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Changes in funding assistance for low-income families

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Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board (DSB) approved the revised Healthy Community Fund Policy contained within the Ontario Works Policy Manual effective April 1, 2012.

The Healthy Communities Fund (HCF) is an in-house program which provides both the financial security to support individuals and families' basic needs in emergency situations.

The fund is comprised of three separate components: Homelessness Funding, Rent Bank and Emergency Energy Assistance.

Eligibility for this program is limited to one issuance within a 24-month period.

Families in receipt of Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program automatically qualify.

Eligibility for these benefits for those not receiving Social Assistance is based on the most recent Low Income Cut-Off (LICO) for the appropriate family size published by Statistics Canada.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB also delivers the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP). LEAP is a grant program intended to provide emergency relief to eligible low-income customers of utilities arrears who may be experiencing difficulty paying their current arrears.

To be eligible for LEAP, the customer has to be a residential customer, have current arrears with their utility bill and qualify under the most recent LICO chart as set by Statistics Canada 'plus' 15%, taking into account family and community size.

The Our Kids Count (OKC) Policy is a Social Assistance Reinvestment program, which assists all low-income families by supporting parents on social assistance as they move into employment with improved access to essential benefits and services for their children.

This provides much needed support to parents who are employed in low-income jobs, to stay employed.

The OKC program is comprised of three separate components: Recreational Bursaries, Early Childhood Services and Supplementary Health Benefits and Informal Child Care Subsidies.

Families in receipt of Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program automatically qualify. Just like the Healthy Communities Fund, eligibility for these benefits is based on the most recent Low Income Cut-Off (LICO) for the appropriate family size.

The DSB is changing the Healthy Communities Fund policy and Our Kids Count policy to reflect the same LICO chart being used for clients who qualify for LEAP.

This change ensures a more consistent approach in the delivery of the Our Kids Count, Healthy Communities Fund and the Low Income Energy Assistance Program.

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