



Can I work and still get money and other help from Ontario Works?

Ontario Works (OW) has rules that say you can work and get money from OW if you:

- tell OW about any money you make
- do not make too much money

Tell OW about money you make

You must tell OW how much money you, your spouse, and your dependants make each month from:

- jobs
- training allowances
- being self-employed

Your **spouse** can be a person of any sex or gender. It does not matter if you are married or not.

Dependants are people who live with you and who you take care of financially. For example, this could be your children or elderly parents.

Income that OW does not count

OW will **not** count money earned by a dependant who:

- is a full-time student in high school, college, or university
- is younger than 18
- lives in a First Nations community and gets money from an employment training program that lasts up to 12 months

Working during the first 3 months on OW

If you earn any money from work during the **first 3 months** you are on OW, OW reduces the amount of money they give you.

They reduce it by the **same amount** as your take-home pay.

Take-home pay means the money that is left after your employer takes off things like taxes. It is usually the amount that goes into your bank account from your paycheck.

Take-home pay is also called **net earnings**.

For example, you get **\$623 a month** from OW and one month you earn \$100 from work. OW will reduce the money they give you by \$100. So you will get \$523.

\$623	usual amount from OW
- \$100	take-home pay
= \$523	amount from OW that month

Earnings exemption of \$200 after 3 months

After getting money from OW for **at least** 3 months, the rules about take-home pay change. After 3 months, OW will not reduce the monthly amount they give you if your take-home pay is \$200 or less that month.

This is called an **earnings exemption**.

Instead of waiting 3 months, you can get the earnings exemption right away if all of the following are true:

- you got money in the past from OW or the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) for at least 3 months in a row,

- you earned at least some money from work since you stopped getting money from OW or ODSP, and
- it has been less than 6 months since you stopped getting money from OW or ODSP.

Money you make over \$200

After getting money from OW for at least 3 months, if your take-home pay is more than \$200, OW reduces the money they give you that month. They reduce it by half the amount of what you earn above \$200.

For example, if your take-home pay is **\$260 in a month**, OW will not count the first \$200. But they will reduce the amount of money they give you by half of the remaining \$60.

\$260	take-home pay
- \$200	earnings exemption
= \$60	OW reduces your month's payment by half of this
÷ 2	
= \$30	OW takes this much from your monthly amount

Help with costs related to work

OW may be able to help you pay for:

- tools, equipment, and clothing for work
- travel costs related to a new job
- fees for a licence or membership in a work-related association
- child care so you can go to work

Benefits after you stop getting money from OW

If you stop getting money from OW because of the amount of money you earn from work, you might be able to get the **Extended Health Benefit (EHB)**.

The EHB may cover costs like:

- prescription drugs
- visits to a dentist
- eye exams and glasses

Get legal help

If you have questions about OW rules or do not agree with a decision OW makes, contact your local community legal clinic.

To find the clinic nearest you, visit Legal Aid Ontario's website at legalaid.on.ca/legal-clinics or call them at **1-800-668-8258**. For TTY, call **711**.

There is information about appealing a decision by OW at stepstojustice.ca/disagree-OW.

CLEO has a tool that can help you write to OW to ask for an internal review of their decision. Go to stepstojustice.ca/ask-ow-review.



Visit stepstojustice.ca for more information about income assistance. This is general information for people in Ontario, Canada. It is not intended to be used as legal advice.

Vous pourriez avoir droit à des services en français devant les tribunaux ou auprès d'organismes gouvernementaux. Visitez justicepasapas.ca/droits-linguistiques-des-francophones.