

# AFN National Income Assistance Forum

September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024

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Indigenous Services  
Canada

Services aux  
Autochtones Canada

Canada

# PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

## HIGHLIGHTS

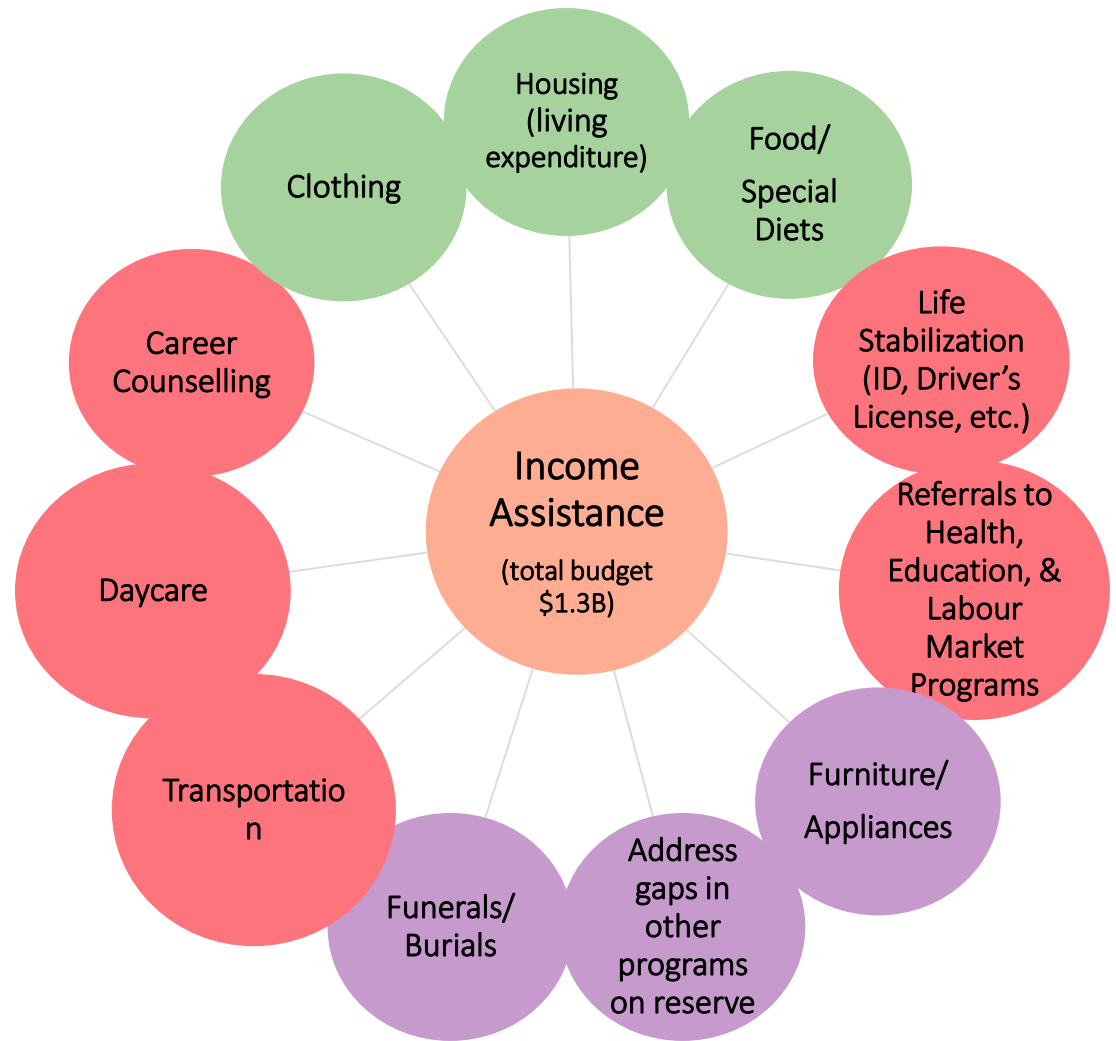
### Clients

- In 2020-21, IA supported 82,363 clients and 63,322 dependents (spouse, children, etc.)
- More than 40% of all IA clients are single males.

### Communities

- Nearly half of the communities receiving IA have a population of less than 500 people.

Source: IA Program Data, Census 2016, ISC Community Profiles



Income Support for Basic Needs

Case Management & Pre-Employment Supports

Income Supports for Special Needs

# OPERATING CONTEXT

IA **dependency rate** remains higher than provincial average:

- **27% on-reserve** compared to **4.7% off-reserve** in 2020-2021.

On-reserve dependency rate has been **decreasing since 2013**, in part due to the introduction of **case management**.

- From **34%** dependency in 2011-2012 to **27%** in 2020-2021.

**Comparability with provincial/Yukon rates and eligibility** is challenging as demand has historically exceeded available funding:

- The availability of IA Case-management and pre-employment supports are more limited on reserve compared to communities off reserve and,
- Additionally, wrap around services tend to be more available in communities off reserve (e.g. childcare, transportation passes, etc.)

<sup>1</sup> In Ontario, First Nation communities or organizations deliver Ontario Works, which includes employment assistance, in accordance with the Canada-Ontario 1965 Memorandum of Agreement Respecting Welfare Programs for Indians.

# INCOME ASSISTANCE PROGRAM: ENGAGEMENT

Budget 2018 committed \$8.5M over 2 years for a **First Nation-Led IA reform engagement** process which brought forward five themes that should be considered under program reform, including:



## Adequacy of Provisions

- Does not cover actual needs.
- Issues with Provincial / Yukon alignment.



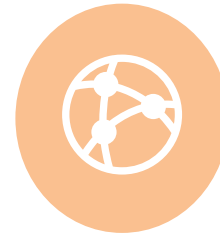
## Capacity

- Insufficient training & overworked staff.
- Unmet needs due to lack of funding or services.



## Case Management

- Should be expanded to all First Nation communities



## Wrap-around Services

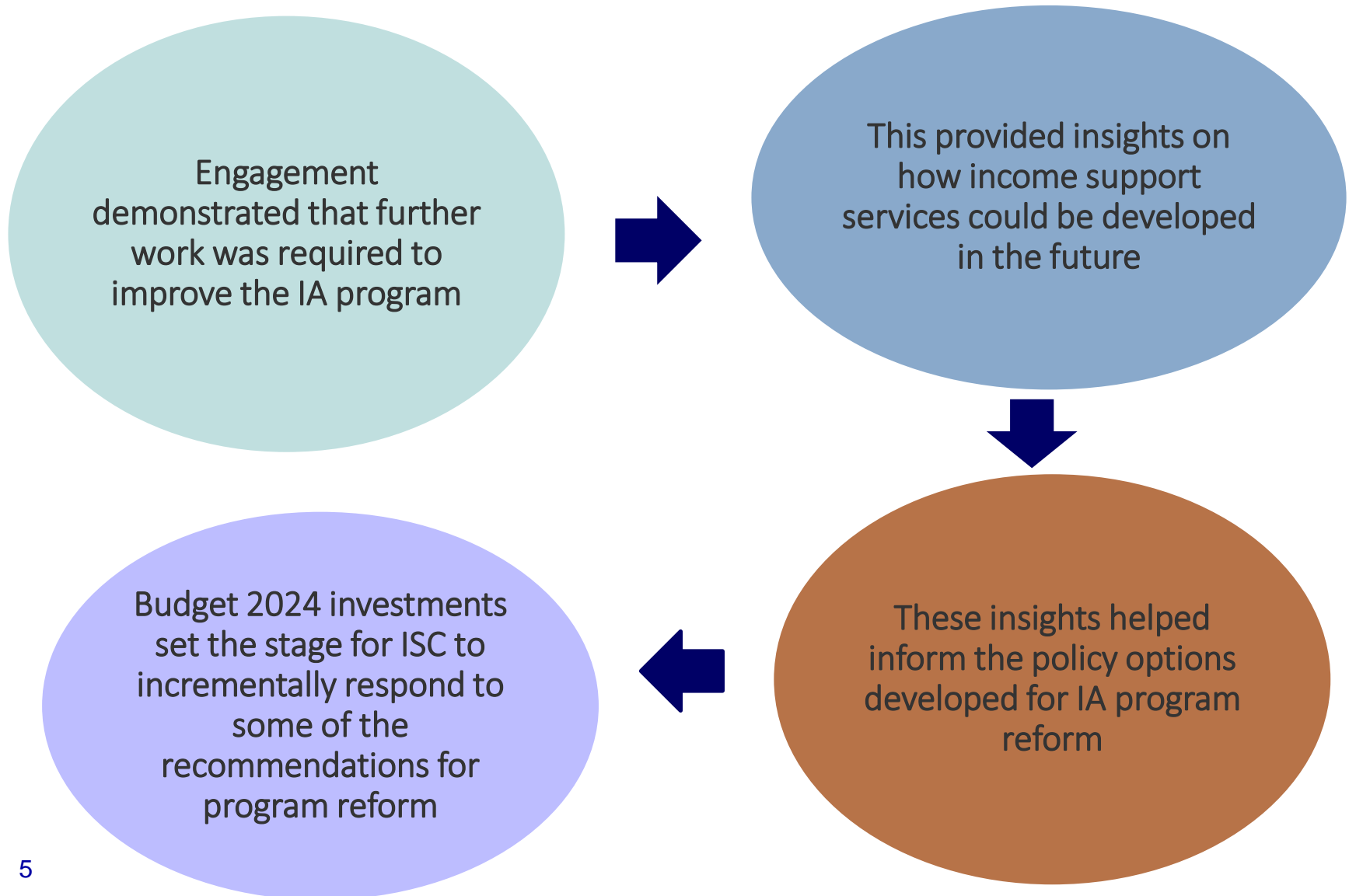
- Clients need more than just financial support.
- Lack of coordination with other services.



## Self-determination

- No one-size fits all for communities
- Need for greater control and flexibility.

# INCOME ASSISTANCE REFORM: POST ENGAGEMENT



## BUDGET 2024

- In total, Budget 2024 committed over \$927 million to the Program over five years starting in 2024-25, and \$169 million ongoing.
- This the largest increase in ongoing funding for the Program in some time and responds to critical elements identified during the engagement and co-development process.
- Budget 2024 announced funding for the Income Assistance program to address program pressures, continue case management and pre-employment supports at current levels, and introduce disability income supports on reserve where there are existing gaps compared to provincial/territorial programming.

## BUDGET 2024: PROGRAM INTEGRITY

- ✓ \$596.2 million over five years, starting in 2024-25, and \$119.2 million per year ongoing to provide income support on reserve to meet demand.
- ✓ This is new funding aimed to ensure the Program is responsive to pressures related to the growth of existing funding activities – like rate and caseload increases – and to fill gaps in existing programming – like Special Needs.
- ✓ In preparation for delivering this investment, the Program has implemented a new national service delivery funding model to ensure that all recipients who deliver Income Assistance receive consistent and equitable service delivery funding.
- ✓ Of note, funding to continue the cost-of-living benefit was not included in the Budget 2024 decision.

## BUDGET 2024: CASE MANAGEMENT AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

- ✓ The previous budget commitment for CM/PES (2022) was set to sunset on March 31, 2024.
- ✓ \$117.6 million over three years, starting in 2024-25, for case management and pre-employment supports to increase access to job opportunities in existing communities.
- ✓ This funding will cover a 3-year **renewal** of CM/PES at status quo levels (no expansion).
- ✓ ISC has already provided funding to First Nations to support case-management and pre-employment supports.



## BUDGET 2024: DISABILITY INCOME SUPPORTS

- ✓ Budget 2024 provided \$213.5 million over five years, starting in 2024-25, and \$49.8 million per year ongoing to implement income supports for eligible persons with disabilities.
- ✓ This funding will allow the program to provide rates that are aligned with provincial/Yukon disability income supports, particularly in regions where there are standalone disability income support programs.
- ✓ For clarity, the funding for disability income supports is limited to financial payments for IA clients with disabilities, aligned with provincial/Yukon rates. Funding for social and health supports would continue to be delivered through the Assisted Living program and FNIHB.
- ✓ To support delivery, ISC will be providing further information to First Nation partners in the fall (e.g. updated program guidelines, Q&As, and other).

## CONTINUED AREAS OF FOCUS

- In addition to the work on implementing the Budget 2024 investments, ISC will aim to work with the AFN and other First Nation partners with an aim to incrementally responding to the findings of the national report on the 2018-2020 First Nations-Led Engagement on Income Assistance.

Areas of focus include:

- ✓ **Adequacy of Provisions** - concerns with provincial comparability.
- ✓ **Case-Management and Pre-Employment Supports** – expansion to additional communities.
- ✓ **Wrap-around Services**- identify and address gaps in supports and services.
- ✓ **Capacity** – determine ways to address the important needs of those delivering the Program.
- ✓ **Self-determination** – support great control over program design and delivery (e.g. working with New Fiscal Relationship).

# CONTACT

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*Merci / Thank you / Wela'lin / Ekosani / Miigwech/ Meegwetch / Marsee /  
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