Applying for Ontario Works in York Region
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, including a monthly payment to cover food and shelter costs, and other benefits.

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 or other approved non-employment activities

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

✓ Family size
✓ Shelter costs
✓ Income

How to Apply

CALL 1-888-256-1112
TTY: 905-895-4293

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

Before calling, make sure you have 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 meet eligibility criteria, we will contact you to schedule an in-person meeting and tell you which documents you must bring to the interview. During your interview, a caseworker will review your documents and complete your application for Ontario Works.
Employment

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

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

Employment activities include:

✓ 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.

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
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

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

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 change in rent or utility cost

✓ 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).

How to Appeal a Decision

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

If you wish to appeal, you will 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 complete 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

Family Support Program

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.

York Region has Family Support Workers to help those receiving Ontario Works assistance pursue child and spousal support payments.

A Family Support Worker can help you:

✓ Provide referrals to community agencies such as legal aid
✓ Complete court forms for child and spousal support applications
✓ Review agreements already in place
✓ Locate absent parents
✓ Negotiate out of court support agreements

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
Frequently Asked Questions

What happens if I am not eligible?
If you are not eligible, you can request an internal review of the decision. Your caseworker will give you information about other community services, such as child care fee assistance or subsidized housing.

What should I do if I can’t attend my interview?
If you can’t attend your interview, please call 1-888-256-1112 at least 24 hours before your appointment to reschedule.

What if I don’t have a phone?
If you don’t have a phone, please bring the information noted on the inside of this brochure to your local Ontario Works office. You can then use the telephone in the office to apply for assistance.

What if I don’t speak English?
If you don’t speak English you can have a friend, relative, or community agency interpret for you during your application. If needed, your local Ontario Works office can arrange for an interpreter at no cost to you.
York Region
Ontario Works

To apply call
1-888-256-1112
TTY: 905-895-4293

Or apply online at
www.ontario.ca/socialassistance

Ontario Works offices are conveniently located throughout York Region

Richmond Hill
50 High Tech Road, 3rd Floor
Richmond Hill, Ontario

Newmarket
62 Bayview Parkway
Newmarket, Ontario

Georgina
24262 Woodbine Avenue
Keswick, Ontario

Vaughan
9060 Jane Street
Vaughan, Ontario
York Region
Ontario Works

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