

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 \$75 a month (raised from \$65 a month in December 1963) or of the allowance paid, whichever is less. 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. All provinces use a maximum payment of \$75 a month and the income limits set out in the following paragraph. In May 1964, the Yukon and Northwest Territories were using a maximum payment of \$65.

For an unmarried person, total income including the allowance may not exceed \$1,260 a year. For a married couple the limit is \$2,220 a year except that if the spouse is blind within the meaning of the Blind Persons Act, income of the couple may not exceed \$2,580 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 mothers' allowance.

The allowance is not payable to a patient in a mental institution or a 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 another 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, the allowance may continue to be paid.

In recent years, disabilities in the two medical classes—mental, psychoneurotic and personality disorders, and diseases of the nervous system and sense organs—have been found to be the most prevalent among the persons becoming eligible for allowance, followed by diseases of the circulatory system. Mental deficiency, the most frequently occurring disability, has accounted for over one quarter of all cases granted an allowance.

Recipients of disability allowances who are in need may receive supplementary aid under general assistance programs in the province. Where the amount of aid is determined through an individual assessment of need, which takes the recipient's requirements and resources into consideration, the Federal Government may share in it under the Unemployment Assistance Act.