

## CIRCULAR

**Date:** July 25, 2025

**CIRCULAR NUMBER:** EIA #2025-17 **Alternate Programs:**

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**To:** Program Managers - Rural & Northern Offices

**Subject:** **Building Independence Program Northern Affairs Communities Employment Initiative**

**Reference:** Rewarding Work Allowance (2007-37, 2011-18R), EIA and EM Roles and Responsibilities as they relate to Employment Planning for EIA participants (2014-06)

**Replaces:** 2021-19

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**Type:**  Policy  For Internal Reference Only  
 Procedure  
 Rate  
 Information Only

**Effective Date:** April 1, 2025

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**The circular has been revised to reflect that the Building Independence Program is open to referrals for 2025/2026.**

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The Departments of Families (FAM) – Policy, Programs and Legislation Branch, Municipal and Northern Relations (MNR) – Northern Affairs Branch (NAB), and Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation (BMTJC) – Training and Employment Services (TES) Branch continue to support the development of employment opportunities in Northern Affairs Communities (NACs) for residents who are in receipt of provincial Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) benefits through the Building Independence Program.

The Building Independence Program (BIP) provides employment opportunities to EIA participants who reside in Indigenous communities. The EIA program will ensure participants' basic needs continue to be met while they are participating in the program and their income, while working, will be greater than it would have been had they received EIA benefits only. Due to the expected level of BIP earnings, EIA files will not close during attachment to BIP. The program aims to provide subsidized employment

that will enhance or develop participant skills and lead to long-term sustainable employment.

**Earnings reported by EIA participants hired under this initiative are subject to standard employment exemptions (first \$500.00 of net monthly earnings plus 30%). Participants are also eligible for the Rewarding Work Allowance (with the exception of persons enrolled in the disability category).**