

Subsection 3.—Allowances for Disabled Persons

The Disabled Persons Act of 1954, as amended, provides for federal reimbursement to the provinces for allowances paid to permanently and totally disabled persons aged 18 or over who are in need and who have resided in Canada for at least ten years immediately preceding commencement of allowance or, if absent from Canada during this period, have been present in Canada prior to its commencement for a period equal to double any period of absence. To qualify for an allowance a person must meet the definition of permanent and total disability set out in the Regulations to the Act which requires that a person must be suffering from a major physiological, anatomical or psychological impairment, verified by objective medical findings; the impairment must be one that is likely to continue indefinitely without substantial improvement and that will severely limit activities of normal living. The federal contribution may not exceed 50 p.c. of \$55 a month or of the allowance paid, whichever is less. All provinces and territories use a maximum payment of \$55 a month. The province administers the program and, within the limits of the federal Act, may fix the amount of allowance payable, the maximum income allowed and other conditions of eligibility.

For an unmarried person, total income including the allowance may not exceed \$960 a year. For a married couple the limit is \$1,620 a year except that if the spouse is blind within the meaning of the Blind Persons Act, income of the couple may not exceed \$1,980 a year. Allowances are not paid to a person receiving an allowance under the Blind Persons Act or the War Veterans Allowance Act, assistance under the Old Age Assistance Act, a pension under the Old Age Security Act, or a mother's allowance.

The allowance is not payable to a patient in a mental institution or tuberculosis sanatorium. A recipient who is resident in a nursing home, an infirmary, a home for the aged, an institution for the care of incurables or a private, charitable or public institution is eligible for the allowance only if the major part of the cost of his accommodation is being paid by himself or any other individual. When a recipient is required to enter a public or private hospital, the allowance may be paid for no more than two months of hospitalization in a calendar year, excluding months of admission and release, but for the period that a recipient is in hospital for therapeutic treatment for his disability or rehabilitation, as approved by the provincial authority, the allowance may continue to be paid. The provincial authority must suspend the payment of the allowance when in its opinion the recipient unreasonably neglects or refuses to comply with or to avail himself of training, rehabilitation or treatment facilities provided by or available in the province.

In the fifth year of the program, disabilities in the two medical classes—mental, psychoneurotic and personality disorders, and diseases of the nervous system and sense organs—were again found to be most prevalent among those persons becoming eligible for an allowance. These classes accounted for 53.9 p.c. of the new cases, an increase over the 47.5 p.c. in the year ended Mar. 31, 1959. Neoplasms and diseases of the respiratory system also increased slightly over the previous year. Other classes, however, such as diseases of the circulatory system, diseases of the bones and organs of movement, and infective and parasitic disease, continued to decline. Mental deficiency, the most frequently occurring disability, rose from one-fifth to nearly one-quarter of all cases granted an allowance.

British Columbia pays a flat rate supplement of \$24 a month to recipients of disability allowances who qualify under a residence test. In Ontario, the government shares to the extent of 80 p.c. in the first \$20 a month paid by a municipality to a needy recipient. In Manitoba, the province may pay a social allowance to a recipient of a disability allowance unable to provide the basic necessities of life. In some provinces and in Yukon Territory, recipients in special need may also be eligible for relief.