delegation of Authority

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|--|--------------------------|
| The required delegate must indicate approval of the verbal withdrawal. | |
| Policy | Approval Required |
| 21 – Verbal Withdrawal of Appeal | Supervisor |

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 22 | Legislative Authority |
| Trustees | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 3-6 |

Trustees

Intent

This chapter outlines the supports a SIS client can access to help them manage their benefits when other options have been exhausted and/or other supports are not sufficient.

Policy

The Ministry may refer a client to trusteeship services after all other options for support are deemed insufficient and that the client is not able to manage their own benefits

The Ministry will review the need for trusteeship services at least annually or according to the client's need with the purpose of ensuring the client will be able to eventually independently manage their own affairs.

There are two types of trustees the Ministry may consider:

- Personal Trustee (PT) – are non-Ministry funded arrangements the Ministry makes with a PT (e.g. family, friend or another person); or
- CBO Trustee – are part of contracted services through a community-based organization (CBO).

PTs and CBO Trustees (or 'trustees') will sign agreements with the Ministry and report on how they spend a client's benefits. They must participate in a review of services at the request of the Ministry.

The Public Guardian and Trustee (PGT) acts as a trustee if a person has been certified incompetent under *The Adult Guardianship and Co-decision Making Act*. They become placed under the jurisdiction of the PGT. The Ministry does not require the PGT to sign an agreement nor report on how they spend a client's benefits. The Ministry does not review PGT services.

22.1 – Designation of a Trustee - Regulations Section 3-6

A supervisor must approve the appointment of, and the agreement entered into with a trustee.

The Ministry advises trustees and recipients in writing of the appointment and the following trustee responsibilities:

- The responsibility to notify the Ministry of changes in the recipient's circumstances;
- The responsibility to notify vendors (landlords and utility companies, etc.) of changes to a client's financial circumstances that may affect them;
- The requirement to keep records of and account for benefits. Trustees shall keep all receipts, invoices and canceled cheques until the Ministry grants authority for their destruction or until five (5) years has passed; and

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| The Saskatchewan Income Support Program | |
| Chapter 22 | Legislative Authority |
| Trustees | <i>The Saskatchewan Income Support Program Regulations</i> Section 3-6 |

- The requirement to submit an accounting report upon the Ministry’s request.

Clients have the right to appeal the appointment of a trustee or if they are dissatisfied with a trustee’s services. If there is an appeal, trusteeship continues until the appeal process is complete.

22.2 – Review of Trustee Services- Regulations Section 3-6

The Ministry has the right to audit transactions related to trusteeship and to review the continuing need for trusteeship services.

The Ministry will establish a date for review of trustee accounting and review of service need when signing the agreement with the trustee. The period for trusteeship is always based on the needs of the client and established criteria.

Delegation of Authority

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|--|--------------------------|
| The required delegate must indicate approval of the verbal withdrawal. | |
| Policy | Approval Required |
| 22.1 – Designation of a Trustee | Supervisor |