



Saskatchewan Rental Housing Supplement (SRHS) Paper Application Guide

INTRODUCTION

The Saskatchewan Rental Housing Supplement (SRHS) helps low-income families and individuals with physical and cognitive disabilities to obtain accessible, quality and affordable rental housing. The supplement helps with some of the additional cost that people with disabilities have for disability related housing supports.

To apply for the Saskatchewan Rental Housing Supplement by telephone, please contact the Building Independence Contact Centre at 787-4723 (in Regina) or 1-888-488-6385 (toll free). TTY service is available by calling 787-1090 (in Regina) and 1-800-683-9052 (toll free). Hours of operation are Monday to Friday from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm and Saturday and Sunday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. We are not open on statutory holidays.

This guide has been created to assist with the completion of the paper application form. Paper applications are available at your local Community Resources office, through the Contact Centre or on the Department web site: www.dcre.gov.sk.ca.

APPLICATION FORM GUIDE:

Page1:

Full Name, Birthdate and Saskatchewan Health Services

Numbers: This information is required for yourself, your spouse (if applicable) and all children 18 and under in your family.

Note: When you apply and sign the declaration attached to the application, you are giving consent for Community Resources to use

your Saskatchewan Health Services Number to confirm the size of your family and that you live in Saskatchewan.

Social Insurance Number (SIN): SIN numbers are only required for you and your spouse. You must have a Social Insurance Number to be eligible for the supplement.

Does your income fluctuate or change from month to month?: If you answer “yes” to this question, you should be reporting income changes for you and your spouse (if applicable) each month.

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Password: To ensure your account is kept confidential we require you to use a password when dealing with our staff over the telephone. You should not share your password with anyone.

Hint: Pick a password that is easy to remember for example a pet’s name or your mother’s maiden name.

Home phone number and address: This information is required so we are able to contact you if we have any questions about your application or updates regarding your account.

Mailing address: This section needs to be completed if you receive your mail at a different address than where you live.

Optional contact person: Only complete this section if you would like us to notify a person or agency who helps you with paperwork, that we have sent mail to your address.

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Disability Self-Assessment Questions: No medical forms are required. The Disability Rental Housing Supplement is a self-declaring program. You must answer yes to both questions to be eligible for the program. The names of those individuals in your family who have a disability must be provided.

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Housing Supports In Your Current Housing Environment: We ask four questions to determine the nature of the supports to assist with disability related housing needs. These questions help us determine if the supports relate to accessibility, built in features or location related disability needs.

A number of examples are provided on the application form to help you identify those features in your home that assist you or a family member with a disability. This is not a complete list and space has been provided for you to add other types of features that may not be listed.

Note: Portable aids or devices such as portable tub seats or lifts, hospital beds, TTY phones, and other aids or devices that are not built in or fixed modifications or features in your home are not eligible as part of the program. Please call the Building Independence Contact Centre if you have any questions that relate to a support not identified on the paper application.

Reference Person/Agency: If you or a member of your family indicates you have a location related disability support, we ask that you provide us with the name of a reference person or agency who is familiar with your or your family member's disability. This person or agency would only be contacted if your account was selected for a home inspection or review. The reference person would be asked to confirm that this support is required as a result of your disability.

Remember: You only need one reference on the application form.

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Information About Your Home: In order to calculate your benefit, it is essential for us to know how much rent you pay each month, whether your rent amount includes heating and the number of people residing in your home.

Pages 6-7:

Health and Safety Self-Assessment: In order to receive a benefit your home must meet minimum health and safety requirements.

If your answers indicate that your home does not meet these minimum standards, you will not be eligible for the supplement. Applicants have the option to move to a different home that meets the health and safety requirements of the program or request their landlord make required repairs/modifications. In cases where the applicant has their landlord make repairs, an inspection of the property may be required. Property inspections only relate to the health and safety of the rental property for the purposes of program eligibility.

Did You Know: The Saskatchewan Housing Corporation (SHC) has programs available to help landlords make improvements to their properties for health and safety reasons and to make modifications for people with disabilities. For more information on the repair and home modification programs, call the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation at 787-4177 or 1-800-667-7567 (toll free).

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Income:

Do you currently receive benefits from the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan or the Transitional Employment Allowance (TEA)?: You must answer this question, as it has an effect on how your benefit is calculated.

Employment Income: Whenever you report income, you must report the GROSS amount. This is the amount calculated before deductions (such as Income Tax, Employment Insurance or Canada Pension contributions) are subtracted. You and your spouse's (if applicable) previous month's income is used to calculate your current month's benefit. You should be reporting each month if you and/or your spouse's income fluctuates or changes.

Pages 7-8:

Self-employment and Farming Income: If you have been farming or self-employed for more than 12 months, you must report your gross income from your prior year's Income Tax Return. This amount will be averaged over 12 months. If you have not been farming or self-employed for 12 months, you report your previous month's gross income until you complete your next income tax return. A percentage (25% or 40%) of your farming or self-employment income will be considered expense, whichever is more beneficial to your benefit calculation.

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Consent/Declaration: The supplement program relies on the Saskatchewan Health records system to keep your file information up to date. We require your consent to allow Community Resources to use your Saskatchewan Health Services Number to confirm the size of your family and that you live in Saskatchewan.

Remember: Please sign and date the application form before sending it in. Also have your spouse sign and date the application (if applicable).

AFTER MY APPLICATION IS RECEIVED

Once your completed application is received, a Client Service Specialist will enter the information on your account. Your eligibility starts on the date your application is received in our office.

If information is missing: We will attempt to contact you by telephone. If this is not possible, we will contact you by mail. Notification of the mailing will be sent to your contact person, if you indicate you have one.

After your application is processed: You will receive a Confirmation of Eligibility form. You must answer the four questions on the front of the form, sign two consent lines and complete direct deposit banking information. For direct deposit banking information you can choose to attach a void

personalized cheque or take the form to your bank and have them complete the required information. Once this has been done and you have completed all other parts of the form please return it to us in the postage-paid envelope provided.

If you do not have a bank account, you can write to the Program Manager requesting that your benefits be issued by cheque. Please be sure to state why you are unable to open a bank account.

The supplement is deposited directly into your bank account on the last working day of each month. It is not paid directly to your landlord

My Responsibilities

In order to confirm that your home meets minimum health and safety standards and provides for your required disability support needs, you may be selected for a random home inspection or financial review.

As part of your application, you must agree to allow an inspector to verify that health and safety standards are met and that disability supports are in place. If you are declaring a disability requiring an environmental or location related support you will be required to have a reference person or agency confirm your disability support need in writing.

If you are selected for a financial review, you will be required to submit verification of income sources, rental amounts and family composition.

REPORTING CHANGES

Income: If you or your spouse's (if applicable) income changes from month to month, you must call or write in each month to advise of the income change. Previous month's income is used to calculate your current month's benefit. We ask that you have income changes for the previous month reported to us by the 20th of the current month.

Address or family size: Please report these changes to Saskatchewan Health at 787-3251 or 1-800-667-7551 (toll free). We will receive this

updated information two to three business days after you report it to Saskatchewan Health. We then require that you contact us to advise of your new rental arrangements, including how much you pay for rent, whether heat is included and to review minimum health and safety questions.

Bank account: You must call or write the Contact Centre to request direct deposit banking change form and advise us of your new account information.

Other questions: If you have any other questions or require further assistance completing an application form please call the Contact Centre at 787-4723 or 1-888-488-6385 (toll free). TTY service is available by calling 787-1090 (in Regina) and 1-800-683-9052 (toll free).

Saskatchewan Rental Housing Supplement (SRHS)

Frequently Asked Questions – Disability Rental Housing Supplement

1. Who is eligible to apply for the SRHS?

In order to make application for the supplement the applicant must:

- be a Saskatchewan resident
- have a Saskatchewan Health Services card and Social Insurance number
- and either you or a member of your family has a disability that impacts the type of rental accommodation you choose to live in.

2. What type of disability supports qualify:

The SRHS supplement recognizes physical accessibility supports (ramps, elevators), built in modifications (alarms, lever handles on doors), home environment features (soundproofing, enhanced ventilation) and location related supports (close to services/neighbourhood features that support the disability housing related need).

3. Is a medical form required to verify my disability or the disability of a family member:

No medical forms are required. The SRHS is a self-declaring program.

4. How is SRHS eligibility determined:

SRHS eligibility is based on your rental property meeting minimum health and safety standards, as well as you and your spouse's (if applicable) previous month's gross monthly income, your family size, how much rent you pay, whether your rent includes heat, the location of your home and the type of supports in place relating to your disability.

5. How do I apply for the SRHS?

You can apply for the SRHS several ways. You can choose to fill out and mail in a paper application, apply by telephone or use a combination of both paper and telephone application methods.

Paper applications are available at your local Community Resources office or by contacting the Building Independence Call Centre at 1-888-488-6385 (toll free) or 787-4723 (in Regina). Press zero to immediately bypass the Automated Telephone System.

TTY service is available by calling 787-1090 (in Regina) and 1-800-683-9052 (toll free).

Hours of operation are Monday to Friday from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm and Saturday and Sunday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. We are not open on statutory holidays.

Many local community organizations have copies of the application form and may be able to assist you with making your application.

6. When does eligibility start?

Eligibility starts on the date your application is received in our office.

7. How is the SRHS paid?

The SRHS benefit is deposited directly into your bank account on the last working day of each month. You must have a bank account in your name or joint with your spouse, and fill out a direct deposit form.

The SRHS is not paid directly to your landlord.

8. How often do I have to report income?

If your income does not change from month to month, you must report quarterly (every three months). Quarterly report reminder letters are sent to your home and to your contact person if you have identified one on your application. If your income changes each month, you must report monthly. Income reports can be made in writing or by telephone.

9. How do I report changes in my personal situation, such as a marriage, move or change in dependents?

When you apply for the SRHS we ask for your permission to use your Saskatchewan Health Services number to automatically collect information about your address and family unit. As a result, changes to your address and family must be reported to Saskatchewan Health. You can contact Saskatchewan Health @ 1-800-266-0695 (toll free) or 787-3124 (in Regina).

We encourage you to contact the Building Independence Contact Centre two to three days after you report a change to Saskatchewan Health, if you would like to know how the change affects your SRHS benefit.

10. Does the SRHS program help me find rental housing?

When a property does not pass the minimum health and safety criteria the department tracks this information and will advise individuals applying for the supplement that an inspection is required before receiving the supplement.

11. Does the SRHS program provide me with moving money in order to relocate to a better quality and more suitable rental property?

No, moving allowances are not available through the SRHS program. If you are receiving social assistance, you may contact your worker about moving expenses.

12. If I am on assistance and currently receive an excess shelter allowance, how will the SRHS affect my assistance benefits?

Your excess shelter allowance will be reduced by the amount of the supplement you receive.

13. If I'm thinking of moving, can I be pre-approved for the SRHS?

At this time we cannot pre-approve applications. Please call the Contact Centre and one of our Client Service Specialists will help you complete a pre-assessment for any potential move. We will ask for the address of the rental property, the rental amount, whether heat is included in the rental amount, your family size, your family income and what disability supports exist.

14. Am I eligible for the SRHS if my rental accommodation includes personal care and meals?

No, individuals who reside in approved homes, personal care homes, special care homes, private service homes, residential service facilities, communal living arrangements or an arrangement which includes the provision of meals are not eligible.

15. How will the home inspections work?

Since one of the eligibility conditions of the rental housing supplement is meeting a minimum set of health and safety criteria, your file may be randomly selected for a home inspection. If selected, a home inspector will contact you to set up an appointment, at your convenience, to inspect and verify the health and safety conditions and/or recognized disability supports in your home.

A number of files will also be selected for a home inspection prior to the first payment of the supplement. Again, a home inspector will contact you to arrange an appointment to inspect and verify the health and safety conditions and/or recognized disability supports in your home. If selected for one of these pre-supplement home inspections, your supplement will be suspended until the home inspection is completed on your home.