

Information About

Ontario Works



Community and Health Services Department
Social Services Branch

What is Ontario Works?

Ontario Works helps people find jobs, develop skills, and access other supports as needed.

Ontario Works provides monthly financial assistance to those who qualify. Financial assistance includes a monthly payment to cover food and shelter costs, and other benefits.

If you qualify, the amount you may receive will depend on things like your:

- ✓ Family size
- ✓ Shelter costs
- ✓ Income

To be eligible for Ontario Works you must:

- ✓ Live in York Region
- ✓ Have assets and income within Ontario Works limits and meet other eligibility requirements
- ✓ Be willing to participate in Ontario Works employment activities

Employment Activities

We'll help you develop a return-to-work plan. This plan is designed to help you get back to work, and it will be updated as you move towards finding a job.

There are many ways to participate in Ontario Works including:

- ✓ Job searching
- ✓ Workshops
- ✓ Paid employment
- ✓ Volunteering
- ✓ School or training

Employment Resource Centres

Employment Resource Centres are located in each Ontario Works office. Many of the tools needed to look for work, such as computers, Internet, fax machines, and photocopiers are free for Ontario Works participants to use.

Participating in Employment Activities

Most Ontario Works participants are required to participate in employment activities.

You may not have to participate if you:

- ✓ have a disability that prevents you from working
- ✓ are over age 65
- ✓ are a single parent with non-school-age children

Ontario Works Benefits

Drug Card

Monthly coverage for approved prescription drugs

Dental Care

Basic dental care for children and adults

Vision Care

Glasses for children and adults

Special Diet Allowance

Money to help pay for a special diet for specific medical conditions

Employment Start-Up Benefits

Help with expenses related to new employment

Community Start-Up Benefits

Money to help with costs related to moving to a new residence or maintaining a current residence

Other Assistance

Money to help pay for medical supplies, transportation, supports for people with disabilities (such as, wheelchair repair), etc.

How to Apply

CALL 1-888-256-1112

A staff member will ask you some questions and your answers will help determine if you may be eligible. The call will take from 30 to 60 minutes.

Before calling, gather the following information about yourself and all your family members:

- ✓ Date of birth
- ✓ Social Insurance Number (SIN)
- ✓ Health Card number
- ✓ Immigration number/sponsorship information/date of landing, if applicable
- ✓ Full address, including postal code
- ✓ Cost of rent or mortgage
- ✓ Landlord's name and address
- ✓ Cost of utilities (gas, hydro, water)
- ✓ Bank account information
- ✓ Address history for the past 12 months
- ✓ Employment history for the past 24 months
- ✓ Any sources of income
- ✓ Assets (vehicle, RRSPs, etc.)

If you seem to be eligible, the staff member will schedule an appointment at your local office and tell you which documents you must bring to the interview. During your office interview, a staff member will review your documents and complete your application for Ontario Works.

Accessing Your Information

The Interactive Voice Response (IVR) telephone system is a convenient way for you to get specific and confidential information about your assistance and general information about Ontario Works programs during and outside regular business hours.

If you call the IVR number at **1-800-808-2268**, you can access:

- ✓ Personal case information
- ✓ Most recent cheque details (date issued and amount)
- ✓ Recent cheque history (payments within the last 45 days)
- ✓ Information on overpayment deductions
- ✓ Case status, such as “ongoing,” “suspended” or “closed”

Within two to three weeks of your first monthly payment, you will receive your Member ID number and Personal Identification Number (PIN) in the mail. You will need these numbers to access the IVR system.



Contacting Your Worker

Contact your case worker if:

- ✓ You have found a paid job or a volunteer position
- ✓ There are changes to your living arrangements such as:
 - Moving or moved to a new address
 - Someone has moved into or out of your home
 - A rent increase or decrease
- ✓ You will be absent from Ontario
- ✓ You have a new person who is dependent on you (e.g. child, elderly parent, or person with a disability)
- ✓ If there are any changes to your income (such as, employment insurance, child or spousal support) or any new assets (such as, a new bank account, car or house)



When You Find Employment

If you are working more than 30 hours per week, you may be eligible for a one-time benefit of up to \$500 to help with the cost of starting your new job, such as the cost of uniforms, safety equipment, tools, etc.

Even if you no longer qualify for assistance due to your income, you may still be eligible for up to \$500 in employment supports.

When you leave Ontario Works because of your earnings from a job, you may still be eligible to receive some benefits for up to six months.

Benefits could include:

- ✓ Prescription drugs (drug card)
- ✓ Dental and vision care
- ✓ Child care costs



How to Appeal a Decision

If you disagree with a decision that affects your assistance, you can appeal the decision.

If you wish to appeal, you'll need to send a written request for an Internal Review.

If you disagree with the Internal Review decision, you can then appeal to the Social Benefits Tribunal.

The Social Benefits Tribunal will review the decision made by Ontario Works in accordance with the legislation and provide you with a written decision. The Social Benefits Tribunal is an independent organization separate from Ontario Works and The Regional Municipality of York.



Other Services

LEAP

Our Learning, Earning and Parenting (LEAP) program helps young parents to gain their high school diploma and also provides:

- ✓ Free child care while the parent is in school
- ✓ Money for school supplies, clothes, and class trips
- ✓ Funding for transportation to and from child care and school
- ✓ Access to employment resources
- ✓ Parenting and child development information and activities

Child, Spousal and Sponsor Support

If you become an Ontario Works participant you must pursue any support owed to you (except in certain situations, such as cases of documented violence/abuse). This includes pursuing child support, spousal support, and if you are a sponsored immigrant, support from your sponsor.

We will help you explore options, pursue support payments, and build your path to financial independence.

Additional programs and services offered:

- ✓ Child Care Fee Assistance
- ✓ Programs for Children with Special Needs
- ✓ Domiciliary Hostels
- ✓ Emergency Shelters
- ✓ Homemakers and Nurses Services
- ✓ Parenting and Children's Programs
- ✓ Recreational Programs and Summer Camp
- ✓ Social Housing in York Region
- ✓ Transition Homes

For more information on all of our programs and services:

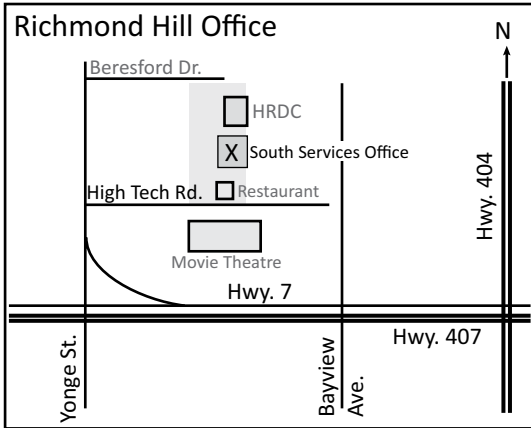
1-888-256-1112

TTY 905 762-0401

www.york.ca



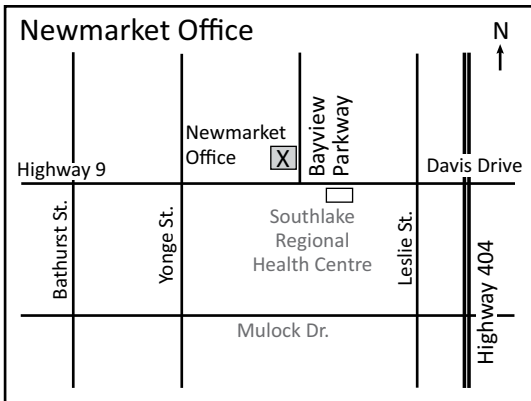
Office Locations



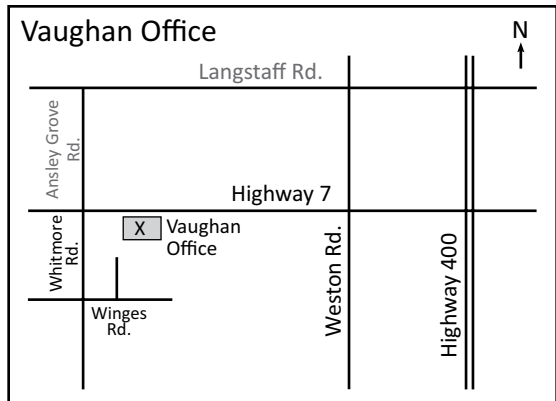
Richmond Hill Office
 50 High Tech Road, 3rd Floor
 Richmond Hill
 905 762-2095 or 1-888-256-1112



Georgina Office
 24262 Woodbine Avenue
 Keswick
 905 989-1883 or 1-888-256-1112



Newmarket Office
 62 Bayview Parkway
 Newmarket
 905 895-5166 or 1-888-256-1112



Vaughan Office
 BDC Building
 3901 Highway 7, Suite 501
 Woodbridge
 905 850-3490 or 1-888-256-1112

www.york.ca

For more information on
Community and Health Services,
call the Contact Centre at:

1-888-256-1112

TTY 905 762-0401

For information on hundreds
of community-based agencies,
services and related government
offices, go to *YorkLink* - York
Region's online community
services directory. Click on the
YorkLink icon at **www.york.ca**

