

Financial Help During COVID-19 Emergency Assistance, Ontario Works, and Ontario Disability Support Program

Updated: April 24, 2020

Caseworkers in Bruce County and Grey County are here to help and are available to provide information about what program or benefit may best suit individual and/or family needs.

Grey County Intake - 519-376-7112 ext. 1117 or online at Grey.ca / General Inquiries – 519-376-7112

Bruce County Intake/Inquiries - 519-881-0431 or 1-800-265-3005 or online at Brucecounty.on.ca

Ontario Disability Support Program - 519-376-1951

Social Assistance Online Application - [Social Assistance Online](#)

Emergency Assistance Online Application - [Emergency Assistance Online](#)

Emergency Assistance (for people not in receipt of OW/ODSP)

The eligibility criteria for Emergency Assistance has been expanded. It is available for those **facing a crisis or emergency** who have no immediate access to other supports. This assistance can be a bridge for those who are waiting for COVID-19 supports from the federal government (CERB, EI) and is temporary in nature. Emergency Assistance rates are based on provincial Ontario Works rates.

To apply for this benefit, please contact your local office at the numbers provided above. You can also apply through the [Emergency Assistance Online](#) application.

Ontario Works (OW)

Basic financial assistance may be available to assist with costs of basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter including health benefits and employment assistance for eligible individuals/families. More information about Ontario Works along with assistance rates can be found at [Ontario Works Eligibility](#).

To apply for this benefit, please contact your local office at the numbers provided above. A complete online application is also available at [Social Assistance Online](#).

OW Emergency Benefit

A New Emergency Benefit is available to meet extraordinary costs during the COVID-19 crisis for individuals/families currently in receipt of OW/ODSP. **Recipients are asked to contact their caseworker** if extra support is needed. Examples of valid expenses include:

- Cleaning supplies for those diagnosed with COVID-19 or a family member who has been diagnosed
- Delivery or travel costs for food or other essential supplies for recipients or families who are self-isolating
- Additional costs for food as a result of food scarcity (e.g., not having access to lower cost staples)

Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) & Social Assistance

Details regarding eligibility for CERB are available on the [federal government's website](#)

For existing Ontario Works recipients (granted prior to March 1st, 2020) and all ODSP applicants/recipients: CERB payments will qualify for a partial exemption – the first \$200 and 50 per cent of each additional dollar received in a month will be exempt.

For new and recent Ontario Works applicants (those granted on or after March 1st, 2020): CERB payments will be deducted dollar-for-dollar when determining eligibility for social assistance.

Note: Ontario Works and ODSP recipients who qualify for the CERB partial exemption but become financially ineligible will not lose access to health benefits. These recipients will remain on social assistance, at a nominal amount, to ensure access to benefits and case management supports.

For more detailed information please contact your local office through the numbers provided above.

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Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)

Eligibility

Applicants will be required to meet both financial and disability eligibility criteria (total process including the medical adjudication can take up to approximately 3 months).

How to Apply – Intake Application

Applications are taken by phone or on-line at: [Social Assistance Online](#).

If you contact us via telephone (519-376-1951) you will be called back to complete the application over the telephone and required to verify: * your personal information * information about members of your household * your household's housing costs and other shelter-related costs * your household's income and assets.

ODSP Emergency Benefit

A New Emergency Benefit is available to meet extraordinary costs during the COVID-19 crisis for individuals/families currently in receipt of OW/ODSP. **Recipients are asked to contact their caseworker** if extra support is needed. Examples of valid expenses include:

- Cleaning supplies for those diagnosed with COVID-19 or a family member who has been diagnosed.
- Delivery or travel costs for food or other essential supplies for recipients or families who are self-isolating.
- Additional costs for food as a result of food scarcity (e.g., not having access to lower cost staples).

Hours of operation: In effort to serve while protecting both clients and staff throughout the management of COVID 19, our office hours have been currently **reduced to 10am to 2pm** providing in office service for exceptional or extenuating circumstances only, and we kindly request that clients contact our office via telephone at 519-376-1951 to determine how we can best meet their needs or answer important questions. Please be advised that we will contact clients directly if there is a requirement to attend our office as most of the work can be accommodated and completed via email, FAX, phone or the mail.

Mail Drop Box: We have a labelled mail drop box that is located outside the front main door of Service Ontario accessible 24 hours a day for clients to leave required documents.

Email or FAX information: All clients can submit documentation or any changes to: income, accommodation/address or banking information to the following generic email address and their information will be forwarded to their caseworkers.

Email: adminowensoundodsp@ontario.ca

Fax: 519-376-4544

My Benefits: Did you know you can access information about your Ontario Works (OW) or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) case, report your income, and change your address online?

Register now at: [Ontario.ca/MyBenefits](https://ontario.ca/MyBenefits)

Note: please ensure your caseworker has your current email address as this is required for registration.

Direct Bank Deposit (DBD): Direct Bank Deposit is a safe and easy way to receive OW or ODSP payments each month. Instead of receiving a cheque, the money you are eligible to receive can be deposited directly and securely into your bank account.

Reloadable Payment Card (RPC): A Reloadable Payment Card is another way to receive your OW or ODSP payments if you don't have a bank account. The card works in the same way as a debit card but does not require a bank account.

For more information or to sign up for DBD or RPC, please contact your OW or ODSP caseworker at one of the numbers provided above.

***Note: if you cannot click directly to the website links in this document, please use the web addresses below:**

Apply for OW/ODSP Online - <https://saapply.mcsc.gov.on.ca/CitizenPortal/application.do>

Apply for Emergency Assistance Online - <https://www.ea.mcsc.gov.on.ca/>

Ontario Works Eligibility - <https://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/en/mcscs/programs/social/ow/eligibility.aspx>

Register for MyBenefits - <https://mybenefits.mcsc.gov.on.ca/>

Federal government supports - <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application.html>