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| <i>Act/Regulations</i> <i>Social Assistance Act Reg. 18(a)</i> <i>Supports for Persons with</i> <i>Disabilities Act Reg. 41</i> | Program | Social Assistance, AccessAbility Supports | |
| | Subject | Communication | Policy # SA 5.9 AAS 6.9 |
| Effective Date: October 1, 2021 | | Authorized by: | |
| Revision Date: July 1, 2023 | | Deputy Minister Teresa Hennebery | |

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide financial support for communication costs for eligible applicants of Social Assistance (SA) and Assured Income (AI).

2.0 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **Applicant:** a person who has applied for, on whose behalf an application is made, or is in receipt of funding through SA.
- 2.2 **Assured Income (AI):** 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 who provides direction and case management support in delivering a range of social benefits and services to applicants eligible for SA.

3.0 POLICY STATEMENTS

- 3.1 An applicant is eligible to receive financial benefits for communication costs of \$40 per month per household. Where an applicant has dependents, they are eligible to receive \$60 per month per household. Communication costs may include a telephone or internet expense.
- 3.2 Connection charges, deposits and accrued arrears for communication devices will not be paid by the Department.

4.0 PROCEDURE STATEMENTS

- 4.1 The Supports Coordinator is responsible to verify an applicant's household composition to determine the applicant's eligibility for communication costs.

HISTORY

October 1, 2021: Editorial, content, and format changes. Replaces SA policy 5.5 Utilities, section 7 and AAS policy 3.2 Core Living Supports, section 3.1 & 4.1. Policy has been extended to allow internet as a communication expense.

December 1, 2022: Communication rates now apply to all SA and AI files. Applicants are no longer required to provide verification of communication costs. Communication rate has increased from \$40 to \$60 for applicants with dependents.

July 1, 2023: Policy numbers have been updated from AAS policy 3.2.1 to AAS policy 6.9.