

Hello Heather,

Couple of questions for a story I hope to publish in the run of the day (Thursday Nov 16):

1 - In a news release about the recent Sparks decision by the NS Court of Appeal issued today 20 different groups are asking that the review announced by the Department be public and include all relevant regulations, as listed in the release. What is the department's response?

2 - The groups are also asking that families that were cut off be provided full restitution of the benefits they were entitled to. Is this something the department is considering?

As always, much appreciated.

Robert DeVet

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Fairbairn, Heather J <Heather.Fairbairn@novascotia.ca>

Nov 16 (1 day ago)

to me

Thanks will get back to u

Heather Fairbairn

Media Relations Advisor

Education and Early Childhood Development/

Department of Community Services

Fairbairn, Heather J <Heather.Fairbairn@novascotia.ca>

6:09 PM (22 hours ago)

to me

Hi Robert – You can attribute this to me on behalf of the department:

We accept the court's ruling and continue to work with staff and legal counsel to understand exactly what the decision means for the department and for our clients going forward.

To provide context around the decision, based on our initial review, out of 25,800 cases and about 39,000 beneficiaries, there were approximately 53 cases between April and September 2017 where similar action may have been undertaken.

The intent of the Employment Support and Income Assistance (ESIA) program is to help people be as independent as possible. Under the program, people who are employable are required to actively participate in employment activities.

We do not take the suspension of benefits lightly. Such action is only undertaken in situations as a last resort.

Any changes resulting from the court's ruling will be applied to cases on a go-forward basis.