

became payable in 1968. Pensions for disabled contributors and their dependent children became payable in the spring of 1970.

To obtain coverage under the Plan, all eligible persons must obtain a social insurance number to identify and maintain their individual record of earnings. Provision is made under the Plan for appeals with respect to coverage, contributions and benefits. The Department of National Health and Welfare administers the payments of benefits; the Department of National Revenue is responsible for coverage and contributions.

Old-age security

Under this program, the Federal Government pays a monthly pension to all eligible persons who are 65 years of age or older. In 1972, the pension payable is \$82.88 a month. To be eligible, the claimant must have lived in Canada for at least ten years immediately preceding application for the pension. Any gaps in the ten-year period may be offset if the applicant, after the age of 18, had lived in Canada in earlier years for periods equal in total to three times the length of the gaps, but in this case the applicant must have lived in Canada for one year immediately before application. Persons who have had 40 years of residence in Canada since 18 years of age and who left Canada before reaching 65 are eligible for the old-age pension. A pensioner who leaves Canada for permanent residence abroad but has had 20 years of residence in Canada since attaining the age of 18 may continue to receive his pension indefinitely. Otherwise, payment of the pension to pensioners absent from Canada is continued for six months in addition to the month of departure and is then suspended until the pensioner returns to Canada.

The 1972 pension was adjusted by the percentage increase in the consumer price index during the fiscal year 1971-72 over that for the fiscal year 1970-71. Beginning in 1973, the OAS pension will be adjusted on April 1 of each year to reflect the full rise in the cost of living during the previous calendar year.

The Department of National Health and Welfare administers the program through regional offices located in each provincial capital, to which application is made for the pension.

Guaranteed income supplement

This program, which started in January 1967, is designed to provide a guaranteed minimum income to old-age pensioners. Beginning January 1, 1972, the new maximum for the combined pension and supplement is \$150 a month for a single person or a married person whose husband or wife is not a pensioner, made up of the old-age security pension of \$82.88 and a supplement of \$67.12, and \$285 a month for a married couple where both are pensioners, made up of the pension of \$82.88 and supplement of \$59.62 for each spouse. The supplement is subject to an income test and depends on the amount of income an applicant has in addition to his old-age security pension. For purposes of the program, income is determined in the same way as under the Canada Income Tax Act. In