

Subsection 1.—Old Age Assistance

The Old Age Assistance Act (R.S.C. 1952, c. 199), effective January 1952, provides for federal financial aid to the provinces for assistance to persons aged 65 or over subject to a residence qualification of at least 20 years. The payment of old age security commencing at age 70 makes old age assistance effective from ages 65 to 69. Within the limits of the federal Act each province is free to fix the amount of the maximum assistance payable, the maximum income allowed and other conditions of eligibility. The Federal Government's contribution per recipient cannot exceed 50 p.c. of \$40 per month or of the assistance paid, whichever is less.

For an unmarried person the total income allowed including assistance cannot exceed \$720 a year; for a married couple, \$1,200 a year; where the spouse is blind within the meaning of the Blind Persons Act the total income of the couple cannot exceed \$1,320 a year. The exact pension payable in each case depends on the amount of outside income and the resources of the applicant and his spouse. To be eligible for assistance the applicant must not be in receipt of an allowance under the Blind Persons Act or the War Veterans Allowance Act. The applicant must have resided in Canada for at least 20 years immediately preceding the commencement of the assistance but may have certain temporary absences; where the applicant has not so resided for the 20 years he must have been physically present in Canada prior to the 20 years for a total period equal to twice the total of the absences during the 20 years.

The program became effective in January 1952 in all areas except Newfoundland, Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories where the effective date was Apr. 1, 1952. The maximum assistance is \$40 per month in all provinces and territories except in Newfoundland where it is \$30 per month. Administrative responsibility is vested in the province; the provincial plan must be approved by the Governor in Council. Assistance is paid by the province with federal reimbursement.

In Alberta, British Columbia and the Yukon Territory the provincial or territorial governments make supplementary payments to recipients of old age assistance who qualify under a means and residence test. In Alberta and British Columbia the allowance cannot exceed \$15 per month and in the Yukon it cannot exceed \$10 per month. In some provinces recipients of old age assistance who are in special need may also receive relief.

7.—Old Age Assistance Statistics by Province, Years Ended Mar. 31, 1954 and 1955

NOTE.—Figures for 1952 and 1953 are given in the 1955 Year Book, p. 265.

Province or Territory and Year	Recipients	Average	P.C. of	Federal
	in Month of March	Amount of Monthly Assistance	Recipients to Population Age 65-69 ¹	Government Contribution During Year
	No.	\$	p c.	\$
Newfoundland.....1954	5,124	29.21	55.70	896,429
.....1955	5,073	29.38	54.55	898,973
Prince Edward Island.....1954	594	25.88	16.97	\$5,986
.....1955	612	27.54	18.00	98,531
Nova Scotia.....1954	5,173	33.47	26.53	1,028,756
.....1955	5,178	33.63	26.55	1,063,165
New Brunswick.....1954	5,756	36.93	39.42	1,248,339
.....1955	5,808	36.89	39.24	1,288,095

For footnote, see end of table.