



ALBERTA  
COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES

*Office of the Minister*

April 27, 2020

Dear Mayors and Chief Administrative Officers:

We are dealing with a fast and rapidly changing landscape in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a government, we are committed to supporting our most vulnerable and at-risk people.

There is a growing use of food banks, and food security was identified as one of the most common areas for funding requests during the initial round of applications for the COVID-19 emergency social services funding. Community and Social Services (CSS) is temporarily relaxing the funding restrictions on Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) funding to help you address food security needs at the local level.

In response to COVID-19, CSS has temporarily suspended the regulatory restriction that prevents FCSS funding from addressing food security. This has been done through a Ministerial Order (attached) under the authority of the *Public Health Act*. With this amendment, FCSS programs will have more flexibility in providing secure access to food for vulnerable Albertans.

Food security is but one of many issues facing Albertans at this time. Given the magnitude of impact of COVID-19 on our province, I would like FCSS programs to work with your partner organizations and prioritize available funding to meeting COVID-19 needs in your local community.

Thank you for your support and ongoing commitment to meeting the needs of Albertans during this extra-ordinary time.

Sincerely,

Rajan Sawhney  
Minister of Community and Social Services

Attachment

cc: Family and Community Support Services Program Directors

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## Ministerial Order No. 2020-15

WHEREAS the Lieutenant Governor in Council made Order in Council 080/2020 under section 52.1(1) of the *Public Health Act* (PHA) on March 17, 2020 declaring a state of public health emergency in Alberta due to pandemic COVID-19 and the significant likelihood of pandemic influenza;

WHEREAS Order in Council 080/2020 has effect for 90 days following March 17, 2020 under section 52.8(1)(a) of the PHA;

WHEREAS sections 52.1(2) and 52.1(3) of the PHA authorize the Minister of Community and Social Services (Minister) to make an order, without consultation, to suspend or modify the application or operation of all or part of an enactment, subject to the terms and conditions the Minister prescribes, if the Minister is satisfied that the application or operation of all or part of the enactment is not in the public interest;

WHEREAS section 2(a) of the *Family and Community Support Services Act* (Act) allows a municipality to provide for the establishment, administration and operation of a family and community support services program;

WHEREAS section 7(a) of the Act allows the Lieutenant Governor in Council, by regulation, to determine what constitutes a program for the purposes of the Act;

WHEREAS section 2.1 of the *Family and Community Support Services Regulation* (Regulation) sets out the service requirements for a program under the Act;

WHEREAS section 2.1(1) of the Regulation requires programs to be of a preventive nature that enhance the social well-being of individuals and families through promotion or intervention strategies provided at the earliest opportunity, and section 2.1(2) of the Regulation sets out program prohibitions;

WHEREAS I am satisfied that the prohibition on providing direct assistance for food to sustain an individual or family set out in section 2.1(2)(b) of the Regulation is not in the public interest because during this COVID-19 crisis food security and providing food directly to individuals and families is preventive in nature and enhances the social well-being and safety of those individuals and families and allows them to remain independent, strengthens their ability to cope with the other consequences of the restrictions put in place to slow the spread of COVID-19 and be more resistant to the other impacts of COVID-19 and the associated social distancing restrictions;

THEREFORE, I, Rajan Sawhney, Minister of Community and Social Services, pursuant to section 52.1(2) of the PHA, do hereby order that:

1. The prohibition in section 2.1(2)(b) of the Regulation that direct assistance for food not be provided to individuals and families is suspended and that direct assistance for food is deemed to meet the criteria set out in section 2.1(1) of the Regulation.
2. This Order lapses, unless it is sooner continued by an order of the Lieutenant Governor in Council under section 52.811(3) of the PHA, at the earliest of the following:
  - (a) August 14, 2020;
  - (b) 60 days after Order in Council 080/2020 is terminated by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, if Order in Council 080/2020 is terminated before June 15, 2020;
  - (c) when the Order is terminated by the Minister under section 52.811(2) of the PHA because the Minister is satisfied that this Order is no longer in the public interest; or
  - (d) when this Order is terminated by the Lieutenant Governor in Council under section 52.811(1)(c) of the PHA.

DATED this 14 day of April, 2020.



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Rajan Sawhney  
Minister of Community and Social Services