



NOVA SCOTIA
Community Services
Office of the Minister

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DEC 01 2017

Mr. Chuck Porter, MLA
Chair of the Standing Committee on Community Services
Legislative Committee Office
2nd floor, One Government Place, 1700 Granville Street
PO Box 2630 Station M
Halifax, NS
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Dear Mr. ~~Porter~~: *Chuck*

Thank you for your letter of November 22, 2017, with respect to correspondence received from Benefits Reform Action Group (BRAG) regarding annual reviews for Employment Support Income Assistance (ESIA) recipients.

The ESIA Program does require recipients to meet with their caseworker on an annual basis, to review eligibility and to confirm they are receiving the correct level of assistance and supports. This review also provides recipients with the opportunity to discuss any concerns or needs they may have, advise of any change in circumstances, and to ensure that documentation and consents are updated.

A caseworker would not have reason to ask a recipient how much money they have in their pocket. The annual review is conducted in a professional and respectful manner. If there are concerns, the recipient is encouraged to speak with the local office's supervisor or manager.

Medical supporting documentation may be requested at an annual review when:

- it is unclear how the disability or illness affects the ability to participate in employment or employability activities.
- there are special needs that have expired or changed.

When there is existing documentation on file, new documentation is not required unless it is out of date, there is a change in the recipient's circumstances regarding employability, and/or there is a new request for medical related special needs. The form does ask specific questions regarding activities of daily living that include mobility questions. This information assists caseworkers in the determination of eligibility for specific types of special needs.

