

Discretionary Benefits Overview Procedure

Department:	Community Services	Effective Date: 2008-10-01
Division:	Social Services	Approval Level: Division
Section/Function:	Benefits	

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1. This procedure is in response to the City of Peterborough's Discretionary Benefits Policy. The purpose of this procedure is to provide direction and clarification to ensure that the Discretionary Benefits Policy is administered in a fair and consistent manner.

2.0 APPLICATION

- 2.1. This procedure applies to Social Services staff of the City of Peterborough, or any other individual or agency, who have responsibility for approving, providing, and/or processing discretionary benefits under the Discretionary Benefits Policy.
- 2.2. Discretionary Benefits are limited to persons in receipt of assistance under the Ontario Works Act, 1997 or the Ontario Disability Support Plan Act, 1997, unless stated otherwise under a particular discretionary benefit.

3.0 DEFINITIONS/ACROYNMS (As Required)

- 3.1. **Discretionary Benefits** – Means payments that Ontario Works Administrators have the discretion to approve on a case-by-case basis to recipients who meet the eligibility criteria for the particular benefit. Discretionary benefits may be health related benefits, non-health related benefits, or other special services, items or payments.
- 3.2. **Health Related Benefits** – Means one of the categories of discretionary benefits provided for under the Ontario Works Act, 1997. Examples include: dental care for adults, vision care for adults, prosthetic appliances, and funerals and burials.

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- 3.3. **Non-Health Related Benefits** – Means one of the categories of discretionary benefits provided for under the Ontario Works Act, 1997. Examples include: vocational training and retraining, travel and transportation that is not for health related purposes, and moving expenses.
- 3.4. **ODSP** – Means Ontario Disability Support Plan.
- 3.5. **OW** – Means Ontario Works.
- 3.6. **Ontario Works Administrators** – Means the position within the OW Delivery Agent's organization designated to meet the requirement of the legislation, usually the Social Services Division Head for the City of Peterborough.
- 3.7. **OW Delivery Agent** – Means an organization designated by the Minister to administer the Ontario Works Act, 1997, and provide assistance in that geographic area.

4.0 PROCEDURE

- 4.1. Discretionary benefits will be administered in accordance with Schedule A and the particular Procedure for each discretionary benefit under Section 5.0. Each discretionary benefit may have different eligibility criteria, processing requirements, notification processes, and methods of payments.
- 4.2. Clients will not be required to seek alternate funding sources before accessing discretionary benefits, except when required by provincial policy or legislation. Where the client is able to pay a portion, a discretionary benefit may be for a reduced amount.
- 4.3. When determining eligibility for ODSP clients for discretionary benefits, the value of their available assets will be considered according to the prescribed limits for assets under Section 38 of Regulation 134/98 of the Ontario Works Act, 1997.

5.0 APPENDIX, RELATED DOCUMENTS & LINKS

5.1. Pertinent Resources

Ontario Works Act, 1997

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_97o25a_e.htm

Report C555J55C08-012 - Ontario Works Discretionary Benefits Review

http://www.peterborough.ca/City_Hall/City_Council/2008-06-12_-_J55C_Meeting.htm?ViewMode=View&DateTime=633488823000000000&PageMode=View

5.2. Related Policies

Discretionary Benefits Policy

<http://www.peterborough.ca/Assets/Documents/Corporate+Policy/Community+Services/Social+Services/Discretionary+Benefits+Policy.pdf>

5.3. Related Procedures

N/A

5.4. Related Forms

N/A

5.5. Miscellaneous:

N/A

6.0 AMENDMENTS

Date (yyyy-mm-dd)	Section # Amended	Comment
2008-09-30	N/A	Procedure approved by Social Services Division Head.