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OLD AGE AND BLIND PENSIONS IN CANADA

Old age and blind pensions in Canada are non-contributory. They are administered under the "Old Age Pensions Act" (Revised Statutes of Canada, 1927, chapter 156), amendments and regulations, and under the various provincial concurrent acts. The Old Age Pensions Act made provision for the establishment of a Dominion-provincial pensions plan in such provinces as might enact and give further effect to special legislation for this purpose. Responsibility for granting old age pensions to persons residing in the provinces rests solely with the provincial authorities. All of Canada's nine provinces are now participating, and the Dominion grants old age pensions in the Northwest Territories. The Dominion reimburses the provincial authority to the extent of 75% of the net sum paid out by the province to such persons as are specified in the Act and regulations.

Under the provisions of the Act, an old age pension is payable to any British subject, or to one who, being a widow, is not a British subject but was such before her marriage, of 70 years of age and over who is not in receipt of an income of as much as \$365 a year. The pensioner must have resided in Canada for the 20 years, and in the province in which the application is made for the five years, immediately preceding the date of the proposed commencement of pension. The Act also provides that an applicant must not have assigned or transferred property for the purpose of qualifying for a pension. Indians, as defined in the terms of the Indian Act, are not eligible to receive old age pensions.

It is specifically provided that the receipt of a pension shall not by itself disqualify any person from voting at any provincial or municipal election.

The maximum amount of pension payable under the provisions of the Old Age Pensions Act is \$240 yearly, payable in monthly instalments. This amount is subject to reduction by the amount that the private income of the pensioner exceeds \$125 a year. On July 24, 1943 the federal Minister of Finance announced in the House of Commons that, in view of the unanimity of attitude on the part of the provincial governments that the maximum pension payable should be increased at the present time, provision would be made by means of order-in-council under the War Measures Act to raise the maximum monthly payment from \$20 to \$25.

Order-in-Council P.C. 6367, dated August 10, 1943, authorizes the Dominion government to enter into supplementary agreements with the provinces, enabling a special war supplement, not exceeding \$5 a month, to be paid to both old age and blind pensioners in addition to the regular pensions payable under the original provisions of the Act. All the terms and conditions of the original Act are to be continued, including the present ratio sharing by the Dominion and the provinces of the amount of pensions paid, as well as provisions covering the maximum total income, except for the appropriate adjustment in regard to those provisions which have to do with the maximum pension and allowable outside income. This supplementary war pension is not intended to disturb any supplementary allowances now being paid by

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