

**Chapter 10: Information on Other Related Income Support Benefits**

**(ii) Prenatal – Early Childhood Nutrition Supplement**

<b>Intent:</b>	To provide information on the Prenatal – Early Childhood Nutrition Supplement (PECNS) which provides \$150 per month to people with low incomes to assist with the extra costs of healthy eating during pregnancy and up to the child’s fifth birthday.
<b>Act:</b> (if applicable)	N/A
<b>Regulations:</b>	N/A
<b>Overview:</b> (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PECNS of \$150.00 per month is an income tested benefit provided separate from the Income Support Program to low-income pregnant individuals and families with children under age five.</li> <li>• The benefit assists with the additional costs of healthy eating when proper nutrition is vital for fetal and infant health and development.</li> <li>• The PECNS Program can also provide referrals to community health nurses and/or family resource programs (including Healthy Baby Clubs) across the province, with the consent of the applicant.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy:</b>	<p><b><u>Pregnancy Component</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Department manages the pregnancy component.</li> <li>• Recipients receive the benefit around the 20th of each month. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Payments for the pregnancy component begin in the month eligibility is determined and continue until one month after a child’s birth.</li> <li>○ Payments will be retroactive only to the month of eligibility up to a maximum of \$300.00.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• People may apply for PECNS through mail, e-mail, or fax by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Calling toll free 1-800-508-4788 and requesting an application</li> <li>○ Printing an application online</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- To be eligible for the pregnancy component, an applicant must:
  - provide medical proof of pregnancy,
  - live in Newfoundland and Labrador,
  - be in receipt of Income Support benefits or;
  - have a family net income for the preceding taxation year that is less than the maximum income parameter for the [Newfoundland and Labrador Child Benefit \(NLCB\)](#).
- Applicants under the age of 18 can apply for PECNS in their own right, and no income test is required.
- Eligibility can only be determined after receipt of a completed application and the required documentation.
- Applicants expecting multiple births will only receive a single \$150.00 monthly payment during the pregnancy portion of PECNS.
- In the month of birth, individuals will also receive a one-time Birth Benefit of an additional \$150. The Birth Benefit is paid consistent with the number of newborn children when multiple births occur.

#### **Early Childhood Component**

- Canada Revenue Agency manages the early childhood component.
  - Recipients receive the benefit on the 20th of each month in a single combined monthly payment with the Newfoundland and Labrador Child Benefit ([NLCB](#)) and the Canada Child Benefit ([CCB](#)).
  - To be eligible, first time parents and families not receiving the CCB must apply for it and file an income tax return.
  - Parents already in receipt of the CCB /NLCB must notify Canada Revenue Agency of the birth of the child to have their benefit adjusted.
    - Once CRA is notified, families with child (ren) under the age of five who are receiving at least \$1.00 of the NLCB will automatically receive the benefit effective the month of birth
-

of the child up to and including the month preceding their child's first birthday.

- There is no separate application form for this portion.
- Payments will be retroactive only to the month of the child's birth up to a maximum of 11 payments.
- Families with more than one child under the age of five are entitled to a monthly benefit payment for each child.
- Payments for the early childhood component begin in the month of a child's birth and continue until the month preceding the child's fifth birthday.
- People in receipt of Income Support with children under age five not receiving any amount of the NLCB, will have the benefit added to the Child Benefit Adjustment automatically.

**Procedure: Eligibility - In Receipt of Income Support**

- Applicants in receipt of Income Support are automatically eligible for PECNS benefits. Financial documentation such as the Notice of Assessment is not required.
- Medical documentation confirming the expected date of delivery is required.
- Income Support recoveries should not be taken from PECNS.

**Eligibility - Not In Receipt of Income Support**

- Applicants must be living in the province and be Canadian citizens or Permanent Residents. If the applicant was born outside of Canada, verification/proof of Permanent Residency Status is required for the applicant and spouse.
- The following documents are required to confirm eligibility for PECNS during pregnancy:
  - The application and consent for release of information (applicant and spouse)
  - Verification of SIN (applicant and spouse)
  - Verification of date of birth (applicant and spouse)
  - Verification of MCP (applicant)
  - Request for payment by direct deposit, including relevant banking information

- Medical documentation confirming expected date of delivery
- Notice of Assessment from Canada Revenue Agency for previous fiscal year (applicant and spouse)
- The CSO should determine if there was previous receipt of Income Support. If so, the file should be re-opened.
  - Persons with previous status as a dependent should be transferred to a new adult file.
  - Previous Income Support overpayments should not be recovered from PECNS.

### **Eligibility Under Age 18**

- Financial eligibility does not need to be confirmed for applicants under age 18.
- If the applicant's family is in receipt of Income Support, they remain as a dependent on the family file.
- Any overpayments owed on the family file should not be recovered from PECNS.
- Payments should be issued directly to the applicant unless specifically requested.
- Applications can be processed without a Social Insurance Number.
- A signed Direct Deposit form and banking information should be submitted; however, the banking information should not be added to the account tab if for the applicant's account. If the applicant wishes, payments can be made directly into the parent's bank account.

### **Applications**

- Once the PECNS application (recipients and non-recipients) has been received, the CSO must:
    - Complete the required information in CAPS
    - Ensure all required documentation has been received and forwarded to the Document Processing Unit to be scanned into TRIM
    - Verify that all dates of birth, SINS, and MCP numbers entered into CAPS are correct
-

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Contact the applicant when additional information is required, or verifications have not been received as part of the initial application process</li> <li>○ Refer to community health nurse/family resource program, if applicable</li> <li>● Prenatal and Birth Benefits are issued as Supplementary Benefits             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Requests for applicants not in receipt of Income Support are issued as “PECNS Client”</li> <li>○ Use requirements: “Special Needs/Other Benefits- PECNS”</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Eligibility for the early childhood portion is determined by Canada Revenue Agency.</li> <li>● In exceptional circumstances, staff should consult with the Client Service Manager.</li> </ul>
<b>Authority Level:</b>	<p>Client Services Officer</p> <p>Client Services Manager – exceptional circumstances</p>
<b>Date revised:</b>	<p>February 26, 2024</p>