



Ontario Works (OW)—Youth Under 18 Years Old

Eligibility

When you are under 18 years old, Ontario Works (OW) believes your parents should provide you with your shelter and personal needs. There are specific situations where they understand this is not possible and may provide financial assistance. They include:

- **It is unsafe for you to live at home:**
 - you need to tell your caseworker the reasons it is not safe for you to live at home, e.g., physical abuse, assault, drug use/addiction by a caregiver, etc.
 - you will need to provide a Third Party Letter of Support that confirms your reasons
 - this letter can come from a school social worker, counsellor, previous Children’s Aid worker, etc.
 - parent/child conflict is **not** considered a valid reason for you to live on your own.
- **Your parents have kicked you out of the house and refuse to provide for you:**
 - OW worker **may** call your parent(s) to confirm you are no longer allowed to live at home
 - if your parent(s) say you can move home if you follow certain rules, OW **will not** approve your application
 - if your parent(s) confirm you are not welcome at home under any circumstances, OW requires them to contribute money to your care

Important Information

- A single youth approved for OW will receive a maximum of **\$656** per month:
 - covers your rent as well as items such as groceries, personal hygiene products and clothing
 - a bus pass cost can be added for school or work
 - you can have up to \$2,500 in savings/assets and still be eligible for OW
 - if you have a part-time job, your earnings will not be deducted
- The **\$656** breaks down as follows—**\$376** is the maximum for rent and remaining **\$280** is for purchase of food and hygiene supplies.
- If your rent exceeds **\$376**, you must deduct the difference from your food and hygiene allowance. OW will not approve rent above **\$450** for a period longer than three months unless you have additional sources of income/support.
- When you are under 18, you should communicate what your housing choices will be as your living arrangements are subject to the Ontario Works Administrator’s approval.
- There is a fund available to assist with last month’s rent, moving costs and a mattress/box spring called the **Housing Stability Fund**. It can be accessed on a once-in-a-lifetime basis by contacting Halton Region at 905.825.6000. Press 0 and ask to apply for this assistance.
- Must agree to a participation plan. Youth under 18 **must be enrolled in school and attending full-time**.
- You cannot miss more than three classes per month or your OW money will be suspended.
- The application process is the same if you are in a Halton shelter; however, you will only receive basic needs until you find housing.
- If at any time you do not agree with a decision made by OW, you have the right to appeal it.



Online Application

A Bridging the Gap worker can assist you in this process if you need support

The website address to access the online Ontario Works application is <http://www.halton.ca/cms/One.aspx?portalId=8310&pageId=10114>

OW will call within two to four business days with a day and time for an interview.

In-Person Interview

- When you are under 18 years of age, you need to have a public trustee attend this meeting with you
 - Nelson Youth Centres acts as the public trustee for Halton
 - As soon as you have your interview date and time you **must** call a trustee to ensure they are available to attend the in-person interview with you
 - The number to reach a trustee is 905.977.8863
- At your local Ontario Works office, you will be assigned to a youth case worker
 - a Bridging the Gap worker can also attend this meeting if it makes you feel more comfortable
- They will ask questions about why you are not living at home (and need to see proof).
- If you are approved and have provided a rental agreement, the trustee will usually receive your first cheque within one to three business days.

List of Required Information

Information/Documents Needed	Check
Birth Certificate	
Social Insurance	
Health Card	
Third Party Letter of Support from a professional *must have this*	
Bank Account Information for past three months for each account you have	
Proof of School Registration/Attendance/Schedule *must have this*	
Rental Agreement (must be completed by the owner of the property not a renter in the property)	
Employment History for Past Year (Record Employment from Employers)	
Assets, e.g., money in savings, vehicles, RESPs, GICs, trust funds, joint bank accounts	



If You Are Approved

- You **must** attend school on a full-time basis. You **cannot** miss more than three classes (or provide a doctor's note) or you will be suspended from Ontario Works.
- You **must** report any earnings from employment (they will not be deducted) and attach the pay stub.
- You **must** keep all receipts for anything you buy that OW gave you additional money for (e.g. bus pass, furniture allowance, work boots, etc.)
- You **must** keep in touch with the trustee.

By the 16th of Each Month, You Will Need to Submit

- Completed Income Reporting Statement (income that you have earned)
- Paystubs
- Attendance record for the past month

If you do not submit this information, Ontario Works WILL suspend your payment