



Ontario Works

Ontario Works (OW) provides employment and financial assistance while you take the steps required to get a job. The program is designed to be applicable only after other employment and financial resources and opportunities have been used.

To Apply

- Call the OW Intake Screening Unit (call centre) for York Region at: ☎ **1-888-256-1112**

You Are Eligible If You

- Reside in Ontario
- Have financial need based on an assessment of your family size, income, assets and shelter costs
- Agree to participate in employment-assistance activities
- Agree to make reasonable efforts to obtain any financial resources to which you or your dependants are entitled before accepting OW assistance

The Application Process

- The call centre will conduct an initial telephone interview, during which you will get information about OW, and you will be asked for information about your financial and employment situation
- The call centre will then refer you to your local OW office
- At your local OW office, you complete and sign a detailed application form and a participation agreement, which outlines a plan to return as quickly as possible to paid employment

The Appeal Process

- The OW office will review complaints or disputes about decisions affecting applicants to OW and OW participants
- If unsuccessful, then you request a review by the Social Benefits Tribunal

There Is a Variety of Employment Assistance

- Community participation placements
 - This is an opportunity to provide help to a non-profit organization in your community while you get work experience
- Practical help finding a job

- Workshops on looking for work, resume writing and preparing for an interview
 - Referrals to job counselling
 - Access to telephones, faxes, computers and job banks
- Basic education
 - Support to complete high school, improve your language, reading, writing or math skills
- Job skills training
 - Support to obtain training for a specific job, on-the-job training, co-op training, special skills programs or special certificate courses
- Employment placement, including supports to self-employment
 - OW has direct connections to employers who are hiring
 - Employment specialists can help if you have ideas for starting your own business
- Learning, Earning and Parenting (LEAP)
 - This is help for teen parents between the ages of 16 and 25 to complete high school, improve your parenting skills, prepare for and find work so you can support your family
- Help with work-related expenses
 - A start-up benefit can help pay expenses related to getting ready for work and taking part in OW employment activities
 - Ongoing help while you are in OW activities with costs of transportation, work, clothing, equipment, summer camp fees for children and childcare
- Addiction treatment services
 - assessment and treatment services for addiction to drugs or alcohol can help overcome barriers to employment
- Earning exemptions
 - if you are working part-time, exemptions allow you to continue to receive OW assistance until you are able enough to provide for yourself and your family
 - Example: For every \$1.00 you earn, Ontario Works will deduct 0.50¢ from the amount of money you receive from them

There Is a Variety of Financial Assistance

- Income assistance
 - the focus is to provide basic needs and shelter
- Benefits
 - Example: Prescription drugs, basic dental care, eyeglasses, diabetic supplies, moving or eviction costs, employment related costs
- Emergency assistance
 - the focus is to provide basic needs and shelter on an emergency basis

Specific Situations for Eligibility for Financial Assistance

- Financial assistance and benefits are provided to an adult on behalf of a child if the child is in the temporary care of the adult because his/her parents are unable to provide the child's care
- Financial assistance may be paid to a person under the age of 18 under exceptional circumstances and only if he/she is attending school or

- an approved alternative learning program
- Financial assistance may be paid to a person age 18 and over who lives with his/her parents only if they meet the test for financial assistance
- Single applicants or participants attending post-secondary institutions become ineligible for financial assistance upon receiving a student loan from the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP)

Considerations Related To OW Assistance

- If you have money owed you, the participation agreement specifies that you will pursue this income and then reimburse OW if you receive it
- In determining eligibility, your income will include any payments you receive under any annuity, pension plan, superannuation scheme or insurance benefit
- You can receive an advance childcare payment if it enables you to start or change employment or an employment-assistance activity

Considerations Related To Dependent Children

- Permanent wards of the Children's Aid Society (CAS) or of the Crown under The Child and Family Services Act are not eligible for assistance
- If your child is attending a residential school, such as a child mental-health facility, where his/her basic needs are being met, he/she will not be considered a dependent for the purpose of calculating your OW assistance
- Your child must attend school or an approved program to be considered a dependent child in the calculation of your OW assistance
- there are specific reasons, such as illness, why children between the ages of 6 and 16 may be excused from school attendance
- If you are a dependent child, you can apply for assistance for your dependent child, regardless of whether or not you are receiving assistance
- In assessing your income, OW considers childcare expenses to be a deduction from your net earnings or net training income

OW Can Benefit Employers

- OW will refer candidates that meet your requirements
- OW will follow up with you to ensure the employee meets your needs
- An employer may be eligible for up to 6 months to receive help with costs for extra supervision or training for the new employee
- OW can cover the costs of Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) coverage during the training period for your new employee

Disclaimer: Although every reasonable effort is made to present current and accurate information, being listed does not indicate that the service is recommended or endorsed by York Support Services Network (YSSN) or the Developmental Services Ontario Central East Region (DSO CER). As this information is created and maintained by a variety of sources both internal and external, we would like to recommend that you contact the organizations directly, as information can change periodically without notice.

Our Mission

Communicate. Connect. Support.