



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Education, Culture and Employment	Manager, Student Financial Assistance Program	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
71-12248	Yellowknife	Income Security Programs / HQ

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Manager, Student Financial Assistance, is responsible for the overall management and delivery of the Student Financial Assistance Program in the Northwest Territories. The Manager ensures services are delivered in an efficient and effective manner and in accordance with existing legislation and standards.

SCOPE

Income Security Programs provides eligible Northwest Territories (NWT) residents with financial assistance to assist with post-secondary educational expenses through the Student Financial Assistance (SFA) program. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) administers approximately \$50 million in assistance to NWT residents through a number of social and financial assistance-based programs. The Manager, Student Financial Assistance (Manager) ensures residents receive the financial assistance they are eligible for to support their participation in post-secondary studies. SFA consists of an annual budget of approximately \$15 million and serves an average of 2,200 applicants per year from across the NWT.

Located in Yellowknife, the Manager reports to the Director, Income Security Programs, and supervises indeterminate Student Case Officers and several seasonal casual staff. One additional position, the Administrative Assistant, provides functional support to the Manager in a shared capacity but reports to the Director, Income Security Programs.

The Manager has the authority to make decisions about the implementation of the SFA program and provides regular briefings and advice to the Director and senior management. The Manager is responsible for the overall delivery of the SFA program in accordance with applicable legislation, policies and standards, including overseeing client relations with SFA recipients, ensuring service standards are met, conducting program evaluations, providing



leadership and direction to staff, and managing all financial and administrative aspects of the SFA Program.

The Manager provides advice, guidance and direction to regional staff, including regional managers of Income security programs, on all matters related to the SFA Program. All irregular, problematic or exceptional circumstances are directed to the Manager for resolution.

The Manager is responsible for developing and promoting an ethical culture in the workplace, ensuring clients receive professional, courteous and appropriate services. As the Department's spokesperson on all matters related to SFA, the Manager leads teams of internal and external stakeholders including ECE, other Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) departments, Indigenous Governments, related federal government departments, land claimant organizations, community governments and residents, and employers and representatives of industry and members of the public.

The Manager is responsible for the daily operation of an office, which includes maintaining a professional environment for providing services to the public, ordering supplies and ensuring staff have the tools and equipment to do their jobs.

The Manager's work environment includes strong expectations from the public, tight and shifting deadlines, diverse client needs and numerous program responsibilities that require constant attention and action. The Manager holds significant responsibility for providing services in an effective, appropriate and efficient manner. Failure to do so would have a direct and significant financial and political impact on NWT residents.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Manages, administers and oversees the delivery of the SFA program.

- Leads in the management of the SFA Program to ensure services are delivered in an effective and efficient manner and in accordance with existing legislation and standards.
- Investigates best practices in service delivery in other jurisdictions, evaluates their appropriateness in the NWT context, and applies them accordingly.
- Supervises staff by setting realistic, timely and attainable objectives and providing constructive feedback.
- Negotiates effectively with internal and external stakeholders, including members of the public, on all matters pertaining to the SFA program.
- Maintains an even-handed approach to dealing with stakeholders given an occasionally volatile political climate and varying pressures to provide more or less financial assistance.
- Investigates and keeps abreast of up-to-date information on sources of financial assistance available to postsecondary students and makes referrals accordingly.



- Reviews programs and courses offered by Aurora College and all other postsecondary institutions in the jurisdiction to ensure their students' eligibility for financial assistance.
- Serves as an active member of the Quality Assurance Review Advisory Committee, a group responsible for designated private training institutions in the NWT and ensuring that their programs qualify for SFA funding.

2. Ensures the SFA program is delivered in accordance with legislation and policies and develops policy and legislative alternatives for meeting program objectives.

- Analyzes and interprets existing legislation and policies and provides plain language explanations to staff and clients.
- Investigates best practices in other jurisdictions in respect to SFA legislation and policies, evaluating their appropriateness in the NWT context, and putting them into practice accordingly.
- Evaluates financial, legal and socio-political implications of existing legislation and policies, and develops policy and legislative alternatives for meeting program objectives.
- Makes recommendations to the Director and other senior managers in respect to legislative amendments or alternative courses of action.
- Writes briefing notes, activity reports and reports on program effectiveness in response to requests from senior management or the Minister.

3. Manages and monitors client relations to ensure service delivery meets a standard of excellence.

- Monitors, reviews and evaluates service delivery, ensuring it meets a standard of excellence.
- Promotes an ethical culture in workplace settings to ensure clients across the territory receive professional and appropriate services.
- Employs the principles of lean implementation and continuous improvement cycles to enhance service delivery.
- Monitors the Case Management Administrative System (CMAS) and conducts ongoing audits of information contained in the database including Identifying and Investigating anomalies.
- Promotes and monitors excellence in service delivery standards by developing and Implementing Instruments for program evaluation.
- Ensures relations between staff and clients are handled professionally within clearly defined parameters.
- Monitors, identifies and investigates possible overpayments through the financial abuse review process and conducts recovery actions, fraud investigations and reviews of problematic files.



- Reviews client files on a regular basis to ensure appropriate supports and assistance are provided.
- Responds to issues and inquiries that are beyond the scope or authority of SFA officers and regional staff.
- Investigates and mediates concerns expressed by clients experiencing problems.
- Reviews files with staff to ensure adherence to legislation and policies and ensures appropriate casework standards are implemented.
- Serves as first point of contact for applicant complaints and provides accurate, effective and timely responses.
- Provides regular reports and recommendations to senior management regarding service delivery.
- Performs compliance audits as requested by the Director or senior management.
- Reviews and evaluates staff workloads associated with program delivery, timelines and delegation of tasks.
- Ensures client assessment requirements are met.
- Ensures client information is verified.
- Reviews client files to ensure appropriate supports and assistance are provided.
- Reviews irregular or exceptional circumstances and provides resolution in a rapid and diplomatic manner.

4. Leads, directs and supervises staff to ensure the SFA program is delivered in a consistent and professional manner.

- Provides training, advice and support to regional and headquarters staff on the appropriate application of SFA policies and guidelines.
- Develops and implements guidelines, tools and practices to improve service delivery.
- Oversees and manages Student Case Officers in their use of CMAS to ensure effective and accurate delivery of client benefits.
- Investigates and mediates concerns expressed by any clients experiencing personal problems with Student Case Officers or the SFA program.
- Leads in the recruitment and selection of Student Case Officers.
- Develops work-plans, action plans, reports and program updates for self and staff.
- Reviews Student Case Officers files to ensure compliance with policy and legislation.
- Provides mentorship for SFA staff working in a volatile and challenging environment.
- Provides interpretations and expert technical support to staff on SFA issues.
- Monitors and evaluates staff performance, providing constructive feedback on performance and implementing corrective actions as required.
- Ensures staff receives statutory training and technical training in the use of databases.
- Assigns and monitors distribution of work within the section.
- Supports staff in developing and achieving goals in self-managed work plans.
- Initiates ongoing performance planning with staff.



5. **Manages the financial resources of the SFA program, ensuring compliance with departmental guidelines and the *Financial Administration Manual*.**
 - Operates within the overall program budget while providing sufficient funding for eligible clients to attain their educational goals.
 - Prepares budget estimates and explanations.
 - Oversees the SFA program annual budget of \$13.5 million.
 - Reviews and approves variance reports.
 - Provides input into the Division's operations budget submissions and financial forecasts.
 - Recommends budgetary changes and adjustments to meet emerging issues and needs.
6. **Ensures the provision of effective communication with community organizations concerning the SFA program.**
 - Coordinates and delivers presentations and provides program updates to community organizations and other stakeholders.
 - Works cooperatively with partner organizations to establish and maintain an effective client referral process.
 - Meets with community, Indigenous and non-government organizations and government departments to obtain input on how to improve program delivery, design and implementation.
7. **Evaluates and reports on program and policy requirements of the SFA program.**
 - Responds to *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy (ATIPP) Act* requests.
 - Conducts program and project assessments at the request of senior management.
 - Participates in special projects at the request of senior management.
 - Prepares appeal packages and represents the SFA program at appeal hearings.
 - Serves as the spokesperson on all matters related to the SFA program, ensuring informed, prompt and timely response as issues arise.
 - Supports and promotes the implementation of ECE's Strategic Plan and department-wide priorities or initiatives.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

No unusual demands.

Environmental Conditions

No unusual conditions.



Sensory Demands

No unusual demands.

Mental Demands

The Manager experiences frequent client interactions and is the path of escalation for clients who have been denied financial assistance. The unit experiences high volumes of applications within set deadlines.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of program planning, development and evaluation.
- Knowledge of and/or the ability to learn and apply knowledge of the *Student Financial Assistance Act* and associated regulations, the *Financial Administration Act* and Manual, and related GNWT policies and procedures.
- Knowledge of and/or the ability to learn the *NWT Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, including the ability to interpret and apply it.
- Ability to acquire knowledge of community life in the north and cross-cultural issues.
- Skilled in the use of Microsoft (MS) Operating Systems, MS Office, Internet, e-mail programs, and the ability to learn and use program related databases.
- Skills relating to managing financial resources.
- Communication skills, orally and in writing, preparing reports and analyzing problems.
- Management skills, ability to work independently and in a team environment.
- Interpersonal and motivational skills to develop staff, as well as the interests of stakeholders within and outside of the department.
- Ability to evaluate and report on program and policy requirements of the SFA program.
- Ability to meet tight and shifting deadlines and respond quickly to arising issues and remaining calm under pressure.
- Ability to recognize unique issues/situations and exercise good judgement.
- Ability to problem-solve, including the ability to motivate and persuade others, mediate between conflicting parties and resolve problems effectively.
- Ability to plan and set priorities, including establishing work schedules for self and staff.
- Ability to commit to actively upholding and consistently practicing personal diversity, inclusion and cultural awareness, as well as safety and sensitivity approaches in the workplace.

Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:

A relevant Bachelor's Degree and five (5) years of relevant experience, including one year of supervisory or leading a team.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.



ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Position Security

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

French language (check one if applicable)

- French required (must identify required level below)
Level required for this Designated Position is:
ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION
Basic (B) Intermediate (I) Advanced (A)
READING COMPREHENSION:
Basic (B) Intermediate (I) Advanced (A)
WRITING SKILLS:
Basic (B) Intermediate (I) Advanced (A)
- French preferred

Indigenous language: Select language

- Required
- Preferred