

Women in shelters often missing out on federal child benefits: ombudsman ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

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EXCERPTS

OTTAWA - Canada's taxpayers' advocate says the Canada Revenue Agency isn't doing a good enough job ensuring women living in shelters with their children are aware of and receiving benefit cheques.

Taxpayers' ombudsman Sherra Profit launched a systemic examination Friday to study what kind of effort the CRA has made to reach out to shelters regarding benefits such as the Canada Child Benefit or the working income tax benefit.

She said in December she was contacted about difficulties some women living in shelters were having getting the Canada Child Benefit which can pay up to \$6,400 per child, annually.

Profit says preliminary research done since that complaint found a problem with awareness of the benefit and she has decided the issue needs a deeper look.

She said most shelters indicated the CRA hadn't reached out to them, the information shelters were able to provide clients came from their own experience as parents or by going to the CRA website themselves.

A Statistics Canada survey in 2014 found about 4,500 women and 3,500 children were living in emergency shelters on a single day and more than 60,000 women were admitted to a shelter for at least one night.

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