



INCOME ASSISTANCE APPLICATION



Revised: November 2016

Getting the Application for Income Assistance Started

The Ministry of Social Development & Social Innovation's (MSDSI) application can be quite complex and consists of a number of steps and considers multiple things such as your income if you have any, assets, past earnings, recent sales of assets, your household composition (who you are living with) and if you have any other source of support other than assistance that you could pursue, the Ministry contends they are, "the last avenue of support" be prepared for a lengthy process.

Step One – Applying

The first step to apply for Income Assistance is to complete the online Self-Serve Assessment & Application (SSAA) which can be found at this site: <https://www.iaselfserve.gov.bc.ca/HomePage.aspx>

The SSAA has over 90 questions which all need to be answered. Before completing the SSAA, have this information ready:

- Your SIN number
- Average monthly hydro & heat amount
- Bank account balances
- Monthly rent amount
- Average monthly utilities amount
- Value of assets (e.g. car)

**Take note of your Assessment ID Number and your Application Number.
Also print a copy or forward one to your email so you have it for your own records.**

Step Two

A Ministry worker should **contact you within 5 business days** of receiving your application. If you are in immediate need (you have no money for food, shelter, or medication) a worker should call you within 1 business day.

If you do not hear from the Ministry in that time, you should call them at their toll free number: **1-866-866-0800**.

When you speak with the worker, you will be asked to take in some documents which may include:

- Identification documents (ID)
- Verification of any income
- Confirmation of rent amount
- Vehicle registration
- Bank statements for last 60 days
- Confirmation of mailing address
- Most recent tax assessment

Tip: If you can, fax over any documents the Ministry is asking for and take down the fax confirmation details. This way you have proof you submitted the documents in case they get lost.



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Step Three

If this is your first time applying, you must complete a 5 week Work Search Requirement. If you have applied before and completed the Work Search before, you only have to do a 3 week search. The Work Search must be completed before you can receive benefits. The Ministry will accept a work search you may have done yourself in the last 30 days.

You can be excused from this search if you have a medical condition which stops you from working but you need a doctor's note to prove this.

During this time period the Ministry will be verifying and checking various things including:

*Have you satisfied the 2 year independency test? This is where you need to demonstrate that for 2 consecutive years since you turned 19 you were financially independent. This can be by showing income tax assessments where you earned over \$7000 per year or worked more than 840 hours.

*Do you have an outstanding warrant anywhere in Canada? If you do, you would not be eligible for assistance other than transportation to the area where the warrant exists.

*Do you own any property anywhere? The Ministry can run a search for your name through land titles. You can own a home and still be eligible for assistance but the catch is you must live in the home. If you have your name on property elsewhere it could result in not being eligible.

Step Four

Once you have given the additional documents to the Ministry and done your eligibility interview, the Ministry will tell you if you are eligible for assistance **within 5 business days**. If you do not hear back from them within this time frame, call them and ask about your application at **1-866-866-0800**.

Step Five

If you are told you are not eligible for benefits, ask the Ministry the reasons why.

If you decide that the Ministry's decision is wrong, you have **20 business days** (from the date when you learnt of the denial) to challenge the decision and to submit a reconsideration request (appeal the decision).

**Check with an advocate for more information, there may be exceptions or special considerations.*

For more information visit our website at www.AskAnAdvocate.ca