

**KENORA DISTRICT SERVICES BOARD
POLICY and PROCEDURE**

TITLE: INTAKE, ELIGIBILITY AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE – DISCRETIONARY BENEFITS	SECTION: ONTARIO WORKS
DATE: May 8, 2003	POLICY NO.: KDSB-OW-IV-09
APPROVED BY: Resolution No. 2003-38	REVISED: Resolution No. 2005-78 Resolution No. 2009-37

REFERENCES

OW Directives 7.1, 7.2.7.8,7.9

POLICY STATEMENT

The Kenora District Services Board provides Mandatory Benefits in accordance with the OW Act, Regulations and Directives.

The Kenora District Services Board also provides following Discretionary Benefits where authorized by the Director of Ontario Works (Ministry Director) in accordance with OW Directive 7.1. Discretionary Benefits may be issued **only to recipients of Ontario Works and ODSP** and are to be approved by an Ontario Works Manager. Requests will be denied if other sources of income or assets are available for the item/payment requested.

Decisions to deny Discretionary Benefits are not appealable.

The Kenora District Services Board will consider requests for the following Discretionary Benefits as listed on the SDMT Discretionary Benefits Admin List Page (see this page for most up-to-date benefits

Discretionary Benefit	Maximum Amount	Frequency per year
Prosthetic Appliances	\$1,000	One Time
Chiropractic Services	\$2,400	One Time
Northern Allowance for communities south of 50 th parallel without year round road access	Current Northern Allowance rate according to Ontario Works Regulations	
Wheelchair and mobility devices, lifts, batteries, replacement batteries and necessary repairs	\$1,000	One time
Provision, replacement and repairs of hearing aids including batteries for the portion not covered by the Assistive Devices Program	\$1,000	One Time
Prescription Drugs when not listed in the Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary	\$1,000	One Time
Certification of a learning disorder by a qualified medical doctor or psychologist	\$2,000	One time
Costs of completing medical forms not covered by OHIP, as required verifying eligibility for assistance, benefits or other required purposes.	\$100	One Time
Necessary repairs to homes owned by recipients	\$1,000	One Time

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Discretionary Benefit	Maximum Amount	Frequency per year
Replacement or repair of essential household furniture and appliances	\$1,000	One Time
Replacement or purchase of smoke alarms and batteries for recipients who own their homes and are not in receipt of the maximum shelter allowance	Room within Shelter Allowance first.	
Replacement of household items and personal effects in emergency situations (e.g. fire, flood, storms).	\$1,000	One Time
Electric beds to avoid bedsores for persons confined to a bed.	\$2,000	One Time
Air Conditioners for severe asthmatics	\$1,200	One Time
Electric Breast Pumps	\$250	One Time
Layettes and Baby Supplies	500	One Time for each child
Blood tests required for Applications for Support where the cost cannot be paid by some other means.	750.	One time for each instance
Initial deposits required by landlords or others for rent, hydro and heating where necessary.	Only after shelter has been topped up and CSUMB has been exhausted	
Payments for low cost energy and water conservation measures	\$100	One Time
Health-related purposes where the Administrator has made a determination of need based on verifiable documentation and failure to provide would result in a detriment to the health of the recipient or member of a benefit unit.	Actual Cost	
Non-health related purposes on a case by case basis	\$250	One Time
Non-Health Transportation	Transportation Policy	
Funerals and Burials	Funeral Policy	
Dental Care for Adults	Dental Policy	
Vision Care for Adults	Vision Policy	
Heating Payments	Heating Policy	

The issuance of Discretionary Benefits requires managerial approval.

TITLE: INTAKE, ELIGIBILITY AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE –
DISCRETIONARY BENEFITS

SECTION: ONTARIO WORKS

PROCEDURE:

Ontario Works Cases

1. When a request is received for Discretionary Benefits, the Caseworker will search the Benefits List to ensure that the maximum payment has not been reached. If the maximum amount has already been paid, the applicant will be advised that the benefit is denied.
2. The Caseworker will also determine if other resources are available for the item/purchase requested. Resources may include available income, assets or third party funding such as Assistive Devices or charitable organization funding. If other resources are deemed to be available, the applicant will be advised that the benefit is denied.
3. If the maximum payable has not been reached, and if there are no other resources available to the applicant, the Caseworker will enter a *Note - Payments/Benefits: Discretionary/Benefit Items: "benefit type"* outlining the request, cost and detail. They will ensure that one of the following has been received:
 - a. For medical requests: The request is to be accompanied by at least two estimates for big ticket items and a doctor's prescription/recommendation when a purchase is being requested.
 - b. For non-medical requests: The request is to be accompanied by at least two estimates (when a purchase is required) and/or the verification that the bill must be paid.



The onus is on the applicant to provide verification that the item is required to maintain mental or physical health, accommodations, employment or childcare.

4. The request and estimates will be forwarded to the Administrator for review and decision. Requests will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. The Administrator will append the original note with the decision.
5. Each year, one Note string will be used to track each benefit type. Each subsequent request for that benefit will be appended to the original Note.

For example:

- If a request is made for Dental benefits in January, a new Note (Category Discretionary Benefit Items – Dental YYYY) is created.
 - If a second request for dental is received in June, it is appended to the original Note.
 - If a third is requested in October, it is again appended.
 - However, if a request for vision occurs, a new Note (Category Discretionary Benefit Items – Vision) is created for that benefit type.
 - In January, if a fourth request for Dental is made, a new Note (Category Discretionary Benefit Items – Dental YYYY) is created to track Dental payments for that year.
6. If approved, the Caseworker or their Clerical Support will either:
 - a. Create the appropriate benefit and amount using the SDMT Benefits Details Page. A *Note - Payments/Benefits: Discretionary Benefits: "Item name"* will be created to record the payment.
 - b. Create the appropriate benefit *request* with a purchase order number for payment later when the purchase order is returned. (See Appendix A for detailed instructions).
 7. If denied, the Caseworker may create a non-appealable letter notifying the applicant.



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ODSP Cases

8. Ontario Works offices will accept requests for Discretionary Benefits for ongoing ODSP recipients via a Referral for Services form and will follow the same procedure as outlined above.
9. Requests, with all supporting documentation and the recommendation, will be forwarded to the Administrator for review and decision.
10. When recording Discretionary Benefits requests/decisions for ODSP clients, Caseworkers will create Notes/Benefits and Payments in the ODSP SDMT case using the procedures outlined above.

Filing

11. If a request for Discretionary Benefits is approved, the documentation will be filed in an existing OW file or a new file will be created for an Ontario Works applicant. For ODSP applicants, one master file will be created at each local site named "Discretionary Benefits – ODSP" and all approved documentation will be filed for one calendar year. Each year a new file will be created.
12. If the request is denied, and if no OW file exists, documentation will be filed in a new file to be created at each local site named "Discretionary Benefits – Denied" and all documentation for denied benefits for either OW (where no file exists) or ODSP applicants will be filed for one calendar year. Each year a new file will be created.

APPENDICES:

- A. Technological Instructions

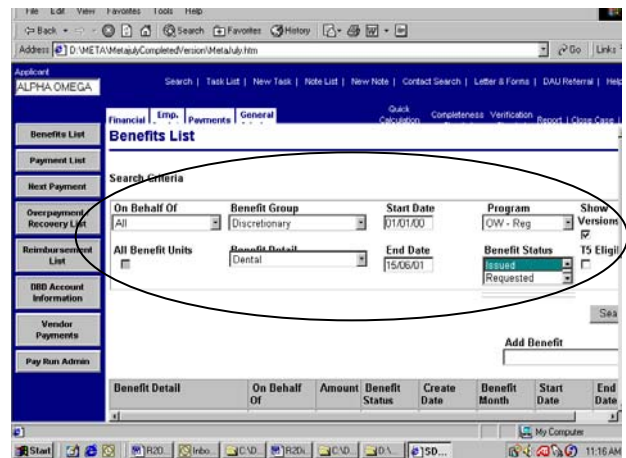
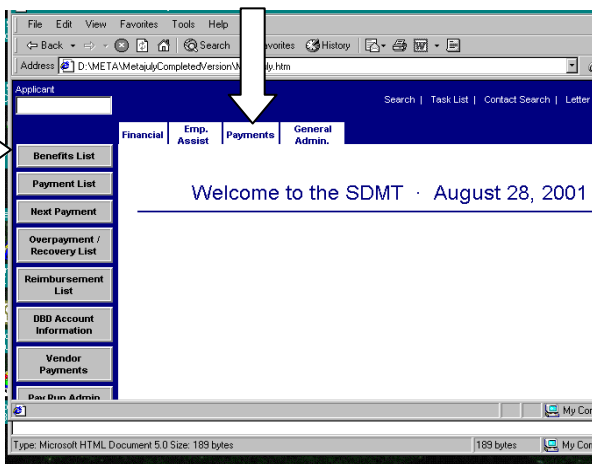
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Appendix A: TECHNOLOGICAL INSTRUCTIONS

□ Searching for previous payments takes place on the Benefits List page. **Search:**

- Discretionary Benefits for
- the specific benefit requested
- *Issued* (NOT Requested) for
- The appropriate benefit unit member(s) for
- the current and previous years



□ Discretionary Benefits are issued on the Benefits List Page by selecting “Add Benefit” and completing the Benefits Detail Page:

