



FOR RELEASE

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Pioneer Utility Grant modernized

WHITEHORSE—The Yukon government has made changes to the Pioneer Utility Grant (PUG) regulations, Minister of Health and Social Services Mike Nixon announced today.

"We recognize the importance of supporting seniors who face economic challenges," Nixon said. "These regulation changes will help ensure that all eligible seniors will continue to receive it."

The Pioneer Utility Grant assists seniors with the cost of heating owned or rented units. While the basic eligibility requirements of the grant remain the same, the following key changes have been introduced:

- Seniors can now apply for the PUG in July, rather than waiting until October.
- The base amount for rural residents will increase to reflect the higher costs of heating in the communities.
- An income test and sliding scale will be used on all applications.

"The income test is the biggest change we have introduced," Nixon added. "It will help ensure the sustainability, fairness and flexibility of the grant."

Individual seniors whose income is less than \$40,000 and couples with an income of less than \$56,000 will receive the maximum grant. Seniors in the middle income range will receive a partial grant. Individuals with incomes of more than \$117,000 and couples with incomes of more than \$165,000 will no longer be eligible.

In 2015 the maximum rate payable within Whitehorse is \$1,049. In rural Yukon the maximum rate is \$1,132, which is eight per cent higher.

The Pioneer Utility Grant was introduced in 1978 at a rate of \$300 a year. There have been a number of rate increases since then. In 2003, the grant was indexed to the annual rate of inflation.

Learn more: Pioneer Utility Grant

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