

Judge extends injunction against Ontario's day-care policy: Parents can keep RRSPs and day-care subsidies until court hears case [CA-ON] ^[1]

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Source: Ottawa Citizen

Format: Article

Publication Date: 5 Oct 2000

AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

An Ottawa judge extended a temporary court injunction indefinitely yesterday allowing parents to keep their RRSPs while qualifying for day-care subsidies.

Justice Heidi Polowin extended the injunction until Nov. 21 and said it will remain in effect until a court rules on the legality of an Ontario government policy that would require parents to cash in RRSPs worth more than \$5,000 to qualify for subsidized child care.

The injunction was to end yesterday, but the case, which affects poor parents across Ontario, was postponed.

Justice Monique Metivier said Aug. 25 the new provincial policy to limit day-care subsidies would cause "real and immediate harm" to needy parents.

In a ruling against Ottawa-Carleton, which provides provincially subsidized day care, Judge Metivier said the harm would have begun Sept. 1, when the parents of 900 children would have been forced to spend their RRSPs or pay full day-care fees.

Parents with company, provincial or federal pension plans could keep the plans and still be eligible for subsidies. Angered by what they call discrimination, 11 parents with children at Glebe Parents' Day Care sought an injunction to allow them to keep their savings.

Dave Hagerman, co-ordinator of Glebe Parents' Day Care, said the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services wants Divisional Court to rule on the case for all Ontario when the court sits in Ottawa in February.

Mr. Hagerman said the court is to set a date for the hearing on Nov. 21. He said some parents have been liquidating their assets or withdrawing their children from the day-care centre because of the policy.

"The extension of this injunction is good news for parents who have RRSPs and young children in day care," Mr. Hagerman said. "In November, the province will argue that this case should be heard by a panel of Divisional Court judges from Toronto. We will argue that it should be heard by an Ottawa court."

-Reprinted from The Ottawa Citizen

Region: Ontario ^[2]

Tags: subsidy ^[3]

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