

# Individual Case Management

## Overview

February 28, 2006

Front line staff translate BC Employment and Assistance legislation, regulations, and policy into practice. Case management is primarily the responsibility of the Employment and Assistance Worker (EAW).

EAWs are responsible for overall management of individual clients' cases, which includes initiating and reviewing employment plans, assistance reviews, file closure, notifying clients about changes in eligibility, conducting home visits, residency verifications, and measures to detect and prevent fraud. Disability Consultants (DC) and contracted service providers may also have a role in managing the provision of employment-related supports. Other HSD staff manage the provision of other ministry services, such as family maintenance.

EAWs are responsible for assisting clients to reach their full social and economic potential. They must balance the two inter-related roles of determining eligibility and supporting clients to employment.

Contracted services support the efforts of the HSD case manager in helping clients become independent of assistance through sustainable employment.

## Acts and Regulations

### *Employment and Assistance Act*

Section 1, Interpretation

[<http://www.EIA.gov.bc.ca/PUBLICAT/VOL1/Part3/3-2.htm#section1>]

Section 10, Information and verification

[<http://www.EIA.gov.bc.ca/PUBLICAT/VOL1/Part3/3-2.htm#section10>]

Section 34, Delegation of minister's powers and duties

[<http://www.EIA.gov.bc.ca/PUBLICAT/VOL1/Part3/3-2.htm#section34>]

### **Employment and Assistance Regulation**

Section 1, Definitions

[[http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/reg/E/263\\_2002.htm#section1](http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/reg/E/263_2002.htm#section1)]

Section 28, Amount of income assistance

[<http://www.EIA.gov.bc.ca/PUBLICAT/VOL1/Part3/3-3.htm#28>]

Section 34, Requirement for eligibility audit

[<http://www.EIA.gov.bc.ca/PUBLICAT/VOL1/Part3/3-3.htm#34>]

### ***Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act***

Section 1, Interpretation

[<http://www.EIA.gov.bc.ca/PUBLICAT/VOL1/Part3/3-4.htm#section1>]

Section 10, Information and verification

[<http://www.EIA.gov.bc.ca/PUBLICAT/VOL1/Part3/3-4.htm#section10>]

Section 25, Delegation of minister's powers and duties

[<http://www.eia.gov.bc.ca/PUBLICAT/VOL1/Part3/3-4.htm#section25>]

### **Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Regulation**

Section 1, Definitions

[[http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/reg/E/265\\_2002.htm#section1](http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/reg/E/265_2002.htm#section1)]

Section 24, Amount of disability assistance

[<http://www.eia.gov.bc.ca/PUBLICAT/VOL1/Part3/3-5.htm#24>]

Section 30, Requirement for eligibility audit

[<http://www.eia.gov.bc.ca/PUBLICAT/VOL1/Part3/3-5.htm#30>]

## **Definitions**

**Applicant**

**Assistance**

**Assistance month**

**BF**

**Case manager**

**Client Employability Profile**

**Employability Screen**

**Employment Plan (EP)**

**Family unit**

## **Fraud Allegation and Reporting System (FARS)**

**Home visit**

**Residency verification**

## **Policy**

### ***MHSD Case Management Principles***

December 1, 2003

Case management in the ministry embodies four principles:

- focus on employment and independence
- focus on personal responsibility
- engage clients quickly in services and activities toward employment and independence
- convey high expectations for success

#### **Employment and Independence**

All programs, staff, interaction with clients, sequencing of activities, referrals, and procedures should reflect a work-first approach.

#### **Personal Responsibility**

Staff present the program options and client supports in alignment with the BCEA principles and objectives. Clients choose to participate or not and are informed early about the consequences [see Related Links - Sanctions] of not participating in programs and activities. Consequences are applied fairly and consistently as appropriate through regular monitoring.

#### **Engage Clients Quickly**

All clients with employment-related obligations have an *Employment Plan*. *Case managers* are in frequent contact with clients and coordinate services for seamless delivery.

#### **High Expectations for Success**

Attainable employment and independence plans are the building blocks of sustainable employment. Case managers focus and build on clients' strengths and capabilities to assist them to achieve independence or increase employability.

## ***Roles***

December 1, 2003

EAWs balance the two inter-related roles of facilitating employment and determining eligibility.

The role of facilitating employment is to:

- guide clients as they progress through stages of employment preparation while receiving *assistance*
- assist clients to capitalize on their capabilities
- draw on their understanding of work-finding strategies, employment and community resources to assess and monitor client progress
- focus on the ministry's mission and the objectives of the BCEA program

The role of determining eligibility is to:

- enforce program mandates
- determine and verify initial and on-going eligibility
- rely on legislation, regulation, and policy to guide and make the best decisions
- monitor and re-assess for continued compliance

## ***Case Management Responsibilities***

July 1, 2006

EAWs are the overall *case managers* of a client's *assistance* case. Other ministry staff may assume a management role in the provision of related programs and services to a client, for example, family maintenance, and employment planning. Where clients are referred to or engaged in a ministry funded employment or employability program, the contracted service provider manages the employment or independence aspects of the case.

The EAW is responsible for managing the client's overall case, which includes:

- completing the *Employability Screen* at the application interview
- determining eligibility for *assistance* and authorizing payments in accordance with legislation and ministry policies
- completing and ensuring compliance with an *Employment Plan*

- determining if the client has employment-related obligations
- conducting the *Client Employability Profile*
- assisting clients to explore other possible sources of income
- ensuring clients understand the terms and conditions of receiving assistance
- positively marketing the expected outcome of employment and the services designed to assist in achieving employment
- ensuring clients understand their referral to a program or service and the consequences of not following through or participating in the program
- imposing appropriate sanctions where there is non-compliance with an Employment Plan
- managing any changes or revisions to the Employment Plan
- explaining the role of contracted service providers, including the provision of information to HSD staff for monitoring purposes
- facilitating access to other required services, for example, child care subsidy, family maintenance, and referral to other resources
- receiving information from contracted service providers about clients' attendance and participation
- monitoring employment placements and determining if the client will receive net income in excess of assistance rates prior to cheque issue

The following table outlines the case management responsibilities of HSD staff and contracted service provider staff:

**Table: Case Management Responsibility**

R = Responsible

C = Consultation (may occur but is not necessarily mandatory)

Case Function	HSD Staff	Contracted Provider
Conduct intake interview, verify information & determine eligibility	R	
Complete <i>Employment Screen</i>	R	
Complete <i>Client Employability Profile</i>	R	C
Complete <i>Employment Plan</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• set out the terms &amp; conditions of assistance</li> </ul>	R	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>list employment program activities &amp; expectations</li> </ul>	R	C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify other activities &amp; expectations</li> </ul>	R	C
Revise Employment Plan	R	C
Monitor Client Case: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide attendance &amp; participation information</li> <li>provide employment &amp; earnings information</li> <li>review financial eligibility</li> <li>monitor client's job search (for clients not referred to or engaged in ministry-funded programs)</li> </ul>	R R R R	R R
Assess Compliance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>impose consequences</li> </ul>	R	C

## Staff Assisting Clients

September 29, 2009

In dealing with all clients, staff are expected to provide courteous, professional, and consistent services that apply best practices, ministry standards and values.

Although it is a client's responsibility to provide all information and documents necessary to demonstrate eligibility for assistance, staff will assist a client when the client requires or requests assistance. Staff may also assist a client who requires help in obtaining documents and/or may provide information or requests in writing when required or requested by a client.

Staff must review each case individually to determine how to assist or provide appropriate accommodation, which may vary depending on the individual circumstances. Staff must be proactive and make reasonable inquiries in determining whether it may be appropriate to assist the client or provide accommodation.

[For more information, including clients requiring assistance, see Policy – Duty to Accommodate.]

Examples of how staff may assist clients include but are not limited to:

### Obtaining documents

- With the client's permission, staff may contact organizations such as banks, employers, landlords, or insurance brokers and request that they send documents directly to the ministry.

- Staff can provide a client with a list of addresses and/or telephone numbers of agencies where documents may be obtained.
- Staff will support clients to seek the assistance of advocates or community agencies that can help clients, especially if they are identified to have barriers such as mental or physical disabilities or language difficulties.
- Staff may extend deadlines if there is a non-legislated timeframe limit and additional time is required or requested in providing information.

[For information on obtaining and providing required information, see Related Links – Verification – Policy – Client Responsibility.] [\\*NEW RELATED LINK\\*](#)

### **Providing information or requests in writing**

- When a client asks for a written response and/or requests information in writing, staff will provide the response or information in writing.
- Where a client asks for the authority upon which a decision or request from the ministry is based to be provided in writing, the ministry will respond in writing. For example, when a client asks for a written explanation why the ministry is requesting certain information in order to assess the client's eligibility for assistance, staff will provide a written explanation for the ministry's request. (i.e. Section 10 of *Employment and Assistance Act*).
- In addition, staff may provide clients with information by way of forms, information cards, pamphlets and correspondence which may be of assistance in clarifying information and assist a client in comprehending and processing the information.

[For Information/Documentation Checklist (HSD3034) – see Forms and Letters.]  
[\\*NEW FORMS AND LETTERS LINK\\*](#)

### **Duty to Accommodate**

September 29, 2009

The British Columbia *Human Rights Code* (the Code) protects British Columbians from discrimination. The Code prevails over ministry policy and practice, as well as other legislation. The ministry is committed to providing an environment that is inclusive and does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital or family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, age (19 years and over), or other grounds protected under the Code.

Discrimination is contrary to the standards and values of the ministry. The ministry strives to abide by the Code in all activities and in particular the provision of services to clients. The ministry is committed to providing accommodation to clients for needs related to the grounds protected under the Code (for example, accommodating the needs of a client with disabilities).

Through its staff, the ministry has a legal duty to accommodate individual needs to the point of undue hardship where the need is based on a protected ground in the Code, as is consistent with current human rights law. Undue hardship in this context means the ministry may be excused from this obligation only where it has a reasonable justification, made in good faith, for not accommodating an individual's needs. Generally speaking, issues of cost, administrative difficulty or inconvenience will not be sufficient to excuse the ministry's duty to accommodate the individual needs. Staff must review each case individually to determine the appropriate accommodation, which may vary depending on the individual circumstances.

The nature and extent of the accommodation will depend on the particular circumstances in which the need arises. To facilitate a need for accommodation, both the client in need of accommodation and the ministry have a shared responsibility to work together towards reasonable solutions. However, the ministry recognizes that some clients may not expressly communicate the need for accommodation or may not want to self-identify. Staff must be proactive and make reasonable inquiries in determining whether it may be appropriate to offer accommodation.

[For more information, see Procedures – Duty to Accommodate.]

## ***Eligibility Review***

April 3, 2006 {PRIVATE "TYPE=PICT;ALT="}[]

Eligibility reviews are reviews of the client's situation that focus on financial eligibility and a discussion about time limits. They should include discussion about the client's employment situation. Eligibility reviews are conducted at least once per year and are a major aspect of HSD individual case management. [For more information, see Related Links - Eligibility Review.]

Prevention and Loss Management Services Branch Investigative Officers (IO) also conduct compliance reviews as part of the ministry's loss management strategy. IO's review current and past eligibility, gather additional information and, if necessary, adjust the amount of assistance. They may also identify and calculate overpayments, provide notification to clients and record debt. These reviews are generated by data matching, fraud allegations and the File Review and Distribution (FRD) system. [For more information, see Related Links – Loss Management – Referral for PLMS Review or Investigation].

## ***File Closure***

February 9, 2009

Eligibility for *assistance* is determined on a month by month basis. Files should be manually closed in a timely way when there is no eligibility for assistance (see Manual File Closure). Where no assistance has been issued for two or six *assistance months*, MIS is programmed to close the file (see Two-Month File Closure and Six-Month File Closure).

Once a file has been closed (unless closed in error), a new application process is required, which includes the three-week work search. [For more information, see Related Links - Three-Week Work Search or BC Employment and Assistance Application – Stage 1.]

## **File Closure - Information for Staff**

February 9, 2009

For information of File Closure: Close/No Case Made Reason Codes, Two-Month File Closure and Six-Month File Closure, see Systems Instructions.

## **Reasonable Attempts Prior to Cheque Signalling**

September 29, 2009

To be eligible for income assistance, clients must continue to satisfy the conditions of eligibility. In many cases where eligibility issues arise, a client may be required to provide information or documentation before further assistance can be issued. Eligibility issues may result from but are not limited to a change in family status, change in income or employment status.

Examples of some common eligibility issues are:

- Shelter receipts/confirmation
- Verification of income
- Compliance issue with Employment Plan

Where additional information or documentation is required to establish or confirm eligibility, staff are expected to make reasonable attempts to contact a client, either by telephone or in writing. Staff must document client contact and staff actions.

When all other attempts to reach a client have failed and eligibility for assistance cannot be determined, a client's cheque may be signalled. Staff should attempt to resolve signals before cheque issue. If the ministry is unable to receive the necessary information or documentation to resolve the eligibility issue, assistance may be withheld until the information is received in order to determine eligibility.

Cheque signalling and withholding of assistance are only permitted where eligibility is in question.

[For more information, see Procedures – Reasonable Steps Prior to Cheque Signalling.]

## ***Notification of Change in Eligibility***

December 1, 2003

An unexpected change to a client's monthly *assistance* cheque or supplements, for example, as a result of a recapture, other income, Canada Pension Plan, or Employment Insurance, must be communicated to a client at the time of that change or in advance of the next assistance cheque. The reason for the decision or change must be clearly communicated as well as the client's right to a reconsideration of that decision.

Where the notification is in writing, a copy of the letter will be kept on the client's file. If the notification is made in person or by phone, the client contact must be recorded on the electronic record. This record will include the reason for the change, and note that the change, reason and appeal options have been discussed with the client.

## ***Interpretation Services for Clients with Language Barriers***

June 26, 2009

For clients with language barriers who are unable to comprehend or communicate through written or spoken English, the ministry can provide access to contracted interpretation services by telephone and, on a case-by-case basis, in person.

Ministry staff are expected to assess clients for comprehension while conducting ministry business. Upon a client's request or when it is identified that the client is unable to comprehend what is being communicated due to a language barrier, the ministry must offer the client a ministry contracted professional interpretation service.

The ministry contracts with professionally trained interpreters who are familiar with ministry programs and procedures. The use of the ministry contracted professional interpretation services is preferred. However, in cases where appropriate services are not available or the client declines the interpreter offered by the ministry, the client is permitted to use an interpreter of their choice.

## ***Home Visits***

February 28, 2006

A *home visit* means an official visit by a ministry employee to a client's residence, for the purpose of providing *assistance* pursuant to EA and EAPWD legislation. Home visits may involve entering the client's residence for the purpose of providing service or assistance. Prior notification must be given to clients for all home visits, regardless of the reason.

Home visits are used, typically by EAWs to:

- offer clients access to programs and services
- make referrals to employment programs
- facilitate an application for assistance for those who are ill or homebound

Wherever possible, staff will make a specific appointment to conduct a home visit. When staff routinely make several home visits in a day, it is acceptable to inform clients of the day and time frame for home visits (for example, Thursday afternoon between 1:00 and 4:00 p.m.). All home visits must be logged on the MIS File Information Management (FIM) screen.

Staff are required to follow their local office safety protocols/ procedures when conducting home visits. Staff must not explore other areas of the home or go through personal belongings even if invited to do so. Staff must not interview children with regard to applicant or recipient's circumstances.

### ***Consent to Disclosure of Information***

September 4, 2008

#### Consent to Disclosure of Information - HSD3189

In circumstances where clients wish that third parties communicate with a ministry representative, informed written consent must be given by the client. The HSD3189 form is to be used for this purpose. With this form, the client is able to restrict what information can be disclosed and the period of time covered by the consent. The HSD3189 provides great latitude in what can be discussed. The third party may be a social worker, physician, advocate, parent, etc. In situations where someone has legal authority to act on the behalf of the client, such as power of attorney, they may also provide this consent as outlined on the form.

#### Release of Personal Information - HSD0095

The HSD0095 may be used for release of information purposes, but its use should be restricted to situations where a third party requires specific information regarding type, amounts of and duration on assistance. The HSD0095 is completed by a ministry representative, including only information that is required. The ministry representative determines with the client what information is required. For example, the Property Tax Deferral Program requires only ministry confirmation of the applicant's *designation as a Person with Disabilities*; it does not require the amount of assistance received. The client must sign the HSD0095 prior to the completion by the ministry representative.

### ***Residency Verifications***

February 28, 2006

A *residency verification* means an official visit by a ministry employee to a client's residence, for the purpose of verifying a client's residency. A residency verification does not require staff to enter the client's residence and may be conducted without prior notification to the client.

Residency verifications are conducted by staff to:

- verify a client's residence

Staff may make unexpected residency verifications for the purpose of verifying a client's residency. All residency verifications must be logged on the MIS FIM screen and other screens as appropriate.

Staff are required to follow their local office safety protocols/procedures when conducting residency verifications. Staff must not enter the home under any circumstances, even if invited to do so. Staff must not interview children with regard to the client's circumstances.

## ***Administration of Funds***

February 28, 2006

The required method of issuing *assistance* is by Direct Deposit to the client's bank account. In other situations, assistance may be issued by cheque to the client in-person or by mail. In these situations the client may be managing their own funds independently. In some situations, either initiated by the client or after careful consideration by the EAW, other forms of administration of funds may be put in place, such as:

- a recipient requests payment be made directly to a landlord or utility
- the monthly assistance amount is divided into two or more cheques to be issued at intervals through the assistance month
- the assistance is issued "in kind" by voucher
- a third party administers a client's funds

### **Third-Party Administration**

Clients who have difficulty managing their funds or who may be a risk to themselves or others may have their *assistance* administered by agreement with a third party.

Third-party agreements must not include ministry employees or any person with whom a conflict of interest may arise. If a third party expresses an interest in managing a client's personal and financial affairs, ministry staff will suggest the client consult with a lawyer in order to ensure the client understands how this may affect her/his rights.

Third-party agreements may be made with individuals or agencies on a voluntary basis or fee-for-service basis. If no appropriate individual or agency is prepared to volunteer to

administer a recipient's assistance, a fee-for-service arrangement can be considered. The maximum fee is \$25 per month per family unit. Where an agency or community society proposes to provide administration to a number of recipients, the region may enter into a contract with the agency. In this event, the fee limit may be exceeded, with regional management authority.

In situations where the client is incapable of managing their funds and no one is willing or able to fill this role, the Public Guardian and Trustee service of the Ministry of Attorney General may be considered [see Resources for Clients].

The Supervisor should review cases annually that are being administered by a third party.

### ***Allegations of Fraud or Overpayment of Assistance***

April 3, 2006 {PRIVATE "TYPE=PICT;ALT="}[]

In the day-to-day management of individual cases, EAWs may receive or become aware of information that requires further investigation to determine if fraud or overpayment of assistance is occurring. In minor cases, the EAW reviews the matter directly with the client. Serious cases of suspected or alleged fraud or overpayment of assistance that require in-depth investigation are referred by the EAW to Prevention and Loss Management Services.

[see Related Links - Loss Management – Referral for PLMS Review or Investigation]

## **Authorities and Responsibilities**

### **Authorities**

December 1, 2003

<b>Position</b>	<b>Authority</b>
Business Strategy Manager	Third party administration fee for service contracts
Service Delivery Director	Regional home visit plan

### **Responsibilities**

July 1, 2006

**Supervisor** is responsible for:

- ensuring the required documentation supporting eligibility for *assistance* is maintained on the client's physical file
- ensuring that payments to clients have been made under the correct authority

**Employment and Assistance Worker (EAW)** is responsible for:

- issuing assistance in accordance with legislation, regulations, and ministry policies
- conducting employment plan reviews as required by the timelines of the program or activity
- conducting eligibility reviews (eligibility audits) at least once per year
- referring cases of alleged or suspected fraud or abuse that require in-depth investigation to Prevention and Loss Management Services by submitting the fraud allegation on the Fraud Allegation Reporting (FAR) System.
- managing the day-to-day case administrative decisions
- monitoring employment income and assessing eligibility for assistance
- seeking Supervisor authority and case consultation as required
- closing files in a timely way where there is no eligibility for assistance

## Procedures

### ***Duty to Accommodate***

September 29, 2009

The ministry is committed to providing accommodation to clients for needs related to the grounds protected under the *Human Rights Code*. These procedures assist staff when working with clients who may be in need of or have requested an accommodation. Although in many cases the ministry may do so, the ministry's duty to accommodate does not mean that it must necessarily adopt the specific accommodation requested by the client. The manner in which the client's request can be accommodated will be determined through discussions between the ministry and the client. The parties must work together to reach a reasonable solution or accommodation.

Duty to accommodate can take many forms. Staff must review each case individually to determine the appropriate accommodation, which may vary depending on the individual circumstances. The duty to accommodate may include but is not limited to the following:

#### **Providing information or requests in writing**

When required or requested by a client whose need arises from a protected ground under the Code, staff will accommodate the client's request to provide information or requests in writing. For example, a client who has difficulty remembering or is confused by verbal information because of a mental disability may require or request that information or requests sent by the ministry be provided in writing. Staff will accommodate this need.

[For information and other examples, see Policy – Staff Assisting Clients.]

[For Information/Documentation Checklist (HSD3034) – see Forms and Letters.]

### **Obtaining documents**

Staff may assist the client in obtaining documents where the client requires assistance.

While it is a client's responsibility to provide all information and documents necessary to demonstrate eligibility for assistance, the duty to accommodate may require staff to assist a client with disabilities or those with language barriers to obtain and provide required information, or provide clients with additional time to provide information, or both.

[For information and examples, see Policy – Staff Assisting Clients.]

[For information on obtaining and providing required information, see Related Links – Verification – Policy – Client Responsibility.]

### **Interpretation services**

For clients with language barriers who are unable to comprehend or communicate through written or spoken English, the ministry provides access to interpretation services by telephone and on a case by case basis, in person.

[For information on how to access interpretation services, see Policy and Procedures – Interpretation Services for Clients with Language Barriers.]

### **Designated worker**

When requested by the client, ministry staff may assign a designated worker to the client. Staff assess whether a designated worker is appropriate to meet the unique needs of the client. Staff may also identify a client with challenges or unique needs and proactively assign a designated worker on behalf of a client.

Clients who receive a designated worker may need to contact the designated worker by telephone. To ensure clients have accessibility to the designated worker by telephone, staff may:

- give their phone number to the client if they have a direct line;
- advise the client to leave a message asking for their designated worker to call them back when they dial the 1-866 number; or
- announce the client's name to the designated worker before transferring the call when client asks for their designated worker.

[see Resources for Staff – Designated Worker Guidelines] [\\*NEW RESOURCES FOR STAFF LINK\\*](#)

## ***Assessing for Comprehension***

June 26, 2009

Good interviewing, listening and observation skills are essential when assessing comprehension and help staff to identify those clients who may require interpretation services. To assess for understanding and comprehension, staff should follow these guidelines:

- Ask questions to determine if English is a second language for the client.
- Assess the level of the client's understanding during initial conversations and/or while completing forms.
- Ask the client to repeat or summarize what has been discussed or requested of them to ensure understanding.
- Assess whether the client is able to accurately complete ministry forms. Clients should not be asked to sign forms they might not understand. Remember that if the client has trouble reading, they may also have trouble understanding what is said to them.
- Remember that some clients may seem fluent in English, but still have trouble understanding what you say.
- If a client's level of comprehension is in question, ask if they would like the assistance of an interpreter.

### **Case example:**

A single mother is applying for income assistance at a ministry office. During the interview the client is very quiet, responding to the worker's questions with one word answers only and appearing to be uncomfortable with the process. Through conversation, the worker identifies that English is not the client's first language. The worker probes the client for her understanding of the information being asked by reviewing the income assistance application form with the client. The ministry worker asks the client if she understands the form and the client nods her head in agreement. The client manages to write her name and her children's names on the form but seems hesitant to finish the form. The worker then asks the client if she prefers to have an interpreter to help with the interview so she can hear the questions and give her answers in her own language. The client agrees and the worker immediately contacts interpreter services to be connected by telephone to an interpreter in the client's first language.

### **Case example:**

A single male presents at a ministry office loudly demanding something from the ministry worker at the front counter, but the worker cannot understand the language he is speaking. The worker speaks calmly and reassuringly to the client and presents him with the Provincial Language Services (PLS) Language ID card in order to determine which language he speaks. The client points to his language and the worker immediately contacts PLS by telephone to connect the client to an interpreter that speaks his language and a three-way conversation between the ministry, client and interpreter is conducted.

**Note:** Provincial Language Services (PLS) Language ID card lists 14 of the most common languages used in BC. Use this card to assist clients to identify their first language if they are unable to communicate this information in English.

## ***Accessing Interpretation Services***

June 26, 2009

Use of interpretation services should be considered at every point of contact as general client questions can lead to possible eligibility discussions.

If your region has a specified contract for interpretation services, follow your regional protocol to arrange for this service to be provided by your regional service provider.

In communities where regional contracts exist, applicants and clients may contact ministry funded interpretation services directly when they are engaged in ministry-related business. In order for the service provider to be assured that it is a ministry client contacting them, clients will be required to provide their client file number to the service provider in order to initiate this service.

When an immediate need for interpretation services is identified that cannot be met by local or regionally contracted interpretation services, you may access Provincial Language Services (PLS) to acquire an interpreter for clients over the telephone or on a case-by-case basis, in person.

Delivery methods of PLS interpretation services include:

- three-way call (client, interpreter and worker all in different locations)
- telephone (client or interpreter in the office or at another location)
- in-person (on a case-by-case basis)

Add an Information Alert (INF A) to the file if interpretation services are required.

[see Procedures, Best Practices for Assisting Clients with Language Barriers - Use of Information Alerts]

## ***Accessing Interpretation Services – Information for Staff***

June 26, 2009

To access immediate (usually within 2 minutes) **telephone** interpretation services through Provincial Language Services (PLS), follow these steps:

1. Contact PLS at 1-877-228-2557
2. Specify if the client is in your office or if a three-way call is required

3. Advise PLS of the approximate duration of the call
4. Provide your name and telephone number
5. Advise PLS that you are with the ministry
6. Identify your region and office code
7. Specify the language required
8. Wait for the interpreter to come on the line
9. Conference in the non-English speaking client into the call or use speakerphone, if required
10. Once connected, introduce yourself, your role and the context of your call for the interpreter
11. Ask the interpreter to introduce him/herself and to clarify his/her role
12. Proceed with the conversation
13. Announce the end of the call when the conversation is completed
14. Add the Reference Number you receive from PLS to the client file
15. Record date and time of interpretation service on the client file
16. Supply details of the call and interpretation services provided to your regional or office contact as outlined in your regionally specific procedures for tracking, billing, reconciliation and payment for PLS

To access **in person** interpretation services through PLS, follow these steps:

1. Contact PLS at 1-877-228-2557
2. Provide the date, time, location and duration of the appointment
3. State the name of the ministry worker attending the appointment
4. Provide the client's name and contact number(s) if required
5. Add PLS Reference Number to the client file
6. Inform PLS of any changes to the appointment as soon as possible. The ministry will not be charged for the service if more than 24 hours' notice is given to cancel the appointment
7. If a client does not show up for an appointment with interpreter services, arrange with the interpreter to contact the client for an immediate teleconference or rebook the appointment as necessary

## ***Best Practices for Assisting Clients with Language Barriers***

September 29, 2009 ~~June 26, 2009~~

### **Working with Professional Interpreters**

The ministry's standard is to use professional interpreters to conduct ministry business. The following protocols assist staff when working with interpreters:

- Brief the interpreter on your role and the context of the appointment prior to starting the appointment.
- Ask the interpreter to introduce him/herself and clarify his/her role prior to the start of the appointment.
- Ensure the client and interpreter are aware that the role of the interpreter is to impartially translate the interview proceedings alternating between the client and the worker.
- Speak to the client directly, as you would speak to an English speaker. The interpreter will translate what you say as exactly as possible, including tone, style, and pronoun use. The same procedure applies when the client is speaking.
- Speak in your usual manner using clear, concise sentences.
- Avoid the use of jargon or acronyms and try not to interrupt.
- Allow time every few sentences for the interpreter to interpret.

**Note:** Upon a client's request or when it is identified that the client is unable to comprehend what is being communicated due to a language barrier, the ministry must offer the client a ministry contracted professional interpretation service. In most cases, professionally contracted interpreters will be used to assist clients to communicate with ministry staff in the client's first language. However, if preferred by the client, they are permitted to use an interpreter of their own choosing. Staff must explain to the private interpreter how important it is that he/she interprets everything said or written and that the client understands the same.

### **Use of Information Alerts**

Add an Information Alert (INF A) to the file for a client who is unable to comprehend or communicate in English and requires interpretation services.

Identify in the Client Summary/Info Alert the appropriate language/dialect for the client.

Example: Alert: Client unable to understand or communicate in English. Provide <insert language> interpreter.

### **Communicating with clients with language barriers**

The following guidelines assist staff when assisting clients with language barriers:

- Interpreted sessions will take longer than usual, sometimes up to three times as long. Staff will need to set adequate time for appointments.
- Use interpreter services to contact a client by telephone when a Language Information Alert has been placed on the client's file.

- If the client cannot be contacted by telephone, use office initiated letters to communicate with the client regarding ministry business.
- Offer to provide information, requests or decisions in writing to enable translation.
- Give encouragement to clients with language barriers to increase confidence.
- Be an active listener. When communicating across cultures, do not assume the other party has understood you. Ask the client to summarize and verify information to ensure comprehension.
- Remember that the client might not be literate in their first language.
- Verbal translation services contact information may be included in written communications with non-English speaking clients.
- If client has completed forms, ask the client to summarize what they have agreed to.
- Avoid the use of slang expressions. Clients who have language barriers may know of the word but miss the meaning when slang is used.
- Slow down, speak clearly and ensure clear pronunciation, and avoid long, complex sentences.
- Ask one question at a time and let your listener answer one question at a time to increase comprehension. Cross cultural communication is enhanced through taking turns to talk, making a point and then listening to the response.
- Support clients to seek the assistance of an advocate or community Settlement Worker.
- Ensure assistance is not delayed and that basic needs do not go unmet as a result of a language barrier.

### ***Reasonable Steps Prior to Cheque Signalling***

September 29, 2009

Staff must make reasonable attempts to contact the client to request information or documentation that is required for determining eligibility before the cheque is signalled. Staff should also attempt to resolve signals before cheque issue, and where appropriate, required information can be provided by telephone, fax, mail or in person.

Staff must use discretion when following these steps. Consideration should be given to the timing of the request for required information and how vital it is to receive it before cheque cut-off. If the request for the required information is made unreasonably close to cheque issue week and will not affect eligibility, then do not signal the immediate coming cheque. Follow the steps to contact the client and provide the client a reasonable opportunity to respond. If the client has not responded within the requested timeframe, the next following cheque may be signalled.

When the issue leading to the signal is resolved, the client can choose to either pick-up their cheque or have their cheque mailed to them.

Staff must take appropriate steps to avoid a signal but if it is necessary to signal, staff should follow these steps before signalling cheques:

1. Identify the information or documentation required from client and confirm that the information is necessary for purposes relating to eligibility.

2. Initiate contact by telephone. Attempt at least one telephone call when contacting a client. Provide reasonable opportunity and timeframe for the client to respond.

Eligibility assessment and/or reviews can be conducted by telephone. Clients may fax required documents but must submit the original copy within a reasonable time after the faxed version was sent.

3. Disclose the specific issue to the client so the client can respond appropriately and provide information or documentation to address the issue.

4. If the client has not responded to the initial contact, make a subsequent attempt to contact the client either by telephone or in writing. If you are attempting in writing, send a notification to the client advising that their cheque will be redirected to the office if the information or documentation requested has not been received by specified due date. Use the Cheque Hold Letter (HSD3032).

5. Add comment in the client file for each action when attempting to contact the client.

6. Follow your office protocol to monitor response from the client.

7. Signal cheque if the requested information is required for determining eligibility and the client has not responded by due date.

8. Immediately signal the cheque, if:

- the client has NFA for contact information and cannot be contacted by phone;
- the client frequently moves and current address is unknown; or
- the letters mailed to the clients have returned undeliverable.

9. Immediately contact the client by telephone or in writing and then signal the cheque if:

- the Monthly Report (HSD0081) submitted is incomplete and the information required determines eligibility (i.e. rent receipt not attached, or indicates earnings but pay stub not attached); AND,
- the Monthly Report was submitted unreasonably close to cheque cut-off date.

If contacting in writing, send a notification to the client using the Cheque

Hold Letter (HSD3032).

If the client has submitted the Monthly Report within adequate time (i.e. 5<sup>th</sup> day of month), follow steps 2 to 6.

10. If the information required is related to eligibility assessment during employment and income monitoring, see Related Links – Income and Exemptions – Procedures – Assessing Eligibility – Employment and Income Monitoring.

If the information required is related to eligibility review, see Related Links – Eligibility Review – Procedures – EAW Eligibility Review.

If the information required is related to employment plan, see Related Links – Employment Plan – Procedures – EP Development and Case Management.

If the cheque stub is incomplete, see Related Links – Monthly Reporting Requirements – Procedures – Steps for Reviewing and Processing the Monthly Report (HSD0081).

Each of these procedures has template letters to send when requesting information or when setting-up appointments and processes to follow before a client is considered non-compliant.

11. Supervisors print the signal list prior to cheque cut-off to resolve issues and reduce signals. Check that all appropriate steps have been taken and that clients remaining on the list have outstanding eligibility issues. If the signal list includes a signal unrelated to eligibility, remove the signal and direct staff to take alternative action to resolve outstanding issue.

## ***Home Visits***

February 28, 2006

### **Preparing for the Home Visit**

1. Confirm the date and time with the applicant or recipient. If conducting more than one home visit it is acceptable to notify them of the time frame you will make the home visit (for example, Thursday afternoon between 1:00 and 4:00).
2. Follow all safety protocols and office practices.
3. Check MIS for alerts and review history. Discuss health and safety alerts with supervisor.
4. Request Supervisor approval prior to conducting a home visit.

5. Ensure you have all required forms, brochures and other documents.
6. Ensure confidential material is secured.
7. Consider driving or walking by the location to assess potential safety risks.
8. Contact the client and make other arrangements if you have any concerns about your safety.
9. Ensure application procedures are followed.

### **Conducting the Home Visit**

1. Identify yourself as a ministry representative, the purpose of your visit and show valid MHSD identification to the applicant or recipient.
2. Ask to see the applicant or recipient's photo-identification (where available). Make note of what identification has been seen. Ensure the correct person is being interviewed.
3. If there are other persons in the home who will be present during the interview determine whether or not to continue in their presence, being mindful of confidentiality and privacy rules.
4. Inquire only about facts relating to the purpose of your visit. Do not explore other areas of the home even if invited to do so.
5. Leave immediately if you are asked to do so.
6. Reschedule the home visit if, upon your arrival, the person is:
  - Under the influence of drugs or alcohol
  - Inappropriately dressed
  - Extremely ill (and unable to be interviewed)
  - Unable to meet due to competing priorities; or
  - A large number of people are present
7. Record completed home visits on the electronic history and FIM screen on MIS.

### ***Residency Verification***

February 28, 2006

### Preparing for the Residency Verification:

1. Follow all safety protocols and office practices.
2. Check MIS for alerts and review history. Discuss health and safety alerts with supervisor.
3. Request Supervisor approval prior to conducting a Residency Verification.
4. Ensure you have all required forms, brochures and other documents.
5. Ensure confidential material is secured.
6. Consider driving or walking by the location to assess potential safety risks.

### **Conducting the Residency Verification**

1. Approach the residence; identify yourself as a representative of the ministry and show valid MHSD identification. State the purpose of your visit is to verify the residency.
2. Staff must not enter the home even if invited to do so. Staff must not explore other areas of the home even if invited to do so.
3. If the applicant or recipient is home, verify their identity by asking to see their photo identification (ensure you are interviewing the correct person).
4. Verify the residency information only (address and client). Staff must not interview children with regard to the client's circumstances.
5. Record completed residency verifications by updating the history and FIM screen on MIS

### ***Scheduling Appointments***

October 2, 2008

When applicable, ministry staff can schedule an appointment by phone or in person. When scheduling an appointment by mail, ministry staff are to follow these steps:

1. Send the First Appointment - Other Appointment letter (HSD3233) if no other appointment letters are applicable. [see Forms and Letters] Ministry staff are able to manually enter information in this template letter as required.
2. Place a comment on the file to indicate the type of appointment letter sent and the reasons for scheduling the appointment. Use your office caseload management protocol to follow up on the file.
3. Send the Second Appointment - Other Appointment letter (HSD3236) if the client was unavailable to attend the first scheduled appointment. [see Forms and Letters]

4. Place a comment on the file to indicate that a second appointment letter was sent and the reasons. Use your office caseload management protocol to follow up on the file.
5. Follow your regional protocol for situations where a client does not attend their second appointment.

## **File Closure**

February 9, 2009

### **Automatic File Closure**

As a system default where the EAW has not manually closed a file, MIS will automatically close the assistance file during month-end processing if no support or shelter assistance has been issued for two or six assistance months, as appropriate. The two-month exceptions are MSO and Long Term Care files. The six-month exceptions are clients with the Homeless Indicator marked “Y” [see Related Link – Homelessness].

As a case management practice, EAWs should not rely on the automatic file closure function to close files. The majority of files should be closed manually with proper notification to the client and use of the appropriate Closed/No Case Made reason

### **Example – Automatic File Closure**

*A family unit* received support or shelter for the April *assistance month*, but did not receive any support or shelter for May or June. The EAW did not manually close the file. The system will automatically close the file during the June month end processing (that is, at the time July assistance is processed), using code 95.

### **Manual File Closure**

To manually close a file, ministry staff are to follow these steps:

1. When applicable, ensure there is documentation on file to confirm that the client no longer requires and/or is no longer eligible for assistance.
2. The File Closure letter (HSD3133) may be sent to the client if he or she has not taken any steps to confirm their ongoing eligibility for assistance. [see Forms and Letters] The Reconsideration and Appeals brochure should be included when mailing out the File Closure letter.
3. Place a comment on the file when the File Closure letter and the Reconsideration and Appeals brochure have been mailed.
4. Use your office caseload management protocol to set a reminder to close the file if there is no contact from the client after 20 business days.

5. After 20 business days, use the appropriate close code on the CLS (Close) screen and record the reasons for closing the file.

**Note:** Ministry staff can manually close a file at any time upon the request of the client.

### **Examples – Manual File Closure**

**Example 1:** On March 5 the EAW receives a Monthly Report (HSD0081) indicating the *family unit* no longer requires assistance and that the *applicant* is attending school or training. The EAW should manually close the file at the time the HSD0081 is processed, using code 53 on the CLS (Close) screen.

**Example 2:** The EAW determines that a client who is single is non-compliant with their Employment Plan and declares the client ineligible for assistance. The EAW should use their office caseload management protocol to set a reminder to review the file after 20 business days (timeframe to request a Reconsideration of the eligibility decision). If the client has not requested a Reconsideration, the EAW should manually close the file, using code 28 on the CLS (Close) screen. [For information on Reconsiderations, see Related Links – Reconsideration.]

**Example 3:** On March 10 ministry staff determine that a client received \$2,000 net income which is in excess of their family unit's assistance rate prior to April's assistance being processed. For income monitoring purposes staff will contact the client, and signal the cheque prior to May's assistance being processed to review the client's employment situation and to ensure employment is sustainable (ongoing and likely to be long term). On Cheque-Issue day the staff determines the client is ineligible for May's assistance. The Staff cancels the assistance cheque and turns cheque production off in order to monitor income if necessary. [For information on Employment and Income Monitoring, see related links – Income and Exemptions.]

### **File Closure – Information for Staff**

February 9, 2009

For further information on the auto-close rule for clients with the Homeless Indicator marked "Y", see Systems Instructions.

### **Allegation of Fraud or Overpayment of Assistance – Information for Staff**

March 27, 2008

For information on completing the fraud allegation refer to Resources for Staff – FARS E-Learning Module and Related Links – Loss Management – Referral for PLMS Review or Investigation – Systems Instructions.

## Rate Table

N/A

## Systems Instructions

### ***Fraud Allegation Reporting System***

March 27, 2008

The Fraud Allegation Reporting (FAR) System is an interactive web based application used to record, track and monitor all fraud allegations reported to the ministry. The allegations include those received from an external source or those arising from day to day work of staff.

[For detailed information on FAR System, please refer to System Memo #12 and the FARS E-learning module in Resources for Staff.]

Fraud Allegation Reporting System (FARS)

[<http://busapps.eia.gov.bc.ca/Default.asp>]

Systems Memo #12, 2007/08 on Fraud Allegation Reporting System

<http://icw.eia.gov.bc.ca/policies/systememo/07-08/12FARS.pdf>

### ***General File Closure***

February 9, 2009

#### **File Closure: Close (CLS) /No Case Made (NCM) Reason Codes**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
01	*	Ineligible – immigration status
02	*	Immigration – sponsorship
03	*	No SIN provided
05	*	No ID provided
07	N	On strike or lockout
10	C	Cheque returned – no contact
12	C	Person deceased
14	C	Obtained employment
16	C	Family Maintenance action outcome
18	C	Married/common-law or reconciled
19	C	Cancel Medical Only
20	C	No response – signal, letter

22	C	No HSD0081 returned
24	C	Moved out of province
28	*	Non-compliant with Employment Plan
29	*	Failure to meet employment obligations
30	*	Income in excess
33	*	Assets in excess
34	*	Assets in excess – vehicle
36	*	Ineligible – 2 year independence
37	C	Confirmed job program
43	C	Coded Warrant in error
50	*	In prison/halfway house
53	*	Ineligible as in school
56	*	Maximum time Hardship – Code K
59	*	Maximum time Hardship – Code L
64	*	By request – reason unknown
66	*	Person under age 19
70	*	Ineligible – disposed assets
73	*	Information false – no contact
76	*	Quit/fired/refused employment
80	C	Non-compliant – eligibility review
81	*	Residing on reserve
82	*	Non-compliant – information request
85	*	Non-pursuit of income
88	*	Sanction over 2 months – appeal over
95	C	Automatic closure – no support/shelter
96	C	CIHR returned home/In Care now
97	C	After Hours Open/Close
99	C	CIHR turns 19

**TYPE**

\* = CLS/NCM Reason Code can be used on Close (CLS) and No Case Made (NCM).

C = CLS Reason Code can be used on the Close Update (CLS U) screen.

N = NCM Reason Code can be used on the No Case Made Update (NCM U) screen.

[For systems changes for debt collections on closed Income Assistance files see Systems Memo #9 (1999/00).]

[<http://icw.eia.gov.bc.ca/policies/sysmemo/2000/DebtCollections.pdf>]

***Two-Month File Closure***

February 4, 2009

As a system default where the EAW has not manually closed a file, MIS will automatically close the assistance file during month-end processing if none of the following have been issued for two assistance months:

- Support (codes 41, 70)
- Shelter (codes 42, 71)
- Appeal Supplement (code 13)
- GP Schedule C Appeal (code 29)
- One Time Allowance - Lost/Stolen Cheque (code 68)

### **Exceptions**

The following files are not closed by MIS:

- MSO (Class 08)
- Long Term Care (Class 05)
- Recently reopened (within the last 3 months)
- PWD status P (Pending), C (Correspondence), L (Late) or R (Received)
- PWD I (Ineligible) with adjudication date less than 5 months ago (to allow time for appeal)
- PWD E (Eligible) with adjudication date less than 3 months ago
- PWD E under age 18yr/3mo.

Payments with cashed or outstanding status are considered “received allowances.” The EAW will be notified by a Case Review Message when a file is closed by the system.

[For more information on two month file closure, see [Systems Memo #4 \(2002/2003\)](http://icw.eia.gov.bc.ca/policies/sysmemo/2003/SPIJuly.pdf).]  
[<http://icw.eia.gov.bc.ca/policies/sysmemo/2003/SPIJuly.pdf>]

### ***Six-Month File Closure***

February 9, 2009

As a system default where the EAW has not manually closed a file, MIS is programmed to automatically close the assistance file during month-end processing if the client has not received assistance payments for two months. The auto-close rule has been extended to six months for clients with the Homeless Indicator marked “Y”.

[For more information on six-month file closure, see [Systems Memo #8 \(2008/2009\)](#).]  
[http://icw.hsd.gov.bc.ca/policies/sysmemo/08-09/08-homeless\\_indicator\\_auto.pdf](http://icw.hsd.gov.bc.ca/policies/sysmemo/08-09/08-homeless_indicator_auto.pdf)

## ***Home Visits and Residency Verifications***

August 30, 2005

Update the File Management (FIM) screen on MIS for Home Visits and Residency Verifications to provide a distinction between visit types.

Update the Eligibility Review One (ER1) screen on MIS as needed when conducting Residency Verification.

[For information on systems changes to support guiding principles for Home Visits and Residency Verification, see [Systems Memo #14 \(2005/06\)](#).]  
[\[http://icw.eia.gov.bc.ca/policies/sysmemo/05-06/14\\_Res\\_Verification.pdf\]](http://icw.eia.gov.bc.ca/policies/sysmemo/05-06/14_Res_Verification.pdf)

Log home visits and residency verifications on the client's History (HST) screen.

## ***Third Party Administration***

December 1, 2003

<b>Description</b>	<b>Screen</b>	<b>Action</b>
Paying an administration fee to a third party	ALL	Code 12 (Administration Fee)

## **Contacts**

N/A

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

## **Forms and Letters**

[Consent to Disclosure of Information – HSD3189](#)  
[http://icw.hsd.gov.bc.ca/forms/PDF\\_forms/HR3189.pdf](http://icw.hsd.gov.bc.ca/forms/PDF_forms/HR3189.pdf)

[Declaration of Administrator of Employment and Assistance or Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities, HSD2062](#) Form used to establish a third party as administrator of a client's assistance.

[[http://icw.EIA.gov.bc.ca/forms/PDF\\_forms/HR2062.pdf](http://icw.EIA.gov.bc.ca/forms/PDF_forms/HR2062.pdf)]

File Closure, HSD3133

Letter notifying clients that their file will be closed.  
[<http://icw.eia.gov.bc.ca/forms/letters/HR3133.doc>]

First Appointment - Other Appointment, HSD3233

Letter advising clients of a scheduled appointment time.  
[<http://icw.eia.gov.bc.ca/forms/letters/HR3233.doc>]

Release of Personal Information – HSD0095

[[http://icw.eia.gov.bc.ca/forms/PDF\\_forms/HR0095.pdf](http://icw.eia.gov.bc.ca/forms/PDF_forms/HR0095.pdf)]

Second Appointment - Other Appointment, HSD3236

Letter advising clients of a re-scheduled appointment time.  
[<http://icw.eia.gov.bc.ca/forms/letters/HR3236.doc>]

Cheque Hold Letter – HSD3032

[[http://icw.mhr.gov.bc.ca/forms/template\\_letters/template\\_letters\\_list.html](http://icw.mhr.gov.bc.ca/forms/template_letters/template_letters_list.html)]  
\*NEW FORMS AND LETTERS LINK\*

Information/Documentation Checklist - HSD3034

[[http://icw.hsd.gov.bc.ca/forms/PDF\\_forms/HR3034.pdf](http://icw.hsd.gov.bc.ca/forms/PDF_forms/HR3034.pdf)]  
\*NEW FORMS AND LETTERS LINK\*

## Resources for Staff

FARS E-Learning Module – *Information for Staff*

[<http://icw.eia.gov.bc.ca/learnserv/fars/player.html>]

Learning Guide and Training Tutorial – Information for Staff Assessing Marriage-Like Dependency Relationships and Employment and Income Monitoring

[[http://www.hsd.gov.bc.ca/forms/rfs/IMD\\_Presentation.pps](http://www.hsd.gov.bc.ca/forms/rfs/IMD_Presentation.pps)]

Homeless Indicator Training – February 9, 2009

[<http://www.hsd.gov.bc.ca/forms/rfs/HomelessIndicatorTraining.ppt>]

Designated Worker Guidelines

[<http://www.hsd.gov.bc.ca/forms/rfs/DesignatedWorkerGuidelines.pdf>]

\*NEW RESOURCES FOR STAFF LINK\*(link provided by webmaster)

## Resources for Clients

Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia Website for providing clients with information about the Public Guardian and Trustee, including referrals and services.  
<http://www.trustee.bc.ca/adults.htm>

## Related Topics

- [BC Employment and Assistance \(BCEA\) Application - Stage 1](#)
- [BC Employment and Assistance \(BCEA\) Application - Stage 2](#)
- [Eligibility Review](#)
- [Employment Plan \(EP\)](#)
- [Income and Exemptions](#)
- [Loss Management – Referral for PLMS Review or Investigation](#)
- [Payment of Assistance](#)
- [Reconsideration](#)
- [Sanctions](#)
- Three Week Work Search
- **Verification \*NEW RELATED LINK\***
- [Vision, Mission, and Values](#)