



## Discretionary Benefits Policy

**Department:** Community Services

**Approval Level:** Council

**Division:** Social Services

**Effective Date:** 2008-10-01

**Section:** Ontario Works

**Policy #:** 0008

### 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy is made pursuant to Section 59 of Regulation 134/98 of the Ontario Works Act, 1997, which enables the City of Peterborough, as an Ontario Works delivery agent, to provide a program of discretionary benefits to eligible recipients. The purpose of this policy is to ensure fairness, consistency, and accountability in the provision of discretionary benefits to eligible recipients.

### 2.0 APPLICATION

- 2.1 This policy is limited to persons in receipt of assistance under the Ontario Works Act, 1997 or the Ontario Disability Support Program Act, 1997, unless stated otherwise under a particular discretionary benefit.

### 3.0 DEFINITIONS/ACRONYMS

- 3.1 **Discretionary Benefits** – Payments that Ontario Works Administrators have the discretion to approve on a case-by-case basis to recipients who meet the eligibility criteria for the particular benefit. Discretionary benefits may be health related benefits, non-health related benefits, or other special services, items or payments.
- 3.2 **Health Related Benefits** – One of the categories of discretionary benefits provided for under the Ontario Works Act, 1997. Examples include: dental care for adults, vision care for adults, prosthetic appliances, and funerals and burials.
- 3.3 **Non-Health Related Benefits** – One of the categories of discretionary benefits provided for under the Ontario Works Act, 1997. Examples include: vocational training and retraining, travel and transportation that is not for health related purposes, and moving expenses.

- 3.4 **ODSP** – Ontario Disability Support Program.
- 3.5 **OW** – Ontario Works.
- 3.6 **OW Administrator** – The position within the OW Delivery Agent’s organization designated to meet the requirement of the legislation, usually the Social Services Division Head for the City of Peterborough.
- 3.7 **OW Delivery Agent** – An organization designated by the Minister to administer the Ontario Works Act and provide assistance in that geographic area.

**4.0 POLICY STATEMENT**

- 4.1 The OW Administrator may provide for discretionary benefits to eligible recipients to support them in times of crisis or with costs that cannot be accommodated within regular financial assistance, subject to available funding and as outlined in Schedule A of the Discretionary Benefits Procedure Section 5.0.
- 4.2 The OW Administrator shall have the discretion to amend the benefits and dollar values listed in Schedule A, as necessary to stay within the approved budget.

**5.0 APPENDIX, RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES & LINKS**

- 5.1 [Ontario Works Act, 1997](#)
- 5.2 [Ontario Works Regulation 134/98](#)
- 5.3 Ontario Works Directives 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.5, and 7.7
- 5.4 [Ontario Disability Support Plan Act, 1997](#)
- 5.5 Discretionary Benefits Procedure including Schedule A – Summary of Discretionary Benefits

**6.0 AMENDMENTS/REVIEWS**

Date (yyyy-mm-dd)	Section # Amended	Comment
2008-07-07	N/A	Policy approved by Council