



GUIDELINES

DEBT MEDIATION PROGRAM FOR FISHERS

The purpose of this program is to provide professional debt mediation services to Prince Edward Island commercial fishers who are experiencing financial difficulties, and to provide a structured process to mediate acceptable solutions between fisher clients and lenders.

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

1. Applicants will be provided with the services of a Financial Expert to prepare up-to-date financial statements, market-value net worth statements, budgets, cash flow projections and guide mutually-acceptable solutions between applicants and lenders.
2. Assistance shall be a maximum of \$3,000 per client based upon eligible costs incurred. This contribution will include provision for financial assessment and preliminary debt mediation, if required.
3. Additional assistance of \$2,000 can be provided to clients with complex mediation cases provided the request receives prior written permission and is cost-shared 20% by the client. The Department's contribution will not exceed \$5,000 to any client under the Program.

ELIGIBILITY

An eligible applicant:

1. Must be a core and/or bonafide fisher in LFA 25 or 26A.
2. Must be a PEI resident.

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1. Applicant and lender confidentiality is a top priority of this program. Meetings with applicants will be arranged so as to protect their identity. Safeguards will be put in place to ensure that files are highly secure and access to files will be limited to a minimum number of program administrators. No one will be permitted to disclose an applicant's financial information or to share with anyone the outcomes of the applicant's mediation.
2. A list of professional Financial Experts be prepared through a Request for Proposals process. In the interim, a list of qualified consultants specialized in farm debt mediation will be used by the Program Coordinator.

3. Applications will be received by the Program Coordinator who will;
 - provide the client with a list of information that will be required for the financial assessment;
 - distribute a list of registered Financial Experts to the client;
 - follow up with the client to confirm a Financial Experts has been selected;
 - prepare an approval or rejection outlining any terms and conditions of the project;
 - the project must be carried out prior to March 31st of the fiscal year of the application unless otherwise approved;
 - claims for assistance can be submitted direct by the financial expert/mediator to the program;
 - claims must include an itemized description of the work carried out on an hourly basis, a copy of the Fishing Business Assessment Report and, if applicable, a Recovery Plan, Debt Reduction Strategy and Results of Preliminary Mediation.
4. Each applicant is permitted to participate in the process only once during the life of the program.

ADMINISTRATION

This program will be administered by the Fisheries and Aquaculture Division of the Prince Edward Island Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Aquaculture. Applications for assistance or requests for information should be directed to:

Program Coordinator
Debt Mediation Program for Fishers
PEI Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Aquaculture
PO Box 2000, Charlottetown, PE C1A 7N8

Phone #: (902) 368-6330
Fax #: (902) 368-5542

TERMINATION

1. This assistance program will terminate on March 31, 2007, unless renewed by the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Aquaculture on or before that date.