

Bridging to Adulthood Tips: Applying for Developmental Services Ontario (DSO)

What is Developmental Services Ontario (DSO)?

A central access point for services for **adults** who:

- Are **18 years and older** and live in **Ontario**
- Have **Intellectual Disability** (confirmed by a psychologist)



When can I apply?

You can **start registration** at **16 years old**. Services can start at 18 years old and so registering early can help prevent delays.

What services are offered through DSO?

At age 18, you can ask DSO for Passport Funding. Passport is a reimbursement program of at least \$5000 per year that can help cover costs of community participation supports that the family buys.

Also, DSO will sometimes provide supports directly paid by the government e.g. respite, educational or day programs, specialized therapies, housing, crisis supports (see DSO website for complete list). Services are provided on a “needs basis” and there are waitlists.

How Do I apply?

See the next page of this handout for a step-by-step guide.

Why should I apply?

Children’s developmental services, such as Special Services at Home (SSAH) and Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (ACSD) stop at age 18. Applying to DSO can help you find out if you are eligible for adult developmental services that paid for by the government (Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services).

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A teaching hospital fully affiliated with the University of Toronto.

Steps for Apply to DSO

Application assistance: [Sign up](#) for the Transitions Pop-Up: Connect with DSO event for information and application support **at age 16**.

Request to Register

1. **Contact your local DSO office to register** (as early as 16 years old).
 - Leave the parent/guardian's name, the child's name, child's date of birth, phone number and best time to reach you at in the voicemail or email

For **Toronto** Region: **1-855-372-3858** or dsotr@surreyplace.ca.

For **other locations in Ontario**, search for your **local office** on the [DSO Website](#).

Registration Call and Documents

2. A **DSO Intake Worker will call you to complete registration** over the phone.
3. During telephone registration, the intake worker will ask you to **send certain documents** to the DSO office including:
 - Photocopy of health card
 - Copy of psychological report confirming the Intellectual Disability diagnosis
 - Latest Individual Education Plan (IEP) if the psychological report was done when the person was 10 years old or younger
 - Any other documents requested
4. Wait. If eligible, the **DSO will send you an eligibility letter** and **welcome package** within a few months. It's very important to **keep this eligibility letter**.

Wait for Full Assessment

5. **Wait. DSO will contact you in approximately 24 months to book a detailed assessment** of the person's needs. DSO calls this assessment "**the Application Package**" The assessment will help determine what supports you may be eligible for and then you will go on waitlists for supports.

Important: Keep DSO Updated!

No matter where you are in the application or waitlist process, you must contact DSO when:

- a) The person **turns 18 years old** and you **want a referral for Passport Funding**

Important: The DSO does not automatically send you Passport Funding or track when people turn 18 and could be eligible. **You must ask DSO directly for a referral to Passport.**

- b) **Anything about your situation changes e.g.**

- Change in **phone number or address**
- The person **finishes high school** or leaves another program e.g. leaves their day program
- There are significant changes in the **person's support needs** e.g., medical or behaviour
- There are changes to a **caregiver's ability** to support the person
- If you are **approaching a crisis** e.g. hospitalization, homelessness, caregiver surgery
- Other relevant changes to your situation

Note: The information in this handout is current as of May 2022. This resource may not reflect changes made to the program(s) described after this date and the information is subject to change over time. Refer to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services or contact your local DSO office for more comprehensive and the most up to date information <https://www.dsontario.ca/>.

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