

SOCIAL SOLIDARITY PROGRAM

The Social Solidarity Program is aimed at people with a severely limited capacity for employment and the members of their families. It is designed to foster recipients' participation in and active contribution to society, with the necessary support.

Recipients under the program are granted a monthly social solidarity benefit. It is made up of a social solidarity allowance and, if applicable, an adjustment for the Québec sales tax, adjustments for dependent children and an amount for any special benefits.

The social solidarity allowance replaces the basic benefit and the allowance for severely limited capacity for employment.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Social Assistance Program is aimed at people whose capacity for employment is not severely limited. It is designed to encourage recipients to engage in activities conducive to job-entry and social and community participation.

Recipients under the program are granted a monthly social assistance benefit. It is made up of a basic benefit and, if applicable, a temporarily limited capacity allowance, an adjustment for the Québec sales tax, adjustments for dependent children and an amount for any special benefits.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information, contact the officer assigned to your file at your local employment centre (CLE) or telephone the Bureau des renseignements et plaintes at the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale at one of the following numbers:

- If you are calling from the Québec City area
418 643-4721
- Elsewhere in Québec, toll-free
1 888 643-4721

www.mess.gouv.qc.ca

PLEASE NOTE

This general information document may not be used for legal purposes (interpretation, etc.) and does not replace the provisions of any act or regulation.



MAIN CHANGES UNDER THE INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY ASSISTANCE ACT

New programs as of January 1, 2007



ANOTHER STEP IN THE BATTLE AGAINST POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY ASSISTANCE ACT

The Individual and Family Assistance Act, adopted in June 2005, flows from the Government Action Plan to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion. It provides for:

- greater flexibility, in order to adapt services to the needs of individuals and families
- an approach based on encouragement, assistance and support

Two of the programs deployed by virtue of the new Act are designed to provide last-resort financial assistance for individuals and families whose income is insufficient to meet their needs. The Social Solidarity Program and the Social Assistance Program, which replace the Employment-Assistance Program, come into force on January 1, 2007.

Other measures under the Act will be announced over the coming months.

The following provisions apply only to recipients
under the Social Solidarity Program
(i.e., recipients with a severely limited capacity for employment)

**GLOBAL EXEMPTION APPLICABLE
TO PROPERTY AND LIQUID ASSETS**

As of January 1, 2007, certain property and liquid assets are exempt for benefit-calculation purposes, up to a total value of \$130,000. An extra exemption of \$1,000 is added for each year during which the recipient has owned and occupied his or her residence. The main types of property and liquid assets covered by the exemption are as follows:

- immovable property (residence, working farm, cottage, land, etc.)
- certain types of liquid assets (registered retirement savings plan, registered education savings plan, etc.)
- property and liquid assets received as an inheritance (this exemption applies only if the property and liquid assets are received during a month in which the person is a recipient under the program)

If the value of the above property and liquid assets is higher than the total exemption, 2% of the excess amount is taken into account for benefit-calculation purposes, resulting in a lower benefit.

SPECIAL BENEFITS

Eyeglasses, lenses and moving expenses incurred for health reasons

As of January 1, 2007, special benefits for the above expenses may be granted to an adult, his or her spouse or his or her children eligible under the Social Solidarity Program, even if the recipient has not received benefits for six consecutive months.

Deadline for applying for a special benefit to reimburse expenses

As of January 1, 2007, in almost all cases, applications for reimbursements must be filed within 30 days following the date on which the goods or services were provided, or as soon as possible if the person can show that he or she was unable to file the application by the deadline. The deadline is 90 days in the case of transportation by ambulance.

The following provisions apply to recipients
under the Social Solidarity Program
and the **Social Assistance Program**

PROPERTY

The rules governing certain property and assets have been made more flexible:

Uninhabited residence

The period during which the net value of an uninhabited residence may be excluded for benefit-calculation purposes has been increased from one to two years if the recipient does not live in the residence for health reasons, due to a separation, because he or she is sheltered or for certain other reasons.

Indemnity received further to the loss of movable property

In the case of an indemnity paid as compensation for movable property following a fire or other disaster, the deadline for using the indemnity has been extended from 45 to 90 days following receipt of the sum.

In addition, there is no longer any obligation to use the indemnity to repair or replace the movable property. The sum may be used for other purposes, depending on the person's needs.

Indemnity received further to the loss of immovable property

In the case of an indemnity paid as compensation for immovable property following an expropriation or a fire or other disaster, the principle from the indemnity may be used either to repair or replace the property. It may not, however, be used for other purposes.

Exemption for an automobile

As of January 1, 2007, the exemption for an automobile is increased from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

LIQUID ASSETS

As of January 1, 2007, the exemption for amounts such as money accumulated in a retirement investment instrument (e.g., a registered retirement savings plan) also applies to amounts held in a registered education savings plan.