

FAMILY SERVICES AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS CIRCULAR

Date: December 12, 2011

CIRCULAR NUMBER: EIA #2011-67

Alternate Programs:

To: Community Social Service Supervisors/Program Managers

Subject: EIA Supports for Victims of Human Trafficking

Reference:

Type: Policy
 Procedure
 Rate
 Information Only

Effective Date Immediately

The purpose of this circular is to highlight Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) supports for adult applicants who are victims of human trafficking. A separate process exists for children through Child and Family Services.

On May 17, 2011 the expansion of the Province's sexual exploitation strategy, Tracia's Trust, was announced with a focus on human trafficking. The news release can be found at <http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2011-5-01&item=11509>. The expanded strategy includes a number of new initiatives over the next three years to ensure greater perpetrator accountability; routes out for victims, and includes prevention and public awareness.

The expansion of Tracia's Trust includes the commitment of EIA to the provision of priority assistance to those affected by human trafficking. This strategy does not require a change in policy and standard procedures apply.

If an individual is identified by police, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), a social service advocacy group, or discloses to EIA staff as a person who is a victim of human trafficking, whether internationally or domestically, it is beneficial to have an intake worker familiar with the issue involved to ensure the application process is as straight forward as possible. These individuals may face numerous challenges such as lacking an address, identification, banking details or an understanding of the paperwork requirements of the EIA program. It is important to initiate discussions with a supervisor on eligibility rather than sending the individual away for more information. Individuals are at risk of returning to an unsafe situation if they leave with the perception that they will not be assisted.

At the discretion of the EIA community or regional office, the individual may be assigned an EIA case coordinator/counsellor who is familiar with the unique needs and resources available to immigrants.

For victims of international trafficking, if an applicant that is identified as a victim of human trafficking attends an EIA intake appointment without documentation confirming residency in Manitoba or Canada (such as identification or immigration papers), the individual will be enrolled and be provided financial assistance provided they meet financial eligibility criteria. This enrollment must be approved by the supervisor as per policy 6.4.10.

An action plan is to be developed with the participant which clarifies EIA's expectations, and outlines steps the individual needs to take to remain eligible for benefits. The action plan may include contacting Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) to clarify status, and/or referrals to service agencies.

Background

The United Nations' definition of human trafficking is "The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation".

Further information and resources for victims of sexual exploitation and human trafficking can be found on the government website at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/traciustrust/index.html>.