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June 2019

## Community Update Province Announces Policy Changes Aimed at Reducing Poverty

Dear Community Partner,

On June 17, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction announced a number of policy changes that **will take effect on July 1<sup>st</sup>**. These changes are being introduced to further the Province's poverty reduction strategy, TogetherBC, and help reduce the rate of poverty in BC.

The Province's media release ([https://archive.news.gov.bc.ca/releases/news\\_releases\\_2017-2021/2019SDPR0047-001258.htm](https://archive.news.gov.bc.ca/releases/news_releases_2017-2021/2019SDPR0047-001258.htm)) lists policy changes which will impact people with disabilities and people on regular income assistance.

For all people on Ministry assistance, including those on PWD:

- ending penalties for families providing room and board to a family member;
- expanding access to the identification supplement;
- eliminating the "transient" client category; and
- expanding the moving supplement to cover more circumstances.

For people **not** intending to apply for PWD:

- decreasing the work search from five weeks to three weeks;
- expanding access and simplifying the application process for Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers programs by eliminating the Employability Screen, the 12/15 month wait period to apply and removing addiction-related restrictions to eligibility;
- removing \$10,000 asset limit on a vehicle for everyday use; and
- increasing asset limits for people on income assistance from \$2,000 to \$5,000 for a single income assistance or PPMB recipient and from \$4,000 to \$10,000 for families and couples.

We welcome these changes, which will remove barriers to supports and increase the well-being of many British Columbians with disabilities living on low incomes. We encourage the government to keep moving forward and to raise the disability and income assistance rates further.

Further changes will be announced in the coming months, which DABC will monitor.

For more information, please contact our Advocacy Access program by phone at 604-872-1278/1-800-663-1278 or by email at [feedback@disabilityalliancebc.org](mailto:feedback@disabilityalliancebc.org).

Kind Regards,

Justina Loh,  
Executive Director