

**1. If I do not want to access Direct Payment and wish to remain on Invoice Payment, do I need to contact the Autism Funding Branch?**

No. If you do not choose to the direct payment method, your child will automatically remain on the invoice payment method.

**2. What is the main difference between Invoice Payment and Direct Payment?**

Under the **Invoice Payment method**, the eligible parent/legal guardian signs an Autism Agreement. Funding is then set aside in an account held by government in the child's name. Parents choose eligible autism intervention services that suit their child's needs. Once eligible authorized services have been provided to the child, an invoice is sent to the Autism Funding Branch (AFB), and the AFB pays the service provider. For more detailed information on invoice payment please go to [http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/pdf/autism\\_handbook\\_web.pdf](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/pdf/autism_handbook_web.pdf)

**Under the Direct Payment method**, the eligible parent/legal guardian signs a Direct Payment Agreement. Funding is then provided up front and directly to the parent/legal guardian at the beginning of their child's funding period. The parent chooses eligible autism intervention services that best suit their child's needs and the parent is responsible for paying the service provider for those services.

At the end of each funding period, parents using the direct payment method must account for the use of their child's autism funds through the submission of an Accountant Confirmation Form and supporting documentation (e.g., invoices; receipts; autism branch approval letters; etc.).

**3. Who is eligible for Direct Payment?**

- A child diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder must be 12 years or older (Note: siblings with ASD between the ages of 6 and 11 are also eligible for direct payment);
- The parent/legal guardian who signs the Direct Payment Agreement (aka the "Agreement Signatory") must have successfully managed invoice payment for a minimum of 2 full years (i.e., 24 months);
- The parent/legal guardian who signs the Direct Payment Agreement must not have failed to comply with any of his or her obligations under any previous funding Autism Agreements with MCFD;
- The parent/legal guardian must notify the Autism Funding Branch at least 60 days prior to the end of their current funding period that they wish to switch to direct payment; and
- The parent/legal guardian must complete their child's existing funding period under invoice payment before establishing a new funding period under direct payment.

**4. It is my understanding, that if families want to switch from the Invoice Payment method to the Direct Payment method, they are required to contact the AFB at least 60 days prior to the end of their current funding period. Our renewal date is in September 2013, is the Direct Payment method available to us for our 2013/14 funding period?**

Yes. For eligible agreement signatories with renewal dates in September, October, or November 2013 who are interested in switching to the Direct Payment method, an exception for the requirement to make contact with the AFB at least 60 days prior to the renewal date will be made.

In circumstances of new policies being introduced, there is often a window where families are not able to meet eligibility requirements due to timelines of policy introduction. Such is the case in the introduction of the direct payment method. This exception will be made for agreement signatories with renewal dates in September, October, or November 2013 **only**.

**In order to take advantage of this exception period, the AFB must have** received your request up to 1 week prior to the end date of the child's current invoice payment funding period (i.e. September renewal dates requests received by September 23<sup>rd</sup>; October renewal dates requests received by October 24<sup>th</sup>; November renewal dates to be received by November 24<sup>th</sup>).

As of December 1, 2013 all agreement signatories interested in switching from invoice payment to direct payment will be required to inform the AFB of their interest to switch payment methods 60 days prior to their renewal date.

### 5. When can families switch to the Direct Payment method?

Direct payment will become available in September 2013, starting with children born in the month of September. Parents/legal guardians with a child between the ages of 12 and 18 will have the choice to switch to direct payment. Children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) between the ages of 6 and 11 on Autism Funding who are siblings of children between the ages of 12 and 18 using direct payment are also eligible for direct payment.

Parents/legal guardians who choose direct payment will be required to sign a Direct Payment Agreement.

### 6. What does it mean that siblings are eligible for Direct Payment?

Families who have more than one child with ASD enrolled in the Autism Funding Program may also choose direct payment for their younger sibling. The younger sibling must be over the age of 6. Children in the Autism Funding: Under Age 6 Program are **not** eligible for direct payment.

Switching to direct payment for the younger sibling can only occur at the renewal of the younger sibling's funding period. The parent/legal guardian must notify the Autism Funding Branch at least 60 days prior to the end of a sibling(s) current invoice payment funding period that they wish to switch to direct payment.

### 7. Why aren't siblings of children using Direct Payment who under the age of 6 eligible for Direct Payment?

Families of children under the age of 6 are more likely to experience a significant increase in financial responsibility given the amount of funding (i.e., \$22,000/year) involved and government would be required to implement a significant expenditure monitoring infrastructure. In addition, families of young children are more vulnerable to the inadvertent purchase of ineligible services or those not based in early intervention best practices.

Direct payment can assist with successful transitions to adulthood and consequently the focus is on children ages 12 to 18.

**8. I have more than one child with ASD. My oldest child is over 12 and is eligible for Direct Payment. Can my other child(ren) with ASD access Direct Payment if they are under the age of 12?**

Yes, siblings ages 6 through 11 with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder who meet the eligibility criteria as outlined in *A Parent's Handbook: Your Guide to Autism Programs* will have a choice to also have access funding through direct payment in order to simplify the autism payment process for families.

Siblings diagnosed with ASD who are under the age of 6 are not eligible for direct payment.

**9. I have two children with ASD. The oldest is between the ages of 12 and 18 and the youngest is under 12. If I switch both children to the Direct Payment method, once my oldest child turns 19, will the younger child still be eligible for the Direct Payment method even if they are not yet 12 years old?**

Yes, even after the older sibling turns 19, younger siblings will continue to be eligible to use the direct payment method even if they are under the age of 12 at that time.

**10. Why is Direct Payment only available for children ages 12 through 18?**

Direct payment can assist with successful transitions to adulthood and consequently the focus is on children ages 12 to 18.

Direct payment allows persons with disabilities and their families' to more easily allocate funds to eligible community-based services that best suit their child's needs. Often community-based services require payment upfront and the current invoice payment method will only pay for services rendered.

Providing a direct payment option for this age group promotes an early start to the transition process and ensures that young persons with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) have opportunities to establish long-term community-based routines resulting in an improved sense of inclusion within their local communities as they age.

Typically, children in the 12-18 year old age group have been receiving autism funding for a period of several years and parents are knowledgeable about the program, working with service providers and their child's needs.

**11. Can I switch to Direct Payment at any time in my child's funding period?**

No. The parent/legal guardian will need to complete the existing funding period under invoice payment before being able to establish a new funding period under direct payment. The parent/legal guardian must notify the Autism Funding Branch at least 60 days prior to the end of their current funding period that they wish to switch to direct payment (see question 12 for further details).

### 12. What process/paperwork needs to be completed to switch to the Direct Payment Method?

1. The parent/legal guardian will need to complete the existing funding period under invoice payment before being able to establish a new funding period under direct payment.
2. At least sixty days *prior* to the end of the child's current funding period the parent/legal guardian who is the Agreement Signatory under the invoice payment method needs to notify the Autism Funding Branch by phone (toll-free at 1-877-777-3530 or in Victoria at 250-387-3530) or by email at XXX to inform them that they wish to switch from invoice payment to direct payment.
3. The AFB reviews the request and notifies the parent/legal guardian whether they are eligible to access autism funding through the direct payment method (for details on eligibility please see question 3).
4. The AFB mails an introductory letter, a Direct Deposit Application form, and the Direct Payment Agreement to eligible the parent/legal guardian.
5. Upon receipt of the Direct Payment Agreement, the parent (aka: Agreement Signatory) must sign the Direct Payment Agreement and return it to the AFB at least 30 days prior to the commencement of their child's new funding period.
6. It is strongly preferred that payments are made to agreement signatories by Direct Deposit. If the agreement signatory does not already have a Direct Deposit account with the provincial government the Direct Payment Agreement should be accompanied by a completed Direct Deposit Application form. If the agreement signatory has a Direct Deposit account then the account information should be provided to the AFB when the Direct Payment Agreement is returned. Direct Deposit Account forms are also available at: [http://www.eia.gov.bc.ca/publicat/bcea/direct\\_deposit.htm](http://www.eia.gov.bc.ca/publicat/bcea/direct_deposit.htm)
7. Once AFB has received the signed Direct Payment Agreement, it is processed for approval.
8. Once approved, \$6,000 is paid to the Agreement Signatory at the start of the funding period.
9. The money must be held in a separate bank account for the child into which only the autism funds can be deposited and out of which only eligible autism expenses can be withdrawn.
10. The parent/legal guardian who signed the Direct Payment Agreement will be responsible for acquiring eligible autism intervention services, travel, training, equipment and supplies and will be responsible for paying the professionals, service providers and/or vendors directly.
11. To continue to receive direct payment funding in subsequent years, the parent/legal guardian who signed the Direct Payment Agreement must submit the required paperwork establishing proof of payment and identifying who provided service (e.g., Accountant Confirmation Form; invoices; receipts; Autism Branch approval letters, etc.) within 60 days of the end of a direct payment funding period

### 13. What is an Agreement Signatory?

An Agreement Signatory is one of the child's parents or legal guardians who has primary care and supervision of the child at least 50% of the time and is the one that signed the Autism Agreement or the Direct Payment Agreement. This person must be the signatory on all paperwork associated with their child's Autism Agreement or Direct Payment Agreement.

### 14. Can I set up Direct Deposit for my autism funding if I already receive direct deposit from another government funding program?

If you have direct deposit set up for any other BC government funding program, the Autism Funding payment will automatically be issued by direct deposit into your existing account. A remittance slip will be mailed to you with the exact amounts that have been deposited.

Please note that autism funding must be held in a separate bank account for the child into which only the autism funds can be deposited and out of which only eligible autism expenses can be withdrawn. If you have a direct deposit account with government for another purpose, you must transfer autism funding to a separate account once the funds have been deposited.

### 15. If I am on Direct Funding do I have to set up Direct Deposit?

It is recommended that families using the direct payment method set up a Direct Deposit Account and receive autism funding by direct deposit. Direct deposit allows for faster and more convenient transfer of funding as funds are deposited directly into a bank account. Direct deposit is more secure than a cheque because there is no risk that the payment will be lost or damaged.

A Direct Deposit Application Form will be sent to you with the Direct Payment Agreement. It is recommended that you sign and return the Direct Deposit Application Form to the AFB if you do not already have a direct deposit account.

### 16. Under Direct Payment, will PST or GST come out of the autism funding?

Yes, under direct payment both **PST and GST will come out of the annual autism funding amount.** (**Note:** Under invoice payment only PST is required to come out of autism funding).

### 17. Are Request To Pay (RTP) forms required on Direct Payment?

No. **Under the direct payment method**, the eligible parent/legal guardian who signs the Direct Payment Agreement chooses eligible autism intervention services that best suit their child's needs and the parent is responsible for paying the service providers for those services.

### 18. Is pre-authorization for equipment required on Direct Payment?

Yes, all guidelines for eligible equipment that apply to invoice payment apply to direct payment. When using direct payment, Justification for Equipment/Supplies (JFE) forms are required prior to purchasing equipment. Once approval is provided, the parent/legal guardian may use direct payment to purchase equipment.

The parent/legal guardian is responsible to keep all documentation and records pertaining to the equipment/supplies purchased within each funding period. This documentation must be submitted to the Autism Funding Branch as part of the Accountant Confirmation form within 60 days of the end of each funding period. All documentation is subject to audit.

Please note an audit can be done several years after the initial payment has been made.

**19. My service provider has suggested I buy a specific piece of equipment. Does this mean the equipment will be covered by the autism funds?**

No. A service provider's recommendation is not a guarantee that equipment can be paid for with autism funds. Parents should submit a Justification for Equipment/Supplies (JFE) form completed by a professional/specialist so that it can be reviewed by the Autism Funding Branch before making any purchases. Please see *A Parent's Handbook: Your Guide to Autism Programs* for a list of professionals/specialists: [http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/pdf/autism\\_handbook\\_web.pdf](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/pdf/autism_handbook_web.pdf)

**20. Is pre-authorization required for services or service providers on Direct Payment?**

All guidelines for eligible services and service providers that apply to invoice payment also apply to direct payment. Eligible supports and services for children over the age of 6 years are outlined in the parent handbook.

Although pre-authorization is technically not required on direct payment, at the end of each funding period, agreement signatories using the direct payment method must account for the use of their child's autism funds through the submission of required paperwork establishing proof of payment and identifying who provided service (e.g., Accountant Confirmation Form; invoices; receipts; autism branch approval letters; etc.). If the parent/legal guardian does not submit the required paperwork to account for the \$6,000 received for the funding period, they will no longer be eligible to access funding through the direct payment method. They will be able to access future autism funding through the invoice payment method only.

If you are not certain if a service provider will meet the criteria for autism funding, please submit a Letter of Recommendation (LOR) from a professional or specialist as indicated in the Parent Handbook and obtain written confirmation from the Autism Funding Branch (AFB) prior to purchasing or committing to a expense.

**21. On Direct Payment can I pay someone living in the same house as my child to provide services?**

No. Autism funds cannot be used to pay a parent or foster parent of the child, or any other person living in the same household as the child, for autism intervention services. See *A Parent's Handbook: Your Guide to Autism Programs* for more information.

**22. Does a service provider being paid through Direct Payment require specific professional designations or qualifications?**

All guidelines for eligible professionals and services that apply to invoice payment also apply to direct payment.

**23. When on Direct Payment, how do I account for the funds at the end of the funding period?**

The parent/legal guardian who signed the Direct Payment Agreement is responsible for submitting all required paperwork establishing proof of payment and identifying who provided service (e.g., Accountant Confirmation Form; invoices; receipts; Autism Branch approval letters, etc.) within 60 days of the end of a direct payment funding period. This documentation confirms which equipment, travel, services and supports were rendered and that payment was made. Documentation must include:

- A completed Accountant Confirmation Form (under development) completed and signed by the

\* **CGA:** Certified General Accountant; **CA:** Chartered Accountant; **CMA:** Certified Management Accountant; **CPA:** Chartered Professional Accountant

- Agreement Signatory and the professional accountant (CPA, CGA, CA, CMA certified\*)
- Original detailed expense invoices and receipts establishing proof of payment and identifying who provided service
- Statements for the child's separate bank account
- Autism Funding Branch expense approval letters
- Justification for Equipment/Supplies forms
- Any relevant letters of recommendation
- If the full \$6000 was not spent, it must be clearly identified in the space provided on the Accountant Confirmation form.
- If the parent/legal guardian does not submit the required paperwork to account for the \$6,000 received for the funding period they will no longer be eligible to access funding through the direct payment method. They will be able to access future autism funding through the invoice payment method only.

### **24. What accounting designations are acceptable for the accountant confirmation form?**

At the end of the funding period the parent/legal guardian who signed the Direct Payment Agreement is required to submit the required paperwork within 60 days. Required paperwork includes and accountant confirmation form. The professional accountant who must complete the form can have any of the following designations:

- Certified General Accountant (CGA),
- Certified Accountant (CA),
- Certified Management Accountant (CMA), or
- Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA).

### **25. What does the professional accountant need to do?**

The professional accountant will be required to complete and sign-off the Accountant Confirmation Form indicating they have reviewed the required paperwork and identified confirmed, unconfirmed, and total spending.

Professional accountants will not be responsible for identifying if the items purchased were eligible for funding through the Autism Funding Program. The parent/legal guardian who signed the Direct Payment Agreement is responsible for using the funds for eligible autism intervention expenses for their child.

### **26. If Direct Payment is used to purchase in-eligible equipment, services or hire ineligible service providers is there any financial penalty?**

If it is determined that funding was spent on ineligible expenses, the parent/legal guardian who signed the Direct Payment Agreement may no longer be eligible to access funding through the direct payment method and may be required to repay the ineligible amount back to MCFD.

The parent/legal guardian who signs the Direct Payment Agreement is responsible for acquiring eligible autism intervention services, travel, training, equipment and supplies and is responsible for paying the professionals, service providers and/or vendors directly. When using direct payment, Justification for Equipment (JFE) forms are required prior to purchasing equipment. Once approval is provided, the parent/legal guardian may use the funds to purchase equipment.

Within 60 days following the end of each funding period, the parent is required to the required paperwork to the AFB. All documentation is subject to audit. An audit may take place up to several years after the funds have been expended.

If you are not certain if equipment or a service provider will meet the criteria for autism funding, please submit a Letter of Recommendation (LOR) from a professional or specialist as indicated in the Parent Handbook and obtain written confirmation from the AFB prior to purchasing or committing to a expense.

**27. I understand that I am required to submit all original invoices and receipts that I receive from service providers as proof of payment with my Accountant Confirmation Form within 60 days of the end of my child's funding period. What information needs to be on the original invoices and receipts that I receive from service providers?**

Invoices and receipts are to be reconciled. The following information is required on all original invoices to be submitted to the AFB:

- a. Name of the child;
- b. Name, address and phone number of the service provider;
- c. Date and description of the service provided;
- d. Hourly rate and number of hours of service provided;
- e. Total amount billed; and
- f. Who provided service (e.g., the signature of the service provider).

The following information is required on all original receipts to be submitted to the AFB:

- a. Cross reference to the original invoice;
- b. Name of the child;
- c. Identity of the service provider; and
- d. Amount paid and date of payment.

**28. What if my service provider does not provide a signed receipt or statement indicating that they received payment? How can my accountant confirm proof of payment – i.e., How can I prove that my service provider was paid with autism funding for the invoices/receipts they submitted?**

If a receipt is not available the following can be submitted as an alternative:

- a. The service provider can sign the bottom of the detailed invoice next to a note indicating the date that payment was received;
- b. The parent can provide the original cashed cheque submitted to the service provider; or
- c. The parent can provide an original bank statement indicating that the exact invoice amount was paid and who it was paid out to.



The service provider can be asked to issue a receipt or statement indicating the amount paid. If this is not available there are three options to confirm that an invoice/statement was paid to that service provider:

- a. The service provider can sign the bottom of the invoice next to a note indicating the date that payment was received;
- b. The parent can provide the original cashed cheque submitted to the service provider;
- c. The parent can provide an original bank statement indicating who the payment was made to and the exact invoice/receipt amount that was paid.

### **29. Who pays for the Professional Accountant?**

The parent/legal guardian who signed the Direct Payment Agreement may use up to 10% of their child's annual autism funding (\$600) to pay the professional accountant to complete and sign-off the Accountant Confirmation form and/or pay for any other administrative costs incurred (e.g., monthly bookkeeping services).

If accountant costs and/or any other administrative costs incurred exceed \$600 the difference is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian.

If a parent chooses to use autism funding to pay for the accountant fees, then these costs come out of the funding period in which the accounting services occurred.

### **30. What cost can be reasonably anticipated for the Professional Accountant and will there be a fee cap?**

Please discuss accounting fees with your professional accountant or visit the Chartered Professional Accountants Canada website (<http://cpacanada.ca>). Up to 10 per cent of the child's annual autism funding (\$600) is available per funding period to be used for professional accountant fees and/or pay for any other administrative costs incurred (e.g., monthly bookkeeping services).

### **31. Is the Professional Designated Accountant fee tax deductible for the family?**

It is recommended that parents contact a tax professional for information specific to your individual situation. The [Canada Revenue Agency](#) has general information for individual income tax enquiries as well as specific information regarding people with [disabilities](#) (or call 1 800 959-8281).

### **32. What happens if I do not submit any paperwork at the end of my child's funding period on Direct Payment?**

At the end of each funding period, parents using the direct payment method must account for the use of their child's autism funds through the submission of the required paperwork (e.g., Accountant Confirmation Form; invoices; receipts; autism branch approval letters, etc.). The Accountant Confirmation Form must be signed-off by an eligible Professional Accountant.

All documentation submitted to MCFD is subject to audit. If it is found that autism funding was spent on ineligible equipment, supports and/or services, the parent/legal guardian who signed the Direct Payment Agreement will be required to pay the ineligible amount back to MCFD. An audit may take place several years later and all funds will need to be repaid.

If the parent/legal guardian fails to comply with any of his or her obligations under the Direct Payment Agreement including submitting all required paperwork at the end of the child's funding period, the Province may immediately terminate the Direct Payment Agreement by providing written notice and may pursue any other remedies the Province considers necessary or appropriate.

If a Direct Payment Agreement has been cancelled due to non-compliance with the Agreement obligations, the family will still be able to access autism funding through the invoice payment method, but will no longer be eligible to access funding through the direct payment method.

**33. Can a family have both programs – Invoice Payment and Direct Payment for one eligible child?**

No, a child can only be on one program to access autism funding - invoice payment or direct payment.

**34. How can MCFD be certain that families are spending autism funding on eligible items? How will MCFD be accountable for money that is being dispersed through Direct Payment?**

At the end of each funding period, parents using the direct payment method must account for the use of their child's autism funds through the submission of required paperwork (e.g., Accountant Confirmation Form; invoices; receipts; autism branch approval letters, etc.). The Accountant Confirmation Form must be completed by an eligible Professional Accountant.

All documentation submitted to MCFD is subject to audit. If it is found that autism funding was spent on ineligible equipment, supports and/or services, the parent/legal guardian who signed the Direct Payment Agreement will be required to pay the ineligible amount back to MCFD. An audit may take place several years later and all funds will need to be repaid if an error is found.

If the parent/legal guardian fails to comply with any of his or her obligations under the Direct Payment Agreement, the Province may immediately terminate the Direct Payment Agreement by providing written notice and may pursue any other remedies the Province considers necessary or appropriate.

**35. Will someone be auditing my invoices/receipts and account?**

Yes, All documentation submitted to MCFD for the direct payment method is subject to audit. If it is found that autism funding was spent on ineligible equipment, supports and/or services, the parent/legal guardian who signed the Direct Payment Agreement will be required to pay the ineligible amount back to MCFD. An audit may take place several years later and all funds will need to be repaid if an error is found.

If the parent/legal guardian fails to comply with any of his or her obligations under the Direct Payment Agreement, the Province may immediately terminate the Direct Payment Agreement by providing written notice and may pursue any other remedies the Province considers necessary or appropriate.

### **36. Can I decide to switch back to Invoice Payment after trying Direct Payment?**

Yes, a family can switch between invoice payment and direct payment. Any such change can only occur at the end of a child's funding period.

The parent/legal guardian who signed the Direct Payment Agreement must contact the Autism Funding Branch (AFB) 60 days prior to the end of the current funding period and inform them that they want to switch payment methods. When switching back to invoice payment, the parent/legal guardian will be required to sign an Autism Agreement and return it to the AFB at least 30 days before the commencement of their new funding period.

### **37. Do I need to submit my gas receipts for travel to autism interventions services or training to the Autism Funding Branch?**

No. Gas receipts do not need to be submitted. Travel in a private vehicle will be reimbursed at \$0.40 per kilometre if the round trip exceeds 80 kilometres and the travel is specifically related to accessing autism intervention or training within BC.

### **38. Can I use my current autism funds to pre-pay for services in the next funding period?**

Autism funds are provided to cover services within a specific funding period with the exception of funds used to pre-pay for approved specialized therapeutic activities and camps designed to address your child's ASD that will occur within 6 months of payment. Funds must be used within the start and end date of the agreement term for which they were issued.

If enrolled on direct funding, unspent funds remaining at the end of the funding period will be carried over to the next funding period and subtracted from the annual total of \$6,000.

### **39. I have money in my bank account at the end of my child's Direct Payment funding period and my child is not yet 19 years of age, what should I do with it?**

If the full \$6,000 was not spent, this must be clearly evidenced as specified in the Accountant Confirmation form.

If your child is still under the age of 19, unspent funds are carried over to the next funding period to be used to purchase eligible autism services and supports for your child.

**Example:** There is \$2,000 unspent at the end of the funding period.

- The \$2,000 can remain in the bank account and can be used to purchase eligible supports and services.
- The parent will also receive a \$1,500 pre-payment 1 week prior to the new funding period while the required paperwork is completed and submitted.
- Once the required paperwork has been approved for the previous funding period by the Autism Funding Branch, an additional \$2,500 will be paid to bring the total amount of funding for the new funding period to \$6,000.

If there is more than \$1500 remaining in a child's account at the end of the funding period, the agreement signatory will be required to pay anything exceeding an annual total of \$6,000 back to the AFB. Funds exceeding an annual total of \$6,000 should be returned by cheque to the Minister of Finance payable to the Autism Funding Branch.

**Example:** There is \$5000 unspent at the end of the funding period.

- The parent will receive a \$1,500 pre-payment 1 week prior to the new funding period while the Accountant Confirmation Form is signed-off and submitted.
- Once the required paperwork has been approved for the previous funding period by the Autism Funding Branch, the parent will be required to pay the excess \$500 that was deposited 1 week prior to the new funding period.

If the agreement signatory does not repay the amount owing to the AFB, the Province may terminate the Direct Payment Agreement by providing written notice and may pursue any other remedies the Province considers necessary or appropriate. If a Direct Payment Agreement has been cancelled due to non-compliance with the agreement obligations, the family will still be able to access autism funding through the invoice payment method, but will no longer be eligible to access funding through the direct payment method.

#### **40. My child has turned 19 and I still have money in my bank account at the end of my child's Direct Payment funding period. Can I keep these funds?**

No. Autism Funding under direct payment must be spent within the funding period it was allocated and cannot be carried over past age 18. If your child is 18 years of age, the funding must be spent before your child turns 19. Unspent funds remaining after a child turns 19 must be returned by cheque to the Minister of Finance payable to the Autism Funding Branch along with all required paperwork within 60 days of your child's final funding period.

At the end of the funding period, all documentation submitted to MCFD is subject to audit. An audit may take place several years later and all funds will need to be repaid if an error is found. If the parent/legal guardian fails to comply with any of his or her obligations under the Direct Payment Agreement, the Province may pursue any remedies the Province considers necessary or appropriate.

#### **41. Is Direct Funding considered as personal income for tax purposes?**

It is recommended that parents contact a tax professional for information specific to your individual situation. The [Canada Revenue Agency](#) has general information for individual income tax enquiries as well as specific information regarding people with disabilities (or call 1 800 959-8281).