

## Ontario Works Directives

### **6.5: Pregnancy/Breast-Feeding Nutritional Allowance**

#### **Legislative Authority**

Sections 41(1), 44 (1) (2) (3) and 57(5) (e) of Regulation 134/98.

#### **Audit Requirements**

A copy of the completed **Application for Pregnancy/Breast-feeding Nutritional Allowance** (Form 3109) is on file, or verbal confirmation is noted on file, as required.

The Pregnancy/Breast-feeding Nutritional Allowance is not paid in combination with a Special Diet Allowance for inadequate lactation or breast-feeding is contraindicated.

#### **Application of Policy**

Pregnant or breast-feeding women who apply for or receive social assistance are eligible for a Pregnancy/Breast-feeding Nutritional Allowance (the “nutritional allowance”) to assist with the costs of the nutritional needs associated with pregnancy and breast-feeding. This includes applicants or recipients who rent or own their accommodation or who live in a board and lodging situation. The allowance is also available to children on whose behalf Temporary Care Assistance is being paid.

Applicants and recipients who reside in hospitals, domiciliary-type hostels, interval and transition homes for victims of family violence, emergency hostels and shelters – CMSMs and DSSABs, and residential programs for the treatment of substance abuse may also be eligible for this allowance if their budgetary requirements are determined under sections 41 or 44(1) of O.Reg 134/98.

Pregnant or breast-feeding applicants or recipients receiving emergency hostels services by First Nations delivery agents or residing in long-term care homes are not eligible for the nutritional allowance as part of their budgetary requirements.

A mother is eligible to receive the nutritional allowance for an additional 12 months after the birth event (up to and including the month the infant is 12 months old) if the mother verbally indicates that she is breast-feeding. When the child turns 13 months old the nutritional allowance is no longer provided.

Mothers who are breast-feeding are eligible for the nutritional allowance even if

they did not receive it while they were pregnant.

The maximum amount provided is:

- \$40/month; or
- \$50/month where an approved health professional confirms that the mother requires a lactose intolerant diet.

The Pregnancy/Breast-feeding Nutritional Allowance is not paid in combination with a Special Diet Allowance due to inadequate lactation to sustain breast-feeding or breast-feeding is contraindicated.

If the infant is receiving a Special Diet Allowance due to inadequate lactation to sustain breast-feeding or breast-feeding is contraindicated due to a medical condition, the nutritional allowance paid to the mother ceases to be paid effective the month in which this Special Diet Allowance is paid.

The mother may be eligible to receive a Special Diet Allowance for other approved medical conditions on the Special Diets Schedule at the same time as she receives the nutritional allowance. The amount provided for the nutritional allowance, which is not a special diet, is not included when the \$250 maximum for special diets is calculated ([see Directive 6.6: Special Diets](#) for more information).

Eligibility for the nutritional allowance will commence on:

- confirmation of the pregnancy, or confirmation that a breast-feeding mother requires a lactose intolerant diet, by an approved health professional; or
- verbal confirmation of the mother that she is breast-feeding.

Approved health professionals who may indicate that, to their knowledge, the applicant or recipient is pregnant and/or whether a pregnant or breast-feeding mother requires a lactose intolerant diet are as follows:

- a Physician registered with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario;
- a Registered Nurse in the Extended Class registered with the College of Nurses of Ontario;
- a Registered Dietitian registered with the College of Dietitians of Ontario;
- a Registered Midwife registered with the College of Midwives of Ontario; or
- a Traditional Aboriginal Midwife recognized and accredited by her or his Aboriginal community.

If the pregnancy is terminated, the nutritional allowance ceases to be paid effective the last day of the month the pregnancy ends.

If the allowance is paid in any month after the pregnancy terminates without the live birth of an infant because the recipient did not notify the Ontario Works office, an overpayment is established according to current practice.

## **Procedure**

### **For Pregnant Women applying for the Pregnancy/Breast-feeding Nutritional Allowance**

When an applicant or recipient is pregnant, she is provided with **the Application for Pregnancy/Breast-feeding Nutritional Allowance** (Form 3109) to be completed by an approved health professional to confirm that she is pregnant.

Approved health professionals are required to sign and date the application form. The date the approved health professional signs the form must be the date on which he/she completed the form.

Back-dating the form is not permitted. Therefore, the date of the signature cannot be a date earlier than the date the application was issued to the applicant or recipient.

The month in which the approved health professional “confirms” that the nutritional allowance is required is the month in which the approved health professional confirms the pregnancy for purposes of Ontario Works budgetary requirements (i.e., completes the **Application for Pregnancy/Breast-feeding Nutritional Allowance** form), and not the date that the approved health professional tells the woman that she is pregnant, unless the application is completed in the same calendar month. If the completed form is submitted to Ontario Works in a month following the month in which the form is issued, the nutritional allowance is paid retroactively to the month the form is signed. The allowance is to be paid in full each month and is not pro-rated.

Example:

A woman is advised that she is pregnant on July 15, 2010, an approved health professional signs the application form on September 16, 2010 confirming the pregnancy and requirement for a lactose intolerant diet. An amount of \$50 is provided effective September 2010.

### **For New Mothers applying for the Pregnancy/Breast-feeding Nutritional Allowance**

New mothers who are breast-feeding infants 12 months of age or younger who request the allowance after the birth of the child are eligible to receive the allowance, even though they did not receive the allowance while pregnant (e.g., new social assistance applicants or recipients).

Verbal confirmation from the mother that she is breast-feeding is required. The

allowance will be issued commencing the month that eligibility for assistance is determined and terminating on the last day of the month in which the infant is 12 months of age.

New mothers who request the allowance after the birth of their child are not required to submit a completed application.

However, if the mother requests the higher amount of \$50 because she needs a lactose intolerant diet, then confirmation from an approved health professional by means of a completed application form is required.

If the infant ceases to be a member of the benefit unit, the allowance ceases to be paid effective the month following the month in which the infant ceased to be a member of the benefit unit.