

# Start Early: Connect with Development Services Ontario (DSO)

## Plan ahead for when your family member turns 18 years old.

### Step One “Get your eligibility documents ready”

- Gather documents to confirm: your age, that you are living in Ontario, and that you have a developmental disability which started before the age of 18 which requires a psychological assessment. *The psychological assessment must include:*
  - **Information about your cognitive functioning** which means your ability to reason, organize, plan, make judgments, and identify consequences, usually done as an IQ test.
  - **Adaptive information** which means your capacity to gain independence and apply skills in everyday life: conceptual skills like reading & math, social skills, and practical skills.
- If you don't have a psychological assessment with an IQ score and the required adaptive information, then you will need to get one before your eligibility can be confirmed.

<https://www.dsontario.ca/how-to-access-services/the-application-process>

Call Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) South West Region at 519-945-3797 Or toll-free at 1-855-437-6797 to start an application for: independent facilitation, Passport funding, individualized housing support funds/options or other services.

#### A/ At 16 years of age

##### **Using an existing psychological assessment:**

You can provide an assessment from the past to confirm eligibility in advance.

If this confirms your eligibility, then you would be able to make a call to the DSO at 17 ½ years of age for an appointment to start the application process.

#### B/ 14 - 17 years of age

##### **If you need to get a new assessment:**

If no psychological assessment has been completed or an existing one is not suitable, contact your school to see if they would arrange for one. If the school is not able to assist, you could contact a psychologist to complete the assessment. There is a cost to this option which may be partially covered with a private benefit plan. You could also contact the DSO to see if they know of community resources offering this service at reduced fees.

If these options don't work, then you must wait until your family member turns 17 ½ years of age to get assistance through the DSO for a psychological assessment.

#### C/ At 17 ½ years of age

##### **If eligibility has already been confirmed:**

Contact the DSO to make an appointment with a DSO assessor and **start the application process**. It will take at least two meetings - sometimes more.

##### **If eligibility is not yet confirmed because you don't have a psychological assessment:**

You can ask the DSO to make a referral for a psychological assessment that would be funded through the government. Ask the DSO about wait times.

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#### **What to do if you are NOT confirmed eligible after submitting your psychological assessment:**

A review of the decision can be requested by writing the DSO within 25 business days from the date you get the letter stating that the person is not eligible.

<https://www.ontario.ca/document/policy-directives-application-entities-under-authority-services-and-supports-promote-social/3-review-process-decisions-eligibility>

#### **About ODSP – the Ontario Disability Support Program**

##### **After you are confirmed eligible through the DSO:**

You can use your DSO eligibility letter to qualify for the disability portion of the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). All other requirements must still be met (age, residency, and financial need).

##### **You can apply for OSDSP:**

- By using the [Online Application for Social Assistance](#)
- By phoning 519-254-1651 or 1-800-387-7327
- In person at 270 Erie St. East, Windsor