

PASSPORT

Funding for community participation supports
for adults with a developmental disability

Application Guide for Families/Caregivers

York Support Services Network

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What's Inside the Guide

This Passport Application Information Guide has been written for you. Inside this guide, you will learn about Passport and what you will need to do to apply for Passport.

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About Some of the Words in this Guide

Community Advisory Committee

A regional committee with representation from self advocates, families, service providers, education, health, etc. that will provide advice about service needs in the community, provide advice and feedback on the effectiveness of current practices and procedures, provide input into proposed changes to policy, practices and procedures to improve service provision.

Community Participation Supports

As an adult, to be active and included in your community you may need some help and support. These supports are called 'participation supports'. For example, you may need a support person or service to help you:

- Prepare for a job
- Volunteer in the community
- Learn how to get along with others, live on your own or look after yourself
- Continue your education after high school
- Learn how to shop for yourself, use the library, the bus, find out what's at your local community centre, etc.

Delivery Agency

The agency in your community that will review and assess Passport applications, confirm eligibility, determine level of need and funding allocations. The delivery agency will administer funding for individuals who choose direct funding.

Local Access Mechanism

A group of individuals, or a single agency, representing community developmental service agencies that acts as an entry point for many of the developmental services in your community. Each community in Ontario has a local access mechanism. Local access mechanisms review local priorities within available resources.

Ministry of Community and Social Services Transfer Payment Agencies

Agencies in the community that the Ontario government contracts with to provide a service. Examples of these agencies include: associations for community living, children's aid societies, etc.

Transition

Transition means your life is changing. An example of your life changing is when you leave high school.

Introduction: What is Passport?

- Passport is a new Ministry of Community and Social Services initiative that helps people who have a developmental disability who have left school or have been waiting for service and are in need of community participation supports. There are three parts to Passport.
- **PART 1 - Mentoring:** Part 1 of the Passport initiative is called 'mentoring'. Mentoring is for students between the ages of 14 and 21, who have a developmental disability, are still in high school and would like the opportunity to meet with someone and talk about things they can do in the community after high school. *This project is being phased in across the Province and at this point in time is not yet available in all communities.* One high school in the Peterborough area is participating in the project. For more information, please visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services website at www.mcss.gov.on.ca. (Click on 'Newsroom, News Releases for March', "*Ontario Government Launches Mentoring Partnership...*")
- **PART 2 – Planning:** Part 2 of the Passport initiative is 'planning'. Making a plan is important as you transition through changes in adult life. An example of your life changing is when you leave high school. Before you graduate, someone from your school will be working with you and your family to develop a 'transition' plan. This plan will help you start to think about what you would like to do in the community as an adult. Under Part 2 of Passport, the person you are working with at school can call **York Support Services Network's Passport Coordinator** to find out about developmental services in your community. Knowing about what services are available can help you develop your plan.
- If you have already left school and want to develop a plan, you will want to do this with someone you like, trust and who knows you well - maybe someone from your family, a friend, your support circle or maybe a worker from a community agency (e.g. Adult Protective Services Worker, Adult Support Worker, Case Manager, Building Bridges or Foundations worker, etc.).

- ***PART 3 – Funding for Community Participation Supports:*** Part 3 of the Passport initiative is called ‘Funding for Community Participation Supports’. This part of the Passport initiative provides you with the option of receiving direct funding to purchase supports and services or you can choose to access services through transfer payment agencies. If you choose the option of direct funding, you can purchase supports from existing agencies that provide community participation supports, or you can hire your own worker. Funding is meant for adults who are seeking community participation supports and who are no longer in school *or* within 6 months of leaving high school. It is voluntary and is based on a commitment from your family and a willingness from you to take part in these supports. In order to respond to your changing needs, you will be required to submit an application every three years. This allows for an opportunity to revise your plan and level of funding based on your circumstances as your needs may have changed.

This guide describes Part 3 of the Passport initiative.

If you want to find out more about all three parts of the Passport initiative, guidelines are available on the government website at www.mcass.gov.on.ca

PASSPORT: Funding for Community Participation Supports

Who can apply for Passport funding?

- You can apply for passport funding if you:
 - ☑ Live in Ontario (Canadian citizen, landed immigrant, Minister's permit, permission to remain by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, e.g. refugee), *and*
 - ☑ Have a developmental disability that has been documented and confirmed by a family doctor, psychiatrist or psychologist, *and*
 - ☑ Are an adult who has left school *or* are within 6 months of leaving high school, *or*
 - ☑ Are an adult living in the community who has been waiting for community supports and due to needs require this support, *and*
 - ☑ Are not eligible to receive support through the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) *Employment Supports Program (You can be receiving an income from ODSP and apply for Passport funding)*
- Passport applications will only be considered on an individual basis (no group submissions); however, if you are approved for Passport funding, you and your family can pool your resources with other families to set up a program for your group.
- *It's important to remember that funding for community participation supports under Passport is a limited resource and not an entitlement program.* Depending on available resources, some individuals *may or may not* receive funding.

What can the funding be used for?

- As an adult, to be active and included in your community you may need some help and support. These supports are called 'community participation supports'. For example, a support person or service may help you to:
 - Prepare for a job
 - Volunteer in the community
 - Learn how to get along with others, live on your own or look after yourself

- Continue your education after high school
- Learn how to shop for yourself, use the library, the bus, find out what's at your local community centre, etc.
- If approved, Passport gives you the option of getting money directly allocated to you to buy community participation supports and services *or* you can choose to access services through an agency. For instance, you may want to hire your own support person to help you learn a job. Or, you could decide to use supports from an agency that provides community participation supports and services to help you.
- You can find out more about your local agency community participation supports by calling these phone numbers or going online and visiting these websites:

York Support Services Network at <http://www.yssn.ca/page.asp?pageid=49>

Central East Region Information Service at <http://www.centraleast.info>
<http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/CFCS/en/programs/SCS/DevelopmentalServices/passport.htm>

- If approved, you can use up to 10% of your total Passport money to hire a person of your choice, including an agency, to look after paying your service provider (e.g. writing a cheque to your service provider, keeping your receipts for you and sending your receipts to **York Support Services Network's Passport Coordinator** or if you would like someone to help develop and coordinate a plan for your community participation supports.
- To respond to your changing needs and to reflect your ongoing personal plan, you will need to submit an application every three years, unless requested earlier by you or your family. This will provide an opportunity to re-assess your plan and level of need. **York Support Services Network's Passport Coordinator** will contact you each year to see if there have been any significant changes in your circumstances.

How do I know if Passport is right for me?

- With Passport funding, you have a choice about how to get community participation supports. Having more choice about how you get and spend your support money also means having more responsibility.
- If you choose the option of direct funding to buy supports and services you need to make sure you understand your responsibilities. Here are some things to think about:

- If you choose to hire a worker, you are now the employer – as an employer, you will need to find the right worker, interview the worker, ask for and check references, schedule hours, etc. or find someone to help you with this.
- The workers you hire are self-employed – they are not employees of the Ministry of Community Social Services or employees of the community agency.
- If you choose to use your money to purchase services from community agencies, it is your responsibility to make sure the program you select provides a quality service and is the right program for you (i.e., the program will meet your needs, how it will help you work towards goals, etc.).
- Whether you are hiring your own worker or purchasing services from a community agency, you should have an agreement – something written down on paper - with the service you use or the individual you hire so that everyone is clear about what your needs are and what service the person will be giving you. An agreement can help you sort things out if there are problems or disagreements. *(If you would like to see sample agreements, go online and visit respiteservices.com).*
- You or your family member (or you may find someone to help you) is now responsible to manage the money that you get from Passport. This means:
 - You have a responsibility to use the money only for what was approved in your plan
 - You pay the service provider directly and you need to work with the service provider to sort out any problems
 - You need to send in receipts to **York Support Services Network's Passport Coordinator**

How do I apply for Passport funding?

STEP #1: Complete an individual plan

- While not mandatory, when you apply for Passport funding it would be helpful to attach a plan to your application. Whether you are an adult already in the community who has changing needs or you are changing from student life to life as an adult in the community, a plan will help you and other people understand what you want to do, what you need, how you want to do things and who you want to help you. This plan can also tell you

and other people what community participation supports you need. There are a number of ways you can develop your plan:

- If you are still in school you can work with a school staff person, a Building Bridges or Foundations worker.
- If you have already left school and are working with a community agency, you can contact your worker (e.g. Adult Protective Services Worker, Adult Support Worker, Case Manager, etc.).
- If you have already left school and are not working with a community agency you can call **York Support Services Network's Passport Coordinator** at (905) 898-6455 Ext. 444.
- If you would like to develop your plan on your own, there is a booklet, designed by the Individualized Funding Coalition for Ontario, called *Creating a Good Life in Community: A Guide on Person – Directed Planning* that can help you with this planning. You can read or print a copy of the booklet online at www.mcsc.gov.on.ca or at the Individualized Funding Coalition for Ontario website at www.individualizedfunding.ca. You can also get a copy of the booklet by calling **York Support Services Network's Passport Coordinator** at (905) 898-6455 Ext. 444. You can also request this guide from your local Passport Delivery Agency — **York Support Services Network**.

STEP #2: Fill out a Passport application form

- After you complete your plan, you need to fill out a Passport application form. This is an Ontario government form that is the same for everyone in the province. You can get the application form at these places:
 - Ministry of Community and Social Services website: www.mcsc.gov.on.ca
 - Central East Region Information Service website: <http://www.centraleast.info>
 - York Support Services Network at (905) 898-6455 Ext. 444 or on the YSSN website: www.yssn.ca
- You will need to complete the application form if:
 - It is your first time applying for Passport funding, **OR**
 - There has been a big change in your care needs, support network or services since the date of your last Passport application; **OR**
 - It is the third anniversary from the date of your last Passport application.

- If you need help filling out the form, family members or someone from an agency who knows you well can help you or they can fill out the application form on your behalf. If you or your family member has any questions about filling out the form, you can call **York Support Services Network's Passport Coordinator** at (905) 898-6455 Ext. 444.

STEP #3: Submit your application

- If you think Passport will meet your needs, you can start the application process prior to leaving school as it may take up to six months to review, consider priorities and allocate funding if approved.
- If you are an adult and have already left school, you can start the application process anytime.
- Applications can be submitted anytime during the year and approvals will be made as funding becomes available. Applications can be sent by



Mail to: Passport Coordinator
York Support Services Network
102 Main St South, Unit 3
Newmarket, ON L3Y 3Y7

OR



Fax to: (905) 898-1171

Don't forget to sign your application. Your signature lets people know that the information on the form is true and correct.

How is my application processed?

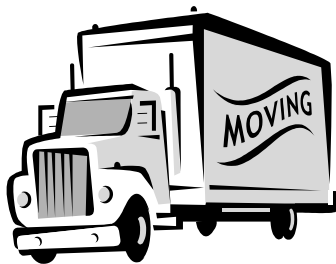
STEP #1: Application reviewed for eligibility

- After your application is received by **York Support Services Network**, they will:
 - Review your application package (A worker from **York Support Services Network** may call you and ask for some more information to help them understand your developmental disability and what you need. They may also ask to visit with you).
 - Confirm eligibility for Passport funding. Remember, when you apply for Passport funding, you may be eligible but that doesn't automatically mean you will get funding. Many people will have community participation needs and the government wants to support people based on their needs but there are limits on how much money it has to meet these needs.
 - Determine a funding level.

STEP #2: Priority Review

- Once **York Support Services Network** has processed your application form, they will:
 - Review the information from all applications submitted, consider your needs, other people's needs in your community, and how much Passport funding is available. This prioritization process will link with the local access mechanism.
- **York Support Services Network** will then let you and your family know in writing if you have been approved for funding and if/when you can begin accessing Passport supports.
- If you have been approved for funding, you or your family member will then need to:
 - Decide whether you want the option of direct funding to hire your own support workers/service or if you want to access supports through an existing agency that provides community participation supports
 - If you choose direct funding make arrangements for participating in the community participation activity
 - If you choose to access supports through an existing agency, contact **York Support Services Network** to make arrangements
 - If you choose the option of direct funding you can decide if you want to use up to 10% of your funding to further develop your plan or to have an agency or a person of your choice to look after paying your service provider.

- The Central East Region will also have a Community Advisory Committee to support Passport. This regional committee, with representation from self advocates, families, service providers, education, health, etc., will provide advice about service needs in the community, provide advice and feedback on the effectiveness of current practices and procedures, and provide input into proposed changes to policy, practices and procedures to improve service provision.
- If you have not been approved for funding, **York Support Services Network** will let you know in writing:
 - Your status (that your name is on the waiting/community needs list)
 - That your name is being kept on file and will be continually reviewed as funding becomes available (Note: if your individual situation changes, please contact **York Support Services Network's Passport Coordinator** to update your application)
 - The name of a contact person if you have any questions/concerns
 - Any information that may be of help to you while you are waiting.



IF YOU ARE MOVING...

If you have been approved for Passport funding and decide to move to another community in Ontario, the same level of funding is available to you whether you choose to hire your own support worker/service or access support through an agency. If you decide to move, there are some steps that you need to take to make sure your funding follows you to your new community:

1. Contact **York Support Services Network's Passport Coordinator** within a reasonable amount of time *before you move* to let the agency know when you are moving and your new address.
2. Make arrangements in your new location for community participation supports. You are responsible to make sure the quality of service and support you need in your new community meets your needs.
3. Make sure you understand how funds will be flowed to you by the delivery agency in your new location.

Where You Can Get More Information

Application Form and Passport Guidelines	Government website: www.mcass.gov.on.ca York Support Services Network website: www.yssn.ca
Booklet: <i>Creating a Good Life in Community: A Guide on Person – Directed Planning</i>	Government Website: www.mcass.gov.on.ca or Individualized Funding Coalition for Ontario website at www.individualizedfunding.ca or York Support Services Network website: www.yssn.ca
Central East Region Information Service	http://www.centraleast.info
Information	York Support Services Network Passport Coordinator Ph.: (905) 898-6455 Ext. 444 Email: passport-coordinator@yssn.ca
Sample family/worker agreements	Respiteservices.com

- To access all other subsidized services in your community for individuals who have a developmental disability, you can contact your local access mechanism directly or through a community transfer payment agency. Each community in Ontario has a local access mechanism. Local access mechanisms review local priorities within available resources. The local access mechanism in your community is York Support Services Network's **Service System Response Unit (SSRU)**.