



August 27, 2009

Message to Community Organizations

Re: Changes to Community Gaming Grant Program

I am writing to advise community organizations in British Columbia of a number of changes to the provincial government's community gaming grant program, which take effect immediately.

The Province is facing unprecedented global economic challenges that have required difficult decisions. It is critical that core services and priorities continue to be funded. And, as with previous years, demand for community gaming grants exceeds the amount of funding available.

As such, the priority for 2009/10 grants will be:

- Programs that support low income and disabled British Columbians;
- Programs that provide food, shelter and support to at risk individuals;
- Programs that support community health services;
- Programs that fund nutritional and similar programs in schools for underprivileged children;
- Public safety programs;
- A limited number of arts and culture activities;
- Community education programs, such as daycares and preschools;
- Public community facilities like community halls and recreation facilities;
- Youth and disabled sports; and
- Non-sport youth groups, such as scouts and cadets.

For 2009/10, several programs previously funded through other areas of government, such as the CommunityLINK program that provides nutritional and other programs in schools for underprivileged children and programs supported by the B.C. Arts Council, will be funded by the community gaming grant program. This will allow important programs for children to continue, as well as ensure ongoing support for British Columbia's vibrant arts and culture community.

Government will be able to fully support some of the highest priority organizations listed above. Other groups will get smaller grants this year and some groups will not receive a grant at all. Examples of sectors that will not receive additional funding this year include environmental organizations, adult sports groups, alumni associations, and a number of arts and culture organizations. In addition, major capital project grants and playground grants will not be available.

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Three year grants will not be offered this year and organizations with existing second or third year grants will have to reapply for funding. Eligibility decisions for grants and grant amounts are final and reconsideration or review of those decisions will not be available.

These are significant shifts in the gaming grant program and they will impact some community organizations this year. We remain steadfast in our commitment to help build strong communities through the community gaming grant program while we contend with these challenging economic times.

Rich Coleman
Minister