



Income Assistance Services for Persons with Disabilities

Contents

What is Services for Persons with Disabilities?	1
Differences Between Income Assistance and SPD	1

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<http://www.dal.ca/faculty/law/dlas/public-legal-education.html>

What is Services for Persons with Disabilities?

The Department of Community Services also offers a collection of programs that are generally referred to as Services for Persons with Disabilities (SPD).

As of June 2012 there is a general SPD policy governing the programs offered under SPD. It can be found here: <http://novascotia.ca/coms/disabilities/SPDProgramPolicy.html>

This policy covers all of the eligibility criteria for SPD programs, amounts for special needs, etc...

A complete list of all the programs offered under the umbrella of SPD can be found here: <http://novascotia.ca/coms/disabilities/index.html>

The SPD program is governed by the *Social Assistance Act*.

The programs are offered to Nova Scotians with various mental, intellectual and physical disabilities. They focus primarily on providing residential options for people with disabilities (i.e. Residential Care Facilities, Small Option Homes and Group Homes), offering support to families caring for persons with disabilities (i.e. respite care) and providing minimal assistance with activities of daily living for people living at home.

Depending on their living situation SPD participants may be in receipt of a personal and shelter allowance from IA. SPD participants are also eligible for special needs.

Despite the legislative authority for SPD being found in the *Social Assistance Act*, appeals of SPD decisions are governed by the *ESIA* and the *Assistance Appeal Regulations*.

Accordingly the appeal process for an SPD participant will be the same as that for an IA recipient.

Differences Between Income Assistance and SPD

SPD Basic and Special Needs Policy 9.0, 7.4 & 7.4.2; SPD Financial Eligibility Policy 5.5.4.

In general, SPD policies are reflective of what we have already covered regarding *ESIA*. Some key differences to be aware of are as follows:

- i. SPD participants are eligible for an additional amount of money called a 'comfort allowance'. The comfort allowance is currently \$115.00 per month;
- ii. SPD participants who are employed can earn up to \$300.00 per month without it affecting their monthly entitlement. If they earn over \$300.00 per month it is charged against their monthly entitlement at 70%;
- iii. SPD participants are also eligible for some special needs that are unavailable to regular IA recipients – for example occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech pathology;
- iv. SPD participants **are** eligible for up to \$200.00 per month in excess shelter as a special need provided they meet the following criteria:
 - v. A participant requires barrier free shelter;
 - vi. The cost of relocating the participant exceeds the annual rent increase;

- vii. A participant's approved support plan has identified elements related to shelter that promote independence and reduce long term SPD support costs (i.e. reducing transportation costs, staffing, etc...); **or**
- viii. A participant cannot secure housing in a safe location that allows them to safely access the community or in a location that allows them to pursue their support plan goals.

Acknowledgement

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Disclaimer

This document contains general legal information and not legal advice. **If you need advice about a specific legal problem then you should contact a lawyer.** If you will have difficulty affording a lawyer then you should contact [Nova Scotia Legal Aid](#) or [the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia's lawyer referral service](#).

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