Search

Possible class-action lawsuit filed in Alberta over child special allowance payments

By: Bob Weber, The Canadian Press
Posted: **5:07 PM CST Monday, Nov. 27, 2023**

Post   Share   🖨 Print   ✉ Email   🔖 Read Later

Hey there, time traveller!
This article was published **27/11/2023** (401 days ago), so information in it may no longer be current.
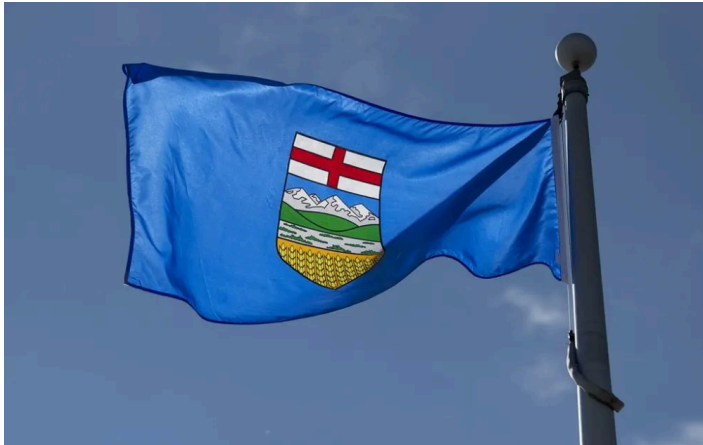
EDMONTON – The Alberta and federal governments are facing a potential class-action lawsuit over how the province handled payments for children in care.

A statement of claim filed Friday alleges Alberta took payments received from Ottawa that were meant to provide benefits for children in care and folded them into general

revenue to offset the amount it spent on maintenance of such children.

"If a child comes into care, the child shouldn't be deprived of that benefit," lawyer Kris Saxberg, who's handling the case, said Monday.

The Alberta and federal governments are facing a potential class action lawsuit over how the province handled payments that were supposed to be made to children in care. Alberta's provincial flag flies on a flag pole in Ottawa, Tuesday June 30, 2020. THE CANADIAN PRESS/Adrian Wyld

Similar to cases already filed in other provinces, the statement of claim singles out the federal Children's Special Allowance, a payment meant to ensure children in foster care receive equal treatment to those receiving the Canada Child Benefit.

The money, said Saxberg, is intended for extras that would benefit the child but that might not be covered otherwise, such as music lessons, sports coaching or cosmetic dental work.

"(It's) for those children, so they're treated just the same as children in other houses," Saxberg said.

Those payments were calculated at $620 per month for a child under six and $520 for a child between six and 18. However, the statement of claim alleges that for many children, the province of Alberta applied that money against what it was spending on regular foster care maintenance payments.

The children missing out were mostly Indigenous and were being cared for off-reserve, the document says.

The lawsuit, which hasn't yet been certified as a class action, could apply to thousands of Albertans, Saxberg added.

"We expect it could be as many as 30,000 people that could be affected."

Winnipeg Free Press | Newsletter ✉

The Warm-Up
WINNIPEG JETS GAME DAYS

On Winnipeg Jets game days, hockey writers Mike McIntyre and Ken Wiebe send news, notes and quotes from the morning skate, as well as injury updates and lineup

decisions. Arrives a few
hours prior to puck drop.

SIGN UP FOR THE WARM-
UP

Saxberg said the federal government
is also named in the suit because it
had the responsibility to ensure its
funds were being used appropriately.

The federal government did not
respond to a request for comment.
The Alberta government declined to
comment as the case is before the
courts.

Similar lawsuits have been launched in
Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

The Manitoba government agreed to
$334 million in damages, although it is
still negotiating over how many people
are eligible for a share. The case
against Saskatchewan was filed in
June.

This report by The Canadian Press was
first published Nov. 27, 2023.

Post   🦋 Share   🖶 Print ✉ Email

🔖 Read Later

REPORT ERROR   SUBMIT A TIP

Links

Replica E-Edition

Front Page

Arts & Life

Business

Canada

Local

Opinion

Sports

World

Reader Bridge

WFP Events

Free Press 101: How we practise journalism

Advertising

About Us

Archives

Free Press Community Review

Classifieds

Contests

FP Features

Homes

Newsletters

Obituaries

Podcasts

Puzzles

Photo and Book Store

Become a Free Press Patron

Privacy Policy

✉

Contact Us

Advertising Contact

Send a Letter to the Editor

Staff biographies

Submit a News Tip

Subscribe to Newsletters

👤⚙

My Account

Log Out

Grid View

List View

Compact View

Text Size