Program Administration

General Principle

The Social Development Program provides financial benefits and services to individuals and families, resident on reserve, who are in need. Need is determined by the application of a means-test, and other applicable eligibility requirements.

In British Columbia an understanding exists between the provincial Ministry of Housing and Social Development (MHSD) and the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) whereby administrative and financial responsibility for social assistance and social support services to Indians and non-Indians living off-reserve will be assumed by the province, and responsibility for social assistance and social support services to Indians and non-Indians living on-reserve will fall to DIAND and the bands or tribal councils and organizations that have assumed responsibility for administration of the program.

Band and Tribal Council Administration

A band council or an association of bands (tribal council) may be authorized by a funding agreement to administer the Social Development Program. This body responsible for administration of the program, whether it be band, tribal council or organization is referred to as the *administering authority.* Under such an agreement the administering authority undertakes to ensure that:

- the program is administered in accordance with the DIAND *Social Development Policy and Procedures Manual*
- a competent staff is employed to administer the Social Development Program
- assistance is provided to all persons on the reserve who meet eligibility requirements, without regard to membership status in the band
- all records, forms, and documents that are required by the funding agreement or *Social Development Policy and Procedures Manual* are maintained and are available to DIAND for program reviews and financial audits

- DIAND is provided with statistical and other documentation as required by the funding arrangement
- social development staff are encouraged to participate in available training programs that are designed to enhance administrative and service-delivery skills
- other conditions as agreed upon are observed

When a band or tribal council is granted authority to administer the Social Development Program on behalf of DIAND, the chief and council of the band or tribal council shall appoint a qualified band social development worker and, if provided for in the funding agreement, other social development staff who shall be responsible for administering the Social Development Program on behalf of the administering authority.

The administering authority shall provide the band social development worker and other social development staff with a written statement of current personnel policies and practices and written job descriptions. A sample job description, which the administering authority may adapt for its own use, if it should choose, is located in Volume 3, Appendix 5.

Community Based Welfare Committee

Where a band or tribal council has established a welfare committee, its terms of reference and powers should be defined clearly by the administering authority and may include responsibilities such as program review, development, and other service functions.

A welfare committee has no power to change the *Social Development Policy and Procedures Manual* and shall not relieve the administering authority, band social development worker, or other social development staff of any direct or assigned duties or responsibilities for administering the Social Development Program on behalf of the administering authority.

Members of a welfare committee serve on voluntary basis and receive no financial compensation under the Social Development Program.