

# MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES

## ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM (ODSP)

# Agenda

- 1) Program Overview
- 2) Contacting ODSP- New Service Delivery Model
- 3) Qualifying for and applying to ODSP
- 4) Determining Income Support
- 5) Benefits
- 6) The Special Payment
- 7) Rapid Reinstatement
- 9) Questions

# Overview

- The Ontario Disability Support Program is a program designed to meet the unique needs of people with disabilities and their families, who are in need of financial support, or who want to work and need additional support



- The intent of the program is to provide the supports necessary to enable individuals and families to live as independently as possible in the community and lead more productive, dignified lives.

# CONTACTING ODSP

# The New Service Delivery Framework

- Effective April 2006, a new service delivery model was implemented to facilitate more personalized contact between clients and staff.
- The new framework provides increased accountability, as clients are able to speak directly with the persons who are making decisions that may impact their income support.

# QUALIFYING FOR AND APPLYING TO ODSP

# To Qualify for ODSP:

- You must have a verified physical or mental disability that is expected to last one year or more
- The disability must make it difficult for you to care for yourself, participate in community life, or participate in employment
- You must be financially eligible (This means your income and asset levels must fall within pre-determined ODSP levels)
- You must be 18 years of age
- You must be a resident of Ontario



# Applying to ODSP

1. If you are in immediate financial need, you can contact your local Ontario Works office for temporary assistance; and they will help recipients to access ODSP. OR If you are receiving assistance from Ontario Works already, simply ask your caseworker for a referral to ODSP

OR

2. You can apply directly through your local ODSP office (called a self-referral)

An ODSP application is a 2 step process, except in the case of prescribed classes:

Step 1: The Financial Assessment

To be eligible, the applicant's or recipient's family assets must be within the allowable limits:

- \$5,000 for a single person;
- plus \$2,500 if there is a spouse or same sex partner in the benefit unit;
- plus \$500 for each dependant (other than a spouse).

# What are “assets”???

Examples of assets that would be considered when assessing financial eligibility:

- Cash
- Bank Accounts
- Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP)
- Bonds
- Investments
- Other assets which can be readily converted to cash (i.e.: stamp collection, coins, jewellery, etc.)

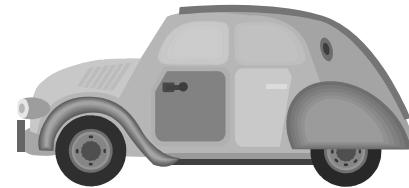


NOTE: Joint assets are also considered.

# Some “assets” are exempt!!!

Examples of exempt assets that are not considered when assessing financial eligibility:

- Principal Residence
- Primary Vehicle
- Prepaid Funerals
- Tools of the trade for those who are self employed or require them for employment
- Some Trust Funds



# Incomes are also considered!!!

- Income includes the monetary value of items and services provided to members of a benefit unit as well as deemed income. The income received from other sources may result in a whole, partial or a full deduction from a recipient's entitlement.

The following list illustrates some potential income sources:

- Canada Pension Plan/Quebec Pension Plan Benefit
- Workplace Safety and Insurance Board Benefit
- Guaranteed Annual Income Supplement - Aged
- Old Age Security
- Employment Insurance
- Employment Earnings



## **STEP 2:**

The Disability Determination Process; whereby health professionals complete the Disability Determination Package which was provided by Ontario Works or ODSP at the referral stage. This package contains the Health Status Report, the Activities of Daily Living Index, the Consent to Release Medical Information, and the Self Report. This package must then be returned to the Disability Adjudication Unit within 90 days.



# Prescribed Classes

- Prescribed classes include persons in receipt of Canada Pension Plan Disability, persons who are 65 years of age or older and not eligible for Old Age Security, residents in a facility designated as an institution under the Mental Hospitals Act, residents of CAMH, residents in a facility designated under the Developmental Services Act, residents in a home for special care established under the Homes For Special Care Act.)

# HOW IS INCOME SUPPORT DETERMINED?

# How is Income Support Determined?

- It is based on legislated rates, family size and age of children, as well as type and cost of accommodation, minus any chargeable income/deductions.
- **Please note: All rates have increased effective November 2006**



# For example...

*\*For people who qualify, the ODSP monthly income support is calculated as follows:*

## **Basic Needs (for a single person - \$543 in a month):**

- Assists with food, clothing, personal needs, household supplies; a set amount based on the number of people in the benefit unit.

## **Shelter Allowance (for a single person - up to \$436 in a month):**

- Rent/mortgage, property taxes, home insurance premiums, utilities, fuel, condominium fees (*based on **actual cost for accommodation** and subject to maximum*).

# Income support calculations continued...

## **Board and Lodging Allowance (for a single person – up to \$746 in a month):**

- A board and lodging situation is one in which a recipient receives food and shelter from the same source.

## **Residents of institutions:**

- Personal Needs Allowance: \$119
- Institutional Rate, depending on type of institution: \$860 or \$852



# BENEFITS

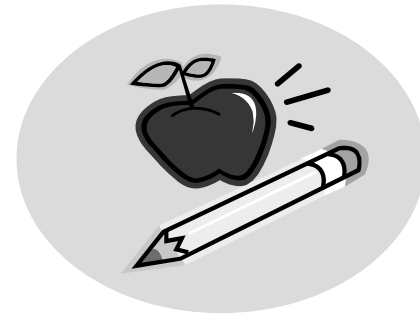
# Benefits available

In addition to your monthly income support **you may be eligible** for other benefits such as:

1. Drug and dental coverage
2. Vision care and hearing aids
3. Mandatory special necessities
4. Pregnancy/breast-feeding nutritional allowance
5. Mobility devices – batteries and repairs



- Assistive devices
- Guide dog allowance
- Back to school allowance
- Winter clothing allowance
- Home repairs
- Discretionary Benefit for Low-Cost Energy Conservation Measures
- Special Diet Allowance\* (see slide 23)
- Community Start up and Maintenance Benefit\* (see Slide 24 and 25)



# Special Diet Allowance

In November 2005, changes to the Special Diet Allowance policy were introduced to better support individuals who require a special diet as a result of a medical condition.

# Community Start Up and Maintenance Benefit (CSUMB)

CSUMB may be issued in situations where:

A recipient is establishing a new principle residence or remaining in current residence;

The Director is satisfied that the recipient will need financial assistance to establish the new principle residence or remain in the current residence;

The recipient meets one of the prescribed criteria.

# CSUMB Amounts

The maximum amount is \$1500 for a benefit unit with one or more dependent children and \$799 in all other cases. The maximum amounts are not to be exceeded within a 24 month period unless there are exceptional circumstances

# THE SPECIAL PAYMENT

# The Special Payment

Effective May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2006, ODSP amended regulations relating to initial retroactive grants for eligible ODSP applicants. The changes:

- a) revoked the four month limit on initial retroactive grants for eligible ODSP applicants; and,
- b) expanded the list of decisions that may not be appealed to include certain decisions related to the date of grant.

# The Special Payment Cont.

The effective date of grant is the date the application is complete for eligible applicants who apply directly to an ODSP office. The effective date of grant is the first day of the month the application is complete for eligible applicants who apply through an Ontario Works office.

# The Special Payment Cont.

The amendment will affect all applicants granted on or after May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2006, and those applicants granted before May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2006 who may have been adversely impacted by the 4 month rule.

Some clients have already received a special payment, and it is anticipated that all eligible clients will receive payment within the next few months.

# The Special Payment Cont.

The City of Toronto Hostel Services and ODSP are looking at ways of matching hostel clients with housing help workers to support clients when Special Payment cheques are issued, as asset rules may apply 6 months after the payment is received.

**\*REMEMBER!**

- 1) THE EXEMPT ASSET SLIDE (Slide 12)
- 2) A client may connect with his/her Customer Service Representative to discuss their individual circumstance.

# RAPID REINSTATEMENT

# Rapid Reinstatement ....

	Scenario	Rapid Reinstatement Rules
Previously FBA Grandparented Recipients	Former recipient exits ODSP for employment	✓ Eligible (no time limit)
	Former recipient exits ODSP for any reason other than employment.	✗ Not eligible – must be adjudicated
Previously ODSP Adjudicated Recipients	Former recipient who did not have a review date	✓ Eligible – regardless of reason for exit or time off ODSP
	Former recipient who had a review date who exits ODSP <b>before</b> review date has passed. 1. reapplies before review date 2. reapplies after review date has passed	✓ Eligible <b>1. Review to occur on the date initially set</b> <b>2. Review to occur at later date as determined by Director</b>
	Former recipient who had a review date who exits ODSP <b>after</b> review date has passed but where review did not occur	✓ Eligible– Review to occur at later date <b>as determined by Director</b>
	✓ Must be financially eligible ✗ <b>Individuals are not eligible for Rapid Reinstatement. To receive ODSP income support, individuals must be financially eligible AND have their disability adjudicated by the Disability Adjudication Unit (DAU).</b>	

# For more information

- Visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services website:

[www.cfcs.gov.on.ca](http://www.cfcs.gov.on.ca)

OR

- Call your local ODSP office

# QUESTIONS???

