

Part C – Decision Under Appeal

The decision under appeal is the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (ministry) Reconsideration Decision dated November 20, 2025, which determined the appellant was not eligible for a crisis supplement for furniture according to section 59 of the Employment and Assistance Regulation.

Specifically, the ministry determined the appellant was not eligible for a crisis supplement for a couch, entertainment unit, coffee table, desk, office chair, side tables, dresser and a water cooler tower as it determined there was no evidence indicating that there would be an “imminent” danger to the health of the family unit if these were not provided.

To note, upon reconsideration the ministry approved the appellant’s request to purchase a full bed frame and a bunk bed.

Part D – Relevant Legislation

Employment and Assistance Act (Act) section 4, section 22(4)

Employment and Assistance Regulation (Regulation) section 59

Relevant sections of the legislation can be found in the Schedule of Legislation at the end of this decision.

Part E – Summary of Facts

The hearing was held as a written hearing on January 5, 2026.

Relevant Evidence Before the Ministry at Reconsideration

Ministry Records show:

- The appellant is in a family of three receiving \$1435 per month in income assistance (\$710 support allowance, \$725 shelter allowance).
- On June 26, 2025, the appellant requested a crisis supplement for \$4500 to purchase a couch, an entertainment unit, a coffee table, a desk, an office chair, a double size bed frame, side tables, a bunk bed, a dresser and a water cooler tower.
- On July 14, 2025, the appellant submitted quotes for a full bed frame (\$470.39) and a bunk bed (\$308.59).
- On October 31, 2025, the ministry denied the request for a crisis supplement.
- On November 7, 2025, the appellant submitted a Request for Reconsideration.

Reason for Request for Reconsideration (November 7, 2025)

The appellant requested reconsideration of a crisis supplement for beds - for them and their two sons. They explain the unexpected need, lack of resources and imminent danger to the family's health.

Request for Furniture Crisis Supplement (June 26, 2025)

The appellant's request is for an entertainment unit, coffee table, desk, office chair, double-sized bed frame, side tables, bunk bed, dresser and a water cooler tower.

In response to the question, "Is the situation that led to your request unexpected?", the appellant answers, "no". They think they will require \$4500 to meet their need and the only money they have is from the ministry.

In response to the question, "If you are unable to meet your need, will this result in imminent danger to your health or the health of any other person in your family unit?", the appellant said, "No, I don't think so.".

Additional Information Received After Reconsideration

Notice of Appeal (December 5, 2025)

In the reasons for appeal, the appellant writes, "Check email notes".

Appellant Submission (December 19, 2025)

The appellant explains that he is appealing the denial of essential household items.

The items requested are as follows:

- Sleeping Essentials: bed for appellant and bunk bed for the children
- Sanitation & Food Preparation: rolling kitchen island and water cooler
- Hazard Reduction & Storage: dresser for appellant
- Essential Functioning: desk and laptop

The appellant adds that the absence of these items creates an imminent, life-threatening risk to the physical safety, sanitation, and health of the family. They are currently living in conditions that pose severe hazards and which are degrading their physical health. The appellant urges approval of these items based on the following evidence of imminent danger:

1. Sleeping Essentials

Sleeping on the floor exposes the children to drafts, dust mites, and potential pests/vermin and the lack of a proper bed frame forces the appellant to execute difficult, strenuous physical maneuvers multiple times, day and night.

2. Sanitation & Food Safety (Rolling Kitchen Island & Water Cooler)

A. Rolling Kitchen Island

The appellant states they lack adequate, sterile counter space. The limited area becomes dangerously overcrowded with hot appliances, utensils, and raw ingredients during meal preparation.

Imminent Risk - Fire and Burn Hazard

The lack of space forces flammable items and electrical cords into close proximity to the stove and hot surfaces, creating an imminent risk of accidental fire or severe burns to them and their children.

Food Contamination Risk

A lack of surface area to physically separate raw meats from fresh produce/cooked foods, makes safe food handling impossible. This puts the children at imminent risk of cross-contamination and food-borne illness.

B. Water Cooler

The appellant states the tap water contains visible chemical residue and suspended particles even after boiling, making them fearful to use it for drinking or cooking. Since they lack a vehicle, they cannot transport the necessary bulk 11-liter jugs and instead are

forced to rely on purchasing small, expensive 4-liter bottles (\$2.00 each) that require frequent trips to the store.

Imminent Risk- traffic & pedestrian safety hazard

To buy these bottles, the appellant must walk with their children along a busy, high-traffic street where vehicles pass within two to three feet of the sidewalk at high speeds. This creates an imminent risk of a fatal traffic accident and causes severe psychological distress.

Threat to Food Security

The high cost of purchasing single-use water bottles is financially unsustainable and is depleting the budget for food. The family faces an imminent danger of having to choose between safe water and adequate nutrition.

Physical Injury & Dehydration

The repetitive nature of hauling these bottles on foot poses an imminent risk of acute back injury to the appellant, the sole caregiver.

3. Hazard Reduction & Storage (Dresser)

Clothing, heavy electronics, and daily supplies are piled on the floor or the children's clothing is stored completely out of reach on the top closet shelf.

Imminent Risk - fall & crushing hazard (dresser)

Daily clothing is stored on the high shelf and the children are forced to use unstable furniture, boxes, or stacked objects as makeshift climbing platforms to reach it. This creates an imminent high-risk fall hazard that could result in severe head trauma or a crushing injury if the items on the shelf fall down. A dresser is required to provide safe, ground-level access.

4. Essential Functioning (Desk & Laptop)

The appellant lacks a dedicated workspace and the essential hardware needed to access the internet reliably. They are forced to make frequent and lengthy trips to the public library to manage critical family affairs and look for work online.

Imminent Risk - health & exposure risk

Relying on the library necessitates walking long distances with the children, repeatedly exposing them to the elements, inclement weather, and extreme temperatures. This creates a health crisis risk, (severe respiratory infections, hypothermia) caused solely by the lack of home access. A laptop is the lifeline to safety. Without it, the appellant states he is cut off from vital services like health appointments and accessing time-sensitive government aid portals. This digital isolation puts the family at risk of missing critical deadlines, potentially leading to homelessness or health crises. The desk is required to

maintain a secure and private area to manage confidential, legal, and medical documents away from the children.

Ministry Submission (December 30, 2025)

The ministry states it reviewed the appellant's submission and provides the following response.

- At appeal, the appellant includes a new request for a rolling kitchen island. It was not part of the original request and Reconsideration Decision; Therefore, it cannot be addressed at appeal.
- In respect to a full-size bedframe and a bunk bed, the ministry relies on the record of the ministry decision. The appellant is to contact the ministry to implement the decision.
- In respect to a dresser, the ministry relies on the record of ministry decision and determines there is no imminent health danger if the family does not have a dresser to store clothing.
- In respect to a water cooler tower, the ministry determined there is no evidence of imminent danger to the family's health - no verification from the property owner that tap water at the rented residence may cause an imminent health danger and no evidence to establish that failure to obtain a water cooler tower will lead to imminent danger to the family's health.
- In respect to a couch, entertainment unit, coffee table, desk, office chair and side tables, the ministry relies on the record of the ministry decision.

Admissibility of New Evidence

I determined all the additional information from the appellant (Notice of Appeal and Submission) and the ministry (Submission) is reasonably required for a full and fair disclosure of all matters related to the decision under appeal and therefore is admissible as evidence under section 22(4) of Act.

Part F – Reasons for Panel Decision

The issue on appeal is whether the ministry's Reconsideration Decision was reasonably supported by the evidence or was a reasonable application of the legislation in the circumstances of the appellant.

Specifically, did the ministry reasonably determine the appellant was not eligible for a crisis supplement for furniture (couch, entertainment unit, coffee table, desk, office chair, side tables, dresser and a water cooler tower)?

Upon reconsideration the ministry approved the appellant's request to purchase a full bed frame and a bunk bed.

Appellant Position

The appellant submits that an imminent, life-threatening risk to the physical safety, sanitation, and health of the family is created because of the lack of a rolling kitchen island, water cooler, dresser, desk and laptop. The family is currently living in conditions that pose severe hazards, which are degrading their health.

Ministry Position

The ministry is satisfied that it is unexpected that the appellant has not been able to save for a couch, an entertainment unit, a coffee table, a desk, an office chair, side tables, a dresser, and a water cooler tower. Additionally, the ministry is satisfied that the appellant does not have the resources to purchase these items.

However, the ministry submits it is not satisfied that the health of the appellant's family would be in imminent danger. The word "imminent" denotes a sense of urgency, and the appellant has not provided any evidence to indicate that the family's health would be in urgent danger without these items. As well, as a rolling kitchen island was not part of the original request and reconsideration decision, it cannot be addressed at appeal.

As the appellant's request does not meet all the criteria under section 59 of the Regulation, they are not eligible for a crisis supplement to purchase a couch, an entertainment unit, a coffee table, a desk, an office chair, side tables, a dresser, and a water cooler tower.

Panel Analysis

Section 4, Act - income assistance and supplements

Section 4 of the Act states, subject to the Regulation, the minister may provide a supplement for a family unit that is eligible for it.

Section 59, Regulation – crisis supplement

Section 59(1) of the Regulation states the minister may provide a crisis supplement for a family eligible for income assistance if the family requires the supplement to meet an unexpected expense or obtain an item unexpectedly needed and is unable to meet the expense because there are no resources available and the minister considers that failure to meet the expense will result in imminent danger to the health of any person in the family. Ministry records show the appellant is in receipt of income assistance.

As the ministry is satisfied that the situation is unexpected and that the appellant does not have the resources to purchase these items, I will focus on the criteria the ministry was not satisfied was met - failure to meet the expense will result in imminent danger to the health of any person in the family.

I note the appellant, in their submission, provided examples where they believe there is imminent danger to the health of their family. For example, they state that the tap water contains visible chemical residue and suspended particles even after boiling requiring frequent trips to the store, risking fatal traffic accidents caused by walking along a busy road. Also, reaching for clothing on a high shelf is creating a crushing hazard for the children. And, the lack of a desk means the appellant cannot maintain a secure and private area to manage confidential, legal, and medical documents away from the children.

I find the ministry reasonably determined that the criterion of imminent danger, as required under section 59 of the Regulation, has not been met. Although it is understandable that the appellant wants to keep his family safe, the examples provided by the appellant are insufficient to conclude a threat of "imminent danger". For example, there is insufficient evidence (such as a report from a health authority), to demonstrate that the tap water is unsafe creating imminent danger to the family's health. As well, although it is understandable that using various makeshift objects to reach for clothing on a high shelf can pose a dangerous situation, I also find that there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that a dresser is the only option, which could address the risk of falls or head injuries. In addition, I find the phrase, "desk is required to maintain a secure and private area", does not suggest an imminently dangerous situation if not addressed immediately. Maintaining a secure and private area cannot reasonably be viewed the

same as an imminently dangerous health situation. As well, I find there is no evidence to demonstrate the need for a couch, entertainment unit, coffee table and side tables to avoid imminent danger to the health of the appellant's family.

Therefore, I find, the evidence provided does not meet the criterion of "imminent danger to the family's health" as required under section 59 of the Regulation.

I also note that although the appellant stated a rolling kitchen island and laptop were needed to prevent imminent danger to the family's health, these items were not included in the Request for a Furniture Crisis Supplement nor in the ministry Reconsideration Decision. Therefore, as my role is to determine the reasonability of the ministry's decision, I will not provide any comments on these requests.

According to section 59(1) of the Regulation, all the criteria must be met to qualify for a crisis supplement and since the criterion of imminent danger was not met, I find the ministry reasonably determined the appellant is not eligible for a crisis supplement for furniture (couch, entertainment unit, coffee table, desk, office chair, side tables, dresser and water cooler tower).

Conclusion

In conclusion, I find the ministry decision that determined the appellant was not eligible for a crisis supplement for furniture, is reasonably supported by the evidence.

I confirm the ministry's Reconsideration Decision and the appellant's appeal is not successful.

Schedule of Legislation

Employment and Assistance Act

Income assistance and supplements

4 Subject to the regulations, the minister may provide income assistance or a supplement to or for a family unit that is eligible for it.

Employment and Assistance Regulation

Crisis supplement

59 (1)The minister may provide a crisis supplement to or for a family unit that is eligible for income assistance... if

(a)the family unit or a person in the family unit requires the supplement to meet an unexpected expense or obtain an item unexpectedly needed and is unable to meet the expense or obtain the item because there are no resources available to the family unit, and

(b)the minister considers that failure to meet the expense or obtain the item will result in imminent danger to the health of any person in the family unit.

(2)A crisis supplement may be provided only for the calendar month in which the application or request for the supplement is made.

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APPEAL NUMBER 2025-0414

Part G – Order

The panel decision is: (Check one) **Unanimous** **By Majority**

The Panel **Confirms the Ministry Decision** **Rescinds the Ministry Decision**

If the ministry decision is rescinded, is the panel decision referred back to the Minister for a decision as to amount? Yes No

Legislative Authority for the Decision:

Employment and Assistance Act

Section 24(1)(a) or Section 24(1)(b)

Section 24(2)(a) or Section 24(2)(b)

Part H – Signatures

Print Name

Connie Simonsen

Signature of Chair

Date (Year/Month/Day)

2026/01/05

Print Name

Signature of Member

Date (Year/Month/Day)

Print Name

Signature of Member

Date (Year/Month/Day)