

Ontario Works (OW)

Updated December 2023

Ontario Works provides financial assistance for Ontario residents who cannot find work, are not able to work, or they are working but making little money.

To qualify, you cannot have assets of more than a certain amount (\$10,000 for one person, \$15,000 for a couple, plus \$500 for every child).

How much can you get per month on OW?

Family Type	Basic Needs	Shelter	Total
single	\$343	\$390	\$733
couple	\$494	\$642	\$1,136
Single parent-1 child	\$360	\$642	\$1,002
Couple -2 children	\$494	\$756	\$1,250

Note: families with children will also likely be receiving the Canada Child Benefit and Ontario Child Benefit

What if I live in subsidized housing?

If you live in subsidized housing, then your shelter allowance will only be enough to cover your rent

However, if you pay utilities separately, and/or have tenant insurance, then OW may pay those costs as well, up to the maximum shelter allowance (including your rent)

What happens if I have other income?

- Any other income you receive must be reported to OW
- Often other income is deducted dollar-for-dollar from your OW monthly assistance
- However, certain types of income are fully or partially exempt from being deducted from your OW cheque.

Examples of fully exempt income (they will not be deducted from your cheque)

- Earnings of children under age 18 or of adults over 18 who are going to school full-time
- Refundable tax credits (e.g., Canada Child Benefit, Climate Action Incentive, GST/HST credit, etc)
- Child support payments
- Gifts received of up to \$10,000 per year
- Earnings from an employment training program

Working and Ontario Works

If you work you can keep some of your earned income

When you work you can keep the first \$200 net of your earnings per month.

50% of anything you earn over \$200 is deducted from your OW cheque.

For eg:

if you are a single person and you earn \$1000 a month net from a job, OW will deduct \$400 from your check.

So your income will be: \$1000 from job

\$333 from OW

For a total of: \$1333 per month

Note: the first three months you are on OW, every dollar you earn is deducted

OW wants you to work. They provide a lot of assistance for recipients to find work. These include:

- Employment training programs
- Pre-employment programs
- Job placements
- Provide money for employment related costs

Sometimes you can receive extra payments for participating in these programs, up to \$250 per month

Extra Benefits you can receive on OW

Special Diet Allowance – provides addition funds for people with certain medical conditions and food allergies – up to \$250 per month.

Medical transportation allowance – covers the costs of transportation to and from medical or health related appointments. To qualify, your medical transportation costs must be at least \$15 per month.

Pregnancy and breastfeeding nutritional allowance – provides \$40-\$50 per month for mothers who are pregnant and/or have a baby under age of 12 months.

Drug coverage – coverage for the costs of prescription medication.

Dental benefits - covers just emergency dental services.

Housing Stabilization Fund, for help with moving and setting up a new residence: up to \$1600 for a single/couple, or \$3,000 for families

- This may also be used to cover rental arrears, as well as replacement of furniture due to bedbugs

Eye exams, vision care, glasses- every three years

Coverage for cost of **surgical, medical and diabetic** supplies

Full-time Employment Benefit – up to \$500 for starting full-time employment

Employment Assistance Activities benefit - Provides assistance of up to \$253 for costs of beginning or changing employment or employment related activities.

You may also get additional financial assistance for things you need for your work, like internet, transportation, clothing, tools

Extended Health benefits: if you go off OW for any reason, but you have high health related costs, you may be able to keep your health benefits under OW.

To apply for Ontario works you can apply online at:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/social-assistance> or apply on the phone at 416 338 8888.

Some free/low cost services people on OW will qualify for

TTC

Fair Pass TTC Discount program – 36% off single fares, and 21% off monthly pass.

For people age 20-64 who are low income.

You will need a presto card. You will also need your OW number to apply .

For more information, go to:

<https://www.ttc.ca/Fares-and-passes/Other-passes/Fair-Pass-Transit-Discount-Program>

Call: 416-338-8888

Internet and Phone

Rogers Connected for Success

Internet services as low as \$10 per month (you can also get a bundled plan with cable starting at \$40 per month)

Phone service for just \$25 per month. They will also give you a free phone as long as you stick with the plan for at least 2 years

To be eligible, you must be on OW, ODSP, RGI housing, receiving the GIS, or the Resettlement Assistance Program. For more information go to:

<https://www.rogers.com/connected-for-success/>

Call: 1 866 689 0758

Gift of Sight Program

If you need new eyeglasses

A worker at any agency can write a letter confirming you are low income and need new glasses.

Take this letter to any 'Lenscrafters' store (there is one in the Eaton's Centre).

You will be given new glasses, free of charge

Free computers for low income people

Lets Get Together is a charitable organization that supplies free computers to low income people. For information on how to apply, go to:

<https://www.letsgettogether.ca/>

Or call: 416 302-8349