

Act/Regulations <i>Social Assistance Act Reg. 8(3), 13(3)(e)</i> <i>Supports for Persons with Disabilities Act Gen. Reg. 36(1)(g), 36(5)(e)</i>	Program	Social Assistance, AccessAbility Supports	
	Subject	Post-Secondary Education & Skills Development Training	Policy # SA 3.4 AAS 4.4
Effective Date: SA November 2, 1995		Authorized by:	
Revised Date: July 1, 2022		Deputy Minister Jamie MacDonald	

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To establish criteria for approval of post-secondary education and/or skills training to support an applicant's attachment to the workforce and to limit dependence on Social Assistance (SA) or Assured Income (AI) benefits.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **Applicant:** a person who applies for or on whose behalf an application is made for SA or AI.
- 2.2 **Employment Connector:** a staff member that provides ongoing assessment, service, and reviews for SA and AI clients referred for employment supports and services.
- 2.3 **Employment Support Services:** a service provided by the Department aimed at assisting employable applicants of SA and AI to obtain employment.
- 2.4 **Post-Secondary Education:** an apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma, college or other non-university certificate or diploma, university certificate or diploma below bachelor level, or a university degree.
- 2.5 **Recipient:** a person who is provided SA or AI and includes a person whose SA or AI has been suspended but not cancelled.
- 2.6 **Supports Coordinator:** a staff member that provides direction and case management support in delivering a range of social benefits and services to applicants eligible for Social Programs.

3.0 POLICY STATEMENTS

- 3.1 For the purposes of this policy, use of the word applicant is inclusive of recipient.
- 3.2 Applicants should be encouraged to improve their employability through appropriate educational and/or training opportunities.
- 3.3 Applicants may be considered for continuing financial assistance and an exemption from full-time employment expectations when attending post-secondary education or skills development training where the applicant:

- is financially eligible for SA or AI benefits;
- is likely to establish long-term dependence on financial assistance without intervention;
- has obtained grade 12 or equivalent education;
- has completed an employability assessment and an approved employment focused case plan recommending the applicant to attend a post-secondary education program of two years or less;
- is able to demonstrate:
 - o their personal suitability to the occupation;
 - o the post-secondary training plan is a realistic career goal;
 - o support from a community-based employment agency and/or their Supports Coordinator prior to initiating the post-secondary plan.

3.4 Applicants are expected to utilize and exhaust all available financial resources in pursuit of educational and/or training goals, including but not limited to applying for the maximum amount of student aid from federal and provincial student loan programs.

3.5 Applicants are expected to actively seek employment between school terms.

4.0 PROCEDURE STATEMENTS

4.1 Applicants are responsible to advise the Supports Coordinator of an intention to explore post-secondary education and/or training opportunities. The Supports Coordinator may refer the applicant to an employment-based agency to complete an employability and education suitability assessment.

4.2 The Supports Coordinator and the applicant will work collaboratively to develop a case plan in advance of the anticipated start date of education and/or training.

4.3 Applicants receiving funding from a Skills Development Program for education or training may be eligible for basic living costs, if the Department supports the applicant's case plan. Basic living costs include food, clothing, household, personal, travel, and shelter.

4.4 The Supports Coordinator will calculate student funding in excess of basic educational costs as a financial resource. Excess student funding will be added to the client financial window of the applicant's electronic file as a monthly income over the course of the school year. Basic educational costs include tuition, books, and educational supplies.

4.5 The Supports Coordinator will add income earned from employment to the client financial window of the applicant's electronic file. Income earned from employment is subject to eligible income exemptions.

4.6 Continuing eligibility for financial benefits will be based on compliance with an approved case plan.

- 4.7 The Supports Coordinator will determine progress made by the applicant and compliance of the case plan by verifying the applicant's enrollment annually.
- 4.8 Where there has been a significant change in circumstances or at minimum once every 12 months, the Supports Coordinator will address the applicant's progress to support a recommendation to continue to support the applicant's case plan for a multiple year program.

HISTORY:

July 1, 2021: Editorial, format, and content has been updated; Title has been updated from Post-Secondary Education or Skills Development Program to Post-Secondary Education & Skills Development Training. The following policy requirements have been removed: 4-month reviews, progress reports, and grade and attendance verification. Policy now applies to Social Assistance & AccessAbility Supports. New AccessAbility Supports policy.