

May 3, 2016 Ref: 189557

Linda Derkach
President
BC FamilyNet Society
lindaderkach@shaw.ca

Dear Ms. Derkach:

I want to thank you for your email of April 1, 2016, and apologize for any misinformation being circulated about the disability assistance rate increase announced in Budget 2016.

I want to reassure you that the BC Bus Pass program is still in place and will continue to be available to individuals on disability assistance.

What will change is the monthly disability rate. Our government is investing an additional \$170 million to increase rates for all people who receive disability assistance.

Beginning September 1, 2016, everyone with the Persons with the Disabilities (PWD) designation will receive a rate increase of \$25 to their monthly support allowance. They will also receive a \$52 transportation support allowance. The transportation support allowance will either be added to the monthly assistance payment or be provided in the form of a bus pass.

These changes are being made to benefit all people on disability assistance throughout the province, and build on our commitment to help them gain greater independence, security of income, enhanced well-being and increased participation in the community.

I know many people would like to see a larger increase in assistance rates, and that's something we will continue to look at.

Again, I regret that this information was not communicated in a better, more positive way.

Thank you again for writing and sharing your feedback.

Sincerely,
Michelle Stilwell
Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation