

Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) – Income and Employment Support

A young person with a long lasting mental or physical disability may be eligible for the [Ontario Disability Support Program](#) when they are 18 years of age. A young person with a disability may be eligible for ODSP even when they are living with their parent/guardians and still attending school.

ODSP provides:

- financial assistance to help with essential living expenses
- benefits including prescription drugs and vision care
- help finding and keeping a job, and advancing your career

Families are advised to start the application process for ODSP six months before the individual turns 18 years of age.

Researching eligibility for ODSP and submitting an application should be part of the transition planning documented in the Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Eligibility for ODSP

To qualify for ODSP the individual must:

- be at least 18 years old
- be an Ontario resident
- be in financial need and
- meet the program's definition of a person with a disability, or be a member of a [Prescribed Class](#)

Meeting the definition means that the:

- individual has a substantial mental or physical

- impairment that is continuous or recurrent, and is expected to last one year or more and
- impairment directly results in a substantial restriction in ability to work, care for them self, or take part in community life and
 - impairment, its duration and restrictions have been verified by an approved health care professional

As part of determining program eligibility and financial assistance levels, information is needed about the individual's family (spouse or children), income and assets. It is important to understand that the information relates to the individual who is applying and not their parents/guardians. Most 18 year olds with a substantial mental or physical impairment are not married and do not have significant assets or income. It is important to disclose this information as there are limits on the amount and type of [assets](#) that an individual can have and about the [income](#) an individual can earn or receive. This information must be shared as part of the application process and in determining monthly financial assistance.

The ODSP caseworker will provide a Disability Determination Package to be completed by the individual and their health care provider(s). Specialized ministry staff will review the completed package to determine if you meet the program's definition of a person with a disability.

ODSP and Developmental Services Ontario – A person who has a developmental disability and who is eligible for services through Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) may also be eligible for the [Ontario Disability Support Program \(ODSP\)](#). Students eligible for DSO can apply for ODSP Income Support and they will be recognized as having a developmental disability, without having to repeat the disability eligibility process. They will still have to meet the other criteria for ODSP, but this is one less step.

Only a caseworker can decide who is financially eligible for ODSP, however, you may use the [Online Application for Social Assistance](#) to see if your child might qualify and to start the application.

ODSP offers two types of support:

[Income support](#) – Financial assistance provided each month to help with the costs of basic needs, like food, clothing and shelter. Income support also includes benefits, like drug coverage and vision care, for clients and their eligible family members. If you are eligible to receive Income Support, you will receive a monthly payment. The amount you receive depends on your living situation, whether you rent or own a home, live with family or a landlord that provides your food, or live north of the 50th parallel or in a community with out year round road access.

[Employment supports](#) – Services and supports to help clients with disabilities over age 16 years find and keep a job, or start their own business. Services may include help finding a job, a job coach, software and disability mobility devices that help do the job, assistive devices and training on how to use them, interpreter or intervener services, etc.

There are many rules related to ODSP eligibility and on-going support, including about income and assets, and reporting. This is just a short summary of the ODSP program and for all the details check the Ministry of Community and Social Services website at: [Ontario Disability Support Program](#).

Parent Tips

- Start planning early and find out about the Ontario Disability Support Program
 - Students may be eligible for [ODSP Employment supports](#) at age 16.
- Include planning for the application to ODSP as part of

- the transition plan in the Individual Education Plan
- Apply for OODSP Income Supports up to 6 months before the 18th birthday.
 - If your child has a developmental disability and is eligible for Developmental Services Ontario, a letter from DSO will be accepted as proof of disability

Easter Seals Ontario is providing this information as a support to families. Please check the Ministry of Community and Social Services website for the most recent and accurate information about [ODSP](#).