

FAMILY SERVICES AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS CIRCULAR

Date: July 6, 2011

CIRCULAR NUMBER: EIA #2011-43

Alternate Program(s):

To: Community Social Service Supervisors/Program Managers

Subject: **EIA Administrative Policy Manual Update – Liquid Assets**

Reference: Section 6.7.1 Annual Review
Section 6.8.4 Confirmation and Consideration of Liquid Assets
Section 11.1.2 Financial Eligibility
Section 14.3.2 Allowable Liquid Assets

Type: Policy Replaces #1992-11 and 2007-22
 Procedure
 Rate
 Information Only

Effective Date January 2009

This circular is to inform Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) staff that changes have been made to the *EIA Regulation* and EIA Administrative Manual with respect to liquid asset exemption levels available to applicants and participants.

The increase to EIA liquid asset exemption levels came into effect January 2009 as part of the Manitoba Saves! asset building options included under the Rewarding Work strategy. This increase allows EIA applicants and participants to have modest savings without their income assistance benefits being affected.

Section 8(1)(a)(iv) of the *EIA Regulation* has been amended to exempt from financial consideration liquid assets of up to \$4,000 per person, to a maximum of \$16,000 per household for all case categories.

Note: updates to the liquid asset amounts identified in *EIA Regulation* 8.1(14) are still pending.

The following sections of the EIA Administrative Manual have also been updated to reflect these liquid asset level changes and how they are to be applied to both EIA applicants and participants:

Section 6.7.1 – Annual Review - references the new liquid asset levels that are used to determine the point at which the files of EIA participants under the care of the Public Trustee are to be closed where accumulated savings exceed the liquid asset exemption level.

Section 6.8.4 – Confirmation and Consideration of Liquid Assets: updates liquid asset exemption levels used to establish financial eligibility for ongoing income assistance or for persons with verified employment who are asking for assistance until their first full pay (i.e. aid to pay).

Section 11.1.2 – Financial Eligibility: has been deleted as liquid asset level amounts are consistent across all case categories.

Section 14.3.2 – Allowable Liquid Assets: has been updated to provide direction on the application of liquid asset exemption levels for cases with two or more persons. It also incorporates the consideration of cash surrender amounts available from life insurance, pension, Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSP's) and funeral plans under the new liquid asset exemption levels.

As per longstanding policy, staff are to ensure that participants are aware of their responsibility to report on amounts contained under their respective liquid asset exemptions (typically through the Annual Review process), as well as clearly advise that amounts that exceed liquid asset exemption levels are to be treated as a financial resource that may impact their monthly benefits.

Dave Fisher, Executive Director
Employment and Income Assistance Programs

Michelle Dubik, Executive Director
Winnipeg Services, Community Service Delivery

Debbie Besant, Executive Director
Rural and Northern Services, Community Service Delivery

cc: Distribution List

Attachment(s): (If applicable).