



Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
Department of Health and Community Services

# Provincial Special Child Welfare Allowance Program Operational Standards

January, 2008

**OPERATIONAL STANDARDS - SPECIAL CHILD WELFARE**  
**ALLOWANCE PROGRAM**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This Manual for the Special Child Welfare Allowance Program is a reference for the Regional Health Authorities (RHAs) and clients.

The Manual outlines the requirements related to program eligibility, service delivery and monitoring of services. This manual must be used by families who use this funding to hire home support workers as it outlines Departmental operational standards and required forms. The format may be altered to meet individual RHA requirements, and the RHAs may develop additional forms. No forms should contain logos or be identified as DHCS or RHAs forms.

The Regional Health Authorities include:

- Eastern Health Authority                      Eastern Health
- Central Health Authority                      Central Health
- Western Health Authority                      Western Health
- Labrador-Grenfell Health Authority              Labrador-Grenfell Health

### **Structure and Numbering**

Operational standards are grouped into sections as indicated in the Table of Contents. Each operational standard has an Arabic number to correspond to the section of the manual, as well as an Arabic number to correspond to the requirement itself (e.g. 2-10). Multiples of 10 have been used to identify sequential operational standards within the same section. Reserve numbers are available for the addition of new operational standards.

### **Responsibility for Manual Reviews, Revisions and Additions**

The Department of Health and Community Services (DHCS) will be responsible for review of the provincial operational standards regarding the Special Child Welfare Allowance every three years. Specific standards may be reviewed as issues arise. Upon review and consultation, any changes and additions shall be forwarded to the four RHAs for inclusion in the manual. The RHAs shall be responsible to distribute revisions to the various stakeholders in their region. Holders of the manual are responsible for keeping their manuals up-to-date based upon revisions and additions received. It is the responsibility of the holder to ensure that their manual is current and the RHAs have their correct mailing address.

Upon receiving a request for an operational standard revision or addition, the RHAs will:

- review the request for revisions/additions;
- determine if the suggestion is requirement related;
- endeavor to clarify; and
- forward requested edits and/or suggestions to the DHCS.

The DHCS will:

- research proposed material as necessary;
- review, revise or edit material for appropriateness to the manual;
- incorporate approved operational standards in the manual; and,
- distribute copies of the approved operational standards and revised table of contents, if applicable.

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES</b> <b>Operational Standards - The Special Child Welfare Allowance Program</b>	
<b>Section 1: Program Description</b>	<b>Operational Standard: 1.10 to 1.60</b>
<b>Effective Date: January, 2008</b>	<b>Revised:</b>

**1. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Special Child Welfare Allowance (SCWA) program is intended to assist families (including relatives) offset some of the costs of additional services/supports incurred in the at-home maintenance of children with developmental and/or physical disabilities. The intent of the program is to help minimize additional financial costs which may be present when a family cares for a child with a disability at home. Funds may also be utilized to enhance the developmental potential of a child with a disability. Supports offered through this program shall be specifically related to the additional needs of the child as a direct consequence of the disability.

A major focus of the program is to strengthen each family's ability to support a member with a disability. Families shall be encouraged to utilize the skills and abilities (resources) inherent within the immediate and extended family. In addition, there shall be consideration of the support of family friends, advocacy and support agencies as responses are developed. Empowerment of families and support from the community should allow for the development of partnerships that will promote inclusive, supportive and resourceful environments and communities.

Special Child Welfare Allowance operational standards contained within this document are the Department of Health and Community Services' minimum standards for the provision of this service. These operational standards are designed to ensure the delivery of quality services to families with children with disabilities throughout the province. They acknowledge the unique and complex needs of these children and families and the service required to meet their needs. The operational standards provide a process for reviews and must be implemented in a manner that reflects the expectations of the Province.

Regular monitoring of the program will ensure that the service is delivered within the operational standards and that there is a commitment to continuous improvement. These operational standards are reviewed at regular intervals and revised if necessary to incorporate new guidelines that will support an operational standard that best meets the care, program and service needs of the children and families.

**1.10 Purpose**

The Manual for the Special Child Welfare Allowance Program is intended to provide direction regarding the provision of service under this program to:

- Individuals receiving service and
- Regional Health Authorities (RHAs).

This manual establishes the minimum standards required to ensure consistency of service delivery across the Province. However, exceptional circumstances may be considered by the RHA when approving service. Any inquiries from individuals regarding the provision of Special Child Welfare Allowance Services must be directed to the RHAs.

### **1.20 Authority**

The operational standards contained in the Manual governing the Special Child Welfare Allowance Program are established under the authority of the *Health and Community Services Act*.

### **1.30 Definitions**

Throughout this Manual,

- the term RHA refers to the four Regional Health Authorities,
- the term DHCS refers to the Department of Health and Community Services,
- “staff” refers to staff of the RHAs such as social workers, nurses, financial assistance officers, etc. assigned to the delivery of the Special Child Welfare Allowance Program.

### **1.40 Philosophy**

The Special Child Welfare Allowance Program is based on the following assumptions:

- the most desired place for children with disabilities to live is with their natural parents or family,
- the family has the responsibility to ensure full access to the services that will maximize the attainment of a child's potential,
- whenever possible readily available and accessible resources within the family and community should be encouraged and supported, and
- that assistance be provided to families so that children remain at home and that the child's special needs are addressed in an appropriate manner.

### **1.50 Goals**

The Special Child Welfare Allowance Program's primary goals the following:

- to increase the family's ability to access required services which will allow for the child to remain at home,
- to facilitate the return of children with disabilities to their natural families, and
- to enhance the developmental potential of children with physical and/or developmental disabilities.

## **1.60 Principles**

The Special Child Welfare Program operates within the following principles:

- The program is intended to assist families (including relatives) to offset some of the costs of additional services/supports incurred in the at-home maintenance of children with developmental and/or physical disabilities.
- Funds may also be utilized to enhance the developmental potential of a child with a disability.
- Supports offered through this program must be specifically related to the additional needs of the child as a direct consequence of the disability.
- Families are expected to access generic programs available for all children before applying for funding through the program.
- All children receiving funding on an ongoing basis from this program shall have an Individual Support Services Plan (ISSP).

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES</b> <b>Operational Standards - The Special Child Welfare Allowance Program</b>	
<b>Section 2: Special Child Welfare Allowance</b>	<b>Operational Standard: 2.10 to 2.70</b>
<b>Effective Date: January, 2008</b>	<b>Revised:</b>

## **2. SPECIAL CHILD WELFARE ALLOWANCE**

### **2.10 Service Delivery Model**

The Special Child Welfare Allowance Program is a provincial program. Standards and services are implemented through a consistent, coordinated system of assessment, planning and service delivery by the RHAs. When the child requires supports and services, families are expected to access generic programs available for all children before applying for funding through the Special Child Welfare Allowance Program. Services are provided following a collaborative assessment process during which the needs of the child and family are clearly defined.

### **2.20 Initial Application**

Requests to complete an application for the SCWA program may be made from any source with the concurrence of the family. A family may apply for the program by making application to the RHA. Their application may be supported by other professionals/agencies. Staff shall respond to an application request as soon as possible to process the application within 30 days of referral.

The application form shall be completed and a home visit shall be conducted as part of the application process. The Social Worker, in conjunction with the family, shall collect the appropriate information. Families shall be responsible to provide supporting documentation.

The Social Worker shall assess the specific requirements of the child as related to the disability. The assessment shall consider the items listed below in 2.40 and 2.50 and their specific relevance to the child/family. The type and extent of required services shall be determined and specific costs attached to provision of such supports.

The assessment shall identify the supports/resources available within the family, extended family and community. Informal supports from a family's social network should be identified, encouraged and strengthened. Except in exceptional circumstances, paid support shall not be put in place to replace these informal supports.

The Social Worker shall provide a recommendation indicating the effect the provision of such services will have on the child and family and indicate in the submission how the family and child will be affected if the requested services and financial supports are not provided.

The Social Worker shall make referrals on behalf of the family to other appropriate programs offered by the RHA, other government departments, non-governmental organizations or



agencies.

Staff of the RHA shall assess the family's financial ability to meet the special needs of the child, administer the Financial Eligibility section of the application and enter an effective date, review date, and the amount of SCWA recommended in the appropriate sections of the application form.

The initial application shall be accompanied by supporting documentation from a qualified professional verifying the disability.

Where families are eligible for insurance coverage and are required to pay a portion of the cost for medications, supplies and/or equipment; consideration may be given to the outstanding cost, provided that the item is required because of the child's disability.

Service contracts may be required prior to the payment of funds under the SCWA Program for various services. See Section 7 of Provincial Home Support Services Operational Standards Manual for information regarding this process.

### **2.30 Review and Monitoring**

A Special Child Welfare Allowance may be approved for a maximum of twelve (12) months. Allowances shall be reviewed prior to their expiry date or at minimum every twelve months. The review shall be completed by staff of the RHA and submitted to the appropriate manager(or designate) for approval. If the family's financial circumstances should change at any time prior to the formal review date, the Financial Eligibility section of the application shall be re-administered and eligibility re-established.

A SCWA review shall consist of:

- a determination of the effectiveness of the allowance in meeting the needs of the child and family;
- an accounting of how the allowance has been spent;
- a review of the needs of the child to determine if these have changed; and
- completion of the Financial Eligibility section.

### **2.40 Services and Supports Provided**

If the Special Child Welfare Allowance (SCWA) is to meet its stated program goals, it is important that a comprehensive review of the child's special needs be conducted. This review shall identify the services and supports that are directly related to the child's disability and that are required to ensure continued residence at home. The needs of each child, and therefore each family, will be different. Much of the responsibility of such service identification shall rest with the family in conjunction with the referral source and other professionals involved with the family.

The following items are representative of the types of services, supports, and equipment which

may be provided through the SCWA program:

Medications required due to a child's disability are provided through a Drug Card under the Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program. Where insurance exists, the Drug Card shall reference the allowable portion of costs. Non prescription, over the counter items directly related to the child's disability may also be considered as a separate expense.

Transportation to appointments/activities which are disability related, via the most economical and functional means. Reimbursement of transportation costs (including bus pass for child & adult) shall reflect the actual costs incurred. Types of transportation include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Medical appointments
- Social and recreational travel to activities where such are seen as meeting the developmental needs of the child and are above and beyond the typical activity expectations of the child as detailed in the child's ISSP.

Special Equipment/ Apparatus/ Supplies - The Department of Health and Community Services has delegated the responsibility for the provision of equipment (Special Assistance Program) to the RHA. The RHA maintains a listing of available equipment and apparatus. In the first instance all such requests shall be considered through this program via an Authorization for Service form. The SCWA program policy will only permit consideration for the purchase of apparatus not covered by this program **if it is critical to the well-being of the child**, and with the approval of the designated RHA representative.

Disposable diapers are also provided through the Special Assistance Program. Such requests shall be considered through this program via an Authorization for Service form. This item shall be considered a special need for inclusion in the Special Child Welfare Allowance only for those children who are beyond the normal toilet training age (i.e. 36 months).

➤ Supportive Services:

Funding may be provided to enable the family to avail of supportive services. The following shall outline the parameters to be considered in these circumstances:

- The financial supports to purchase/hire home support are a supplement to the supervision/parenting required and are intended to be of assistance to the family. The costs of these services shall not exceed the ceiling established for home support services for individuals with disabilities and all policies contained in the Provincial Home Support Services Operational Standards Manual shall apply.
- Home supports shall be considered only where the intensity of supervision greatly exceeds that which must be provided to all children. There should also be recognition that attendance at school may replace a portion of home support needs. Children/youth over the age of 12 years may be left unsupervised for portions of time based on the child's/youth's ability to accept such responsibility. Families may be eligible for funding for home supports from the SCWA program due to the requirements for supervision for

youth over the age of 12 years.

- Babysitting or child care to enable employment shall be considered for children **under 12 years** in exceptional circumstances only. Babysitting or child care shall be considered only if the needs of the family exceed that which might typically occur and if the need is related to the child's disability.
- Fees for child care/preschool centres are generally not regarded as special needs within the SCWA program. Child care in a licensed centre shall be considered only when it is recommended by an appropriate professional to be a necessary developmental prerequisite. The eligible amount shall be that which exceeds current child care expenses. If there are no current child care expenses incurred by the family, half day placement should be considered.
- Escort for special transportation to medical appointments, clinics, hospitals, etc., shall be covered only when a parent needs physical assistance in managing the child.
- One-on-one support in licensed child care may be considered.
- Residential respite may be considered for time periods in which it would be beneficial for the family unit and child to be temporarily separated due to issues related to the child's disability. These periods (e.g. week-ends) will give parents time to do things together and/ or with the other children in the family.

## **2.50 Services and Supports Excluded**

The listing above is not meant to be all inclusive. The major criteria for inclusion of a service request within the SCWA program is that the need for service be directly related to the child's disability, and **has no relation to the usual supports of a family to the child**, and that its provision will enhance the developmental potential of the child as well as supporting the child to live in the family.

The following issues shall be considered when determining supports and services:

- Special diet, provision of eyeglasses (not including repair), replacement of household/clothing items damaged by child, educational materials, etc., shall only be considered where such is obviously well beyond the expected norms, related to a child's disability and with supporting documentation.
- The Special Child Welfare Allowance program shall not be used to provide Teacher Aides. While this service may be a valid need of the child, provision of Teacher Aides is the responsibility of the Department of Education. Tutoring shall not be considered under this program. Families who request assistance with tutoring should be referred to the school guidance counselor to determine options that may be available in the school (e.g. peer tutoring).
- While attendance at a child care centre may not be viewed as a need directly related to the disability of the child, the need for a support staff to enable such attendance is not a typical family requirement and may, with appropriate documentation, be considered within the SCWA program. Although support staff funded through this program are hired and employed by the family, social work staff can assist families to ensure the quality of

this service meets their needs. For example, the Social Worker may assist families (upon request) to review the program support for the child, staff training needs to deliver a program, etc. As families are the employers of their support workers and receive funding through the SCWA to enable this activity, staff shall advise families of their employer responsibilities and all of the policies contained in the Provincial Home Support Services Operational Standards Manual shall apply.

## **2.60 Eligibility Criteria**

The SCWA program is intended to provide supports and services to children with either developmental and/or physical disability. The following should be considered when determining eligibility:

### ➤ Service Eligibility

- Any family who has a son or daughter with a disability who is living at home and is not older than eighteen years of age, may apply for assistance through the SCWA program.
- Relatives who are caring for a child (niece, nephew, grandchild) with a disability in their home may also apply as long as the child is not older than eighteen years of age.
- Any family who has a son or daughter with a specific illness (e.g. heart condition, leukemia, renal failure (dialysis) or who is acutely sick, but has no disability) cannot be considered within the parameters of the SCWA program. There are other programs available within Health and Community Services and/or other departments which may meet the needs of these families. If regional staff have questions as to the status of a specific condition or program, consultation with Departmental staff is strongly recommended.

### ➤ Financial Eligibility

- Determination of specific eligibility to receive the SCWA is conducted via the administration of the Financial Eligibility section of the application. Families in receipt of Income Support (Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment) need not complete this section as they will meet the financial eligibility requirements. Specific details are outlined the Financial Operational Standards Manual Governing the Special Child Welfare Allowance.

## **2.70 Terminating Service**

Where financial support is provided to families and they are non-compliant with policy / service contracts, staff of the RHA shall advise the family in writing of the concern, assist them in remedying the situation and provide a time frame for the desired outcome. If the family does not comply with the request, the RHA may terminate the allowance immediately by notice in writing to the family. Staff of the RHA shall take the necessary actions within the RHA to ensure that payments are suspended.

When the child reaches age eighteen, he/she is no longer eligible for funding under this program; however, may still require the same support services. At age eighteen, he/she is considered an adult and may apply for funding through the income support program under Human Resources, Labour and Employment. The staff of the RHA shall ensure that he/she is referred to the Community Support Services Program for any additional supports required as a result of the disability. This should be initiated at the ISSP following the child's seventeenth birthday to ensure a smooth transition.

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES</b> <b>Operational Standards - The Special Child Welfare Allowance Program</b>	
<b>Section 3: Department of Health &amp; Community Services' Responsibilities</b>	<b>Operational Standard: 3.10 to 3.20</b>
<b>Effective Date: January, 2008</b>	<b>Revised:</b>

### **3. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **3.10 Responsibility for Establishing Provincial Operational Standards**

The DHCS will be responsible for:

- developing and revising provincial requirements and regulations regarding the Special Child Welfare Allowance Program, in consultation with the RHAs and other stakeholders,
- planning and coordinating research and evaluation of provincial requirements to ensure that services are integrated and decisions are evidence-based,
- providing direction and support to the RHAs to deliver a continuum of programs and services within available resources,
- ensuring that all provincial standards are met, and
- communicating all requirements and regulations to the RHAs.

#### **3.20 Responsibility for Funding**

- The DHCS will provide funding for the RHAs to provide Special Child Welfare Allowance program services in compliance with requirements.
- The DHCS will be responsible for implementing a process for ensuring fiscal accountability by the RHAs.

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES</b> <b>Operational Standards - The Special Child Welfare Allowance Program</b>	
<b>Section 4: Regional Health Authorities Responsibility</b>	<b>Operational Standard: 4.10 to 4.50</b>
<b>Effective Date: January, 2008</b>	<b>Revised:</b>

#### **4. REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITIES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

**4.10** The RHAs are accountable to the DHCS. The RHAs will be responsible for developing and implementing the Special Child Welfare Allowance Program in accordance with the provincial operational standards. The program will include processes for:

- Acceptance of referrals
- Acceptance/redirection of inquiries
- Assessment/reassessment of need and eligibility
- Financial assessment
- Initiation of Individual Support Service Plans (ISSP)
- Issuing payment for eligible services
- Waitlist management
- Establishing a service contract
- Ongoing follow-up and monitoring of service provided
- Monitoring quality of program delivery and outcomes
- Distribution of revisions to the manual to the various regional stakeholders.

#### **4.20 Implementation of Service**

The staff administering the SCWA Program shall be able to provide social work support to families. This support includes but is not limited to counseling, advocacy, referrals, service planning, etc. Social Workers and other staff of the RHA shall assess the family situation to determine the special needs of the child, compare this with the family's financial position and ability to pay for additional services and using the appropriate financial assessment tool determine if the family is eligible for any form of financial assistance.

#### **4.30 Developing a Service Plan**

A child with a disability whose family receives a Special Child Welfare Allowance on an ongoing basis shall have an ISSP. The Social Worker shall initiate an ISSP if one is not already in place and participate in team meetings as required. Children and families, including friends and advocates, if families desire, are required to be invited to actively participate in the development of the plan. Information on the development of an ISSP and the Model for Co-ordination of Services to Children and Youth with Special Needs, including the necessary forms, may be obtained from the Child Health Coordinator, the RHA representative on the Regional

Integrated Services Management Team or from the web site <http://www.mescy.nl.ca>.

#### **4.40 Monitoring of Services**

A complete reassessment of services shall be conducted annually or more frequently at the discretion of the RHA.

#### **4.50 Service Contracts**

When funding is provided through the SCWA Program for the purpose of enabling the family to hire home support worker(s), the RHA shall enter into a Service Contract with the family prior to issuing the payment of any funds. Information regarding this process and the necessary forms are located in the Provincial Home Support Services Operational Standards Manual.



<b>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES</b> <b>Operational Standards - The Special Child Welfare Allowance Program</b>	
<b>Section 5: Responsibilities of the Family</b>	<b>Operational Standard: 5.10 to 5.20</b>
<b>Effective Date: January, 2008</b>	<b>Revised:</b>

**5. Responsibilities of the Family**

**5.10 Provide supporting documentation**

- The family shall request, obtain and forward the required documentation to the regional staff.
- Families shall be required to provide receipts and/or documents to verify that funds have been applied against the services for which the allowance was approved.

**5.20 Advising of changes in circumstances**

Families shall immediately advise regional staff of the following changes:

- Changes in the child's needs or living environment.
- Changes in family financial circumstances

# **APPENDIX A**



Government of Newfoundland and Labrador  
Department of Health and Community Services

# **Financial Operational Standards Manual**

## **Governing**

### **Special Child Welfare Allowance**

**January, 2008**

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES</b> <b>Financial Operational Standards Manual Governing</b> <b>Special Child Welfare Allowance</b>	
<b>Section: Definition</b>	<b>Operational Standard:</b>
<b>Effective Date: January, 2008</b>	<b>Revised:</b>

**1. Definition:**

The Special Child Welfare Allowance (SCWA) program is intended to assist families (including relatives) to offset some of the costs of additional services/supports incurred in the at-home maintenance of children with developmental and/or physical disabilities. The intent of the program is to help minimize additional financial costs which may be present when a family cares for a child with a disability at home. Funds may also be utilized to enhance the developmental potential of a child with a disability. Supports offered through this program must be specifically related to the additional needs of the child as a direct consequence of the disability.

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES</b> <b>Financial Operational Standards Manual Governing</b> <b>Special Child Welfare Allowance</b>	
<b>Section: Financial Eligibility Criteria</b>	<b>Operational Standard:</b>
<b>Effective Date: January, 2008</b>	<b>Revised:</b>

**2. Financial Eligibility Criteria:**

The financial ability of the family to provide for the special needs of their child is determined by the completion of the Financial Eligibility section of the Special Child Welfare Allowance application form. Applicants are assessed by considering the family’s requirements and expenses. If applicants are partially eligible, they shall pay their contribution towards the cost of their requirements before receiving funding from the Regional Health Authority (RHA).

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES</b> <b>Financial Operational Standards Manual Governing</b> <b>Special Child Welfare Allowance</b>	
<b>Section: Calculation of Requirements</b>	<b>Operational Standard:3.10-3.60</b>
<b>Effective Date: January, 2008</b>	<b>Revised:</b>

### 3. Calculation of Requirements

The information in these categories shall be adhered to in the completion of the Requirements Section of this assessment:

#### 3.10 Basic Living Allowance

Amount entered here is based on family size and living arrangements (own home or rental) as per the amount established by Income Support policy of the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment. This allowance shall be reduced if heat and/or light is included in the rent or if the actual cost of heat and/or light is used under the Fuel/Utilities category of this assessment. Please refer to the Income and Employment Support Regulations under the Income and Employment Support Act, Section 13(1) (2)

<http://www.hoa.gov.nl.ca/hoa/regulations/rc040144.htm>

#### 3.20 Children's Allowance

This category is included to enable families who do not qualify for the Canadian Child Tax Benefit (CCTB), National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS) and the Newfoundland and Labrador Child Benefit (NLCB) to retain an equal amount from their family income to provide regular support for their children. Calculations for the amount to be entered in this category are as follows:

Add the maximum amount available to the family for Canadian Child Tax Benefit (CCTB), National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS) and Newfoundland and Labrador Child Benefit (NLCB), minus the actual amount received. If families receive the full amount for these allowances, enter 0.

#### 3.30 Special Allowance

Amount entered here shall be the total cost of the child's special needs, on a monthly basis, as identified through the family assessment and recorded in the application. The costs of items such as drugs/disposable diapers/equipment etc. shall be included here even though such may be provided through an Authorization for Service form or Drug Card. Total amount entered here shall be accompanied by an itemized breakdown of the services and associated costs. If the family requires home supports for the purpose of respite or attendant care, the amount considered for home support shall not exceed the monthly maximum ceiling for this service.

### 3.40 Rent or Mortgage

Enter actual amount, the rental amount shall be in line with local community rates.

### 3.50 Fuel or Utilities

Enter actual amount (including proportion of wood or propane cost for heating) based upon annual averaging of actual costs. If costs of heat and light are contained in the monthly rental, make no entry.

### 3.60 Assessment of Debts/Expenses

Many debts may be taken into account when assessing the requirements of the family in the completion of the needs test. While an exhaustive listing cannot be provided, refer to the sample list provided at the back of the document.

Staff are requested to assess each debt in relation to the needs of the family. No increase in debt load, following initial application shall be considered unless very exceptional circumstances arise or unless items directly apply to disability costs.

In the event that debts allowed are related to loans/ credit card balances, staff are to determine the date these balances will be paid off and to subsequently reduce the allowable debts by the amounts originally approved for these items when the date is reached.

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES</b> <b>Financial Operational Standards Manual Governing</b> <b>Special Child Welfare Allowance</b>	
Section: Calculation of Resources	Operational Standard:4.10-4.50
Effective Date: January, 2008	Revised:

#### 4. Calculation of Resources

##### 4.10 Employment Income

Enter net income for 30 days as reported by the family. Verification of this entry is required. In situations where children are living with relatives, the income assessed shall be that of the natural parent(s), not the relatives. Where such information is not obtainable, or where such may preclude provisions of needed services/supports, consultation with the appropriate manager is suggested.

**Deductions for RRSP based on the average contributions for the last twelve months &/or RESP contributions at time of application will be permitted to continue.**

Deductions made on monthly cheque for items such as bonds, etc. shall be included as income and entered in this section.

##### 4.20 Employment Exemption

Enter the appropriate amount as per the Income and Employment Support Regulations under the Income and Employment Support Act, Section 12  
<http://www.hoa.gov.nl.ca/hoa/regulations/rc040144.htm>

##### 4.30 Employment Expenses

Amount entered here refers to the total of all expenses which are necessary to the securement of employment (i.e. child care fees, etc.) Receipts may be required. Any amount entered here shall be accompanied by an itemized list.



#### 4.40 Other Income

Any and all income from all sources such as Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance Benefits, Old Age Security, Veteran's Allowance, etc. shall be entered in this category. Refer to the listing provided in the Income and Employment Support Regulations under the Income and Employment Support Act, Section 8 (c)

<http://www.hoa.gov.nl.ca/hoa/regulations/rc040144.htm>

#### 4.50 Liquid Assets

Amount entered here refers to cash on hand, bank accounts, income from sale of land, property, or equipment, inheritance, winnings from games of chance, sale of a fishing license, payments from victim services (crime compensation), Stocks, Bonds, Mutual Funds, GIC's, and Investment Funds. The maximum liquid assets shall not exceed \$5,500 for a couple and \$3000 for a single parent. Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSP) shall not be considered in the calculation of liquid assets.

Registered Education Savings Plans (RESP) that are recognized by Canada Revenue Agency and held by families applying for Special Child Welfare Allowances will be exempt from being considered as liquid assets. Any other savings for educational purposes will not qualify for this exemption.

#### 4.60 Eligible Allowance

The difference between Total of Resources and Total of Requirements is the amount of Special Child Welfare Allowance eligibility. If the family has funds approved for home support services, the monthly amount issued for this purpose shall not exceed the ceiling for that service.

Please refer to format below for a sample of the Financial Eligibility section.

**Financial Eligibility (SCWA)**

<b>REQUIREMENTS</b>		<b>RESOURCES</b>	
Basic Living Allowance	_____	Employment Income	_____
Children's Allowance	_____		_____
	_____		_____
Special Allowance	_____	Employment Exemption	_____
Rent or Mortgage	_____	Income considered	_____
	_____		_____
Fuel & Utilities	_____	Employment Expenses	_____
Approved	_____	Subtotal	_____
Debts/Expenses	_____		_____
	_____		_____
_____	_____	Other Income	_____
_____	_____		_____
_____	_____		_____
Total A	\$ _____	Total B	\$ _____
Maximum Liquid Assets at any time during year			\$ _____
Amount of SCWA for which family is eligible			_____
( Difference between Total A and Total B)			\$ _____

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES</b> <b>Financial Operational Standards Manual Governing</b> <b>Special Child Welfare Allowance</b>	
<b>Section: Special Need Determination</b>	<b>Operational Standard: 5.10-5.20</b>
<b>Effective Date: January, 2008</b>	<b>Revised:</b>

## 5. Special Need Determination

### 5.10 Eligible Expenses

The Special Child Welfare Allowance Program is intended to cover expenses incurred by the natural family as a result of the child's disability. Eligible expenses may include, but are not limited to the following:

- home renovations for accessibility
- special equipment and supplies
- home support for respite and/or personal care
- transportation
- hostel accommodations/living allowance
- special diets
- program supports

### 5.20 Monthly Allowance Calculations

To calculate the total monthly special needs, the following is applicable:

- when services such as a Drug Card or equipment from the Special Assistance Program via an Authorization for Service form, the costs of these services shall be included in the determination of eligibility; and if provided, shall be deducted from the monthly entitlement before any further funds are issued. For example, if a family has \$325 of monthly special needs as follows:
  - \$150 - prescription drugs
  - \$ 75 - transportation
  - \$100 - home support
 and are eligible for \$200 per month after the application of the Needs Test, then if a Drug Card is issued this would mean that only an additional \$50 could be issued to this family; unless special approval is provided. Staff shall not issue a Drug Card and also provide \$200 of assistance.
- the child's needs should be assessed by obtaining appropriate documentation and reports from other agencies and professionals involved with the child. Verification of disability is required from a qualifying professional upon initial application and shall remain on file.

- the costs of one-time expenditures such as equipment, disability related transportation, etc. shall be included as costs only in the month in which such is incurred and are not to be averaged across the approval period. This may involve the re-administering of the Financial Eligibility section, as well as additional approvals being required. Some families may be eligible for funding of one time only expenses but not eligible on an ongoing basis.

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES</b> <b>Financial Operational Standards Manual Governing</b> <b>Special Child Welfare Allowance</b>	
<b>Section: Approval Process</b>	<b>Operational Standard: 6.10</b>
<b>Effective Date: January, 2008</b>	<b>Revised:</b>

**6. Approval Process:**

6.10 The following outlines the steps in the approval process:

- When the application has been completed in accordance with the process outlined and full financial eligibility exists, it shall be approved by the appropriate authority as established by the Regional Health Authority.
- Where financial eligibility does not exist for the services requested; special approval may be obtained from the appropriate authority as established by the Regional Health Authority; however, such approval would be reserved for situations involving extensive special needs and/or requiring assistance to prevent a child from having to leave his/her home and would require full support and recommendation of the Regional Program Director.
- Applications should receive prompt attention and should be assessed as soon as possible; it is expected that applications should be fully processed (i.e. approved/not approved) within 30 days of referral.
- Where financial eligibility exists and the allowance includes funding for home support services, the policies related to the home support program shall apply.

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES</b> <b>Financial Operational Standards Manual Governing</b> <b>Special Child Welfare Allowance</b>	
<b>Section: Payment Process</b>	<b>Operational Standard: 7.10</b>
<b>Effective Date: January, 2008</b>	<b>Revised:</b>

**7. Payment Process**

7.10 When a Special Child Welfare Allowance has been approved, funds will be issued either through recurring pay or short term pay. The following considerations apply:

- Any bills incurred prior to approval will not be considered for payment except in cases where the delay in the approval process is clearly beyond the control of the applicant.
- When approval has been obtained, the monthly amount issued shall not exceed the approved rate. If the child's needs should change prior to the formal review date a review should be initiated (see section 2.3 of the Provincial Special Child Welfare Allowance Program Operational Standards Manual).
- Families shall be required to provide receipts and/or documents which indicate that funds have been applied against those services for which the allowance was approved.
- If SCWA funds are used for the provision of home support and families are hiring their own home support workers no funding shall be issued prior to the signing of a funding agreement as per the Provincial Home Support Operational Standards. Copies of the signed agreement shall be retained on file and updated as necessary.

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES</b> <b>Financial Operational Standards Manual Governing</b> <b>Special Child Welfare Allowance</b>	
<b>Section: Financial Reviews</b>	<b>Operational Standard: 9.10-9.30</b>
<b>Effective Date: January, 2008</b>	<b>Revised:</b>

**8. Financial Reviews**

8.10 A Special Child Welfare Allowance may be approved for a maximum of twelve (12) months. Allowances shall be reviewed prior to their expiry date or at minimum every twelve months. The review shall be completed by staff of the RHA and submitted to the appropriate manager (or designate) for approval. If the family’s financial circumstances should change at any time prior to the formal review date, the Financial Eligibility section of the application shall be re-administered and eligibility re-established.

8.20 If direct funding is provided for home support as part of the Special Child Welfare Allowance, the individual’s financial records relating to the Direct Funding Agreement shall be reviewed according to the requirements of the Provincial Home Support Services Operational Standards Manual.

## **ALLOWABLE DEBT/ EXPENSES (Sample List)**

- Basic rate for cable;
- Basic rate for telephone and cell phone;
- Internet charges;
- Babysitting/ child care costs;
- Insurance for funeral expenses;
- Home insurance;
- Vehicle insurance, license and registration;
- Vehicle loan payment for the full amount (second vehicle payment may be considered if it is required for work or other legitimate reason). Receipts or confirmation from the loan agency are required.
- Personal loan payment(s) at the existing balance at the time of application;
- Board/Lodging cost for employment purposes if parent works/resides away from family home, if not considered under the employment exemption or allowance provided by employer for same;
- Professional fees and/or union dues if not covered via employer or already considered in the net earned income amount;
- RESP contributions at the rate being paid at time of application;
- Deductions for RRSP based on the average contributions for the last twelve months;
- Life/Health insurance premiums;
- Loans for disability related equipment and/or the provision of disability services with the necessary documentation provided;
- A debt incurred to purchase a snowmobile used for recreational purposes would not be approved, yet if the vehicle was needed to acquire wood for heating purposes such might be given favourable consideration;
- Credit card debt for the existing amount at the time of application with the minimum monthly payment amount used in the calculations;
- Municipal taxes (where not included in the mortgage payment); and
- Maintenance (alimony) payments and child support (if not deducted from salary) and supported by receipts.