

2019 - 6 Leveraging Canada Revenue Agency Infrastructure to Deliver Financial Assistance to Eligible Manitobans

Moved by: SEED Winnipeg

Whereas: The Province of Manitoba provides financial assistance to low-income Manitobans through Canada Revenue Agency via personal income tax returns (e.g., the Personal Tax Credit and Education Property Tax Credit) as well as through direct income transfers to Manitobans (e.g., Employment and Income Assistance, RentAssist, the Manitoba Child Benefit, and the 55 PLUS Manitoba Income Supplement).

Whereas: These financial assistance programs are integral to ensuring that low-income Manitobans can support themselves and their families to procure necessary goods and services including housing, food, and other personal and household needs.

Whereas: Take-up of programs such as the Manitoba Child Benefit and the 55 PLUS Manitoba Income Supplement may be underutilized as a result of the bureaucracy through which these benefits are delivered, which requires eligible Manitobans to learn about eligibility criteria and application processes and to submit application forms to Provincial Services each year. This process poses an administrative burden for the Province of Manitoba, eligible Manitobans, and non-profit organizations which support eligible Manitobans to apply for these programs.

Whereas: The Province of Manitoba has committed to reducing Red Tape in the 2016 and 2017 Speeches from the Throne, through the Red Tape Reduction Task Force, and through the Red Tape Reduction and Government Efficiency Acts. The Province of Manitoba could continue these efforts to increase the efficiency of provincial benefit programs established under the Social Services Administration Act by partnering with the Government of Canada to administer these programs. The Canada Revenue Agency has the existing infrastructure to determine eligibility and administer provincial benefit programs to Canadians, and does so for provinces including Ontario and Saskatchewan, among others.

Whereas: Increasing access to these financial assistance programs will improve the well-being of Manitobans living in poverty or may assist in moving Manitobans out of poverty.

Be It Resolved That: The Province of Manitoba partner with Canada Revenue Agency to administer the 55 PLUS Manitoba Income Supplement and Manitoba Child Benefit through Canada Revenue Agency. Eligibility for the 55 PLUS Program Manitoba Income Supplement should be automatically assessed by utilizing income tax filing data, and benefits paid quarterly through Canada Revenue Agency alongside the GST/HST Credit. Similarly, eligibility for the Manitoba Child Benefit should be automatically assessed by utilizing income tax filing data, and benefits paid monthly through Canada Revenue Agency as a supplement to the Canada Child Benefit.