

Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) Ministry of Community and Social Services

DSO is the central point of access for adults (18+) with a developmental disability. DSO will provide information, complete application packages and make referrals for developmental supports and services in your community. Developmental supports and services include residential, community participation, passport, respite, person-directed planning and specialized supports. DSO Central West Region (Dufferin, Halton, Peel, Waterloo and Wellington) is administered by Sunbeam Community and Developmental Services.

Eligibility for DSO:

- be at least 18 years old
- be an Ontario resident
- have a documented** developmental disability (a developmental disability is present at birth or develops before 18 years of age, affects a person's ability to learn, is permanent and can be mild or severe)

** A Psychological assessment is required. You may already have an assessment through your school, a hospital, or another organization. DSO will review it to confirm eligibility.

If a person doesn't have a psychological assessment, someone at your Developmental Services Ontario agency can help you find out how and where to get an assessment done. Some assessments are publicly funded, which means you won't need to pay. Or, you can choose to pay a psychologist to do one.

More information about eligibility: <https://www.dsontario.ca/how-to-access-services/faqs>

How to Apply:

- You can connect with the DSO prior to age 18 (age 16 or 17) to begin the process and determine eligibility; the application process can begin at age 17 and 10 months
- Transition Support Workers work with high schools to identify students who may be eligible
- Call 1-888-941-1121, [email](#) or call or visit your local DSO office (see below)

Local DSO Offices:

[Central West Region](#) (includes Waterloo Region and Wellington)

2749 Kingsway Drive
Kitchener, Ontario N2C 1A7
Phone: 519-894-9563

Determining Service and Support Needs:

Once eligibility is confirmed, **two meetings** will be set up to complete the provincial application package. In addition to the individual who is applying for supports, at least two people, called respondents, who can speak knowledgeably about the person's support needs in a variety of areas are required to attend these meetings.

The first meeting is with an assessor/service navigator who will help the person with a developmental disability and their caregiver(s) to complete the **Application for Developmental Services and Supports** (ADSS). This part of the application process is all about getting to know the person a little better. The assessor will gather information about medical conditions, capabilities and background information as well as caregiver concerns. In addition, they will ask about things that the person likes and dislikes, their dreams and future goals and supports and services being requested.

The second meeting is to complete the **Supports Intensity Scale** (SIS). This part of the application asks about the level of support a person needs to enjoy a positive quality of life at home, in their community and in their personal relationships.

More information about how to prepare for these meetings:

<https://www.dsocwr.ca/how-we-can-help/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQZQmQo19tQ&feature=plcp>

Did you know?

- If you receive a letter from Developmental Services Ontario saying that you are eligible for developmental services and supports, you can use that letter to support your application for ODSP
- If you are connected with Developmental Services Resource Centre (DSRC) you still need to apply to DSO for adult services (i.e. it does not happen automatically)
- **Spotlight on Transformation** is the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services' newsletter for people interested in services and supports for people with a developmental disability. It features: information about what is happening in Ontario's developmental services system, updates on their progress in improving services and supports, and inspiring stories of inclusion in communities throughout Ontario.

<https://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/en/mcss/publications/spotlight.aspx>

For more information:

<http://www.dsontario.ca/>

<http://www.dsocwr.ca/>