

ONTARIO WORKS

PROGRAM OVERVIEW



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ONTARIO WORKS

“The intent of the Ontario Works program is to help people in temporary financial need find sustainable employment and achieve self-reliance through the provision of effective, integrated employment services and financial assistance.”

Directive 1.1



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RESPONSIBILITIES

- A program of mutual responsibility

Participants:

- Have a responsibility to provide information verifying initial and ongoing eligibility for financial assistance; and
- To participate in employment activities



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RESPONSIBILITIES

Case Managers:

- Monitor and determine ongoing eligibility for financial and employment assistance
- Determine the employability of each adult member of the benefit unit
- Refer and match participants to employment assistance measures



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DELIVERY REQUIREMENTS

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

- Basic Needs and Shelter
- Benefits
- Emergency Assistance

EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE:

- Develop a plan to alleviate barriers to employment and help find/maintain a job



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ELIGIBILITY

- Eligibility rules are designed to ensure that employment is the first resort for those in financial need
- People turn to Ontario Works only when all other financial resources and opportunities have been exhausted



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ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility for Ontario Works is based on:

1. Residency Requirements
2. Budgetary Requirements
3. Verified Information
4. Participation Requirements
5. Other conditions of eligibility as prescribed by the Act/Regulations
6. Maintenance and Review



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APPLICATION PROCESS

Anyone who wishes to apply for financial assistance is:

- given the opportunity to make an application;
- have the application completed & reviewed
- have a decision concerning eligibility made and communicated in a timely manner.



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CLIENT SERVICE PATH IN HAMILTON



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HOW TO APPLY

- Online: Visit the MCCSS website and click the link Social Assistance Digital Application (SADA); or
- Call: 1-888-999-1142 for an over the phone application if you do not have access to a computer



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APPLICATION INTERVIEW

- Applicants who do not speak English or need a sign language interpreter are given sufficient time to arrange for a translator.
- Appointments to be scheduled within no more than four days of initial contact.



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THE APPLICATION

- Information and verification regarding someone's income, assets and living arrangements are needed to assess eligibility for Ontario works
- Referrals are made to programs and/or community resources
- Participation is negotiated



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PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS- Action Plan

- Ontario Works delivers case management services that focus on connecting clients to supports/services that prepare or enable them to participate in Employment Services and employment.
- Participants must be willing to negotiate an Action Plan and Participation Agreement to identify those next steps



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ACTION PLAN

- Is a “participant centered”, negotiated agreement which develops over time as the participant's skills, needs and circumstances change
- It is reviewed and updated at a minimum of once every 3 months
- Community referrals are made based on client’s identified needs and goals



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WORKING with COMMUNITY AGENCIES

- Participants must consent to OW communication with other agencies on their behalf
- OW must have a copy of the consent form on file
- OW can also complete a consent valid for up to 180 days if client requests



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CASE MANAGEMENT

- Monitors ongoing eligibility and ensures correct entitlement is issued
- Reviews financial circumstances at a minimum of 24 months (Form 1 Update with Case Manager)
- Conducts Participation Appointments at a minimum every 3 months
- Makes referrals as appropriate



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WORKING ON ASSISTANCE

- Employment earnings are deducted at 100% the first 3 months of coming onto OW
- After 3 months, participants qualify for an Earnings Exemption towards Employment Income – the first \$200 is exempt and the remaining amount is deducted from the monthly income support at 50%
- Example of earnings exemption: Monthly earnings is \$350, you keep the first \$200 without affecting your assistance. The remaining \$150, half would be deducted from your income support (\$75)



MANDATORY BENEFITS

- Participation Benefit - Other Employment & Employment Assistance Activities
- Monthly Drug Coverage
- Vision Care for children
- Dental (Healthy Smiles)
- Medical Travel and Transportation



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DISCRETIONARY BENEFITS

- Car Seat Benefit
- Crib & Layette
- Formula Benefit
- Participation Benefit - Employment Related Expenses
- Dental & Vision Coverage for Adults
- *Housing Stability Benefit



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SPECIALTY CASELOADS

- Youth and LEAP caseload
- French Language Services caseload
- Temporary Care caseload

- Hostels, Lodging & Residential Care Facilities Team
- Homeless/Transient caseload



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INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE

- Automated telephone system which provides personal case file information and general announcements
- Provides access to information beyond regular business hours



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1-800-808-2268

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MyBENEFITS

- A new online service available for OW and ODSP clients to report income, change their address or phone number, see past payments or letters sent to them over the last 12 months
- Available 24/7 from any device
- To sign-up: Ontario.ca/MyBenefits



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Additional Resources

- **Hamilton.ca/OntarioWorks**

Application options

Apply online

Service available 24 hours, 7 days a week, in English or French.

If you have an email and telephone number you can apply online using the new Social Assistance Digital Application (SADA). [Visit](#)

[Ontario.ca/socialassistance](https://ontario.ca/socialassistance) to apply online.

Apply by phone

You can call our office at 905-546-4800 and press option 3 or call toll free at 1-855-999-8729. Service available Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 3:30 pm, in English or French.



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OFFICES

- 250 Main St. E
- 1550 Upper James St.
- 350 King St E – Housing Services



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QUESTIONS?



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