



Social
ASSISTANCE

All about working and ODSP



What we're going to talk about

- Myths about working and ODSP
- Supports that can help you get ready to work
- How getting a job can increase your income
- How ODSP can support you while you're working
- How to report what you earn
- Working is your choice





The myths

Myth #1:

You're not allowed to work when you're on ODSP.

Fact:

- You can work and still receive ODSP.
- Your caseworker can:
 - connect you to services that will help you get ready for and find work and,
 - help you pay for start-up costs, like work clothes and child care.



The myths

Myth #2:

Your income support goes down when you start working, so it's not worth it.

Fact:

- People who work while on ODSP are **always** better off financially than those who don't.
- You can earn up to \$200 each month without affecting your ODSP income support. Every dollar you earn over \$200 only reduces your ODSP income support by 50 cents.

The myths

Myth #3:

You lose your health benefits if you leave ODSP for work.



Fact:

- If you do leave ODSP because of high earnings, you will continue to receive at least drug, dental and vision benefits from ODSP, unless your employer provides the same benefits.
- You can also receive \$500 to help you make the transition from ODSP to employment.



The myths

Myth #4:

**You can't
get back on
ODSP if you
lose your job.**

Fact:

- If you leave ODSP because of high earnings you can return to ODSP **quickly**.
- You will not have to go through the disability adjudication process again.
- You only have to qualify financially.



You can work while on ODSP

- 1) If you haven't already done so, speak to your caseworker about your interest in working.
- 2) We can help you develop a plan for finding work or becoming self-employed.
- 3) When you start working you must report your income and discuss your expenses with your caseworker.

Employment supports



Here are some examples of the kinds of services you can get through ODSP Employment Supports:

- help preparing for work
- help finding a job that is right for you, including starting a business
- help keeping a job
- job coaching
- on-the-job training
- help moving to the next level in your career

Employment supports

To address your disability-related needs, you can get help with the costs of:

- software and mobility devices that can help you do your job
- interpreter or intervenor services
- assistive devices and training to use them



Employment-related supports

- Your caseworker can also help you pay for the costs of:
 - looking for work, like a haircut or bus fare for a job interview
 - starting work, like safety shoes, work clothes or training, and
 - child care that you need to pay for in advance.
- Once you start working, you will receive \$100 for each month you earn money.



Getting a job increases your income

What happens once you get a job:



- Your total income increases
- You can deduct some of your work-related expenses from the money you earn
- You continue to receive health benefits if you leave ODSP



How earnings affect ODSP income support

- The first \$200 of your annual earnings won't affect your ODSP. After that, for every dollar you make your ODSP will be reduced by 50 cents.
- If you are in school full-time, your earnings will not affect your ODSP at all.

How earnings affect ODSP income support



Step 1 Calculate net earnings

	Gross earnings	\$1,000
minus	EI, CPP, income tax*	<u>\$50</u>
	Net earnings	\$950

*deduction is not exact

Step 2 Calculate earnings exemption

	Net earnings	\$950
minus	Flat rate exemption	<u>\$200</u>
		\$750
minus	50% exemption	<u>\$375</u>
	Deduction so far	\$375

Step 3 Add up expenses

	Licensed child care	\$0
plus	Unlicensed child care	\$0
plus	Disability-related work expenses	<u>\$0</u>
	Total expenses	\$0

Step 4 Calculate deduction

	Deduction so far	\$375
minus	Total expenses	<u>\$0</u>
	Deduction for earnings	\$375

Step 5 Calculate income support

	Original ODSP support	<u>\$1,110</u>
minus	Deduction for earnings	\$375
plus	Work-related benefit	<u>\$100</u>
	Total ODSP support	\$835

Step 6 Calculate total income

	Total ODSP support	\$835
plus	Net earnings	<u>\$950</u>
	Total income	<u>\$1,785</u>



Disability-related costs

- For every month you earn money, you can claim up to \$300 for disability-related work expenses, such as special equipment or special transportation.
- We deduct these costs from your earnings when we calculate your income support, so you keep more of your ODSP income support.

How disability costs affect ODSP income support



Step 1 Calculate net earnings

	Gross earnings	\$1,000
minus	EI, CPP, income tax*	<u>\$50</u>
	Net earnings	\$950

*deduction is not exact

Step 2 Calculate earnings exemption

	Net earnings	\$950
minus	Flat rate exemption	<u>\$200</u>
		\$750
minus	50% exemption	<u>\$375</u>
	Deduction so far	\$375

Step 3 Add up expenses

	Licensed child care	\$0
plus	Unlicensed child care	\$0
plus	Disability-related work expenses	<u>\$200</u>
	Total expenses	\$200

Step 4 Calculate deduction

	Deduction so far	\$375
minus	Total expenses	<u>\$200</u>
	Deduction for earnings	\$175

Step 5 Calculate income support

	Original ODSP support	<u>\$1,110</u>
minus	Deduction for earnings	\$175
plus	Work-related benefit	<u>\$100</u>
	Total ODSP support	\$1,035

Step 6 Calculate total income

	Total ODSP support	\$1,035
plus	Net earnings	<u>\$950</u>
	Total income	<u>\$1,985</u>

Child care costs

- For every month you earn money, you can claim money you paid for child care so you keep more of your ODSP income support.
- You can claim the full cost of licensed child care or before- and after-school programs as part of full-day kindergarten.
- You can also claim up to \$600 for each child for unlicensed child care.



How child care affects ODSP income support



Step 1 Calculate net earnings

	Gross earnings	\$2,000
minus	EI, CPP, income tax*	<u>\$300</u>
	Net earnings	\$1,700

*deduction is not exact

Step 2 Calculate earnings exemption

	Net earnings	\$1,700
minus	Flat rate exemption	<u>\$400</u>
		\$1,300
minus	50% exemption	<u>\$650</u>
	Deduction so far	\$650

Step 3 Add up expenses

	Licensed child care	
plus	Unlicensed child care	\$200
plus	Disability-related work expenses	\$0
	Total expenses	<u>\$200</u>

Step 4 Calculate deduction

	Deduction so far	\$650
minus	Total expenses	<u>\$200</u>
	Deduction for earnings	\$450

Step 5 Calculate income support

	Original ODSP support	<u>\$1,733</u>
minus	Deduction for earnings	\$450
plus	Work-related benefit	<u>\$200</u>
	Total ODSP support	\$1,483

Step 6 Calculate total income

	Total ODSP support	\$1,483
plus	Net earnings	<u>\$1,700</u>
	Total income	<u>\$3,183</u>



Starting a business

If you start a business, your income is calculated after you deduct your eligible business-related expenses.

Expenses you may claim:

- Supplies
- Tools and equipment
- Bookkeeping
- Legal fees
- Advertising
- Business cards
- Rent for your place of business

Expenses you may not claim:

- Rent for your home
- Wages for employees
- Gifts and entertainment
- Business losses
- Depreciation on business assets
- Conferences

Starting a business and ODSP



Step 1 Calculate net earnings

	Gross business income	\$1,000
minus	Eligible business expenses*	<u>\$100</u>
	Net business income	\$900

*actual expenses or \$100, whichever is greater

Step 2 Calculate earnings exemption

	Net business income	\$900
minus	Flat rate exemption	<u>\$200</u>
		\$700
minus	50% exemption	<u>\$350</u>
	Deduction so far	\$350

Step 3 Add up expenses

	Licensed child care	\$0
plus	Unlicensed child care	\$0
plus	Disability-related work expenses	\$0
	Total expenses	<u>\$0</u>

Step 4 Calculate deduction

	Deduction so far	\$350
minus	Total expenses	<u>\$0</u>
	Deduction for earnings	\$350

Step 5 Calculate income support

	Original ODSP support	<u>\$1,100</u>
minus	Deduction for earnings	\$350
plus	Work-related benefit	<u>\$100</u>
	Total ODSP support	\$850

Step 6 Calculate total income

	Total ODSP support	\$850
plus	Net earnings	<u>\$900</u>
	Total income	<u>\$1,750</u>

Working while in school



- If you are in school full time, any money you earn will not be deducted from ODSP income support. However, if you earn more than \$113 a week, OSAP will consider your earnings a resource when deciding how much OSAP you can receive.
- If you receive OSAP for education costs, local transportation and child care, there is no impact to your ODSP income support because these funds are exempt.
- In most cases, OSAP will assess ODSP recipients for education costs only. However, if you receive OSAP for living expenses, it is deducted dollar for dollar from ODSP income support.
- Check with your caseworker to see how OSAP rules affect you.



If you leave ODSP for work

- You will also continue to receive health benefits, including:
 - drug, dental and vision care
 - If you have high health costs, you may also qualify for medical supplies, medical transportation, and assistive devices.
- You can come back to ODSP **quickly** if you earn less or leave your job. You will not need to go through the disability adjudication process first.



Report your earnings

Here's how it works:

- 1) take your pay stubs from the first day of the month to the last day of the month
- 2) fill out the Employment/Training Income Report (ETIR) and get it to your local ODSP office by the 7th day of the next month
- 3) we will use this to calculate your ODSP income support at the end of the month



Report your earnings

Here's an example of how it works:

- 1) Report the earnings you receive between **April 1 and April 30**
- 2) fill out the Employment/Training Income Report (ETIR) and get it to your local ODSP office by **May 7**
- 3) we will use this to calculate your ODSP income support on **May 31**



Things to keep in mind

- There is a delay from when you earn your money until when we make deductions. This means it is really important that you save some of the money you earn - especially if you think your job may end soon.
- If you are working and reporting earnings, but do not earn anything for a month, you still have to fill out an Employment/Training Income Report.
- If you are self-employed, the rules are different. If you are interested in self-employment, your caseworker will explain how the rules work.



Benefits of Working

People with disabilities on ODSP do not have to take part in employment-related activities. But if you do work, you will:

- see your income increase
- continue to have health benefits, and
- experience the social benefits of working.

Need more information?



- Remember, your ODSP caseworker is available to answer any questions you have about working while on ODSP.
- Additional program information is available on the MCSS website at www.ontario.ca/socialassistance