

Are there any exemptions to the deduction?

The ministry may temporarily suspend the deduction in some circumstances, such as when a person is residing in Long Term Care, their health is in danger or if they are at risk of homelessness. Debt will be recovered at the standard minimum amount if a client is eligible for an exemption.

Can a decision to apply the deduction and the amount of the deduction be reconsidered?

The deduction is stipulated in the *BC Employment and Assistance Act* and *BC Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act* and, therefore, a person can ask to have the decision reconsidered.

For More Information

Visit the government website at:

www.gov.bc.ca/sdpr

Or call the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction toll-free:

1-866-866-0800

To report fraud:

- » Fill out a Fraud Allegation Reporting Form online at www.reportfraud.gov.bc.ca/
- or
- » Call the Prevention and Loss Management Services Office at 1-866-217-1117, Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to speak directly with a ministry representative or after hours to leave a voicemail message.



Fraud and Consequences



Ministry of
Social Development
and Poverty Reduction

The BC Employment and Assistance Program provides temporary help to British Columbians who can work and long-term assistance to those who, through disability or other barriers, have a more difficult time working.

The Prevention and Loss Management Services (PLMS) Branch is dedicated to preserving the integrity of the BC Employment and Assistance Program. To ensure that assistance is paid only to those who are eligible, PLMS develops and implements prevention, compliance and enforcement initiatives, as well as strategies and programs aimed at reducing overpayments and deterring fraud.

What is fraud?

“Fraud” means providing information that a person knows is false or misleading in order to receive assistance that the person is not eligible to receive.

Those who provide false or misleading information will be required to repay assistance that they were not eligible to receive, and may face:

- » civil court proceedings to recover the assistance, or
- » charges of fraud under the *Criminal Code of Canada*, the *BC Employment and Assistance Act* or the *BC Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*

What can happen next?

If there is a fraud conviction under the Criminal Code, a person:

- » may receive a criminal record,
- » may be subject to court-imposed consequences such as a restitution order, probation or incarceration, and
- » will be required to repay the assistance.

If there is a fraud conviction under a provincial Act, the individual:

- » may be subject to court-imposed consequences, and
- » will be required to repay the assistance.

How will repayment be taken?

Repayment will be a monthly deduction of \$100 for each convicted person in the family unit. The ministry may also seek to recover debts through civil courts.

How long does the deduction last?

If a person is convicted under the Criminal Code, the monthly deduction will be applied to their ongoing assistance until the total amount deducted equals the amount of their outstanding fraud debt.

If a person is convicted under a provincial Act, the deduction will be applied:

- » For a first conviction, 12 consecutive months or until the amount of their fraud debt is reached
- » For a second conviction, 24 consecutive months or until the amount of their fraud debt is reached.
- » For a third or subsequent conviction, until the amount of their fraud debt is reached

For first and second convictions, once the periods of 12 or 24 consecutive months of the deduction have concluded, any remaining debt will still be repayable to the ministry, but will be recovered at the standard minimum amount.

How much would the deduction be?

Under the regulations, the monthly amount will be:

- » \$100 a month if only one person is convicted of fraud
- » \$200 a month if both persons are convicted of fraud