

DIRECTIVE 1.1 APPLICATIONS

SUMMARY OF POLICY

The application process includes completion and signing of specific forms, and verification of prescribed information. No person is eligible for income support unless information and verification that is required to determine eligibility is provided. If within one year of applying for income support, a previous application was completed by Ontario Works or ODSP, the previous application and supporting documentation, with any additional required information, can be used.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

[Section 5\(1\) and 10\(1\) of the ODSP Act](#)
[Sections 4\(1\), 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18 and 21 of the ODSP Regulation](#)
[Sections 38\(2\) and \(3\) of the Ontario Works Regulation](#)

SUMMARY OF DIRECTIVE

This directive outlines the process for taking ODSP applications through ODSP offices (i.e. self-referrals) and Ontario Works offices. The purpose of and when to use the application forms are explained and verification requirements are outlined.

Required documentation must be either:

- Visually verified and noted on the Service Delivery Model Technology (SDMT), or
- Photocopied and placed on the master file.

INTENT OF POLICY

To provide a prompt and comprehensive response to requests for income support and to ensure the information and verification necessary to establish eligibility for income support is provided by the applicant.

APPLICATION OF POLICY

General Standards

- Everyone has the right to make an application for income support.
- An applicant has the right to have an advocate, friend, or family member attend the application interview.
- Applicants who have special needs (e.g. deaf or hard of hearing, do not speak English or French, etc.) should be given time to arrange for the services of an interpreter or translator. If the applicant is unable to make appropriate arrangements, the ministry must provide the necessary accommodation.
- Generally, financial eligibility must be established before a Disability Determination Package (DDP) can be provided and a referral made to the Disability Adjudication Unit (DAU). Exceptions to this general policy are in situations where an applicant appeals a decision of financial ineligibility to the Social Benefits Tribunal (SBT) or the applicant is incarcerated:
 - where an applicant is appealing a decision of financial ineligibility to the SBT, ODSP staff should provide a DDP and make a referral to the DAU;
 - where an applicant is incarcerated, correctional facilities have DDPs. The correctional facility physicians can complete the DDP with respect to the applicant and return it to the DAU. When the applicant is released, he/she will attend an in-person interview at the ODSP office to be determined financially eligible, at which time a referral to the DAU is made.
- Applicants in immediate financial need should apply for financial assistance through an Ontario Works office.

Standards for ODSP Applicants in Receipt of Ontario Works

- For ODSP applicants in receipt of Ontario Works, income support must be granted within 21 calendar days of the date the ODSP office is notified by the DAU that the person is a person with a disability. The ODSP grant information package should be mailed on the same date that the grant is processed.

Standards for ODSP Self-Referrals

- An application must be taken within 21 calendar days of the date the request is received.

- ODSP staff are responsible for taking an application, recording and verifying information obtained from an applicant. A complete and accurate record to support an eligibility decision must be kept.
- Where a trustee is completing an application on behalf of an applicant, the applicant must be seen/interviewed by ODSP staff.
- Persons who apply for ODSP as members of a prescribed class (e.g. over age 65 and not eligible for Old Age Security, in receipt of Canada Pension Plan Disability, in receipt of Quebec Pension Plan Disability Benefits, etc.) must be granted within 21 calendar days of completing an application and providing all verification required to make a decision about eligibility.
- Persons in a prescribed class do not require adjudication by the DAU.

APPLICATION PROCESS FOR DETERMINING FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY

Applications Taken by Ontario Works

Applicants wanting to apply for ODSP, who are in immediate financial need, can apply for financial assistance through Ontario Works. An applicant for ODSP applying through an Ontario Works office must first meet financial eligibility requirements for Ontario Works. Once financial eligibility has been established a referral is made to the DAU and the DDP is provided to the applicant/participant.

If the DAU determines that the applicant is a person with a disability, they will notify the applicant and both the Ontario Works and ODSP office that the person is eligible. Upon receipt of notification from the DAU that the person is eligible, the ODSP office will grant income support based on the electronic file, pending transfer of the physical file from Ontario Works. Any benefits (e.g. MSN, special diet, etc.) in pay at the time of grant, should be continued.

Completion of an Application for Assistance Part 1 is not required where Ontario Works has referred the case to ODSP and completed the application or updated the CVP within the last 12 months.

The Consent to Disclose and Verify Information and the Canada Revenue Agency Consent to Disclose and Verify Information forms that are completed by Ontario Works staff are valid for ODSP purposes as the forms may be used by both programs.

The electronic file should be reviewed to determine if there are any assignments in place. Where there is an assignment noted in the SDMT file, the source of income should be verified and a new assignment form completed at the first opportunity to meet with the recipient after the grant. The assignee is the Ministry of Community and Social Services. Assignments that must be completed may include assignments for spousal and child support, insurance claims, CPP-D, etc.

The grant information package should be mailed on the day the case is granted. The grant information package includes an introductory letter confirming local office information, ODSP brochures and Rights and Responsibilities form. As soon as possible after granting income support, ODSP staff may call the recipient to provide ODSP office contact information and establish ongoing need for any benefits in pay.

Cases granted ODSP through Ontario Works will be prioritized for the Consolidated Verification Process (CVP) within 12 months of the later of the last full CVP or the date that Ontario Works eligibility was determined (see Directive 3.1 Consolidated Verification Information Requirements).

If the DAU determines that the applicant does not meet the definition of disability, the DAU notifies the applicant and the referring Ontario Works office.

Applications Taken at an ODSP Office (Self-Referrals)

Before an application is taken, the Advance List to Applicant form should be mailed to the applicant. This form outlines the information and documentation required to complete the application for income support.

In order to establish financial eligibility for income support, the following forms must be completed and reviewed at the time of the application interview:

- the Application for Assistance Part 1,
- the Consent to Disclose and Verify Information and the Canada Revenue Agency Consent to Disclose and Verify Information forms, and
- the Rights and Responsibilities form (a signed copy is retained on the master file, and a copy provided to the applicant or trustee).

All forms must be signed by the applicant or his/her trustee and, where applicable, the spouse and all dependent adult(s).

Other forms must be completed and signed as appropriate. For example:

- Assignment and Direction and Agreements to Reimburse forms where there is potential eligibility for future income from other sources (e.g. Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance, etc.).
- Declaration of Support and Maintenance, (Form 2212) on each absent person that may have a legal obligation to provide support to the applicant or a member of the benefit unit (spousal, child, sponsorship).
- Spousal Questionnaire where the applicant is living with another adult, who is not the legal or self-declared spouse, and has lived with that person for more than 3 months.

Once financial eligibility has been established a referral is made to the DAU and the DDP is provided to the applicant.

If the DAU determines that the applicant is a person with a disability, they will notify the applicant and the ODSP office that the person is eligible. The ODSP office reconfirms financial eligibility and grants income support within 21 calendar days.

The purpose of the financial reconfirmation is to reconcile any discrepancies between information reported by the applicant and third party checks, verify that all potential income has been applied for, and ensure that all mandatory documentation has been received.

As part of the application process, the Rapid Reinstatement provisions, Employment Supports, and earnings exemptions are to be reviewed with the applicant. In addition, the Employment Training and Income Report (ETIR) and the Changes Report should be reviewed and the reporting process explained, as well as the Direct Bank Deposit process.

Third Party Checks

The application process includes third party checks which are completed to obtain information about an applicant's income and assets, as well as other eligibility-related information. The checks are executed using the Consent to Disclose and Verify Information and the Canada Revenue Agency Consent to Disclose and Verify Information forms signed by the applicant and other members of the benefit unit at the time of the application interview. Third party checks include requests from the following:

- Ministry of Transportation – obtained where there has been a history of vehicle ownership or changes in address
- Equifax (credit check) – obtained for asset verification

- Family Responsibility Office (FRO) – obtained for child and/or spousal support payment information
- Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) – obtained for income verification and other eligibility-related information
- Employment Insurance (EI) – obtained where there has been a history of employment and potential eligibility for EI benefits

Additional requests may be made, as required, to obtain or verify eligibility-related information on behalf of the applicant or any other member of the benefit unit.

Voluntary Withdrawals from the Application Process

If the withdrawal is made in writing, the letter shall be attached to the application and filed. If made verbally, the applicant will be asked to submit a written request. If not received, ODSP staff will send a letter to the applicant confirming that the application will not be processed per their request. A copy of the letter will be attached to the file.

If the applicant requests that the forms be either destroyed or left with the applicant, staff shall destroy the forms in the presence of the applicant and provide a note on the electronic file. Forms shall not be left with the applicant.

VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

ODSP Applicants in Receipt of Ontario Works

ODSP applicants in receipt of Ontario Works will have provided verification to the Ontario Works office. Recipients should not be asked to provide documentation that has already been verified by the Ontario Works office, as noted on the SDMT.

ODSP Self-Referrals

For ODSP self-referrals, the following chart identifies the verification requirements and whether the document is to be visually verified and noted in SDMT or whether a copy of the document is to be placed on the Master File. Some documents require both. The chart should be reviewed to ensure verification requirements are being followed and the applicant is not being asked to provide more documentation than required by regulation.

Verification of Documents	Visually verified and input into the SDMT	Original or photocopy placed on Master File
Social Insurance Number	✓	
Health Number	✓	
Proof of all members identity and date of birth		✓
Verification of Income	✓ *	
Verification of Assets	✓	
Verification of Shelter Costs	✓	
School Verification	✓ **	
Participation Agreement for Dependent Adult	✓	
Verification of Person's status in Canada		✓
Information regarding Debts	Not required at application	

* Exceptions include support provisions where original documentation or a photocopy of verification of support or waivers for the pursuit of support, must be placed on the masterfile

** Verification required only where information indicates that eligibility criteria regarding school attendance is not met

Note: when information is received and verified it should be recorded in the Notes section of the SDMT

Social Insurance Number (SIN) or other official documentation of the SIN (tax form) must be visually verified and noted in the SDMT. Once the SIN is verified and input electronically, photocopies are not to be placed on the master file.

Health Number (HN) must be visually verified and noted in the SDMT for all members of the benefit unit. Other official documentation of the HN includes a letter from the Ministry of Health, or a letter from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). Once the HN(s) is verified and input electronically, photocopies are not to be placed on the master file.

Proof of the identity and date of birth of all members of the benefit unit must be photocopied and placed on the master file and the information recorded in SDMT. Identity and date of birth can be verified with one of the following:

- Birth certificate
- Baptismal certificate on church stationary
- Confirmation certificate
- Naturalization certificate
- Hospital record of birth
- Bible Record
- Confirmation by Registrar General of Notice of Registration of Birth

- Passport
- Landing Record
- Marriage certificate
- Military record
- School record
- National Registration File of 1940 held by Statistics Canada
- Indian Band record
- Immigration documents
- Ontario Driver's Licence

In the case of a child who is adopted, verification of the adoption as proof of identity is not generally required. However, in some circumstances, the adoption order may assist in providing further support regarding the person's identity. For example, where the adopted child's surname is different than the parents' surname. In these cases, a copy of the [adoption order with the identifying information related to the birth parents](#) removed can be requested.

Verification of Income: Other income is taken into account in determining eligibility for income support. All sources of income are reviewed and recorded in the SDMT.

- Income tax information is used to verify total income reported in the year prior to applying for income support, as well as the source of the income. It may also be used to verify additional information such as reported marital status and address. Please note that a third party check is obtained from CRA, however, a recipient may be requested to provide additional income tax information, such as the Notice of Assessment, copy of income tax return, T4s, etc.
- Earned income is visually verified and recorded in the SDMT at the time of application and subsequently through the monthly income reporting process and ETIR.
- Other income sources such as Old Age Security, GAINS, Canada Pension Plan benefits and annuities etc. are input into the SDMT. Any change in the amount of the income must be reported by the recipient. A Changes Report is provided each month to assist with this process.
- Information regarding spousal or child support must be verified. Copies of verification must be placed in the master file. Verification of support includes a support court order, a private agreement, and or a divorce settlement. At application, support arrangements may be verified by accessing Maintenance Enforcement with Computer Assistance (MECA) records if the above documents are not available. At the next earliest opportunity, support documents should be copied to the file. A Declaration of Support and Maintenance (Form 2212) must be

completed on each absent person that may have a legal obligation to provide support to the applicant or member of the benefit unit and placed on the master file. Waivers for the pursuit of child or spousal support including police reports, medical reports, or confirmation that the spouse is receiving social assistance are noted on the SDMT and copied to the master file. See [Directive 5.15 Spousal and Child Support](#). Where support is in pay, the amount of support must be input into the SDMT.

- Information regarding sponsorship support must be verified. Information regarding length of the sponsorship undertaking and the name of the sponsor must also be verified. Copies of verification must be placed on the master file. Verification includes a private agreement for sponsorship support, the Request for Family Class Information (RFCI) form completed by CIC, Record of Landing, etc. A Declaration of Support and Maintenance (Form 2212) must be completed on the sponsor and co-sponsor, if applicable, and placed on the master file. See [Directive 2.5 Tourists, Immigrants, Refugees and Deportees](#). Where sponsorship support is in pay, the amount of support must be input into the SDMT.

Verification of Assets: Assets are taken into account in determining eligibility for income support. All assets are reviewed and recorded in the SDMT. For applicants, bankbooks or statements are reviewed for one month prior to the date of application to identify regular or sporadic income and asset levels. If there is reason to require additional information, any additional statements/bankbooks available to the applicant without incurring fees or charges will be requested.

It is important to review bank balances in combination with other assets such as life insurance policies, funds held in trust and savings plans to ensure asset levels are within the prescribed amount.

One year prior to the date of application, members of an applicant's benefit unit cannot assign, transfer or dispose of assets in order to qualify for ODSP. This may be increased to three years if there is reason to believe that a three-year period of review is appropriate. When an applicant reports the transfer or disposition of assets, the details must be fully documented and verification of the transfer/disposition of assets must be provided. Discretion may be exercised when deciding to obtain verification if there are significant costs associated with obtaining a bank statement. See [Directive 4.4 Transfer of Assets, Inadequate Consideration](#).

Once assets are verified and noted in the SDMT, a copy of the record is not required to be placed on the master file.

Verification of Shelter Costs: Accommodation costs are used to establish budgetary requirements and the amount of income support that the applicant will receive. Visual verification and electronic input of documentation related to shelter costs is limited to the

minimum necessary to verify shelter costs up to the maximum. For example, if a single applicant pays rent of \$500 per month plus utilities, only visual verification of the rent is required as it exceeds the maximum shelter allowance for a single person.

At the next available opportunity or at review, visual verification of all relevant accommodation costs will be obtained and documented in the SDMT. Once the information has been visually verified, and input into the SDMT, verification of the shelter costs is not required to be placed on the master file. The following are acceptable sources of verification:

- Letter from landlord
- Rent receipt with landlord name and number
- Mortgage statement or agreement for payments of principal and interest
- Loans for purchase of principal residence or necessary repairs of residence
- Taxes
- Premiums paid for dwelling and content insurance
- Common expenses for condominiums or cooperative housing units
- Statements or receipts for the payment of utilities, water, sewage and the rental of a furnace or hot water heater
- Statements or receipts for the cost of heat.

School Verification: Attending school is a requirement for the inclusion of a dependent child in the benefit unit. Effective December 20, 2006, the Ministry of Education introduced legislation which requires all students, less than 18 years of age, to be in attendance at school unless they have already graduated.

As it is the school boards' responsibility, under the *Education Act* to monitor a student's school attendance, no verification of school attendance is required. However, where information received by the ODSP office indicates that a child is not attending school (e.g. a fraud allegation, information from the school, a declaration by the parent or child), school verification may be requested.

Report cards may be used to verify attendance as determined by the school. Generally report cards are available in December, March and June of each year. If verification of attendance is required immediately to confirm eligibility, the recipient may be requested to have the School Attendance (Form 2221) completed or submit a letter from the school/program on letterhead. Once visually verified and noted in the SDMT, a copy of the form or letter is not to be placed on file.

Participation Requirements for Non-Disabled Spouses and Dependent Adults:

Non-disabled spouses and dependent adults must comply with the employment assistance provisions in the Ontario Works regulation, unless they meet criteria for non-referral. If the person meets criteria for non-referral, he or she is not required to participate in Ontario Works employment services but may be referred if they wish to get employment help.

Examples of criteria for non-referral include:

- having caregiving obligations to a family member who is ill, elderly or disabled;
- already engaged in employment activities such as looking for work or working (and participation in Ontario Works employment activities would not provide additional employment benefit).

In order to have their referral to Ontario Works waived, the person is required to provide appropriate documentation to verify their circumstances. The following are examples of appropriate documentation:

- a person who provides care to a family member must have their caregiving requirements verified by someone who provides support services to the household such as a doctor, nurse or personal care worker;
- a person in full-time school or training must provide verification from the school or training program to confirm that he/she is registered full-time.

Verification of Status in Canada: All applicants who are not Canadian born citizens must verify their status in Canada.

Acceptable documentation must be provided and copies kept on file and the information recorded in the SDMT. Acceptable documentation includes:

- Certificate of Canadian Citizenship (large and/or wallet size);
- valid Canadian passport;
- Record of Landing;
- Permanent Resident Card;
- letter issued by CIC verifying permanent residence status;
- proof of application for landed immigrant or permanent resident status;
- Determination of Eligibility for refugee status (CIC form IMM1442 or IMM5292);
- Refugee Protection Claimant Document (CIC form IMM1442);
- Temporary Resident Permit (IMM1442 or IMM1263); or
- other acceptable document that confirms that the person is in Canada legally (such as the RFCI).

Ontario has an information sharing agreement with CIC. The nearest CIC office may be contacted for confirmation of an applicant's status in Canada.

Information Regarding Debts: Applicants may verbally declare information regarding debts owed, which is recorded in the Notes section in the SDMT regarding the origin, date and amount of the debt. The Notes are then printed on the Application for Assistance, Part 1. A review of documentation relating to debts is not required at application.

Information related to an amount owed by an applicant may assist in determining eligibility at a future date if a situation arises regarding disposition of assets where the debt is paid using assets or income received by the recipient.

SDMT Flags

Flags are assigned to each benefit unit member in the SDMT to alert staff of specific conditions or incidents relating to each member. There are three categories of flags that may be assigned to a benefit unit member: Safety, Service Delivery and Restricted File Access. Each flag is associated with a standard list of issues and corresponding definitions.

ODSP staff should determine the need to assign or continue a Flag on a case based on the criteria set out in the Regional Office's Safety Manual. Cases with an existing flag that are referred from Ontario Works or granted under rapid reinstatement rules should be reviewed to determine if the flag is still required. Additional direction including job aids may be found in SDM Help.

HYPERLINKS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS POLICY DIRECTIVE

Related Directives:

[1.2 Disability Adjudication Process](#)

[1.3 Rapid Reinstatement](#)

[2.5 Tourists, Immigrants, Refugees and Deportees](#)

[3.1 Consolidated Information Verification Requirements](#)

[4.4 Transfer of Assets, Inadequate Consideration](#)

[4.7 Funds Held in Trust](#)

[4.8 Life Insurance Policies](#)

[6.1 Basic Needs Calculation](#)

[8.1 Budgetary Requirements for Recipients in Institutions](#)

Bulletins:

2007-09 Verification Requirements - Driver's Licence

Memos

May 8, 2006: Streamlined ODSP Intake Process