

Purpose

The Participant Assistance Program provides funding or other assistance to qualifying people and organizations to ensure effective public participation in the environmental assessment and review of major projects.

Right to Apply

Any person or group of people who intend to participate in a public hearing may apply.

Participant Assistance Committee (PAC)

Under the program, the project Proponent is required to provide assistance to approved Participants who, in turn, must comply with conditions set in advance of the hearing.

The Minister of Conservation will determine if the Participant Assistance Program will be applied to a project subject to a public hearing. If so, the Participant Assistance Program will be advertised to the public and applications may be submitted to the Secretary to the Clean Environment Commission who will forward them to a Participant Assistance Committee appointed by the Minister.

Participant Assistance Meeting

The Participant Assistance Committee will hold a public assistance meeting after it has had sufficient time to review all the applications for assistance. During the meeting, the applicants for participant assistance will be required to explain their request, and may be questioned by the Participant Assistance Committee and Proponent.

Provisional Order for Assistance

After the participant assistance meeting, the Participant Assistance Committee will make recommendations to the Minister regarding conditions for a provisional order of participant assistance. The provisional order will specify which applicants will be eligible for assistance, the type and timing of assistance, and any other conditions which the Proponent and Participants must meet. These conditions may require various Participants to cooperate and share assistance in preparing and presenting information. There is also a general requirement that all Participants who receive assistance must act responsibly and contribute substantially to the hearing process. Depending upon the length of the hearing, interim financial reports may also be required.

Up to 30% of the assistance may be provided before the hearings. These funds may help to provide start-up funds to prepare for the hearings and may include the procurement of expert services or other resources by Participants.

Final Order for Assistance

After the hearings are complete, the Participant Assistance Committee will receive itemized accounting, including copies of invoices from each funded Participant. All documentation must be received within one year of the close of the hearing. After determining whether each Participant has complied with the conditions of the provisional order, the Committee will make recommendations regarding a final payment to each Participant.

Eligibility

Normally, only organizations with some record of concern or commitment to a particular interest relevant to the hearing will be eligible for participant assistance. However, any person who feels that he/she could be directly affected by a project may apply for assistance. Funding eligibility is subject to the following conditions, set out in *Manitoba Regulation 125/91* under *The Environment Act*:

- *"The applicant has clearly demonstrated an interest in the potential environmental or related social, economic or health impacts of the proposal under review ..."*

The applicant will show how he/she or other people (including the general public) whom they represent may be affected by the environmental or related impacts from the proposal under review.

- *"If the applicant is a group of persons ... an established record of concerns or demonstrated commitment to the interest must be provided;"*

This criteria ensures that funding is directed to organizations with a specific interest in the environmental impacts of the particular project. However, individuals and newer organizations who want to represent the public interest may also receive funding, provided that they can show commitment to the issue.

- *"... the applicant has attempted to bring related interests of which it is aware into an umbrella group to represent the related interests at the hearing;"*

This criteria ensures that the funds do not lead to duplication or repetition. As well, as many groups as possible will be able to participate in the review and no group will participate in the review to the exclusion of any other.

- *"The work ... assists the panel's investigations into the potential effects of the development and would contribute substantially to the hearing;"*

The Participant Assistance Committee will convene a participant assistance meeting after the hearing to recommend final payments, based on the original provisional order and the applicant's contribution to the hearing.

- *"The applicant has a clear proposal for the use of any assistance that it might be given;"*

Applicants will use the prescribed application form and will include an activity plan of action with the application (Item 4). The plan may be submitted in any form provided that the explanation is concise and readable. The plan should indicate the type of environmental issues and information which the applicant

wishes to raise, the types of activities to be undertaken and must coincide with the Panel's terms of reference.

- *"The applicant does not have sufficient financial resources to enable it to adequately represent its interest ... and has identified all other financial support it has applied for ... relating to the review;"*

Participant assistance will be awarded on the basis of demonstrated need. The participant must not have sufficient financial resources to adequately represent its interest without assistance, and the applicant should have made reasonable efforts to raise funds.

- *"The applicant must have appropriate financial controls to ensure that the assistance ... is spent for the purposes for which it is given;"*

Appropriate financial controls consist of an appropriate accounting system that details all funding commitments and expenses incurred in relation to the participation assistance. The provisional order will list the conditions upon which the participant funding is based and each participant will be required to meet the conditions as outlined in the order. The financial plan will outline the purpose and all activities for which the funding is being sought. These activities may include the use of research staff, legal counsel and expert witnesses.

A summary of these accounts must be submitted to the Participant Assistance Committee on the prescribed form, along with a detailed accounting and supporting invoices and statements on completion of the hearing. **All materials must be received within 1 (one) year of the close of the hearing, claims made after that date will not be honoured.**

Eligible Expenditures

Participants will be able to receive assistance for eligible expenditures, such as the following:

- Professional fees for expertise; (Technical and Legal)
- Salaries for coordination and secretarial staff for time spent on activities directly related to the hearing;
- Travel and accommodation expenses;
- Acquisition of relevant information such as maps, documents and reports;
- Information collection and dissemination;
- Accounting and audit services;
- Photocopying, postage and stationary;
- Telephone rental and charges over and above normal office operation;
- Translation services;
- Transcript acquisition;
- Other expenses as approved by the Minister.

Ineligible Expenses

- Lost income such as wages lost as a result of attending meetings and hearings;
- Capital expenditures;
- Promotion;
- Expenditures not directly related to the assessment, including but not restricted to core activities e.g. monthly phone services, office machine rental, usual office operation and supplies, staff salaries not related to the hearing, etc.

How to Apply

Applications for participant assistance may be obtained from the Clean Environment Commission website www.cecmanitoba.ca or from the Clean Environment Commission office:

305-155 Carlton St.
Winnipeg, MB R3C 3H8
945-0594
1-800-597-3556 (toll free in Manitoba)

Completed applications should be submitted to:

Secretary to the Clean Environment Commission
305-155 Carlton St.
Winnipeg MB R3C 3H8
FAX: 945-0090
cajohnson@gov.mb.ca

