

Financial Help During COVID-19

Emergency Assistance, Ontario Works, and Ontario Disability Support Program

Updated: *August 6, 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 Intake - 519-376-1951 Ext. 241 or online at OSDP online / General Inquiries - 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 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 (*updated effective July 31, 2020)

The Emergency Benefit is no longer available as of July 31, 2020. This means Ontario Works clients will not receive Emergency Benefit payments after July 2020. The Emergency Benefit cannot be provided retroactively for previous periods.

If you have any questions or still need additional supports for exceptional COVID-19-related costs, please contact your caseworker. Your caseworker may be able to provide assistance or help connect you to other supports that may be available in social assistance or your community.

Federal Government Financial Supports

The Federal government has introduced a range of financial supports in response to Covid-19. Details regarding these supports are available on the Federal Government Financial Support webpage. Details regarding eligibility for CERB in particular are available on the CERB webpage.

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.

If you have received notification from the federal government that you have been deemed ineligible for CERB, please contact your Caseworker to discuss your individual circumstances.

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.

Questions and Answers on the Canada Emergency Response Benefit

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

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 Ext. 241) 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 (*updated effective July 31, 2020)

The Emergency Benefit is no longer available as of July 31, 2020. This means ODSP clients will not receive Emergency Benefit payments after July 2020. The Emergency Benefit cannot be provided retroactively for previous periods.

If you have any questions or still need additional supports for exceptional COVID-19-related costs, please contact your caseworker. Your caseworker may be able to provide assistance or help connect you to other supports that may be available in social assistance or your community.

*** Hours of operation:** In efforts to continue serving the public while protecting both clients and staff throughout the management of COVID 19 effective August 4th, ODSP offices have returned to regular office hours of 8:30am to 5:00pm. Staff will be responding to phone calls during these hours but continue to ask that clients do not visit the office without speaking to someone first. You may also email the office at adminowensoundodsp@ontario.ca, fax 519-376-4544, or access MyBenefits, or the Interactive Voice Response system.

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.mcass.gov.on.ca/CitizenPortal/application.do>

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

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

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

Federal government supports - <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html>

ODSP online application - <https://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/en/mcass/programs/social/index.aspx>