

Ontario Disability Support Program - Income Support Directives

9.1 - Employment and Training Start Up Benefit (ESUB) & Up -Front Child Care Benefit

Summary of Policy

Employment and Start Up Benefit

Eligible members of the benefit unit may receive up to \$500 in any 12-month period in order to assist them with the start up costs to:

- Begin or change employment
- Begin an employment assistance activity under the Ontario Works Act, 1997 or
- Begin any other activity intended to assist the person to become and stay employed that is approved by the Director.

Up-Front Child Care Benefit

Eligible members of the benefit unit may receive financial assistance with up-front child care costs that are reasonably necessary and, in the opinion of the Director, the eligible member is required to pay in advance to allow the person to:

- Begin, change or maintain employment
- Begin, change or maintain an employment assistance activity under the **Ontario Works Act** or
- Begin, change or maintain any other activity intended to assist the person to become and stay employed that is approved by the Director

Legislative Authority

[Sections 38.2 and 44\(1\) 6 and 44 \(1\) 7 of the ODSP General Regulation](#)

Summary of Directive

The Employment and Training Start-Up Benefit (ESUB) is available to eligible members of the benefit unit to assist them with expenses approved by the Director and reasonably necessary to begin or change employment, begin an Ontario Works employment assistance activity, or begin an activity approved by the Director that will assist the person to become and stay employed.

The Up-Front Child Care Benefit is available to an eligible member of the benefit unit when in the opinion of the Director he/she is required to pay in advance for child care that is reasonably necessary to permit the person to begin, change or maintain his/her employment or employment activity.

Intent of Policy

ESUB is intended to help ODSP recipients and eligible family members with reasonable costs related to employment or training. This can include costs related to finding a job (e.g. a transit pass), preparing for an interview (e.g. coaching); or meeting job qualifications (e.g. licensing fees).

The Up-Front Child Care Benefit is intended to help ODSP recipients and eligible family members with costs of child care that is required in advance by the child care provider and necessary to allow the person to begin, change or maintain employment or an activity that helps the person become and stay employed (e.g. volunteering or job shadowing).

Application of Policy

Employment and Training Start-Up Benefit (ESUB)

Eligible members of the benefit unit include:

- Recipient
- Spouse included in the benefit unit
- Dependent adult who is not attending secondary school full time
- Dependent child who has received his/her secondary school diploma (or equivalent).

A maximum of \$500 in any 12-month period is available to eligible members of the benefit unit.

The benefit may be paid to a person in a lump sum, or as needed over a 12-month period, but may not exceed the maximum amount. If a portion of the ESUB has been issued within the 12-month period, the balance may be issued at any time in the 12-month period from the date of the original payment.

For the purpose of ESUB, employment includes full-time, part-time, casual or self employment.

In cases where a person changes jobs, ESUB may be provided to a person if he/she has costs related to starting the new job. This includes situations where a person changes jobs, but remains with the same employer, or shifts from unpaid job-training to paid employment.

ESUB may also be provided to a person when he/she has costs related to beginning an Ontario Works employment assistance activity, or beginning any activity that will help the person to become and stay employed.

Employment activities include:

- accepting full-time, part-time or casual employment;
- changing jobs (i.e. a new job with a current or new employer where the duties and responsibilities are substantially different from the previous job);
- beginning a formal program of employment-related training that enhances progress toward financial independence;
- shifting from unpaid job-training to paid work;
- or beginning an “on-the-job” portion of a training program;
- starting beginning a self-employment activity; or
- beginning an employment assistance activity under Ontario Works; or
- beginning any other activity intended to assist the person to become and stay employed, that is approved by the Director. (e.g. job search activities, job preparation activities, volunteer positions that will prepare a recipient for employment, or an unpaid training program that can assist a recipient to become employed, etc.)

Eligible costs may include, but are not limited to:

- Transportation costs related to preparing for, finding or starting a job;
- Costs for clothing for a job interview or work clothes/uniforms required for a new job;
- License or association fees;
- General Educational Development (GED) exam fee;
- Post-secondary application fees;
- Grooming costs;
- Cost of eyeglasses (including lenses and frames) and repairs to eyeglasses for dependent adults; and
- Cost of tools and equipment required for training or a job.

Verification Requirements

Written verification of the person’s employment, self-employment, or other approved employment activity, for which ESUB is required, must be on file to support the decision and the amount paid.

Examples of written verification include:

- Pay stub;
- Letter of employment from an employer, potential employer, etc.
- Notification from ODSP Employment Supports Staff;
- Notification from an ODSP Employment Supports service provider;
- Determination made by ODSP Income Support Staff;
- Any documentation that can verify the activity of the recipient.

Accepting alternatives to a formal letter from an employer will assist those recipients who are participating in approved employment activities and who have start up costs related to those activities.

Further Assistance

A member who is a person with a disability, and who requires additional items or services in order to find or maintain employment, may be eligible for further assistance from ODSP Employment Supports. Employment-related expenses are also available for ODSP recipients who are participating in Ontario Works employment assistance activities. (see [Ontario Works Policy Directives 7.4 Employment and Participation Benefits.](#))

ESUB should not be confused with the Employment Transition Benefit that is provided to a recipient who exits ODSP. In cases where the benefit unit's chargeable income exceeds his/her budgetary requirements, and that income includes income from employment, training or a business, the recipient may be eligible for Employment Transition Benefit (see [Directive 9.17 Employment Transition Benefit](#)).

Persons who are not eligible for ESUB

A dependent child who has not received his/her secondary school diploma (or equivalent) is not eligible for ESUB.

A dependent adult who is attending secondary school full-time is not eligible for ESUB unless he/she is starting employment within fifteen days from the date of leaving/completing school and he/she provides appropriate verification.

A dependent adult who is attending secondary school part-time may be eligible for ESUB if he/she meets the criteria for the benefit.

If a recipient is later determined ineligible for ODSP during the period they received ESUB, the amount of the benefit issued during that period may be included in the overpayment calculation.

Up-Front Child Care Benefit

Eligible members of the benefit unit include:

- Recipient
- Spouse included in the benefit unit
- Dependent adult
- Dependent child

The Up-front Child Care Benefit maybe provided to eligible members of the benefit unit when in the opinion of the Director they are required to pay in advance for child care that is reasonably necessary for them to:

- Begin or change employment (employment includes full-time, part-time, casual or self employment);
- Begin, change or maintain an Ontario Works employment assistance activity; or
- Begin, change or maintain any activity that will help the person to become and stay employed.

An employment activity may include:

- Paid or unpaid training programs;
- Volunteering to prepare for employment;
- Job preparation activities such as, job interviews; and
- Job search.

Written verification

Written verification of employment, self-employment, or an approved employment activity, for which the up-front child care benefit is required, as well as verification that the recipient must pay for child care in advance, must be on file to support the decision and the amount of the benefit issued.

Payment of the Up-Front Child Care Benefit

The amount for up-front child care that can be paid when requested by a member of the benefit unit is determined according to the maximums and criteria outlined in [Directive 5.5 Child Care Deductions](#).

Payment for up-front child care costs, up to the established maximums, may be made in any twelve-month period. For example, if a recipient received an up front child care payment to start a part-time job and moves to full-time employment, thereby requiring additional child care, the recipient may be eligible for an up front payment equalling the difference between the monthly amount paid while he/she was working part-time and the monthly amount now required (up to the maximums).

In the first month of employment, a recipient may deduct the monthly child care expenses as outlined in [Directive 5.5 Child Care Deductions](#), from his/her first month of income from earnings or a business, even if he/she has received the up front child care benefit. This will ensure that recipients with on-going child care costs will have sufficient income to cover their child care costs on an ongoing basis.

The Up-Front Child Care Benefit is paid in addition to ESUB.

Hyperlinks Associated with this Policy Directive

Related Directives:

[5.3 Deductions from Employment and Training Income](#)

[5.5 Child Care Deductions](#)

[9.17 Employment Transition Benefit](#)