

October 23, 2019

Keith Irving  
Chair of the Standing Committee on Community Services  
Legislative Committees Office  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, One Government Place, 1700 Granville St.  
Halifax, NS B37 3P7

Dear Mr. Irving:

Thank you for your request for additional demographic information for the Career Rising participants related to race, ethnicity, gender and disability.

Based on self-disclosed information, we had 18 male and 24 female participants. We also have a number of participants with disabilities, again self-disclosed, and with some who identified more than one.

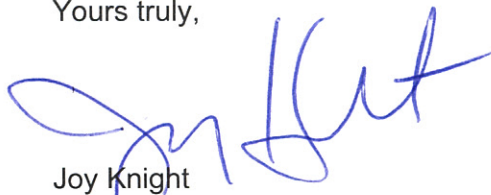
ADHD:	3
ADD:	1
ODD:	1
Vision loss	1
Anxiety	4
Cognitive	1
Dyslexia	1
Diabetes	1
Spina Bifida	1
Depression	1

Our data on race and ethnicity is less robust, and something we will be addressing in future evaluations and outreach efforts. We are aware of the following through self-disclosure, but this may not capture all participant diversity.

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>#</b>
Syrian	2
Mi'kmaq	1

I appreciate your continued interest in the work of the Department and the lives of those we serve. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

Yours truly,



Joy Knight  
Acting Executive Director  
Employment Support and Income Assistance

c: Tracey Taweel, Deputy Minister



Department of Community Services  
Head Office  
5675 Spring Garden Rd.  
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2T7

[www.gov.ns.ca](http://www.gov.ns.ca)

March 24, 2020

Darlene Henry  
Committee Clerk  
Legislative Committees Office  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, One Government Place, 1700 Granville St.  
PO Box 2630 Station M  
Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3J 3P7

Received LCO  
April 8, 2020

Dear Ms. Henry:

Thank you for your letter dated November 21, 2019 requesting additional information following the Department of Community Services' presentation on the poverty reduction grants on November 5, 2019. Please find enclosed:

- a grid on the enhanced income exemption structure, with scenarios illustrating application of the structure; and
- statistics on the number of clients who have found employment and are still on income assistance.

If you have questions about this information, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Yours truly,

Joy Knight  
Acting Executive Director, Employment Support and Income Assistance  
Department of Community Services

## Information Requested by Standing Committee on Community Services

On November 5, 2019, representatives from the Department of Community Services and the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage appeared before the Standing Committee on Community Services to present on the Building Vibrant Communities (BVC) grants. Additional information was also presented on poverty in Nova Scotia and the Poverty Reduction Blueprint.

Following the appearance, the Department of Community Services was requested to provide additional information in response to questions asked by members of the Standing Committee on Community Services:

1. a grid outlining the Department of Community Services' earned income exemption policy; and
2. statistics on the number of Income Assistance (IA) recipients who have found employment and are still receiving Income Assistance.

### 1. Grid outlining the earned income exemption policy

Earned income is the income generated from employment activities, including net wages from an employer, tips, gratuities, net commissions, and net business income.

Historically, the earned income exemption policy stated that the first \$150 of earned employment income, plus 30% of all additional net income, was exempt from the calculation of a recipient's IA benefit. For Supported Employment clients, the first \$300 of earned income, plus 30% of additional net income was exempt. In both situations, the remaining 70% of employment income was considered chargeable and deducted from the recipient's IA payment.

This policy was amended in 2018 to enable recipients to retain more of their earned employment income. In 2019, the policy was extended to include additional types of earned income, such as self-employment, tips, and gratuities. The new earned income exemption for IA recipients is in accordance with the following table.

Earned Income	Exemption Rate	Chargeable Rate
the first \$250 earned	100%	0%
the next \$250 earned: from \$250.01 to \$500	75%	25%
the next \$250 earned: from \$500.01 to \$750	50%	50%
the next amount earned: over \$750	25%	75%

For an IA recipient who is employed, but whose **physical, mental or cognitive abilities prevent them from working on their own without continued support**, earned income is exempted in accordance with the following table for **supported employment**. The remaining income that is not exempted is considered chargeable income and is deducted from the amount of assistance a recipient will receive from IA.

Earned Income from Supported Employment	Exemption Rate	Chargeable Rate
the first \$350 earned	100%	0%
the next \$150 earned: from \$350.01 to \$500	75%	25%
the next \$250 earned: from \$500.01 to \$750	50%	50%
the next amount earned: over \$750	25%	75%

## Earned income exemption structure scenarios

### Scenario 1: Single recipient with a disability under supported employment.

Anthony is an IA recipient who earns \$450 per month in net wages. Under the previous wage exemption structure, Anthony would have had \$105 deducted from his Income Assistance. Under the new earned income exemption structure for **supported employment**, Anthony will have \$25 deducted from his Income Assistance, which is a difference of \$80 a month.

Earned Income Exemption Structure		
Earnings Amount	Exempt Amount	Charged Amount
\$450	\$425	\$25

Previous Wage Exemption Structure		
Earnings Amount	Exempt Amount	Charged Amount
\$450	\$345	\$105

### Scenario 2: Single recipient under regular employment

Keith is an IA recipient who earns \$700 per month from his job. Under the previous wage exemption structure, Keith would have had \$385 deducted from his Income Assistance. Under the new earned income exemption structure, Keith will \$162.50 deducted from his Income Assistance, which is a difference of \$222.50 a month.

Earned Income Exemption Structure		
Earnings Amount	Exempt Amount	Charged Amount
\$700	\$537.50	\$162.50

Previous Wage Exemption Structure		
Earnings Amount	Exempt Amount	Charged Amount
\$700	\$315	\$385

### Scenario 3: Single parent with two children under regular employment

Jennifer earns \$800 a month. Under the previous wage exemption structure, \$455 would have been deducted from her Income Assistance. Under the new earned income exemption structure, \$225 will be deducted from her Income Assistance, which is a difference of \$230 a month.

Earned Income Exemption Structure		
Earnings Amount	Exempt Amount	Charged Amount
\$800	\$575	\$225

Previous Wage Exemption Structure		
Earnings Amount	Exempt Amount	Charged Amount
\$800	\$345	\$455

## 2. Statistics on ESIA recipients who have found employment and continue to receive Income Assistance

In December 2019, 12% of the ESIA caseload was earning wages from employment. This is a 1.7% increase compared to one year ago in December 2018 after implementation of the new policy.

December 2018		
Number of cases with earned wages	ESIA Caseload	% of ESIA Caseload
2,611	25,385	10.29%

December 2019		
Number of cases with earned wages	ESIA Caseload	% of ESIA Caseload
3,025	25,329	11.94%