

ONTARIO WORKS AND ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

Where to go when you are looking for help

Updated May 2024

Applying for financial assistance can be an overwhelming experience. Whether you're facing financial hardship due to job loss, health issues or other personal circumstances, it's important to know that there are resources to help you through this difficult time. Many people have been in your position and have successfully navigated their way to receiving the help they need. Reach out to your local Ontario Works office for guidance and take the first step toward securing the support that can make a significant difference in your life.

This community resource sheet explains how to apply for Ontario Works and for the Ontario Disability Support Program. It also lists other resources that can support you.

Ontario Works

If you are facing immediate financial hardship, such as being behind on rent or other essential expenses, applying for Ontario Works is the best first step. Ontario Works provides financial assistance and employment support quickly, which is crucial when you need immediate help to cover basic living expenses.

www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-works

Tel.: 1 888 999-1142

Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:30 am–5:00 pm

Financial Assistance

Ontario Works offers financial assistance to help with essential living expenses:

- **Basic needs:** Assistance with food, clothing and other personal items
- **Shelter:** Assistance with housing costs, including rent, utilities and other related costs
- **Health benefits:** Coverage for prescription drugs, dental care, vision care, medical supplies and devices
- **Special diet allowance:** Additional assistance for people with medical conditions that require a special diet

If any of this information is incorrect or outdated, or if there are additional organizations or programs that would be helpful to include, please email the information to us at access.resources@camh.ca.

This resource list is for information purposes only and does not constitute an endorsement by CAMH or guarantee any particular outcome.

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Employment Support

Ontario Works provides employment support to help people find and maintain employment:

- **Job search assistance:** Help with writing resumes, searching for a job, preparing for job interviews
- **Job placement:** Access to job opportunities and placements
- **Job training:** Training programs to help people develop new skills or enhance existing ones
- **Employment counselling:** Personalized support and counselling to address barriers to employment
- **Community participation:** Opportunities to gain work experience through community involvement and volunteer work

Eligibility

To qualify for Ontario Works, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Live in Ontario
- Be in financial need
- Be willing to make reasonable efforts to look for, prepare for and keep a job (unless they are unable due to illness, disability or caregiving responsibilities).

How to Apply

1. **Contact Ontario Works:** Reach out to your local office to start the application process:
 - Find your local office: www.officelocator.mcass.gov.on.ca/ - section-1
 - Toll-free tel.: 1 888 999-1142
 - TTY: 1 800 387-5559
2. **Complete the application:** Fill out the application form and provide the necessary documentation.
3. **Submit the application:** Submit your completed application to your local Ontario Works office.
4. **Wait for the assessment of your application:** Ontario Works will review your application and may ask you to provide more information or attend an interview.
5. **Get the decision about your application:** Ontario Works will let you know if they have accepted you into the program.

Ontario Disability Support Program

If you have started receiving support from Ontario Works and you have a substantial physical or mental impairment that is expected to last for one year or more, you can apply for ODSP. The program provides financial assistance and employment support to people with disabilities. The application process takes longer because it involves detailed medical and financial assessments.

www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-disability-support-program

Toll-free tel.: 1 888 789-4199

Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:30 am–5:00 pm

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Financial Assistance

ODSP offers financial assistance to help with living expenses:

- **Basic needs:** Assistance with food, clothing and other personal items
- **Shelter:** Assistance with housing costs, including rent or mortgage payments, utilities and property taxes
- **Health benefits:** Coverage for prescription drugs, dental care, vision care, medical supplies and devices
- **Employment-related expenses:** Assistance with costs related to finding and keeping a job, such as transportation, clothing and work tools

Employment Support

ODSP provides employment support to help people with disabilities find and maintain employment:

- **Job placement:** Assistance with finding suitable job opportunities
- **Job coaching:** On-the-job training and support
- **Skills training:** Training programs to help people develop new skills or enhance existing ones
- **Employment planning:** Personalized employment plans tailored to individual needs and goals

Eligibility

To qualify for ODSP, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Live in Ontario
- Be at least 18 years old
- Have a substantial physical or mental impairment that is continuous or recurrent and that is expected to last one year or more
- Have a substantial restriction in their ability to work, care for themselves or participate in community life
- Meet the financial eligibility requirements

How to Apply

1. **Contact ODSP:** Reach out to your local ODSP office to begin the application process:
 - Find your local office: www.officelocator.mcss.gov.on.ca
 - Toll-free tel.: 1 888 789-4199
 - TTY: 1 800 387-5559
2. **Complete the application:** Fill out the application form and provide the necessary documentation, including medical and financial information.
3. **Submit the application:** Submit your completed application to your local ODSP office.
4. **Wait for the assessment of your application:** ODSP will review your application and may ask you to provide more information or attend an interview.
5. **Get the decision about your application:** ODSP will let you know if they have accepted you into their program.

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