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Société Makivik
Makivik Corporation



Press Release

For immediate release

Improved Measures to Reduce the Cost of Living

Kuujuuaq, Québec, April 1, 2014 – The Kativik Regional Government (KRG) and the Makivik Corporation announce improvements to regional cost-of-living measures. The improvements will lower the prices paid by Nunavimmiut for food, personal care and household products, gasoline, and the transportation of major harvesting equipment, household appliances and furniture. The improvements will also aim to increase the availability of country food in the communities and will increase the subsidy paid to elders to mitigate some of their socio-economic hardships. “The changes to the regional cost-of-living measures are being implemented to more accurately reflect the needs of Inuit families,” stated Makivik President Jobie Tukkiapik. KRG Chairperson Maggie Emudluk for her part noted that “These measures represent another step towards addressing the very high cost of living Nunavimmiut face.”

Improvements to Nunavik Cost-of-Living Measures

(Important changes that will apply to the regional cost-of-living measures effective April 1, 2014, are described below.)

Over 300 food and non-food items across many categories will be added to the 40 items already eligible under the **Food and Other Essentials Program**. Discounts of between 20 and 40% will be applied to these items to bring their costs more in line with the prices paid for the same items in southern Québec.

Under the **Household Appliance and Harvesting Equipment Program**, the new subsidies will be:

- \$1000 for each snowmobile, outboard motor, all-terrain vehicle and boat (and 30% of the cost for each qamutik and boggan up to \$500) purchased for subsistence harvesting activities by beneficiaries of the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement* (effective January 1, 2014);
- \$350 for refrigerators, kitchen stoves, beds, and kitchen tables and chairs, among other appliances and furniture (with the annual maximum amount per individual set at \$1050).

The **Country Food Community Support Program** will aim to increase the quantity of country food available by paying financial assistance to each northern village as well as to the Kigaluk Landholding Corporation of Chisasibi. The reimbursement for country-food transportation costs will continue to be 100%, while the subsidy for the purchase of country food will be increased to 40%. For its part, the subsidy for the transportation of subsistence harvesting supplies has been removed from this measure and will now be covered solely under the Inuit Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Support Program administered by the KRG and local hunter support programs.

Finally, the subsidy under the **Gasoline Program** will be increased to 31¢ per litre at the pump and **Elders' Assistance** will be increased to \$1500 annually (payable by instalments of \$750 each January and July; beginning in July 2014).

For detailed descriptions of all regional cost-of-living measures, visit <http://www.krg.ca/en/cost-of-living-program>.

Background Information

The funding for current regional cost-of-living measures is provided by the Québec government pursuant to the *Agreement on the Financing of Measures to Reduce the Cost of Living in Nunavik* signed with the Makivik Corporation and the KRG on December 9, 2013. Under the agreement, Québec has committed to pay \$10 million in 2014–2015, \$11 million in 2015–2016 and \$12 million in 2016–2017, i.e. \$33 million for the measures for the next three years.

Also under the Agreement, an in-depth study of the consumer patterns of Inuit households will be carried out with a view to developing a comparative cost of living index. The two-year study will be carried out by Université Laval. The results will be used to define effective and long-lasting solutions to the cost-of-living in Nunavik.

The regional cost-of-living measures are determined jointly by the Makivik Corporation and the KRG. The KRG is responsible for administering the implementation of the measures.

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The KRG is a non-ethnic public organization created in 1978, under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. The organization has jurisdiction over nearly the entire territory of Québec north of the 55th parallel in areas such as municipal matters, transportation, the environment, policing, employment, labour training, income security, childcare services, renewable resources, land-use planning, civil security and economic development.

Makivik is the development corporation mandated to manage the heritage funds of the Inuit of Nunavik provided for under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. Makivik's role includes the administration and investment of these funds and the promotion of economic growth by providing assistance for the creation of Inuit-operated businesses in Nunavik. Makivik promotes the preservation of Inuit culture and language as well as the health, welfare, relief of poverty, and education of Inuit in the communities.