



<i>Act/Regulations</i> <i>Social Assistance Act Reg.</i> <i>4(4)(6), 5(1)</i> <i>Supports for Persons with</i> <i>Disabilities Gen. Reg. 34(a)</i>	Program	Social Assistance, AccessAbility Supports	
	Subject	Cohabitation	Policy # SA 1.3 AAS 3.2
Effective Date: SA November 2, 1995 AAS July 1, 2022 Revised Date: SA July 1, 2022		Authorized by: Deputy Minister Jamie MacDonald	

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 To verify an applicant’s living arrangements for the purpose of determining eligibility for Social Assistance (SA) and Assured Income (AI).

2.0 DEFINITIONS

2.1 **Applicant:** a person who applies for or on whose behalf an application is made for SA or AI.

2.2 **Assured Income:** a component of AccessAbility Supports (AAS) that provides monthly financial supports to eligible applicants with disabilities to use towards securing basic needs.

2.3 **Co-Applicant:** the spouse of an applicant, and includes a person who, although not married to the applicant, lives with the applicant as if they were married.

2.4 **Recipient:** a person who is provided SA or AI and includes a person whose SA or AI has been suspended, but not cancelled.

2.5 **Supports Coordinator:** a staff member that provides direction and case management support in delivering a range of social benefits and services to applicants eligible for AAS.

3.0 POLICY STATEMENTS

3.1 For the purposes of this policy use of the word applicant is inclusive of recipient.

3.2 An applicant who is cohabitating as a couple must make a joint application for SA or AI, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, length and/or stability of the relationship.

3.3 Where an applicant denies cohabitation, and there is sufficient evidence for the Department to determine an applicant to be cohabitating, it is the responsibility of the applicant to disprove the relationship.

3.4 Where the Department determines that a couple has separated for the purpose of qualifying for SA or AI, assistance will be refused, or closed.

4.0 PROCEDURE STATEMENTS

4.1 Supports Coordinators are responsible to inquire into the living arrangements of an applicant.

4.2 Applicants are responsible to provide documentation, information, or other evidence to ensure the Department can accurately determine an applicant's living arrangement.

4.3 Where the Department is unable to determine an applicant's living arrangement it may be necessary for the Department to seek additional verification, information, or other evidence as part of the application or review process.

4.4 Where an applicant denies cohabitation and is responsible to disprove the relationship, information to be considered by the Department may include, but is not limited to familial, social, economic, or other sources, such as public records.

4.5 Applicants may be required to swear an affidavit respecting the applicant's living arrangements, participate in a case audit, or sign an authorization to release confidential information to allow a Supports Coordinator to obtain verification, information, or other evidence from a third-party to support the applicant's eligibility.

4.6 Where an applicant refuses to participate in a case audit or sign an authorization to release confidential information the applicant will be deemed ineligible for SA or AI.

4.7 Where an applicant is determined ineligible for SA or AI due to suspected co-habitation, the Supports Coordinator will document the decision and the reason(s) in the applicant's electronic file.

4.8 Applicants who have been denied SA or AI due to suspected co-habitation will be advised of the decision in writing and of the right to appeal should the applicant wish to dispute the decision.

HISTORY:

July 1, 2022: Editorial, content, and format changes. Policy and procedure statements have been expanded. New AAS policy. Combines SA policies 3.2 Cohabitation and 3.3 Separations.