

**APPLYING FOR ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM (ODSP) –
INFO SHEET
(Current to: February 16, 2023)**

Benefits Finder (Federal and Ontario):

- Search tools to help individuals find services and supports based on their needs:
 - o <https://benefitsfinder.services.gc.ca/hm>
 - o <https://www.ontario.ca/page/find-benefits-and-programs>

How to apply for Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP):

- If on Ontario Works (OW), speak to caseworker
If not on OW, contact local ODSP office or apply online:
 - o <https://saapply.mcass.gov.on.ca/CitizenPortal/application.do>

Finding OW/ODSP offices, including to apply in-person or by phone:

- Input the individual's postal code here to locate their local OW/ODSP office:
 - o <http://www.officelocator.mcass.gov.on.ca/>

Info about applying and ODSP Directives:

- To find out more about OW and ODSP, visit:
 - o <https://www.ontario.ca/page/social-assistance>
- To see ODSP Directives, including regarding income and assets, visit:
 - o <https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-disability-support-program-policy-directives-income-support>

Minimum age to apply:

- An individual must be 18 and above to receive ODSP but they can apply as early as 6 months before their 18th birthday. If they qualify, the benefits would start effective their 18th birthday
- If the person is on OW/ODSP benefits as a dependent of their parents, they can still apply for their own ODSP benefit. If they are approved, they will be removed as a dependent from their parents' benefit and begin to receive their own benefit payments
- Note: if someone's parents/guardians are receiving Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities, it does not mean that the person will be automatically eligible for ODSP once they turn 18. They still have to go through the ODSP application process

Benefit Unit:

- When a person applies for OW/ODSP, they will be asked about their household/"benefit unit". OW/ODSP rules apply to the whole benefit unit i.e. income, assets etc
- A "benefit unit" usually includes the applicant, their spouse, and dependent children

- ODSP will consider the assets and income of the whole benefit unit. For example, if the spouse of a disabled applicant is working, their income will be considered when the person applies for ODSP
- Note: the definition of spouse for OW/ODSP is broad and is not limited to couples who are married

ODSP Application – Financial Eligibility:

- ODSP considers items such as household income, assets etc., to determine if they financially qualify
- If someone is on OW, this part is already met
- If the person is not on OW, this has to be assessed

Financial eligibility:

- Individuals have to qualify financially for social assistance in Ontario. This includes the income and assets of the “benefit unit”/household.
- For ODSP purposes, the asset limits are:
 - o \$40,000 for a single person,
 - o \$50,000 for a couple, and
 - o \$500 for each dependant other than a spouse
- Income is a broad category under social assistance and is not limited to employment earnings
- For OW/ODSP, income can include spousal support, most insurance benefits and government benefits such as Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance, and Old Age Security

ODSP Application – Medical Eligibility:

- The majority of applicants have to qualify on a medical basis by completing a Disability Determination Package (DDP) with their health care provider – they are paid directly by OHIP for the completion of the forms
- If the person is on OW, they can contact their caseworker and this package will be issued by the worker
- If the person is not on OW, they first have to contact their local ODSP office and will be issued this package if they are financially eligible
- Note: a person has 90 days to complete and submit the application. If they need more time, they can request an extension. If the deadline has passed and there was no extension, then the person has to request a new set of forms

ODSP Application – Prescribed Class:

- Some individuals do not have to complete the medical eligibility portion, but they still have to qualify financially
- This includes people who:
 - o have qualified for the Canada Pension Plan – Disability Benefit
 - o who qualify for adult developmental services and supports from Developmental Services Ontario (DSO)
 - o are over 65 years of age and do not qualify for Old Age Security (OAS)

- If a person believes they do not have to do the medical application, they should contact their OW worker or local ODSP office directly, explain their situation and ask how they can apply
- Additionally, if an individual was eligible for ODSP, left the program, and now wishes to return to the program, they should contact their local ODSP office to discuss “rapid reinstatement”
- See here for more details:
 - o <https://stepstojustice.ca/steps/income-assistance/3-learn-if-you-can-qualify-without-getting-proof/>

Finding medical providers and programs:

- Health Care Connect:
 - o <https://www.ontario.ca/page/find-family-doctor-or-nurse-practitioner>
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario:
 - o <https://doctors.cpsso.on.ca/?search=general> (can search by area, speciality, language, gender etc.)
- Family Health Teams and Community Health Centres:
 - o https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/fht/fht_progress.aspx
 - o <https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/chc/locations.aspx>
- ConnexOntario (for finding mental health and addictions programs and resources)
 - o <https://www.connexontario.ca/en-ca/>
- OHIP-covered physiotherapy if on OW/ODSP:
 - o <https://www.ontario.ca/page/physiotherapy-clinics-government-funded>

Where to get help:

- For general information:
 - o <https://stepstojustice.ca/legal-topic/income-assistance/ontario-disability-support-program/>
- To find a local community legal clinic, can call Legal Aid Ontario - Client Service Centre at 416-979-1446 or toll-free 1-800-668-8258. Can also search here:
 - o <https://www.legalaid.on.ca/legal-clinics/>

***Please note:** the above has been provided for general information only and is not legal advice or opinion.*

Prepared by Anum Malik, presenter, for the CLEO Webinar “[Navigating the Ontario Disability Support Program \(ODSP\), Part 2: Eligibility and the Application Process](#)”.

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