



Memorandum

Date: September 3, 1997

To: District Directors
Employment and Income Assistance

From: Gerry Schmidt
Executive Director
Client Services
Employment and Income
Assistance
305 - 114 Garry Street

Telephone:

Subject: **Maintenance and Child Support – Pilot Project**

A pilot project is being introduced in Winnipeg to assist new and re-enrolling single parent clients to pursue maintenance and child support. The pilot will begin in September 1997 and will run to March 31, 1998, and may continue thereafter, if it is successful. While the pilot is being implemented only in Winnipeg at this point, some or all of the features of the pilot may be introduced in the other regions of the province at a later date.

The pilot will include providing additional information at the pre-intake orientations to inform clients of the assistance that is available to them to pursue maintenance/child support, as well as to inform them of their options and responsibility to pursue support. At the orientations, clients will be provided with:

- a maintenance/child support fact sheet
- a Family Maintenance Plan form, to be completed for review at intake which identifies their current status with respect to support and steps they will take to obtain or increase support.
- any information sheet on the Child Support Resource Centre. The Centre assists clients with the new Child support Guidelines and to obtain support or to vary existing orders. The Child Support Guidelines only affect clients whose question of support originates from marriage, not common-law situations.

Although some clients may already have support arrangements in place, all new and re-enrolling single parent clients are to be asked to complete the forms to determine their support status. Clients will not be required to complete part three of the Family Maintenance Plan if they already have a reasonable amount of support from the other parent in place. Clients enrolled in the Disable category will not be participating in the pilot at this time.

At intake, staff will review the client's Family Maintenance Plan and make a recommendation whether to waive the pursuit of support. Clients will be advised at the orientations that they should discuss any situations with their counsellor which would make it difficult to pursue support. As is the case now, clients who may be subject to family violence will have their pursuit of support waived, in addition to the other reasons which the pursuit of support is normally waived. Reasons for waiving the pursuit of support are listed on policy manual.

Counsellors will review the Family Maintenance Plan and assist clients to complete their plans and monitor whether the plans have been carried out. In some case, counsellors may assist clients to locate the other parent of the child through access to public information so that support may be pursued. Counsellors will also inform the client of the Child Support Guidelines and, if they have support, whether it is a reasonable amount in relation to guidelines.