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SEPTEMBER BUDGET UPDATE 2005

*Ministry of
Employment and
Income Assistance*

**2005/06 – 2007/08
SERVICE PLAN UPDATE
SEPTEMBER 2005**



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Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance
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Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement

As Minister of Employment and Income Assistance, it is my responsibility to provide an income assistance system that is fair, caring and sustainable — an effective system of supports that will be there for British Columbians if they need it. Our government also continues to be committed to helping people who are able to work to find and keep jobs, and providing assistance that makes a real difference in people's lives.

One of our government's Great Goals for a Golden Decade is to build the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities, special needs, children at risk and seniors. The Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance will continue to provide the greatest level of supports to improve the quality of life for British Columbians with disabilities. We are also committed to ensuring B.C. seniors benefit from our stronger economy with greater income support.

Through the Minister's Council on Employment for Persons with Disabilities, we are also supporting government's Great Goal of creating more jobs per capita than anywhere else in Canada. By bringing together business and community leaders to remove barriers to employment and promote people with disabilities as highly skilled and motivated employees, we are creating new opportunities for people with disabilities — and B.C. businesses. For persons with disabilities for whom employment is not a possibility, we will continue to provide our highest levels of assistance and support.

In addition to providing assistance to those most in need, we continue to help people who are able to work to achieve sustainable employment. We will help British Columbians with barriers to employment to overcome those barriers and find good jobs. By helping our clients achieve independence, we are assisting them to build brighter futures for themselves and their families.

The Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance will also support this government's Great Goal to lead the way in North America in healthy living and physical fitness. We have improved our programs so that children, women and people with special needs have better access to dental, optical and nutritional supports. And we will continue to provide programs to meet the changing needs of our clients so they can develop the lifestyle and employment skills they need to take advantage of all the opportunities our province presents.

I look forward to working with ministry staff and partner agencies to reach new levels of service to British Columbians, and to thank them for their ongoing dedication and professionalism.

The Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance 2005/06 – 2007/08 Service Plan Update September 2005 was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared. All material fiscal assumptions and policy decisions as of August 31, 2005, have been considered in preparing the plan and I am accountable for achieving the specific objectives in the plan.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Claude Richmond". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "C" and "R".

Honourable Claude Richmond
Minister of Employment and Income Assistance

September 14, 2005

Ministry Overview and Core Business Areas

The mission of the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance is to provide services that move people toward sustainable employment and assist individuals and families in need. Ministry services are provided under the BC Employment and Assistance program (BCEA), and are guided by the *Employment and Assistance Act* and the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*.

For clients who can work, the ministry encourages personal responsibility and self-reliance through employment planning. This planning process identifies client job activities and may identify any individual specialized job search needs. The ministry will then provide clients with appropriate tools and supports to find employment, including specialized programs for clients who face additional challenges to obtaining and sustaining employment.

Some clients, particularly persons with disabilities, may be unable to obtain a level of employment that will move them to independence from income assistance. These individuals are provided with ongoing financial assistance. Additional supports may be available to address essential disability-related needs and assist these clients to participate in their communities.

To ensure that individual eligibility decisions are consistent, transparent, fair and equitable, clients have access to an impartial and responsive appeal system.

The ministry delivers BCEA programs and services through six core business areas:

Employment Programs are available to assist clients to find and sustain employment. Individualized employment plans that are signed by clients may include directed job searches or referral to job placement services.

Temporary Assistance is available to clients who are capable of financial independence through employment, or who are unable to seek work because of a short-term condition, as described in the *Employment and Assistance Act*. Persons with persistent multiple barriers to employment are included in this group.

Disability Assistance is available to eligible persons with disabilities who are not expected to gain complete financial independence through employment, including clients with disabilities who are seeking work.

Supplementary Assistance is available to eligible people, and provides health and other supports such as health services for persons with disabilities, seniors' supplement, bus passes, and user fees for continuing care and alcohol and drug facilities.

The Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal provides clients with timely decisions through a single-level, regionally-based appeal system for individuals who wish to appeal decisions of the ministry. The tribunal acts independently of the ministry.

Executive and Support Services provides salaries, benefits, allowances and operating expenses for the Minister's office, ministry corporate services and program management.

Resource Summary

Core Business Areas	2004/05 Restated Estimates ¹	2005/06 Estimates	2006/07 Plan	2007/08 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Employment Programs	71,475	79,370	72,275	72,275
Temporary Assistance	391,176	355,187	346,412	341,461
Disability Assistance	483,158	580,423	610,059	640,860
Supplementary Assistance	144,923	172,479	180,340	182,743
Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal	2,422	1,819	1,819	1,819
Executive and Support Services	168,637	165,682	155,691	155,683
Total	1,261,791	1,354,960	1,366,596	1,394,841
Full-time Equivalents (Direct FTEs)				
Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal	14	14	14	14
Executive and Support Services	1,959	1,959	1,959	1,959
Total	1,973	1,973	1,973	1,973
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)				
Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal	35	35	31.5	31.5
Executive and Support Services	21,512	17,472	22,342.5	24,394.5
Total	21,547	17,507	22,374	24,426

¹ These amounts have been restated, for comparative purposes only, to be consistent with the presentation of the September Update 2005 *Estimates* 2005/06. Schedule A of the 2005/06 *Estimates*, presents a detailed reconciliation.

Strategic Context

Vision, Mission, and Values

Vision

The Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance envisions a province in which those British Columbians in need are assisted to achieve their social and economic potential.

Mission

The Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance provides services that move people toward sustainable employment and assist individuals and families in need.

Values

The Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance' values are reflected in its work every day, and support the government's broader strategic plan and priorities. The government's core values are integrity, fiscal responsibility, accountability, respect and choice.

Personal responsibility — The ministry emphasizes personal responsibility by assisting clients who are able to work to find employment and achieve independence. The ministry supports the efforts of clients who are working to enhance their self-reliance and involvement in their communities.

Active participation — Clients who are able to work are required to actively seek employment. The ministry supports these efforts with work search and job placement services, targeted employment training, and tools such as employment plans. The ministry provides additional/specialized supports to persons with disabilities to maximize their self-reliance.

Dignity and respect — The ministry is committed to treating all members of the public with equity and fairness, upholding the principles of dignity and respect. The ministry does this through open communication, building effective relationships and maintaining high ethical standards.

Innovative partnerships — The ministry is developing creative and innovative ways for delivering client-centred services, as well as working with a range of service providers and external agencies.

Citizen confidence — Maintaining public confidence in ministry programs and services is fundamental to realizing the ministry's long-term objective of providing a sustainable income assistance system that provides for those most in need.

Fairness and transparency — The ministry operates under the principles of administrative fairness and transparency by informing clients of all reasons a decision is made, and providing access to a fair and impartial review of the original decision through reconsideration and appeal.

Clear outcomes — The ministry sets clear outcomes, whether in the form of clearly defined goals as outlined in this Service Plan or the responsibilities of clients as outlined in their employment plans.

Accountability for results — Through performance management systems, the ministry is accountable to government and all British Columbians for the results it achieves.

Planning Context

The Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance operates in a context where:

- Changes in the economic environment, specifically the provincial labour market and employment rates, directly affect the ministry's caseload;
- Demographic shifts associated with an aging population, natural population growth and in-migration into the province increase demand for the ministry's employment and disability assistance programs;
- The number of persons with disabilities requiring assistance from the ministry is anticipated to grow due in part to an aging population, longer life expectancy for individuals experiencing significant health issues and the impact of new illnesses and conditions (such as HIV/AIDS, Hep-C, and drug and alcohol dependencies); and,
- Members of the public continue to expect government services that are responsive, professional, inclusive, cost-effective, transparent and accountable.

These factors have a significant impact on the ministry's operations, caseloads and ultimately, achievement of its goals and performance targets. Within this context, the ministry will pursue opportunities (external to the ministry) and leverage internal strengths that offer the potential to both mitigate risks to the ministry and its clients and support continuous improvement in the delivery of services.

Opportunity

- Revived Provincial Economy: Continued strengthening of the provincial economy due to a sound fiscal policy, balanced budget, strengthened commodity pricing and improved consumer confidence has positioned BC as the national leader with real economic growth of 3.9 per cent in 2004/05. Opportunities for clients to participate in the strengthened labour markets will continue to be supported by the ministry — enhancing client independence and reducing caseloads.

Strengths

- Enhanced Client Capacity: Ministry employment programs will continue to support the transition of clients from assistance to sustainable employment through results-based partnerships with community job placement and training service providers.
- Focus on Persons with Disabilities: The ministry will continue to assist clients with disabilities through income assistance and employment and volunteer programs. The involvement of clients in these opportunities enhances their independence and provides important benefits to the communities in which they live.
- Client-Centered Service Delivery: The ministry will build upon its client-centered culture by working with staff to design services that are coordinated and meet evolving client needs. New and existing programs will be reviewed with a focus on service enhancements, greater consistency in the delivery of services across the province, efficient allocation of resources and increasing the time available for staff to assist clients. Implementation of the Integrated Service Delivery initiative, which is currently underway, builds upon these service attributes through streamlined business processes and improved tools and job aids. Additional work is being undertaken to enhance caseload management systems and increase utilization of the children's health supports available to low-income families.
- Collaboration and Partnerships: The ministry will continue to champion new partnerships with other ministries, the federal government, local municipalities and stakeholder groups to deliver flexible, cost-effective and innovative services. Among the initiatives currently underway are pilots in Vancouver and Vancouver Island addressing mental health, addiction services and homelessness.
- Enhanced Business Administration: The ministry will continue to improve its internal operations and delivery of services through the adoption of best practices in the areas of strategic planning, project and performance management, continuous improvement initiatives and caseload forecasting.
- Expanded Technologies: Expanded use of information and communication technologies offers the potential to improve the timeliness, consistency and cost-effectiveness of services and information provided to clients. Potential initiatives include expanded use of direct deposit of assistance payments to clients via electronic funds transfers, and streamlined adjudication processes.
- Dedicated Staff: Members of the ministry have consistently demonstrated a high degree of dedication, professionalism and flexibility in carrying out their responsibilities. Their continued support and expertise has been, and will continue to be, critical to the success of the ministry and its clients.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Results

This section presents the ministry's goals and outlines how specific objectives, strategies and performance measures will help us to achieve these goals. The business of the ministry supports government's Five Great Goals. Through employment programs, income assistance and supports, the ministry continues to improve the quality of life for vulnerable British Columbians and assist those temporarily in need. These efforts directly support three of government's Five Great Goals:

- building the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities, special needs, children at risk and seniors;
- leading the way in North America in healthy living and physical fitness; and
- creating more jobs per capita than anywhere in Canada.

The diagram on the following page displays the linkages between government's Five Great Goals and the ministry mission, goals, objectives and performance measures. Besides the linkages specifically detailed on the next page, the ministry continues to support the government in its work on aboriginal and citizen services.

Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance

Five Great Goals		Ministry Mission The Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance provides services that move people toward sustainable employment and assist individuals and families in need.		
Direct Impact	Indirect Impact	Ministry Goals	Ministry Objectives	Performance Measures
Goal 3: Building the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities, special needs, children at risk and seniors.	Goal 2: To lead the way in North America in healthy living and physical fitness. Goal 5: Creating more jobs per capita than anywhere in Canada.	1. Clients who are able to work become self-reliant through employment.	1. Clients actively seek work.	Percentage of BC's population aged 19-64 receiving temporary assistance with employment-related obligations.
		2. Clients increase their independence through employment, volunteer and income assistance programs.	1. Persons with disabilities who seek work find employment, and persons with disabilities who seek to volunteer are placed in volunteer positions.	Average percentage of clients with employment related obligations who leave the caseload each month. Percentage of BC's population receiving income assistance.
		3. Clients receive supplementary assistance for health and transportation needs.	1. Clients receive health care supports in a timely manner.	Percentage of total caseload receiving disability assistance. Percentage of persons receiving disability assistance who declare income from working or receive volunteer supplements.
		4. Individuals have access to a fair and timely reconsideration and appeal process.	1. Reconsideration issues are efficiently resolved. 2. Decisions are made on appeals and parties notified within the statutory timelines.	Average number of working days required for the adjudication of short-term nutritional supplement requests. Percentage of reconsideration decisions that are made within 10 business days. Percentage of appeals commenced within the 15-business day statutory time limit.

Goal 1: *Clients who are able to work become self-reliant through employment.*

Core Business Areas: *Employment Programs, Temporary Assistance and Disability Assistance.*

The Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance supports income assistance clients in their efforts to achieve self-reliance and greater community participation. To fulfill this mandate, the ministry will continue to assist those clients who are able to work to find and maintain employment.

Clients who leave income assistance for jobs tend to have higher incomes and their children are less likely to receive income assistance when they become adults. Children whose parents work are also more likely to complete high school, attain higher levels of training and education, and be actively involved in the labour market when they reach adulthood.

Performance Measure:

Goal 1 Performance Measure	2001/02 Baseline	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
1.1 Percentage of BC's population aged 19-64 receiving temporary assistance with employment-related obligations.	3.4%	1.1%	0.87%	0.84%	0.80%
2005/06 result for April through June			0.95%		

Assisting clients to find employment continues to be a critical aspect of the ministry's mission. Temporary assistance is provided to people who have employment-related obligations, and for those who are excused from seeking work (e.g., parents of a young child, temporary illness or injury requiring medical treatment). Measure 1.1 tracks the percentage of British Columbia's working age population receiving temporary assistance. A lower percentage indicates that fewer people are in need of assistance and more are contributing to a strong and vibrant provincial economy.

The percentage of British Columbia's population receiving income assistance who are able to work has been significantly reduced since 2001/02. The ministry anticipates this percentage will continue to decline as more people do not require assistance or leave income assistance.

Objective 1: *Clients actively seek work.*

Strategies:

- 1. Pre-applicants are required to undertake a three-week self-directed work search as a condition of eligibility.*
- 2. Clients with employment-related obligations are required to complete and comply with employment plans as a condition of eligibility.*

Performance Measure:

Goal 1 Performance Measures	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
1.2 Average percentage of clients with employment related obligations who leave the caseload each month.	10.7%	9.9%	8.7%	7.2%
2005/06 results for April through June		10.8%		

Assisting clients who are able to work in finding sustained employment remains the highest priority of the ministry. The ministry provides pre-employment and job placement services, as well as employment supports, to assist clients achieve independence from income assistance through employment. Clients who leave income assistance for employment have higher incomes and achieve a better standard of living.

Measure 1.2 gauges the success of clients achieving financial independence. As clients with employment obligations continue to find alternatives to income assistance through their own actions and participation in ministry programs, this percentage will continue to decrease.

Goal 2: *Clients increase their independence through employment, volunteer and income assistance programs.*

Core Business Areas: *Employment Programs, Temporary Assistance and Disability Assistance.*

The ministry will continue to provide income assistance and a range of programs to support clients as they work to increase their independence. The ministry recognizes a combination of supports may be required for clients who experience barriers to employment. Some clients may benefit from services that support life-skill development or volunteer opportunities as they increase their employability and potential for more independence. The ministry will continue to fund employment programs specifically to support persons with disabilities to find sustainable employment or enhance their participation in the community.

Performance Measure:

Goal 2 Performance Measures	2001/02 Baseline	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
2.1 Percentage of BC's population receiving income assistance.	6%	3.6%	3.7%	3.5%	3.5%
2005/06 results for April through June			3.4%		

Measure 2.1 shows the overall percentage of the provincial population that is receiving income assistance. This includes clients receiving temporary assistance, as well as those receiving disability assistance. A lower percentage indicates a decreasing proportion of the provincial population is dependent on income assistance. Results for the first quarter of 2005 show that the percentage of the provincial population receiving income assistance is lower than had been expected. A number of factors have contributed to this result and the ministry anticipates the continued growth in BC's economy and the delivery of programs that move clients towards independence will further reduce this number in future years.

Performance Measure:

Goal 2 Performance Measures	2001/02 Baseline	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
2.2 Percentage of total caseload receiving disability assistance.	29.6%	49.8%	53.6%	56.4%	58.4%
2005/06 results for April through June			53.2%		

Measure 2.2 tracks the percentage of the total caseload receiving disability assistance. Results for the first quarter of 2005 indicate a continued growth in this measure. As the number of clients receiving temporary assistance declines (i.e., demonstrating success in finding employment) the proportion receiving disability assistance will grow.

Objective 1: *Persons with disabilities who seek work find employment and persons with disabilities who seek to volunteer are placed in volunteer positions.*

Strategies:

1. *Employment services and related supports are provided to persons with disabilities to enhance their self-reliance.*

Performance Measure:

Goal 2 Performance Measures	2002/03 Baseline	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
2.3 Percentage of persons receiving disability assistance who declare income from working or receive volunteer supplements.	13.6%	15.1%	15.0%	15.2%	15.5%
2005/06 results to July 27			15.4%		

In April 2002, the ministry introduced the Employment Strategy for Persons with Disabilities (ESPD). The strategy includes the Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities (EPPD), as well as the Minister’s Council on Employment for Persons with Disabilities. Both of these initiatives support persons with disabilities as they enhance their employability and engage in employment to the greatest degree possible; this may include full or part-time work, or volunteering.

The ministry will continue to provide pre-employment services, assisted job search, job coaching, job placement, follow-up services, employment crisis services and assistance with starting a business for disabled clients.

Volunteering is a valuable activity for many clients who are receiving disability assistance and are not able to fully support themselves through employment. Community work may lead to employment, as it often provides valuable skills and experience. This is an opportunity for clients to contribute to their communities, thereby enhancing their participation with others.

This measure provides a conservative count of volunteer activity, as it only tracks those who report receiving supplements for volunteering. There is a substantial amount of additional volunteer activity that the ministry is unable to measure. Results for the first four months of fiscal 2005/06 show a continued increase in the percentage of disability assistance clients who either had employment income or received volunteer supplements.

Goal 3: *Clients receive supplementary assistance for health and transportation needs.*

Core Business Area: *Supplementary Assistance.*

The ministry provides a range of supplementary social services designed to meet the health and transportation needs of clients. These services include confirmed job supplements, health assistance, seniors’ supplement, bus passes and travel assistance, and user fees for continuing care and alcohol and drug facilities.

Objective 1: Clients receive health care supports in a timely manner.

Ministry clients with special health care needs frequently require equipment, supplements and supports tailored to their specific requirements. Their ability to access these resources in a timely manner assists their quality of life, ability to find employment and participation in the community. The ministry will establish specific service standards based upon the critical nature of these supports as a minimum expectation of performance.

Performance Measure:

Goal 3 Performance Measures	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
3.1 Average number of working days required for the adjudication of short-term nutritional supplement requests.	N/A	Establish Baseline	8	5

Measure 3.1 evaluates the ministry’s performance in the review and adjudication of requests for short-term nutritional supplements provided by the ministry. Nutritional supplements are critical to the wellbeing of vulnerable clients, including infants and persons with disabilities. Future year targets anticipate continual improvements in performance and these time-frames may be shortened pending establishment of the baseline.

Goal 4: Individuals have access to a fair and timely reconsideration and appeal process.

Core Business Area: Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal.

Objective 1: Reconsideration issues are efficiently resolved.

Strategies:

1. *The efficient processing of requests for reconsideration is monitored and, when necessary, procedures are amended to ensure reconsideration timelines are within statutory requirements.*

Performance Measure:

Goal 4 Performance Measures	2003/04 Baseline	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
4.1 Percentage of reconsideration decisions that are made within ten business days.	81.9%	79.7%	87%	88%	90%
2005 results to June 30			83%		

Clients have the right to request a reconsideration of ministry decisions. This is an internal ministry process — a ‘second look’ — that is separate from the external appeal process. Clients can apply to Reconsideration Adjudicators to review the ministry’s decision. If unsatisfied with this decision, a client may appeal further to the Employment and Assistance Tribunal office.

A higher percentage for this measure indicates the ministry is doing a better job of meeting regulatory requirements and providing timely and efficient service to clients. Adjudication of health decisions represents a large and growing proportion of the reconsideration requests that the ministry undertakes annually. Health reconsiderations assess issues specific to individuals, such as their eligibility for a persons with disability designation or requirements for tailored medical equipment, supplies and supports. As a result, health reconsiderations are often complex, requiring additional medical evidence to be submitted by professionals and detailed examination of all case materials. Despite the impacts associated with the growing health reconsiderations caseload, the results to June 2005 show a marked increase in the ministry’s success at achieving statutory timelines. Targets for 2005/06 and subsequent years call for a steady increase in this measure.

Objective 2: *Decisions are made on appeals and parties notified within the statutory timelines.*

Strategies:

- 1. The efficient processing of appeals is monitored and procedures are amended, when required, to ensure appeal timelines are within statutory requirements.***

The BC Employment and Assistance appeal system ensures unbiased, fair, timely and transparent decision-making for clients.

The Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal operates under the authority of the *Employment and Assistance Act*. The tribunal operates independently of the ministry, administering its appeal process through a central office based in Victoria. The appeal process begins after a client has gone through the reconsideration process and is still unsatisfied with the outcome. The tribunal is composed of a full-time tribunal chair and one or more part-time vice-chairs appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, approximately 200 regionally-based panel members appointed by the Minister, and staff appointed under the *Public Service Act*.

Performance Measure:

Goal 4 Performance Measures	2002/03 Baseline	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
4.2 Percentage of appeals commenced within the 15-business day statutory time limit.	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%
2005/06 results to June 30			100%		

Measure 4.2 tracks the percentage of appeals held within the 15-day statutory time limit as set out in the Employment and Assistance Regulation. Future year targets for this measure are also set at 100 per cent, reflecting the ministry's commitment to ensuring fair and timely access to the appeal process.

Discontinued Performance Measures:

The following table provides a summary of discontinued performance measures.

Discontinued 2004/05 Performance Measures	Explanation
1.3 Percentage of Job Placement clients who remain independent of income assistance for at least six months.	This measure focuses on one client group within the expected to work client category and is included as part of measure 1.2 (Average percentage of clients with employment related obligations who leave the caseload each month) by reporting on the results of all ministry programs rather than focusing on one particular program.
2.4 Percentage of persons with persistent multiple barriers who participate in a ministry program.	Measure 2.3 (Percentage of persons receiving disability assistance who declare income from working or receive volunteer supplements) provides a picture of those clients who are increasing their independence. Participation in a ministry program contributes to clients' ability to seek independence, but does not measure their independence.
3.1 Percentage of available emergency shelter beds accessed.	This measure is being discontinued as responsibility for the Emergency Shelter Program has shifted to the Minister Responsible for Housing (now part of the Ministry of Forests and Range).
4.1 Percentage of appeals processed from initial intake to final decisions within statutory timelines.	This measure refined measure 3.2 (Percentage of appeals commenced within the 15-business day statutory time limit) by including both the appeal process and the final decision in the result.
5.1 Percentage of clients using electronic fund transfers.	The ministry will continue to promote the use of electronic fund transfers.

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Discontinued 2004/05 Performance Measures	Explanation
5.2 Comprehensive strategic risk profile completed.	The ministry will continue to enhance enterprise-wide risk management.
5.4 Percentage of employees with a performance and development plan.	The completion of employee performance and development plans (EPDP) is an ongoing task and, once completed, plans are continually updated. Fluctuations in this measure primarily result from staff movement between jobs and classifications.
5.5 Percentage of employees with a personal learning plan.	Personal learning plans are a component of employee performance and development plans. The completion of personal learning plans is an ongoing task and, once completed, plans are continually updated. Fluctuations in this measure primarily result from staff movement between jobs and classifications or completion of training.

Related Initiatives and Planning Processes

Deregulation and Regulatory Reform

As reported in the 2004/05 Annual Service Plan Report, the ministry exceeded its three-year target of a 33 per cent regulatory reduction by achieving 34.3 per cent reduction by June 2004. The legislative framework for British Columbia's income assistance system is now simpler and more understandable. The ministry's target for the duration of this service plan is to maintain the current level (0 per cent net increase) and continue to reduce the regulatory burden where possible.

Overviews of Human Resource Plan and Information Resource Management Plan

Human Resource Plan

The ministry Human Resource Plan overview is available on the ministry website at: <http://www.mhr.gov.bc.ca/sp/>

Information Resource Management Plan

The ministry Information Resource Management Plan overview is available on the ministry website at: <http://www.mhr.gov.bc.ca/sp/>

Appendix

Glossary

Caseload — Number of family units receiving temporary, disability or supplementary assistance.

Disability Assistance — Financial assistance provided to eligible persons who have been designated as meeting the criteria of a Person with Disabilities, as defined in the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*.

Earned income — Any money or value received in exchange for work or the provision of a service (this includes stipends provided to clients for their participation in volunteer positions designed to build employment skills).

Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal — Agency that administers the appeal panel process. Its role begins when a Notice of Appeal is received from the appellant. At that point, the ministry operates at ‘arms length’ from the tribunal process, and is simply one of the parties to the appeal.

Employment Plan — A document that initiates discussion between the client and the ministry and supports employment planning and successful client outcomes. This is a mandatory requirement for most clients with employment-related obligations.

Employment Programs — Programs targeted toward employment and job readiness established or funded under the *Employment and Assistance Act* and the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*.

Employment-related Obligations — The ministry’s expectation that a client will seek work, based upon individual ability.

Employment Strategy for Persons with Disabilities (ESPD) — A strategy designed to assist persons with disabilities to participate in employment-related activities to the best of their ability. The strategy recognizes that individuals experience disabilities in varying degrees, at different stages of their lives, and provides flexibility for those who want to volunteer or work full-time, part-time, or be self-employed.

Persons with Disabilities — People meeting the criteria as set out in the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*.

Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers — People with multiple barriers to employment are those who meet the criteria as set out in the Employment and Assistance Regulations. Examples of multiple barriers are literacy issues, limited education and work experience,

long-term dependence on assistance and medical conditions that preclude or impede employment.

Reconsideration — When a client disagrees with a ministry decision, the client may request a review of the decision. The process involves a written request, which is reviewed by a Reconsideration Adjudicator who makes a new decision. If the client does not agree with that decision, the matter may proceed to the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal.

Supplementary Assistance — Supplementary assistance addresses pressing needs, such as health assistance, seniors' supplement and bus passes.

Temporary Assistance — Financial assistance provided to eligible persons who are expected to achieve independence through employment.

