

NEWS RELEASE

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Improvements needed to ensure effectiveness of the Income Support program

Edmonton, Alberta, Canada ... An audit of the provincial program that provides millions of dollars in income support payments to vulnerable Albertans found a need to improve processes to ensure clients are receiving the supports they need and that the program is making a difference.

The Income Support program, administered by Alberta Community and Social Services, provides Albertans supports to help meet their basic needs and enter, re-enter, or stay in the workforce.

“With the adverse economic climate in Alberta over the past few years, the department’s primary focus has been on ensuring Albertans in need receive prompt financial support,” Wylie said. “However, if the program is not managed effectively, it increases the risk that clients who need support may not receive it, or that some clients may receive support payments to which they are not entitled.”

The audit found the department has:

- ineffective processes to verify program eligibility and substantiate support payments
- client files without Service Needs Determinations, Employability Assessments, and service plans
- client files without evidence to support monitoring of a service plan
- inadequate processes to monitor and report on the effectiveness of the program

Over the past three years, the program has seen a 44 per cent increase in the average caseload. In 2017-2018, the program provided over \$663 million in support payments to vulnerable Albertans.

“Albertans need the assurance that the amount of money invested in the program is both appropriate and well spent, and that it is making a difference,” Wylie said.

Income Supports for Albertans is available at www.oag.ab.ca

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