

UPDATE ON THE AANCE NATIONAL SOCIAL MANUAL

AANDC developed a new national social policy manual it intended the Atlantic First Nations to implement by April 1, 2012. It included reductions in Social Assistance rates in the region and capped Rent/Heat/Fuel and shelter allowance.

The assembly of NB Chiefs sought a legal injunction to prevent the implementation of the new rates on April 1/12 and the Federal Court judge issued an injunction on March 30th temporarily preventing AANDC from forcing the implementation of the new policy for first nations in the Maritimes. The Judge cited lack of consultation with first nations as part of the reasoning and also noted potential harm (emotional and psychological stress) could be caused by implementing new rates.

This injunction is temporary and in force until the application for judicial review of AANDC's decision to implement the new rates can be reviewed by the judge (est. April or May 2013). The impact of this injunction for the Maritime First Nations means they do not have to implement the new rates. Status quo until a decision can be made.

On November 20th the case was heard in the Federal Court of Appeal to defend the injunction decision. The court reserved issuing a decision which means they will issue a written decision in the future. Hopefully within the next 2-4 weeks. If the decision is won this means that the injunction stays in place until there is a decision in the main case.

Will keep you updated as soon as there is more news.