

Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)

What is ODSP?

The Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) is one of Ontario's social assistance programs. ODSP provides income and employment supports to eligible Ontario residents who have disabilities.

A person with a disability doesn't have to be receiving ODSP income support to be eligible for employment supports.

What is ODSP income support?

ODSP income support helps people with disabilities who are in financial need pay for living expenses like food and housing. It also provides health benefits like drug and dental coverage.

ODSP is a program of last resort. This means that you need to look for help from every other source before turning to ODSP for financial help. These sources can include money from:

- a job
- the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB), and
- the Canada Pension Plan Disability benefit (CPP-D).

If you still need help paying for living expenses and medical costs, ODSP may be able to help you.

How do I know if I'm eligible for ODSP income support?

You may be eligible for ODSP income support if you:

- are 18 years of age or older
- live in Ontario
- are in financial need, and
- are a person with a disability as defined under the ODSP Act.

Most applicants must go through a process to determine if they meet the program's definition of a person with a disability.

Under the ODSP Act, a "person with a disability" is a person with a substantial physical or mental impairment that is continuous or recurrent, and is expected to last a year or more.

In addition, the physical or mental impairment must directly result in a substantial restriction in the person's ability to:

- work
- take care of him or herself, or
- take part in community life.

The impairment(s), its duration, and the restriction(s) must also be verified by an approved health care professional.

How do I apply for ODSP income support?

You can call or visit your local ODSP office.

You can also start your application online. If you apply online you will still need to come into your local office to continue the application with a caseworker.

Applying online can help you find out if you are eligible for ODSP, as well as other social assistance programs.

To start an online application, visit ontario.ca/socialassistance.

Can I work and receive ODSP income support?

Yes. Depending on your situation, you can work and receive income support at the same time.

Tell your caseworker if you are working. Your caseworker will let you know how working will affect your income support, and if you qualify for help with work-related costs, like child care.

What if I need money now, and can't wait for my application to be processed?

If you're in immediate financial need you can apply for Ontario's other social assistance program, Ontario Works. Applying to Ontario Works takes less time and you can get help from Ontario Works sooner.

When you apply for Ontario Works you should tell them that you're a person with a disability and that you want to apply for ODSP. Ontario Works staff will also help you with your ODSP application.

What are ODSP employment supports?

ODSP employment supports help eligible people with disabilities prepare for, get and keep a job.

ODSP employment supports can even help people who have never worked, or have been out of work for some time.

To find out more, read our information sheet **ODSP Employment Supports: Preparing for Work, Finding Work and Advancing My Career.**

How do I know if I'm eligible for ODSP employment supports?

If you are already receiving ODSP income support, you're automatically eligible for ODSP employment supports. Participation in employment supports is voluntary.

If you are not currently receiving ODSP income support, you may still be eligible for employment supports, if you:

- are 16 years of age or older
- live in Ontario, and
- have a physical or mental disability that is expected to last a year or more that makes it hard for you to find or keep a job.

How do I apply for ODSP employment supports?

To apply for ODSP employment supports, call or visit your local ODSP office.

Unlike ODSP income support, you can't apply for employment supports online or through an Ontario Works office.

Need more information?

For more information, please contact your local ODSP or Ontario Works office.

To find contact information for your local office and learn more about ODSP visit: ontario.ca/socialassistance

For general questions, please call ServiceOntario at:

Telephone: 1-888-789-4199

Teletypewriter (TTY):1-800-387-5559

Ce document est disponible en français.

Please note:

Everyone's situation is different. The information here is intended as general guidance only. It isn't meant to provide a full description of ODSP or to tell you if you are eligible for the program.

To understand how this information applies to your situation, please contact your local ODSP office.