

Your Rights

When you are applying for BC Employment and Assistance, you have the following rights:

- » To apply for assistance when you believe you are in need.
- » To have the information and assistance you need to complete your application.
- » To know what personal information is collected about you and to have the chance to correct this information if it is wrong.
- » To have your personal information protected, in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
- » To make a complaint if you believe your personal information is not collected, used or disclosed appropriately.
- » To have your eligibility determined on the basis of verified evidence.
- » To receive all assistance and services to which you are entitled and, depending on availability, access to programs that will help you find work quickly.
- » To be informed of your responsibilities to apply for and receive other sources of assistance.
- » To be informed about processes and decisions affecting you.
- » To appeal a decision that results in a refusal, reduction or discontinuance of your assistance, in most cases.
- » To be treated without discrimination, including discrimination based on race, gender, religion, political affiliation, sexual orientation or other protected grounds.
- » To receive courteous, respectful, efficient and fair service. To have service quality complaints addressed in an appropriate and timely manner.

For More Information

If you believe your rights have not been respected, speak to the supervisor at the nearest Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation office by calling:

1-866-866-0800

Or visit the ministry web site at:

www.sdsi.gov.bc.ca

Concerns about privacy can also be taken to the Information and Privacy Office at: **250-387-3128**.

The provincial Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner may also look into complaints about ministry collection, use or disclosure of personal information. The number to call is:

- » Victoria: **250-387-5629**
- » Vancouver: **604-660-2421**
- » Elsewhere in British Columbia: **1-800-663-7867**
and ask to be transferred toll free to the Victoria number.



Your Responsibilities and Rights



Ministry of
Social Development
and Social Innovation

Through BC Employment and Assistance, the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation provides services that help people find sustainable employment and assist individuals and families in need.

Personal responsibility and active participation are the key principles of BC Employment and Assistance. Those individuals who are reasonably able to work are expected to complete a work search when applying for income assistance. Ministry clients who are expected to work are required to complete an Employment Plan indicating they will seek work or participate in employment programs.

The Employment Program of BC (EPBC) services are available to any individual who is unemployed and eligible to work in BC. Services are integrated, responsive, inclusive and accessible with a flexible menu of services and supports that are individualized, based on client eligibility and needs.

Assistance is also available to those in need who are not expected to gain independence through employment.



Government Responsibilities

The Government of British Columbia is responsible for ensuring that assistance is provided only to people who are eligible. In order to apply for and continue receiving assistance, you must provide documentation and information about you and your family. The ministry has the legal responsibility and authority to verify that information. Personal information can be collected, used or shared under the authority of ministry legislation. Use of this information is protected by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.



Your Responsibilities

If you intend to apply for assistance or are currently receiving assistance, you have the following responsibilities:

- » To actively seek work and complete an orientation session during the work search period prior to your application interview date, unless exempt. The length of the work search period is:
 - five-weeks if you have **never** received income assistance or disability assistance before
 - three-weeks if you have received income assistance or disability assistance before
- » To pursue any other income to which you may be entitled, including employment insurance benefits, workers' compensation benefits, union or lodge benefits, pensions, veterans' benefits, or family maintenance payments.
- » To actively seek work if you are employable and, if required by the ministry, take part in employment and/or training programs. You must be available for any job you are able to do.
- » To have, or promptly apply for, a Social Insurance Number, and to provide appropriate identification for yourself and other family members.
- » To ensure that all the information you provide is true and complete. Ministry staff verifies information on application forms and monthly cheque stubs. A deliberately false statement on either form can lead to disqualification or prosecution.
- » To inform the ministry of any change in circumstances that may alter the amount or type of assistance for which you are eligible.
- » To take personal responsibility for becoming self-supporting as quickly as possible.