

Ontario Disability Support Program - Income Support Directives

9.16 - Discretionary Benefit For Low-Cost Energy-Conservation Measures

Summary of Policy

With prior approval, a payment may be issued in an amount determined by the Director to assist a recipient in paying for low-cost energy-conservation measures to his/her principal residence.

Legislative Authority

[Section 45.2 of the ODSP Regulation](#)

Summary of Directive

A recipient may be issued a one-time payment of up to \$50 to assist with the payment of low-cost energy-conservation measures to his/her principal residence.

Intent of Policy

To assist a recipient with certain expenses associated with low-cost energy-conservation measures that have been approved in advance by the Director.

Application of Policy

Who Is Eligible

All recipients who own and reside in their principal residences are eligible for the Discretionary Benefit.

The benefit may also be issued to recipients who reside in a rental unit where it is clear that the landlord is not responsible for providing the items requested (i.e. fluorescent light bulbs).

What is covered

Examples of low-costs energy-conservation may include but are not limited to:

- caulking
- sealing or weatherstripping around doors and windows

- insulating hot water pipes and hot water tank
- insulating blanket for electric water heater
- flow restrictor in showerhead pipe
- low flow aerators for faucets
- fluorescent light bulbs
- clothes line/rack and clothes pins
- motion sensors for lighting

Recipients are to ensure that the items requested are not being offered free of charge by local utility companies or energy conservation and community agencies.

Payment

Payment may be issued only once to a benefit unit and may not exceed \$50.

Appeals

A decision to deny the Discretionary Benefit is not appealable to the Social Benefits Tribunal. However, if the recipient disagrees with the decision and requests an internal review, the internal review should be completed.

Conservation and Demand Management Programs Offered By Local Distribution Companies (LDCs)

In response to the government's commitment to create a conservation culture and reduce electricity consumption in the province, many of Ontario's LDCs have implemented energy-conservation initiatives such as installing smart meters, energy audits, retrofitting grants, fluorescent light bulb exchange, fridge buy-back, education and awareness.

Recipients should be encouraged to contact their individual LDC to determine what is being offered and eligibility requirements for these programs in order to assist with energy-conservation.

Note that the value of grants, items or services provided for the purposes of energy efficiency and conservation by gas distribution utilities, local distribution companies, a municipality, the Ontario Power Authority, the Government of Ontario or the Government of Canada are exempt from the treatment of income and assets.

Rebates for items that were paid for through the ODSP's Home Repairs Benefit are not included in this exemption. A rebate that reimburses the cost of home repairs supported through the ODSP Home Repairs Benefit should be considered a source of funding and should be considered monies owed to ODSP and reimbursed.

Rebates received from items and services that were purchased using a recipient's basic needs amount or from a recipient's exempt income or assets should not be treated as income for the purposes of ODSP. Reimbursement to ODSP in these circumstances is not required.

Hyperlinks Associated with this Policy Directive

Related Directives:

[5.1 Definition and Treatment of Income](#)

[9.3 Heating Costs](#)

[9.5 Utilities](#)

Bulletins

2004-09 ODSP Policy and Regulation Changes Effective December 2004

Memorandums

Financial Grants, Items and Services Received through Conservation and Demand management Programs offered by local distribution companies (LDCs) December 05, 2005

Information Regarding Energy Initiatives that are available to Social Assistance Recipients to assist with energy Costs December 21, 2005

Transition Directive

2009-01 O. Reg. 121/09 & 119/09 : Regulation to Amend O. Reg. 222/98 & 225/98

made under the *Ontario Disability Support Program Act, 1997* in respect of Housekeeping Regulation Amendments