



Keep Calm, Keep up to Date, and Keep in Touch

ODSP, Passport and SSAH Funding Enhancements:

You may be temporarily eligible to expense

- Sensory Items
- Laptops and Tablets
- Netflix and Disney+
- Sport Equipment
- Cleaning Supplies
- Service Delivery Fees
- Development of behavioral support plans
- Early Payments

In keeping with the Bright Futures Ability Network and Special Needs Planning Group's desire to help our friends and clients keep up to date with supports available to them, we are issuing this special update. There have been two significant announcements that may impact people with disabilities and their families.

The **first announcement** relates to how the Ontario Disability Support Program deals with the Federal Government's CERB payments. The Federal Government is providing \$2000 per month to eligible people who have lost their employment due to the COVID-19 crisis. If an eligible person is also receiving ODSP benefits then the \$2000 CERB payment will be treated as being employment income. This means that the first \$200 will not impact the ODSP but 50% of the excess will be de-

ducted from the benefit amount. If their benefit is reduced to \$0.00, they will NOT lose their drug and dental benefits. This is good news for people who have lost their employment but don't forget that the \$2000 is considered to be taxable income and there may be tax implications in the future.

The **second announcement** relates to Passport and Special Services at Home (SSAH) Funding. The rules relating to eligible expenses are temporarily in both programs is being expanded.

Full details of these changes can be found on at the following link:

[Passport Funding Link](#)

[SSAH Funding Link](#)

The changes for both programs can be summarized to include the following expendi-

tures as now being eligible for funding:

1. **Sensory Items** e.g. multi-sensory related products and technologies.

2. **Technology** – for safety, connectivity and engagement while at home, including in virtual and online learning and skill development activities: e.g

- ⇒ Laptops and tablets;
- ⇒ Online educational and e-learning activities and resources;
- ⇒ Videogames and videogame systems;
- ⇒ Webcams and microphones;
- ⇒ Media service subscriptions and platforms (e.g. Netflix, Xbox Live, Disney+);
- ⇒ E-readers (e.g. Kindle or Kobo);
- ⇒ Remote monitoring devices and medical alert services and devices (e.g. to support people living in SIL or independently).

*Life is not
about
waiting for
the storms
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learning
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3. Home-based recreation and fitness activities: - that would otherwise be accessed through day programs, school and other community-based programs: e.g.

- ⇒ Arts and craft supplies;
- ⇒ Hobby supplies;
- ⇒ Puzzles and games;
- ⇒ Books for leisure/learning.
- ⇒ Indoor items and equipment (e.g. skipping rope, yoga mat, resistance bands);
- ⇒ fitness/sport equipment and supplies that may be used on the individual's property (e.g. basketball net, trampoline, frisbee, badminton set)

4. Personal Protective Equipment and Supplies, When Available

- ⇒ Gloves;
- ⇒ Masks;
- ⇒ Gowns;
- ⇒ Cleaning supplies (disinfectant wipes, sprays, and hand sanitizer);
- ⇒ Where required, goggles and face shields.

5. Essential Service Delivery Fees

- ⇒ service delivery fees for essential items such as groceries and medication.

6. Behavioral Support Plans and Related Interventions

- ⇒ Development of behavioural support plans and recommended interventions (delivered in person or remotely / virtually) and/or support strategies to reduce challenging behaviours or potential crisis situations intended to assist families to more safely support their family member at home.

Please review the details found on the links above before assuming that your expenditures will qualify for Passport or SSAH reimbursement.

All other inadmissible expenditures outlined in the program outlines remain in effect.

Payments in Advance:

To make it easier for people who receive this funding to take advantage of these changes, the Government will be giving 25 per cent of the funding for this year in advance. You should save all receipts, invoices and supporting documents with proof of payment for these expenses. In response to the challenges arising from the COVID-19 outbreak, they are also waiving the deadline to file your claims

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