

Income Support

Income Support is part of Alberta Works, which helps unemployed people find and keep jobs, helps people cover their basic costs of living and helps employers meet their need for skilled workers.

The Income Support program helps people who do not have the resources to meet basic needs like food, clothing and shelter.

The level of assistance depends on each individual's situation including financial resources, ability to work and the number of children in the family.

Supplementary benefits provide additional money for particular needs such as health needs, costs related to looking for a job, and the special needs of children or special housing needs.

People in three general situations may qualify for Income Support:

- **Not Expected-to-Work (NETW)** – people who have difficulty working because of a chronic mental or physical health problem or because of multiple barriers to employment
- **Expected-to-Work (ETW)** – people who are looking for work, working or unable to work in the short-term
- **Learners** – people who need academic upgrading or training so they can get a job

The cost of tuition, books and supplies is covered for eligible learners.

Some people may qualify for ongoing benefits; others may qualify for one-time assistance to meet a short-term need, such as utility arrears.

People who are eligible for Income Support also receive a health benefits card, unless they receive coverage through the federal government.

The health benefits card provides premium-free Alberta Health Care Insurance and coverage for prescription drugs, optical care, dental care, emergency ambulance services, and essential diabetic supplies.

Income Support offers people a hand up to employment by helping with employment and training-related expenses such as childcare and work clothing.

People can also work while receiving Income Support. This increases their total income and provides valuable work experience. When people receive ongoing benefits, only a portion of their employment earnings is deducted when their benefits are calculated. This is called an earnings exemption. The amount of the earnings exemption depends on family type.

In some circumstances, people who leave Income Support can continue receiving health benefits through the Alberta Adult Health Benefit. Children living in low-income families are eligible for health benefits through the Alberta Child Health Benefit.

For more information:

Click: www.gov.ab.ca/hre/isp

Call: Alberta Works Income Support Contact Centre

Toll free: 1-866-644-5135

Edmonton area: (780) 644-5135

E-mail: iscc@gov.ab.ca