News Release

Social assistance review – community engagement

IQALUIT, Nunavut (September 11, 2015) – The Departments of Family Services and Economic Development and Transportation are following through with commitments made in the government's mandate by conducting public engagement sessions in each Nunavut community to help reform the approach to social assistance by enhancing training, career development, employment and economic development.

"Currently, 45 per cent of Nunavummiut receive income assistance, amounting to $40 million annually," said Minister of Family Services Jeannie Ugyuk. "The goal of these sessions is to work together with communities to determine how social assistance can better support Nunavummiut to take advantage of training and job opportunities."

The Government of Nunavut is delivering on its commitment in Sivumut Abluqta to review social assistance to ensure that those who truly need the support receive it, while also investing in economic development to secure a prosperous future for all. This commitment falls under the second priority of healthy families through strong and resilient communities.

The sessions will also help find economic development opportunities that can lead to more employment in communities.

"The Government of Nunavut wants to understand what the current economic strengths are and how we can build on these to create more jobs and economic opportunities in each community," said Minister of Economic Development and Transportation Monica Ell. "This community engagement will also give us feedback on how to improve our programs."

Another goal is to determine how Nunavummiut want to develop the territory's economy.

Some of the expected outcomes from these public meetings include:

- Ideas and actions to change social assistance to better support self-reliance.
- Community and territory dialogue on the role of social assistance in our communities.
- Community and territory dialogue on ways to encourage youth to take advantage of education and training opportunities.
- Identified links between income assistance and career development programs.

- Increased understanding of the barriers to transition off social assistance.
- Community dialogue on economic strengths and opportunities

The sessions will start in September and run through the fall. To find out when the public meeting is happening in your community, please visit http://gov.nu.ca/family-services/news/community-meetings-income-assistance.

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Media Contact:
Sara Tufts
Policy Analyst
Department of Family Services
867-975-5201
stufts@gov.nu.ca

Matthew Illaszewicz
Manager, Communications
Department of Economic Development and Transportation
867-975-7818
millaszewicz@gov.nu.ca

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