

IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Education, Culture and Employment	Program Specialist – Income Security Programs	
Position Number(s)	Community(s)	Division/Region(s)
71-12252	Yellowknife	Income Security Programs

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Program Specialist – Income Security Programs develops, evaluates and supports the delivery of the Income Security Programs to eligible NWT residents.

SCOPE

Income Security Programs assist eligible NWT residents to meet their basic financial needs and assists with post-secondary educational expenses through student financial assistance programs. The department administers approximately \$40 million in assistance to NWT residents through a number of social and financial assistance based programs. Income Security Regional Managers, and Client Services Officers in the Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) Service Centers deliver these programs, with the exception of Student Financial Assistance (SFA), which is delivered in Yellowknife by staff in the Income Security Programs Division.

Located in Yellowknife and reporting to the Manager, Income Security Programs, the Program Specialist develops and interprets the framework for the introduction, administration, evaluation and delivery of one or more Income Security program(s). As the government expert on these assigned program(s), the incumbent provides advice and assistance to delivery staff as required.

This position impacts all divisional staff, program delivery staff and program recipients via involvement in the development, implementation and delivery of Income Security Programs. The Program Specialist works with the Trainer, Income Security Programs to ensure that delivery agents receive adequate training related to these programs.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1. Under the general direction of the Manager, Income Security Programs, develop the legislative, policy and operational framework of one or more program.**
 - Initiates and develops regulation amendments
 - Develops and documents program and service standards, best practices
 - Develops and implements delivery procedures
 - Develops process performance standards
 - Manages and contributes to the negotiation of program-delivery contracts
- 2. Support the delivery of programs by interpreting program legislation, policies and guidelines.**
 - Provides advice to delivery staff re: interpretation of legislation, regulations, policies and guidelines
 - Provides advice re: individual client files where complex issues exist
- 3. Evaluate, monitor and report on program activity.**
 - Under the direction of the Manager, Income Security Programs and appropriate stakeholders, develops a comprehensive plan and process to ensure systematic monitoring, reviewing and evaluation of Income Security Programs
 - Conducts program evaluation, identifies problems and addresses them with legislative, policy or procedural changes
 - Refers files for investigation where suspected financial irregularities are detected
 - Coordinates the collection of monitoring, review and evaluation reports, collating and analyzing these reports, and sharing these results with the appropriate stakeholders
 - Monitors program delivery and addresses non-compliance and underperformance with corrective action
 - Ensures appeal process operates fairly and within guidelines
 - Reports on program delivery goals and operational plans
 - Prepares briefing notes, decision papers, options papers, FMB submissions and reports to stakeholders
 - Takes necessary corrective action as result of audit
 - Reviews and monitors new and ongoing agreements
- 4. Participate in setting strategy direction for the programs in the context of all income security, education and employment programs and initiatives in the NWT.**
 - Recommends new initiatives to meet the needs of NWT residents

5. Promote the program.

- Designs and develops all program-related materials for staff and public
- Coordinates response to information requests
- Works with regional offices and ECE Public Affairs Office to ensure ongoing, timely newspaper and radio ads are created and placed
- Delivers speeches and presentations to public and other stakeholders
- Designs and develops program information for web site

6. Administer Income Security modules of Case Management and Administration System (CMAS) with the support of ECE Information Systems Section.

- Determines data and system requirements
- Develops a quality control program for data control and manages data verification activities
- Determines data access authorization levels
- Participates in system development initiatives and coordinates testing of system changes
- Identifies and addresses problems with current systems
- Develops user manuals

7. Participate in risk management activities.

- Identifies risks and sources of uncertainty
- Assesses risks identified for their relative importance
- Assesses and implement strategies to deal with risks and provide solutions
- Implements plan of action

8. Deliver Income Security programs, as required, throughout the Northwest Territories.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Knowledge

- The purpose of income security programs as they relate to the government, department, and division goals, as well as all governing legislation, regulations, policies, guidelines, and procedures
- Government, department, and division practices as they relate to the political realities of operating in the public sector along with the dual responsibilities for customer service and financial accountability
- Relevant government, department, and division legislation, policies, and procedures
- Familiarity with practices in other jurisdictions regarding income security programs

Skills:

- Research and analysis of income security issues, trends, programs, practices in various jurisdictions, as well as government and division initiatives and their potential impact

- Planning and organizing the delivery of an income security program, including the sustenance of collaborative efforts with other stakeholders such as Government Service Centres
- Oral communication skills require the versatility to interact with people one-on-one, in small and large group settings: with people from various cultural backgrounds; with the public, staff, appeal boards, government personnel from various jurisdictions, educational institution personnel, elected officials, the media, and in a court of law. Presentations ranging from the ad hoc to the very structured and formal occur regularly.
- Produce written communication including original correspondence, standard reports and briefing notes, original proposals/position papers, and procedure documentation.
- Diffuse potentially contentious and/or sensitive situations, which could have repercussions at the political, internal, or public level.
- Build unit team morale, spirit, and accountability with a focus on exceptional customer service and results. Build divisional team morale by encouraging staff to work collaboratively with all divisional personnel.
- Ensure the efficient and effective use of the operation and program budgets.
- Time management is critical - as a variety of tasks must often be accomplished simultaneously.
- Work collaboratively.

Abilities:

This position requires a unique combination of attributes:

- Sound leadership and management aptitudes.
- Demonstrated writing ability that results in logical, clear and concise documents and presentations.
- Demonstrated project management ability, independent or in a partnership.
- Well-developed judgment based on experience, sound data gathering techniques, and reflection on the potential ramifications and precedent setting of decisions.
- Thrives in a public sector environment where residents are continuously assessing value for service provided.
- Ability to work in a complex environment providing a service while monitoring activity.
- Pro-actively keeps informed of issues and trends.
- Ability to remain composed when under pressure from staff, clients, advocacy groups, elected officials, regional personnel, management, etc. to meet their demands and expectations.
- A strong people orientation combined with an ability to form strong collaborative networks.
- Demonstrated ability to develop and maintain team.
- A team player.
- Ability to counsel clients who are upset or seeking advice.
- A desire to learn and adapt, as well as an ability to instill a learning work environment.
- Self-directed and a role model.

Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:

A relevant post-secondary degree, and 2 years experience delivering income security related programs relevant to one or more program areas such as: student financial assistance OR social (income) assistance OR child care subsidy OR seniors' subsidies.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

The incumbent works in a typical office setting where there are no unusual physical demands.

Environmental Conditions

The incumbent works in a typical office setting where there are no unusual environmental conditions.

Sensory Demands

The incumbent works in a typical office setting where there are no unusual sensory demands.

Mental Demands

There is a need to continuously balance the demands for customer service, political ramifications, including special consideration for unique cases, ensuring confidentiality and the ability to consider the realities of program resources, legislation, and precedents.

There is continuous pressure to meet deadlines and complete urgent tasks with a high volume of requests for assistance from delivery agents.

Involves regular contact with senior management, government personnel from various jurisdictions, agencies, special interest groups, and stakeholders concerning sensitive political issues.

Involved in situations that require dealing with hostile, angry, or uncooperative clients.

Conducts business with people from various cultural backgrounds and a multitude of expectations who may be resistant to conforming to government requirements.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Position Security (check one)

- ☐ No criminal records check required
- ☒ Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- ☐ Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

