

CIRCULAR

Date: June 25, 2014

CIRCULAR NUMBER: EIA #2014-38g

Alternate Program(s):

To: Community Social Service Supervisors/Program Managers

Subject: **Rent Assist Implementation: Households not on Employment and Income Assistance (EIA)**

Reference: 2014-38h, (transition)

Type: ☐ Policy Replaces: N/A
☐ Procedure
☐ Rate
☒ Information Only
☐ Internal Only

Effective Date: July 1, 2014

In addition to Rent Assist for EIA participants, Rent Assist is also available to help low-income Manitobans who pay rent in the private market and who spend a large portion of their income on rent. In some instances, benefits available through the non-EIA Rent Assist stream may eliminate the need for households to apply for EIA.

Manitobans not receiving EIA can receive up to \$270 per month if living in eligible rental accommodation or board and room arrangements. The amount of benefits will depend on total household income and actual monthly rent. Households also must be spending at least 25% of their income on rent, unless their monthly rent is lower than a specified level (see below for more information on minimum rents).

Low income Manitobans not on EIA who are renting or paying room and board in unsubsidized housing may apply for benefits. As a result, non-EIA Rent Assist is not available to the following household scenarios:

- Individuals rent their home from Manitoba Housing
- Individuals , or the unit they live in, gets any other kind of housing benefit or subsidy from the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation

- Individuals who own their own homes (note: homeowners on EIA are eligible for the Rent Assist Supplement).
- Individuals who live on a First Nations reserve
- Individuals who live in a nursing home, hospital or residential care facility
- individuals who live in student housing

Information for Staff

Non-EIA Rent Assist differs from the current non-EIA RentAid program in three key ways:

1) Eligibility is extended to non-disabled citizens without children who reside in private rental accommodation. The new category will be called Rent Assist General. Previously only those 55 years of age or older, families with dependent children, or persons with a disability could receive benefits. This change effectively makes all Manitobans eligible for non-EIA Rent Assist if they are renting and meet affordability criteria.

2) A minimum rent level has been added to the calculation of benefits so that those with the lowest income and rents have greater eligibility for benefits. This change helps assist those transitioning from EIA who might have lower rents.

3) The total maximum benefit will increase by \$40 to \$270 per month, and income eligibility and maximum rents used to calculate benefits will be increased for some households.

Manitoba Rent Assist Parameters

Number of Persons in the Household	Annual Income Eligibility Threshold	Monthly Income Eligibility Threshold	Minimum Rent	Maximum Rent	Monthly Maximum Benefit
Senior/Persons with a Disability/General Categories					
1 person	\$24,288	\$2,024	\$435	\$506	\$270
2+ person	\$27,312	\$2,276	\$517	\$569	\$270
Family Category					
2 person	\$27,312	\$2,276	\$437	\$569	\$270
3 person	\$33,648	\$2,852	\$480	\$713	\$270
4+ person	\$33,648	\$2,852	\$521	\$713	\$270

Non-EIA Rent Assist is essentially designed to pay the difference between an affordable rent (defined as 25 per cent of gross monthly household income) and a household's actual rent (subject to program maximums). A household will receive an additional \$20 if they are eligible for any level of benefit (up to a total maximum of \$270). The following example illustrates how non-EIA Rent Assist benefits are calculated:

Non-EIA Rent Assist Example
Single Person Annual Household Income = \$17,000 (Monthly Income = \$1,416.67) Rent (if cost of heating is not included in rent add \$65, total cannot exceed maximum rent above)= \$500.00
Deductible = \$354.17 (25% of Monthly Income)
Eligible Benefit (Net Rent – Deductible) (\$500 - \$354.17) = \$145.83
Total Benefit = Eligible Benefit + \$20 (\$145.83 + \$20.00) = \$165.83

Unlike EIA participants who receive Rent Assist automatically if they have shelter costs, Manitobans not on EIA must apply for Rent Assist to receive benefits. An application, direct deposit enrollment form, and application checklist can be obtained from: (<http://www.gov.mb.ca/jec/eia/rentassist/index.html>). An application can also be requested from Provincial Services by calling 1-877-587-6224 (toll-free) or 204-945-2197 or applications can also be picked up at the following address:

Provincial Services
Manitoba Family Services
102 - 114 Garry Street
Winnipeg MB R3C 1G1

Participants who are leaving EIA, or who are ineligible for EIA

Please refer to EIA Circular 2014-38h *EIA Rent Assist to non-EIA Rent Assist Transitions* which speaks to the new measures established to help reduce administrative waiting periods for those who are transitioning off income assistance.

In addition to those transitioning from income assistance to non-EIA Rent Assist, it is important to note that from the point of intake there may be instances where applicants may be eligible for more financial benefits through non-EIA Rent Assist than from regular income assistance.

The Rent Assist Estimator (available at www.gov.mb.ca/jec/eia/mbrentassist.estimator.html shortly after July 1, 2014) may assist intake staff to establish if participants may be financially better off applying for non-EIA Rent Assist.