



Memorandum

Date: March 21, 2005

To: Community Social Services
Supervisors – EIA and
EIA Rural Program Managers

From: Pam Goulet, Executive Director
Adult and Children's Programs, and

John Petersen, Executive Director
Employment and Income
Assistance Programs

Telephone:

Subject: **Banking Information**

As you are aware, in the last few years banks have closed branches making it difficult for citizens to find places where they can cash benefit cheques. This has led many participants to use fringe banking.

The Department is concerned with the increased use of fringe banking by participants because of the higher costs associated with this method of banking. As an alternative, we have arranged for district offices to be provided with three publications by the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada (FCAC) that inform the public about the financial products and services that are available to them. You are asked to have the publications made readily available to participants in the reception area of your office.

The publications provided are:

Bank Account Opening which provides the following information:

- Employment requirements;
- Identification accepted by banks; and
- Credit Bureau Check.

Bank Accounts and Service Packages which provides the following information:

- Benefits of having a bank account;
- Types of bank accounts;
- What is interest;
- What is a service package; and
- How to find the best package for your needs.

What you should know about: Low Cost Accounts which provides the following information:

- Low-Cost account guidelines; and
- Features of the service packages that banks have designated as their low-cost account.

In addition staff are requested to refer to the publications during the orientation/intake process and have them available for participants. (We are in the process of updating the Power Point Presentation.) In addition, staff should remind participants of the following benefits of Direct Deposit:

- It is reliable, efficient, safe and secure; and
- Their money will automatically go into their account.

EIA Case Coordinators/Counsellors may determine after consultation with a participant on the issue of banking that the only barrier to their pursuing traditional banking and/or the direct deposit option is their lack of identification to open a bank account. In these circumstances the EIA Program Manager/EIA Social Services Supervisor may be approached to approve funds for basic ID required by financial institutions. Funds will be issued only once by EIA for the purchase of the identification.

In order to provide a complete service to participants, a listing of the local banks and branches by district office areas is attached (Winnipeg only) for display, along with the information brochures/sheets.

If you wish to request additional free copies of the "What you should know about: Low Cost Accounts" you can call toll free to the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada at: 1-866-461-3222 or fax your request to them at 1-866-814-2224.