

How to access services and helpful tips to help you get the most out of the application package

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Questions and Answers Summary

DSO and available services

1. What types of services does the DSO connect individuals to?

Answer: Depending on an individual's needs, DSO may connect individuals to the following services:

- specialized supports,
- Passport program,
- housing supports,
- community participation supports, and
- caregiver respite supports.

These services differ across the province so individuals should call their area DSO to see what services are available near them. For information on connecting with an area DSO or more information on available services, please visit our dsontario.ca/resources page.

2. Can individuals apply to get Passport funding on their own?

Answer: No. Individuals must apply through their area DSO first to see if they are eligible. Once they are eligible they will receive a letter from their DSO confirming their eligibility. DSO will then forward the individual's request for Passport funding to their local Passport agency.

3. How do individuals get more information about PassportOne?

Answer: They should contact their Passport agency for information about the new PassportOne reimbursement process. If they do not know how to contact their Passport agency they can call or email their area DSO for that information.

4. Are Passport funds taxable?

Passport Funding is not income based and is therefore not taxable for the Passport recipient. For any specific tax/income questions, please contact the Canada Revenue Agency.

5. Does the DSO know if there a time frame for when someone might get their initial \$5,000 in Passport funding?

Answer: No. DSO refers eligible individuals to the Passport agency in their area. The Passport agency is responsible for all other communication. Individuals will be contacted by their local Passport agency when they are eligible to receive funding.

6. After completing the application package, and being referred to a Passport agency, how long does it take to actually get the funding?

Answer: The DSO does not manage the wait times for funding allocation. You will be contacted by your local Passport agency when you are eligible to receive funding.

7. How is the level/amount of Passport funding determined?

Answer: Funding amounts are based on your unique needs and circumstances, which our outlined in your application package. The amount of funding you are eligible for is determined through a ministry-mandated process.

8. Can I get separate funding for respite outside of Passport funding?

Answer: Yes. You can use some of your passport funding for respite. In some areas there may be additional ministry-funded respite support available to caregivers.

For more information on available services near you, please visit our dsontario.ca/resources page or contact your area DSO.

9. How much do services cost?

Answer: Costs vary across the province. For individuals looking for fee-for-service options (which are not funded by Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services), you must speak to the organization providing the service to see how much they charge.

10. Do individuals receive services as soon as they are eligible?

Answer: No. Although they can be eligible for services at age 16, they can not receive services until they are an adult at age 18. Applying early helps DSO staff understand an individuals support needs so that connections to services can be made.

11. How do I find a group home?

Answer: Once you are found eligible through DSO, you can request to be placed on a service registry, for ministry-funded residential services such as group living, supported independent living, and the host family program. If you are looking for ministry-funded housing support, you must apply through the DSO to see if you are eligible, and complete the application process to see if you can access services such as a group home.

Housing navigators are now available across the province through DSO. These roles have been established to assist in connecting you to people in your region who have been successful in creating non ministry-funded housing supports.

For more information on available housing services near you, or DSO housing navigator, please visit our dsontario.ca/resources page or contact your area DSO.

12. Do my Special Services at Home (SSAH) automatically transition to adult services?

Answer: No. Once the individual turns 18 years old, their children's services, such as SSAH end. They must apply through Developmental Services Ontario to see if they are eligible to access ministry-funded services.

For more information on transitioning, please visit our dsontario.ca/resources page.

13. How do individuals contact the DSO?

Answer: There are 9 DSO agencies across Ontario with different contact information. Calling 2-1-1, or visiting dsontario.ca and using the postal code search feature is the easiest way to connect with your area DSO. Visit dsontario.ca/agencies page for more information. You can also refer to our dsontario.ca/resources page to find your area DSO's contact information.

14. Can I apply on behalf of someone else?

Answer: Yes, but you must get their consent in order to do so.

15. If I'm on Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and a senior collecting Old Age Security (OAS) can I apply?

Answer: Yes. You must meet the eligibility criteria and complete the application process to access services.

16. I can't get through to my area DSO, who do I contact?

Answer: If you're having trouble connecting with someone at your area DSO, please fill out your area DSO's online contact us form or connect with us on Facebook.

Eligibility

17. How do you determine if someone is eligible to access services?

Answer: When applying for services, the individual must prove that they have a developmental disability, live in Ontario and are 18 years old.

To understand the types of documents that are required to prove this, please review [the application process](#) link on our dsontario.ca/resources page.

18. What is a psychological assessment?

Answer: The psychological assessment would have been completed by a psychologist or psychological associate. It contains information on an individual's cognitive functioning (how they reason), adaptive information (how they apply skills in everyday life), and age of onset (if their disability occurred before 18 and if it will continue for all of their life).

Please review [the application process](#) link on our dsontario.ca/resources page for a more information.

19. Can an individual with intellectual disability apply for developmental services?

Answer: Yes. To be confirmed eligible they must prove that they have a developmental disability, that they are over 18 years old, and live in Ontario.

Please review [the application process](#) link on our dsontario.ca/resources page for a more information.

20. Does the psychological assessment have a shelf life?

Answer: No. The assessment does not expire.

21. Where do you get a psychological assessment?

Answer: Many individuals would have completed a psychological assessment when they were in grade school. They may also have completed one if they were receiving other developmental services as a child. If they don't have one, please have them contact their area DSO so that they can review options with them.

22. Who created the eligibility criteria?

Answer: The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, developed the eligibility criteria based on consultation with professionals with expertise in this area. The DSO makes sure that individuals meet the criteria in order to access ministry-funded adult developmental services.

23. What happens if I am not eligible for services?

Answer: If you are not eligible, you will have the option to request a review of the decision. DSO will make every effort to provide you with information to assist you in finding other resources. You can also appeal the decision or reapply if you have new information. Your area DSO can help you through that process.

24. Can I apply again, if I was not eligible for services the first time?

Answer: Yes. You can reapply if you have new information that would prove that you have a developmental disability, are 18 years old, and live in Ontario.

Application Process

25. When should individuals start the application?

Answer: Individuals should connect with the DSO at age 16, to ensure that they have the information required to be eligible for services and to begin the application process. This ensures that connection to services can begin when they turn 18.

26. What is the application package? How long does it take to complete?

Answer: The application package is made up of 2 parts, the Application for Developmental Services and Supports (ADSS) and Supports Intensity Scale (SIS). The application package is completed with a DSO staff person.

The information that is collected by completing the application package helps your area DSO understand the type of support the person needs to be successful. It can take up to 2 to 3 hours to complete each meeting; depending on an individual's participation and discussion.

Please review [the application process](#) link on our dsontario.ca/resources page for a more information.

27. What kind of questions do you ask individuals in the ADSS and SIS?

Answer: The ADSS will ask questions to get to know the person, such as form of communication, current living situation, service requests, as well as likes/dislikes, gifts, talents, and what they would describe as a bad or good day for them.

The SIS contains questions about the type of support a person requires to be successful in home and community living, employment, and social settings, as well as, any exceptional medical and behavioural needs.

28. Can I complete the application form online or in the mail?

Answer: No. It must be completed by a qualified DSO staff person.

29. What happens after someone completes the application package?

Answer: The information is submitted into the provincial database. The application package is also used to assist in linking people to funded services, when available. Individuals will receive a copy of their application package for their records.

30. Can someone be on the service registry without completing the SIS?

Answer: We suggest that you connect with your local DSO to find out your status on the service registries. We would recommend completing the SIS so that other support needs can be identified for the individual.

31. What happens to individuals who were grandfathered in service prior to the start of DSO in 2011, are they still eligible for service? Do they have to prove this by showing they were in service with an agency then?

Answer: Yes. Anyone who was receiving supports or was on a wait list for support prior to the start of DSO is eligible for service. DSO will need to confirm this information prior to making any referrals or adding people to service registries.

Wait times

32. How long does it take to get services? Is there a wait time?

Answer: DSO can not confirm when the individual will receive services. Because the types of services and demand for services differ across the province, wait times also vary. It is important to keep the DSO updated on your current situation as this can impact wait times for services.

33. What is a service registry? Isn't it the same as a wait list?

Answer: When services are not immediately available, individuals are placed on a service registry. A service registry is not necessarily the same as a wait list. Individuals are prioritized based on their unique needs and circumstances and the services that they require and are available in their area. A wait list is based on the length of time you've been waiting for a service.

34. What needs are seen as higher priority?

Answer: Each situation is unique and therefore it is important to keep your local DSO updated around any change in your current status. Some examples of situations that may be considered high priority include, but aren't limited to: changes in a caregiver's ability to provide care, if the person is at risk of losing their housing/residence, or instances where a person's well-being is at risk.

Update your DSO

35. What type of information should you update your area DSO on?

Answer: Some types of information you should tell your DSO include changes in caregiver health that may impact their ability to care for the person, a change in the person's support needs—for example, a slip or fall may make someone immobile for a period of time—a change of address or contact information.

We recommend individuals contact their area DSO once a year, in the month of the applicant's birthday, to update their file even if their circumstances have not changed.

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