

# OSAP Appeals Guide

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## Family Breakdown/Step-Parent Reviews

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### FAMILY BREAKDOWNS

The Financial Aid Administrator (FAA) may administer reviews to allow an assessment without reference to one or both parent's financial information in situations where there is a serious rift in the family and the student is estranged from one or both parents due to documented mental, physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse or drug or alcohol addiction in the student's family.

The FAA should consider the following factors when administering family breakdown reviews:

- Severity and degree of the breakdown;
- Length of time the rift has existed;
- Reason for the final breakdown and the extent to which the student could have prevented this situation from occurring;
- Parental treatment of other siblings;
- Reasons for the family breakdown;
- Attempts at, or likelihood of, reconciliation;
- If the problem/rift exists with only one parent, consideration of the other parent's position in the breakdown and his/her ability or willingness to assist the student;

Family breakdown reviews which are submitted where the parents' rationale for not supporting the student is deemed to be arbitrary are not considered, such as the following examples (the list is not exhaustive):

- Parents feel that it is the responsibility of the government to fund postsecondary education;
- Parents feel that once the student reach the age of 18, the student is independent;
- Parents do not agree with the student's choice of program or institution;
- Parents do not approve of the student's living arrangements.

### **Documentation required:**

- Written documentation from at least one third party individual, preferably a professional, who was directly involved with the situation (e.g., court reports; letters from police, social workers, children's shelters or physicians). If a professional third party was not involved, documentation from other reliable third parties who were directly involved with the situation is required. (e.g., siblings, grandparents, other relatives). Third party documents must contain the contact information for the third party, including telephone number and address, and the signature of the third party.
- A letter from the student detailing the situation:
  - Date of the final rift with parent(s);

- If the rift is with both parents, date the student left home and how the student has supported her/himself since leaving home;
- Any steps taken by the student to correct the situation
- Possibility of reconciliation.
- A letter from the student's parent(s) is not required. However, in situations where only one parent was involved in the problem/rift, the FAA may ask the student to provide a letter from the parent who is not directly involved in the situation.
- The extent, if any, of professional involvement in the situation (e.g., social agency, psychologist, psychiatrist, counselor)
- If the rift is with both parents, proof of the student's separate residence (e.g., copy of a lease or rental agreement).

**Note:** Students who are receiving support under the Youth Without Shelter, Stay in School Program are only required to provide a third-party letter from the program identifying that they are living in the shelter provided by the program and receiving basic living supports while in school.

### NON-SUPPORTING STEP-PARENT

The Financial Aid Administrator (FAA) may administer reviews to allow an assessment without reference to the step-parent's financial information if the student's situation meets all of the following criteria:

- The step-parent is refusing to support the student;
- The step-parent does not support the student directly or indirectly, and has not done so since the union.

**Note:** If the student resides in the parental home and the natural parent has minimal income, the step-parent may be deemed to have indirectly supported the student.

#### **Documentation required:**

- A letter from the student detailing the situation and their relationship with their step-parent.
- A letter from the natural parent providing the date of marriage or common law union, a description of any prenuptial arrangements regarding the support of the children, and an explanation of how the natural parent has supported the student since the union.
- A signed letter from the step-parent explaining the reason(s) why he or she will not support the student.
- A copy of the prenuptial agreement/marriage contract, if one exists.
- If prior year taxable income for the natural parent has not been verified (on the OSAP application), a copy of the natural parent's CRA Notice of Assessment for the prior year.

**Additional documentation if the parent union occurred before the student turned 16 years of age:**

- Evidence of formal arrangements/prenuptial agreements that show the step-parent is not directly or indirectly contributing to the student's expenses;
  - The document must be signed by both parents, and witnessed by at least two individuals and dated prior to the marriage;
  - If signed by witnesses only and not notarized or done in consultation with a lawyer, the name and address of witnesses and date of witness signatures must be included on the document;
- A family budget completed by the natural parent indicating their actual monthly gross and net income, their expenses and the amount of support they provide to the student.

**DEPENDENT STUDENT SWITCHES CONTRIBUTING PARENT**

The OSAP application should be completed using information from the custodial parent or the parent with whom the student lives, or last lived.

- A student can, however, change the parent identified on the application from year to year, provided the student actually changes residence or if the custodial/support arrangements for the student have changed.
- A student cannot live with one parent and use the income of the other parent (e.g., because it is lower).

In some situations it may be difficult to establish which parent has been providing the student with primary support (e.g., student will be living 50% of time with each parent during study period, or student has not lived with either parent for several years). Indicators such as where the student last lived, where the student spends the summer holidays, or which parent covers exceptional costs may be considered when determining which parent should complete the application.

In any of the above situations, if the natural parent to whom the student is switching has remarried, the step-parent's information must also be used to complete the application. If the step-parent refuses to provide financial assistance, a review may be applicable.

**Documentation required:**

- Documentation to confirm the residence change (e.g., drivers licence);
- A signed letter from the student outlining the change in residence;
- A signed letter from the parent confirming the change in residence; and
- A new OSAP application with the new supporting parent's financial information must be submitted.

## SEPARATED/DIVORCED OR DECEASED PARENT

If a student's parents separate/divorce, or if one parent dies before the halfway point of the student's study period, then the student's financial need for OSAP funding may be calculated based on the current year estimated income of the remaining custodial parent.

- For a separation or divorce, this review must be used in combination with an Estimated Income Review.
- For the death of one parent, the surviving parent's previous year income can be used instead of doing an Estimated Income Review.

### Documentation required:

- A letter from the student's remaining custodial parent outlining the date and change of the family's circumstances;
- In the case of separation/divorce:
  - A copy of the separation/divorce agreement indicating which parent has custody and the amount of financial support that is being provided by the non-custodial parent, if any; or
  - If there is no separation agreement, an affidavit from the parent that provides the date of the separation and outlines the custody/financial support arrangements, if any;
- In the case of the death of a parent, proof of death (e.g., a copy of the death certificate).

**Note:** In the case of a separation or divorce, documentation relating to the amount of financial support provided by the non-custodial parent, if any, is to be used as supporting documentation in the Estimated Income Review.

## STUDENT'S ONLY PARENT IS DECEASED

If a student has been accepted for OSAP purposes as having only one custodial parent (i.e., was never married, or was separated or divorced and not remarried at the time of the application) and the custodial parent dies before the halfway point of the student's study period, then the student's financial need may be calculated without any expected parental contribution.

### Documentation Required:

- A copy of the death certificate of the supporting parent (which would note the parent's marital status at time of death); and
- A letter from the student explaining their current situation.



## EXTENDED SOCIETY CARE STATUS FROM OUTSIDE ONTARIO (Formerly known as Crown Ward)

A student may be considered independent for the purposes of the OSAP assessment if he or she has Extended Society Care status from another province or jurisdiction (i.e., a current Extended Society Care or has Extended Society Care status at the time of his or her eighteenth birthday and has never been adopted or returned to family). For the purposes of OSAP, the definition of Extended Society Care status is someone who has been made a ward of the Crown pursuant to a court order made under the (Ontario) Child and Family Services Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. C.11.

If a student is able to provide documentation that he or she has Extended Society Care status from another province or jurisdiction and that he or she has not been adopted, he or she may be considered as independent for the purposes of the OSAP assessment and no parental contribution is required.

The Extended Society Care status statements in the Student Profile should be “No”, since these youth do not meet the OSAP definition of Extended Society Care status and are not eligible for the Living and Learning Grant, Ontario Access Grant for Extended Society Care status students, or 100% Tuition Aid for Youth Leaving Care.

### Documentation required:

- Written documentation from a children’s aid society or equivalent from the province or jurisdiction where the student has Extended Society Care status stating that the individual was made a ward of the Crown and that the individual has not been adopted or returned to family.
- Other types of child protection statuses are not acceptable (e.g., temporary care order, society ward, foster care, kinship care, etc.).

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION DATE

### High School Graduation Date for Homeschooled Students

If a student completed his or her secondary school education through homeschooling, it is the student’s/parent’s responsibility to identify when they consider the full-time high school studies to have been completed.

Specific indicators would vary depending on how the student completed high school credentials or equivalents and what the institution requires from homeschooled students, but may include following:

- Dates that the student completed Grade 12 U/M courses via correspondence, on-line learning, night school, day school, etc.;
- Dates that student completed some other curriculum package, if the curriculum included final exams, exam dates;
- Dates of SAT Reasoning Test/ACT and/or SAT Subject Tests;

- Dates of Advanced Placement exams;
- Homeschool Transcript form or Homeschool Credit Evaluation form – a form completed by the parent (or whoever is supervising the homeschooling) to show the subjects studied, dates completed, grades, etc.

If none of the above exist, student's acceptance into the institution may require that the student provide a summary or portfolio of the subjects or projects they studied, which should include completion dates. Sometimes the student may provide third party confirmation or evaluation (e.g., from the principal of a traditional and accredited high school) and that would include a transcript or credit evaluation, etc. and there may be dates associated with the third party information.

### LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP REVIEW

For OSAP purposes, a Legal Guardian would be considered a parent only if the legal guardian has a legal obligation to financially support the student, and the individual is not the student's parent, adoptive parent, step-parent, or sponsor. The student may or may not be living with the legal guardian.

The Full-time OSAP application no longer identifies a legal guardian as a parent.

A student with Extended Society Care status may become the subject of a custody order if there is an extended family member, community member or foster parent willing to assume the responsibility of the child until she or he is 18 years old (see also Kinship Care and Kinship Services, Customary Care Agreements below).

Court-appointed legal custody or legal guardianship does not mean there is an obligation to provide financial support and the guardian/custodian may instead have a more limited role of administering the student's financial affairs until he or she reaches the age of majority (in some cases this service is provided in return for remuneration), or in cases where a financial support obligation exists, these obligations usually end when the student reaches the age of majority (i.e., age 18).

If a Legal Guardian demonstrates that he or she does not live with and/or financially support the dependent student, but is simply administering the student's financial affairs, the student should be reassessed using the Family Breakdown override. This may be considered even where a Legal Guardian had an obligation, set out in a court order, to financially support the student, but the obligation ended when the student reaches the age of majority (age 18). Similar consideration may be granted where the student is under the age of 18, where no financial support is provided.

Note: where the family breakdown has taken place between the student and his/her parent(s), the legal guardianship or legal custody is evidence that a breakdown has occurred. A student does not have to be in a family breakdown situation with their legal guardian to be considered

for this review. In many situations the student/guardian continue to co-habitat and/or have a good relationship.

The family breakdown override will ensure that the requirement for the non- supporting legal guardian, as well as the student's biological parent(s) to complete the current or future applications is removed. Comments should be placed on the students file to advise of the decision in all cases.

If a Legal Guardian wishes to self-identify as the student's parent and complete the parental section, they may do so; however, it is not a requirement.

If a Legal Guardian has an obligation, set out in a court order, to financially support the student, but the obligation ends when the student reaches the age of majority (i.e., age 18), the student's status would not change if the student reaches age of majority during their current study period. The student must be advised to indicate a Family Breakdown on their next OSAP application.

However, if there is a logical break in the study period (e.g., upcoming winter or summer term) you may override the study period end date (to the end of the current term) and guide the student to re-apply for the remaining term(s) as a separate study period and indicate a Family Breakdown.

If a Legal Guardian has an obligation, set out in a court order, to financially support the student, the income of the Legal Guardian's spouse, if any, must be reported in the OSAP application, unless a step-parent review would apply.

**Documentation required:**

- a letter from the Legal Guardian outlining his/her relationship with, and financial responsibilities toward, the student and identifying whether the student is living with the Legal Guardian during the study period; and
- if applicable, a copy of the Court Order specifying the financial responsibilities toward the student and whether or not the financial supports, if any, continue beyond the age of majority.

If the student is living with their guardian during the study period and not paying room and board, the student should be assessed as living at home.

**Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee (OPGT)**

The Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee (OPGT) is an Ontario government office, and is part of the Ministry of the Attorney General. The OPGT serves as a guardian to individuals who are minors and have no other legal guardian or to safeguard the legal, personal, and/or financial interests of individuals who have been deemed "mentally incapable."

Typically, for individuals who are postsecondary students the OPGT would have authority to manage a mentally incapable individual's financial and related legal affairs, but would not have authority to make any personal care decisions on behalf of the individual. In this capacity, the OPGT would sign the student's OSAP application and MSFAA.

If the OPGT has a responsibility for a student solely because the student is a minor, the student must sign his or her own documents, like any other student.

## Student Restriction Issues

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While the FAAs monitor, review and process academic progress issues, only the Ministry or the federal government/NSLSC can review or provide clearance for all other “student restriction” issues. These other “student restrictions” result from issues such as:

- OSAP defaults;
- Debt reduction;
- Debt Reduction in Repayment (DRR),
- Repayment Assistance Plan (RAP) Stage 2, or
- Repayment Assistance Plan for Persons with Permanent Disabilities (RAP-PD);
- Significant income variances; and
- Breach of contract.

The borrower may have any of the following:

- Federal restrictions only;
- Provincial restrictions only; or
- Federal and provincial restrictions.

The following information outlines the procedural issues and documentation requirements for reviews of this nature.

**Note:** Student restrictions may prevent the student from applying for OSAP through the online web application; however, the web will display information to the student that outlines the nature of the restriction and the applicable remedy. Students may elect to complete and submit a paper application while decisions are being made to avoid the possibility of missed program deadlines or late application penalties (i.e., application received in excess of 45 days following the study period start date).

Student restrictions apply to future eligibility for further OSAP assistance, (i.e., loans, grants, bursaries and scholarships, and interest free status). Despite a student restriction, students who have not defaulted on their student loan(s) may remain eligible for repayment assistance programs such as:

- Revision of Repayment Terms;
- Repayment Assistance Plan;
- Severe Permanent Disability Benefit (Ontario);
- Permanent Disability Benefit (Canada).

Students should be directed to the National Student Loans Service Centre to discuss eligibility for repayment assistance.

## FEDERAL RESTRICTIONS

Students who have federal restrictions (e.g., they have defaulted on their federal student assistance debts or have received Debt Reduction in Repayment, RAP Stage 2 or RAP-PD on federal loans) will have a restriction on their file. To obtain clearance from the restriction, they must contact the Government of Canada (Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) – Canada Student Loans Program (CSLP). The student should be directed to contact HRSDC-CSLP, via the National Student Loans Service Centre, at the following address:

National Student Loans Service Centre  
PO Box 4030  
Mississauga, Ontario L5A 4M4  
Telephone: 1-888-815-4514

Note: the steps that the student must take before they can receive clearance from the federal government will vary depending on the restriction. For example, a student with Canada Student Loans in default would be required to make the minimum payments necessary to bring the loan back into good standing (e.g., repay all outstanding interest and make the equivalent of two monthly payments).

If the student receives federal clearance and is approved for additional federal funding, then HRSDC-CSLP will provide the student with a written clearance decision, known as a Clearance Letter.

- The HRSDC-CSLP will notify the Ministry that the student has received clearance through an automatic electronic file transfer. When the Ministry receives electronic notice of the clearance, the Ministry will update the student's OSAP file and eligibility for further federal funding under OSAP will be considered. Typically, the Ministry may receive the electronic clearance notice several weeks after the clearance letter is sent to the student.

### **Documentation required:**

- None. Since federal clearance is communicated electronically between HRSDC-CSLP and the Ministry, FAAs are not required to send any documentation to the Ministry to request clearance.

**Notes:** "Conditional" Clearance Letters issued by the federal government outline the steps the student must take in order to receive official federal clearance. These letters do not provide federal clearance and as a result, students who received these letters are not included in HRSDC-CSLP's electronic clearance notice that is sent to the Ministry.

- A copy of a letter from a lender (e.g., the NSLSC) indicating the student's federal assistance is in good standing will NOT be accepted in lieu of the electronic clearance notice from HRSDC-CSLP.

If the student has only a federal restriction and no provincial restriction:

- Federal clearance will allow the OSAP application to process for full funding (i.e., both the Canada and Ontario portion), depending upon all other eligibility factors;
- As long as the student has a federal restriction, provincial funding will not be issued; and
- Once federal clearance is received, provincial clearance is not required (if there is no provincial restriction).

If all criteria for reinstatement are met and the student becomes eligible to receive OSAP funding during a study period, the student will be assessed from the start of the study period, provided all applicable deadlines are met.

## PROVINCIAL RESTRICTIONS

Students who have a provincial restriction on their file because they have defaulted on their provincial student assistance debt are not eligible for further provincial assistance until they rehabilitate their loan. Students who have received provincial debt reduction are not eligible for further provincial assistance until the provincial debt has been repaid in full.

In some cases the student would still be eligible to receive the Canada portion of OSAP funding (i.e., if there are no federal restrictions on file). The process for students to determine the current status of their Ontario debt and make payments on their debt varies depending on whether or not the student has defaulted on their provincial student assistance debt.

If all criteria for reinstatement are met and the student becomes eligible to receive OSAP funding during a study period, the student will be assessed from the start of the study period, provided all applicable deadlines are met.

### **a) Provincial default**

Students who have a provincial restriction on their file because they have defaulted on provincial student assistance debts may contact the private collection agency that has their loan to apply for the Ontario Student Loan Rehabilitation Program. If the student does not know which agency has their loan, they may contact the Account Management and Collections Branch of the Ministry of Finance:

Account Management and Collections Branch  
Ministry of Finance  
Phone: 416-326-0500  
Toll-free: 1-800-387-5604.

### **b) Provincial debt reduction**

If the student has received debt reduction on provincial student assistance debts and the debt is currently in good standing, that is, the student has not defaulted, the student must be advised to contact the following to confirm the status of their debt and to make payments:

- The lender (bank, financial institution) if the student has an Ontario Student Loans issued prior to August 1, 2001;
- Contact the National Student Loan Service Centre for Ontario Student Loans issued after July 31, 2001.

### **c) Reviews for Provincial Restrictions**

Once the provincial debt has been rehabilitated or paid in full, students can request a review of their situation to determine whether they are eligible for further funding.

#### **Documentation required:**

- A letter from the student requesting a review of their eligibility for further provincial funding, including information on the current status of their provincial debt; and
- Proof that the provincial debt has been repaid in full (e.g. most recent statement of account from the agency holding the debt) or rehabilitated.

## **PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL RESTRICTIONS**

If the student has a federal and a provincial restriction issue, then upon receipt of proof of federal clearance from the student, the Ministry will release the current OSAP application for processing for federal funding only.

Additional provincial funding will be provided once two conditions have been met:

- Proof of federal clearance through electronic clearance notice (as described above); and
- Completion of a successful review to remove the provincial restriction.

If all criteria for reinstatement are met and the student becomes eligible to receive OSAP funding during a study period, the student will be assessed from the start of the study period, provided all applicable deadlines are met.



## Living Allowance for Single Students

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### INDEPENDENT SINGLE STUDENT PAYS ROOM AND BOARD TO PARENTS

The calculation of the pre-study period income contribution for independent single students living at home is based on the student's net income after the deduction of the student's living costs assuming an at-home living allowance rate. If the student pays room and board to his/her parents, the student's pre-study period income contribution can be calculated with a higher living allowance than the at-home rate. The amount used is the at home living allowance plus the actual amount of the room and board payments up to the maximum away from home living allowance.

In addition, single independent students are assessed with an at home living allowance if they are living with their parents during the study period. If a student pays room and board to his/her parents during the study period, a student can be considered for a higher living allowance than the at home rate. The amount used is the at home living allowance plus room and board payments up to the maximum away from home living allowance.

#### Documentation required:

- Completed [Request for Review – Adjust Living Allowance Form](#)
- Signed letter from the student indicating that he/she lives at home and must pay room and board or rent to his or her parents;
- A signed letter from the parents confirming that the student resides(ed) with them during the pre-study period and/or study period and that they collect(ed) room and board from him/her; and,
- Proof of room and board payments for the pre-study period and/or study period (e.g., cancelled cheque or receipt(s)). Note: receipts are not acceptable unless substantiated by cancelled cheques and/or bank statements showing that financial transactions actually occurred.

### SINGLE DEPENDENT STUDENT LIVES AWAY FROM HOME DURING STUDY PERIOD

A single dependent student is automatically assessed with an "at home" living allowance for the study period (regardless of what they report on their application) if his/her principal residence is less than 30 kilometres from the postsecondary institution or less than one hour from the postsecondary institution by public transit.

If a single dependent student in this circumstance is actually residing away from home, he or she can be assessed with an "away from home" living allowance through a review if the student provides proof of living away from home. No justification for living away from home is required.

**Note:** A dependent student who is taking entirely on-line or distance education courses is not required to live at home with his or her parents. No justification for living away from home is required.

A dependent student who is living in a separate apartment in his or her parent's home is not considered living away from home even if he or she is paying rent.

**Documentation required:**

- Completed [Request for Review – Adjust Living Allowance Form](#);
- Proof that the student is living away from home during the study period and incurring living expenses (i.e., living in residence, rental agreement, land line telephone bill, utilities bill, etc.).

## Significant Income Variances

The Ministry verifies student income as reported on the OSAP application against income information provided to Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) by the student. If the Ministry determines a significant variance between these income amounts, then the student is notified in writing of the duration of the resulting restriction.

Reinstatement of eligibility after receipt of a student income verification restriction cannot occur until:

- The end of the period identified in the letter; and
- The day the student repays all interest and principal owing on the outstanding Ontario portion of any Canada-Ontario Integrated Student Loan (issued on or after August 1, 2001) and Ontario Student Loans (issued prior to August 1, 2001) if applicable.

Under usual circumstances, when a student makes a payment on his or her student loan, it is applied against outstanding Canada Student Loans and Ontario Student Loans according to standard rules. If a student wishes to direct a payment specifically toward outstanding Ontario Student Loans only for the purpose of addressing a significant income variance restriction, the Ministry must authorize the directed payment with the service provider. It is therefore the student's responsibility to advise their FAA that the payment is to be applied to their provincial funding.

### Notes:

- Regular payments or payment under RAP that a student has been making over a period of time cannot be redirected after the fact toward Ontario Student Loans. The intent of this policy is to allow students to make lump sum payments toward their provincial loans for the purpose of addressing an income variance restriction.

Students who meet the reinstatement conditions above and who wish to be considered for further student financial assistance must contact:

Student Financial Assistance Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities  
PO Box 4500, 189 Red River Road,  
4th Floor Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6G9  
Telephone: (807) 343-7260  
Toll-free in North America: 1-877-OSAP-411 (1-877-672-7411)  
Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD/TTY): 1-800-465-3958  
Fax: (807) 343-7278

Students must include supporting documentation to show their Ontario funding has been repaid in full (e.g. most recent statement of account from the agency holding the debt).

**Notes:** If all criteria for reinstatement are met and the student becomes eligible to receive OSAP funding during a study period, the student will only be assessed from the date the restriction was lifted to the study period end date.

#### **a) Revised Income Tax Information**

A student may notify the FAA that the income information provided to the Ministry by CRA has been reassessed by CRA. The CRA reassessment information provided by the student to the FAA must be dated after the date upon which the Ministry conducted income verification.

#### **Documentation required:**

- A letter from the student requesting a review of their current situation, including an explanation of the reason for the CRA reassessment; and
- A copy of the student's most recent Notice of Reassessment as issued by CRA.

Once this information has been reviewed by the Ministry, the student will be issued a decision regarding his/her eligibility for further funding.

#### **b) Conflicting Income Amounts: Process for Verification of Income**

In the case of conflicting income amounts reported to OSAP and CRA, a student will be issued a letter from the Ministry at the time that income verification is completed. The letter will include a Verification of Income form that the student must complete providing more detailed information and documentation regarding the timing and amounts of income received. This form must be submitted to the Ministry in order to have the student's situation reviewed. The form includes specific instructions on the supporting documentation that must be provided to support the student's review request.

If the student has lost or misplaced the Verification of Income form, the student may contact the Ministry directly to request a duplicate form or the FAA.

## Credit Checks

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Students who fail their OSAP credit check can apply for review if they can demonstrate all of the following:

- Their financial difficulties were due to circumstances beyond their control (e.g. job loss, marital breakdown, illness, etc.);
- They are now financially stable; and
- They will be able to repay any further student loans that may be issued to them.

### **Documentation Required:**

As indicated on the [Credit Check Review form](#), the student must provide all the following to support their review request.

- A letter outlining the timeline of events that resulted in their financial difficulties, including:
  - An explanation of how the circumstances that led to their financial difficulties were beyond their control.
  - Documentation to support the events outlined in their timeline. Examples of possible documentation include:
    - Proof of layoff or job dismissal (e.g., Record of Employment, letter from employer);
    - Proof of marital breakdown (e.g., separation agreement, divorce judgement, court order);
    - Documentation from a professional third party who was directly involved in the event(s) outlined (e.g. family physician, police officer, social worker);
- A budget that clearly outlines how they are addressing their current debts and living expenses, including:
  - Documentation to support the information in their budget. Examples of possible documentation include:
    - Proof that the student participated in credit counselling and/or other efforts made to improve their credit rating;
    - Proof the student has paid their recent bills on time (e.g., rent/mortgage payments, utilities, credit card payments);
    - Proof that the student has a stable income source that allows them to meet their current living costs and pay down their outstanding debts (if applicable).
  - A letter explaining they plan to repay any OSAP loans that may be issued to them, including details to support their repayment plans:
    - The field of employment/type of job they plan to pursue after completing their program of study;

- Any career counselling they've participated in that supports the suitability of their program of study to their career choice;
- The annual income they expect to earn;
- The job opportunities that exist in their planned field of employment; and
- How their program of study supports their employment plans.
- Students who have indicated "yes" to the question "Have you ever filed for bankruptcy or initiated a related event?" must provide the Liability Page of their bankruptcy document.

## Extraordinary Expenses

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The Extraordinary Expense reviews listed below decrease the amount of the expected contribution from parental income for a dependent student. Specifically, in the calculation of the expected parental contribution, the amount of the extraordinary expense is deducted from the gross income as part of the process of determining discretionary income.

Extraordinary expense reviews do not increase the student's allowable costs and they have no impact on the family income that is used for the purposes of determining eligibility for Canada Student Grants and Ontario Student Grants. Extraordinary expense reviews have no impact on the student's assessment if there is no expected parental contribution in the Canada or Ontario need assessment.

Extraordinary Expense reviews must meet the following criteria:

- The allowable costs have been incurred (or will be incurred) during the student's study period;
- The income (taxable and non-taxable and/or foreign income) of the student's parent(s) has been verified; and
- An estimated income review has not been approved for the parent incurring the expense (e.g., child or spousal support). If the expense is incurred by both parents (e.g., house repairs) an estimated income review can be approved for one parent i.e., the parent who does not claim the extraordinary expense), but not both.

### CHILD/SPOUSAL SUPPORT PAYMENTS

Payments made by the parent(s) of a dependent for child support for a dependent child or spousal support for a former spouse are allowable extraordinary expenses if they meet the following requirements:

- the payments are made during the student's study period;
- the parent claiming child support costs is not the custodial parent for that child.

#### **Documentation required:**

- a copy of the separation/divorce agreement indicating that the parent has a legal responsibility to make payments for a child or to a former spouse. If there is no separation agreement, an affidavit that provides the date of the separation and outlines the custodial/financial arrangements;
- proof of payments that have been made to date (e.g., receipts, cancelled cheques or a signed statement from the former spouse or custodial parent indicating the amount of payments that were received).
- a letter from the parent making the payments showing a calculation of the amounts that will be paid during the student's study period.

## ESSENTIAL HOUSE REPAIRS

The cost of essential house repairs paid by the parent(s) of a dependent student are allowable extraordinary expenses if they meet the following requirements.

- The costs are for essential house repairs only;
- They are paid during the student's study period;
- The costs are not covered by insurance.

### Documentation required:

- letter from the parent(s) describing the type and necessity of the repair;
- receipts itemizing expenses incurred, and the amount and dates of payments made during the student's study period;
- proof of costs covered by insurance plan, if applicable; and
- a copy of the building permit/contract for the repairs, if applicable.

## FUNERAL COSTS

Funeral costs incurred by the parents of dependent students are allowable extraordinary expenses if they meet the following requirements:

- They were paid during the student's study period;
- They were not covered (and will not be covered) by the deceased's estate, Canada Pension Plan (CPP) - Death Benefits, another government agency, or private insurance plan benefits.

### Documentation required:

- a letter from the parent(s) itemizing the costs incurred during the student's study period that have not been covered, and will not be covered by other sources;
- receipts from the funeral home to confirm the amount and dates of payments made by the parent(s) during the student's study period;
- a statement from the estate's executor/executrix, CPP - Death Benefits, other government agency, and/or other private insurance plan(s) itemizing the costs that were covered or will be covered (if not included in the statement from the funeral home).

## LEGAL FEES

Legal fees, including, but not limited to, separation/divorce and criminal/civil cases that were paid by the parent(s) of a dependent student are allowable extraordinary expenses if they meet the following requirements:

- The fees were paid during the student's study period;



- Legal fees related to the purchase of a home or the operation of a business are not allowable extraordinary costs.
- Amounts that have been billed but not paid during the study period cannot be claimed as extraordinary expenses.

**Documentation required:**

- An itemized statement from the parents' lawyer indicating the reason for the costs, date of payments and amounts paid during the student's study period.

**UNINSURED MEDICAL, DENTAL AND OPTICAL EXPENSES**

Uninsured medical expenses paid by the parents of dependent students are allowable extraordinary expenses if they meet the following requirements:

- The payments were made during the student's study period for the parents themselves or their dependent children, including dependent children over 18 with disabilities, if applicable.
- The costs are not covered by OHIP, an employee benefit plan or a private insurance plan;
- If the parents have an insurance/employee benefit plan that does not provide 100% coverage, the amount of the uncovered balance may be considered.
- The costs are eligible to be claimed for income tax purposes and do not exceed amounts allowed by CRA.

**Documentation required:**

- A letter from the parent who will be claiming the costs on their Canadian income tax return, itemizing the costs, identifying the tax year the costs will be claimed and the amounts that will be claimed on Line 330 and/or Line 331 of their tax return;
- And one of the following:
  - receipts from the physician, dentist or optometrist summarizing the costs incurred during the student's study period; or
  - Proof from the insurance company/benefit plan indicating the amount of the costs incurred during the student's study period that are being covered.

Medical expenses for the individual, their spouse or common-law partner and dependent children under 18 are claimed on Line 330. Line 331 is for medical expenses claimed for other dependants.

## SELF-FUNDED EDUCATIONAL COSTS

The costs of tuition, compulsory fees, and books and supplies paid for attendance at an educational institution are allowable extraordinary expenses for parents of dependent students if they meet the following requirements:

- The parent's study period overlaps with the student's study period;
- The parent's direct educational costs have been self-funded;
- The parent is not an OSAP recipient;
  - If the parent is an OSAP recipient, the parent's direct educational costs cannot be considered for review purposes;
- The parent is not a Second Career (SC) recipient (see required documentation below)

### Documentation required:

- Receipts for the amount of tuition, compulsory fees and books purchased (receipts must indicate the name of the educational institution attended);
- a letter from the parent stating that he/she did not receive any OSAP or Second Career Funding or other government financial assistance for the program costs.

## EDUCATIONAL COSTS FUNDED BY SECOND CAREER OR OTHER GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE FOR TRAINING OR EDUCATION

If the parent of a dependent student is receiving Second Career funding or other government assistance during the student's study period that is intended to help with direct educational costs for training or education, see [Estimated Income Reviews](#).

## PAYMENT OF STUDENT LOANS

Minimum required payments for government student loans made by parents of dependent students are allowable extraordinary expenses if they meet the following requirements:

- The payments are made during the student's study period;
- The payments are made for government student loans for full-time or part-time studies;
- Payments to private lenders' student loan programs cannot be considered unless the parent converted their government-funded student loans to a private lender's loan program.

### Documentation required – Government student loans:

- Copy of the government student loan consolidation agreement between the parent(s) and the financial institution or NSLSC indicating the minimum monthly payment;

- If a consolidation agreement is not available, other proof from the parent showing the amount of their required monthly payments (e.g., letter from NSLSC, withdrawals from bank account, etc.)
- A calculation of the total amount of the payments that will be made during the student's study period.

**Documentation required – Government student loans converted to private loans:**

- A signed statement from the financial institution confirming that government-funded student loans were converted to a private lenders loan program. The financial institution's statement must indicate the total amount of converted student loan, the conversion date, and the amount of each loan payments made to date;
- A calculation of the total amount of payments that will be made during the student's study period, based on the average amount of the payments made to date.

**REPAYMENT OF LOAN/GRANT/BURSARY OVERPAYMENTS**

The repayment of a loan, grant or bursary overpayment made by a parent of a dependent student is an allowable extraordinary expense if the payment meets the following requirements:

- The repayment is for the parent's OSAP overpayment and has been entered into the OSAP system on the parent's file;
- The parent repaid the full amount of their overpayment for the purpose of receiving clearance on their current year OSAP application;
- The repayment is made during the student's study period.

**Documentation required:**

Loan Overpayments:

- A copy of the receipt from the NSLSC showing the date and the amount of the payment.

Bursary/Grant Overpayments:

- The FAA can use the online inquiry system or proof of payment from the parent to determine the extraordinary expense.
- The parent should be referred to the collection agency holding his/her account to make repayment arrangements, if necessary. Once repayment in full by certified funds has been processed, a receipt will be provided to the parent that the student can submit to his/her FAA for extraordinary expense review consideration.
- For grant funds issued through the NSLSC, the student must submit a copy of the receipt from the NSLSC to the FAA showing the date and amount of payment.

## CHILD CARE FOR DEPENDENT CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES 12 AND OLDER

The costs of child care/attendant care are allowable extraordinary expenses if they are incurred by parents of dependent students and they meet the following requirements:

- The costs are for child care or attendant care of the parent's dependent child with a disability who is 12 years of age and older;
- The costs were paid during the student's study period.

### Documentation required:

- Receipts for costs paid to date;
- A letter from the parent(s) which indicates the nature of the child's disability and includes a calculation of the costs that will be incurred during the student's study period, based on costs paid to date (i.e., average monthly payments / 4.3 x weeks in study period).

## MAINTAINING TWO RESIDENCES

If a parent of a dependent student must live in another community, away from the family home, because of employment, the additional living costs related to the maintenance of the second residence are allowable extraordinary expenses if they meet the following requirements:

- The costs were incurred during the student's study period;
- Allowable costs are mortgage payments on the second residence, rent payments, or board and lodging costs and return travel costs, and do not include maintenance and insurance costs for a vehicle;
- The amount claimed cannot exceed the actual allowable costs incurred during the student's study period to a maximum of 25% of the away parent's income (as reported on the OSAP application).

### Documentation required:

- a letter from the parent(s) indicating that one parent must reside away from his/her family home (principal residence) for employment purposes and a calculation of the costs that will be incurred during the student's study period;
- a letter from both of the parent's employers confirming the locations of each parent's regular employment; The letter from the "away" parent's employer must confirm what costs if any are covered by the employer;
- proof that the family is maintaining two residences during the student's study period (e.g., a copy of the rental agreement or mortgage from the second residence).

## CARE OF DEPENDENT RELATIVES

Costs incurred by the parents of dependent students for the care of elderly or infirm relatives residing in Canada (excluding children) are allowable extraordinary expenses if they meet the following requirements:

- The costs were incurred and paid during the student's study period;
- The dependent relative is living in the household of the parent claiming the costs or in an institution, such as a nursing home.
- The cost claimed does not exceed the maximum allowable cost of \$2,000 per relative per academic year, and an overall maximum of \$4,000 per family

**Documentation required:**

A signed statement from the parents:

- explaining the amount of support given, the address of the dependent relative, the reason for the support, and the relationship of the parent(s) to the relative.
- Showing a calculation of the costs that will be incurred during the student's study period.
- Receipts that support the calculation of costs during the study period:
- if the dependent relative does not reside in the family home - receipts from the nursing home or institution to date;
- if the dependant resides in the family home, receipts confirming the costs incurred and paid by the parents to date, including all applicable receipts.

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO A REGISTERED DISABILITY SAVINGS PLAN**

The cost of contributions made toward a Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) is an allowable extraordinary expense for parents of dependent students if it meets the following requirements:

- The contribution is made during the student's study period;
- The RDSP contribution is made for the parents themselves or for one or more of their dependent children

**Documentation required:**

- Documentation showing that an RDSP has been set up for the parent(s) or one or more of their children;
- Proof of the amount of payments that have been made to the RDSP(s) to date
- Calculation of the amount of payments that will be made during the student's study period based on average payments made to date.

**PARENTS WORKING IN THE U.S. AND FILING TAXES IN CANADA AND THE U.S.**

Parents of dependent students who are working in the U.S. and who file income taxes in both Canada and the U.S. may claim the income tax liability in the U.S. as an extraordinary expense if it meets the following requirements:

- Only the portion of the tax liability that applies to the student's study period is claimed as an extraordinary expense;

- The parent has not been approved for an estimated income review.

**Documentation required:**

- a copy of the Income Verification: Foreign and/or Non-Taxable
- Income form;
- copy of the Notice of Assessment from Canada;
- a copy of the Tax Account Transcript or the Record of Account Transcript from the U.S.; and
- a letter from the student's parents or spouse, as applicable, explaining their employment situation and a calculation of the amount of tax liability that applies to the student's study period (i.e., the amount of US tax payments minus the amount reported on Line 435 of the Canadian tax return / 52 weeks x number of weeks in study period).

**ADJUSTMENT FOR DOUBLE-COUNTING OF WSIB COMPENSATION**

An adjustment may be made to parental or spousal income if compensation received from the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) is double counted on line 150 of the parent or spouse's income tax return. WSIB compensation may be double counted in Line 150 if an employer paid the employee's salary or sick credits while the employee was off work, and then WSIB reimbursed the employer.

**Reporting of WSIB Income on Income Tax Return:**

Line 150 (Total Income) includes:

- Line 101, Employment income from Box 14 on individual's T4 slips. This amount includes injury related compensation from employer;
- Line 144, Workers Compensation Benefits from Box 10 of the individual's T5007 issued by WSIB; showing the amount WSIB received by the employee directly from WSIB or reimbursed to the employer;

Line 229 (employment expenses)

- From box 77 of the individual's T4, showing the amount of reimbursement that the employer received from WSIB.

**Who is eligible for this review?**

- Parents of dependent students who have reported actual income for assessment purposes;
- Spouses/common-law partners of married students who have reported actual income for assessment purposes.

**Documentation required:**

- Letter from WSIB specifying the amount of WSIB benefit that was double counted in line 150 of parent/spouse income tax return. [This should be consistent with the amount reported in Box 77 of the parent/spouse T4 and the amount of Other Employment Expenses claimed on line 229 of the parent/spouse tax return]; or
- A copy of the parent/spouse income tax return or Canada Revenue Agency Notice of Assessment (check lines 101, 144, 229); a copy of the T4 slip (showing the amount in Box 77); and a copy of the T5007 slip (showing the amount of WSIB benefits received). The amount of parental income would be adjusted by the amount in Box 77 (must be consistent with the amount in Box 10 of T5007 and the amount in line 229 of the income tax return).

### PARENTS OF STUDENT WITH DISABILITY DRIVING STUDENT TO SCHOOL

If the parents of a student with a permanent disability drive a student to school because the student is unable to use public transportation for reasons related to his or her disability, the fuel costs are an allowable extraordinary expense if they meet the following requirements:

- The allowable amount cannot exceed the actual calculated costs for the student's study period to a maximum of \$136.74 per week of study (\$588 per month);
- The allowable amount claimed does not include maintenance costs or insurance for the vehicle;
- The reasons for not using public transit would include, but would not be limited to mobility-related reasons;
- For the purpose of calculating the amount of the costs, the costs have been incurred for a minimum of four weeks.

#### Documentation required:

- a letter from the parent indicating the total number of trips per week and a calculation of the fuel costs per trip incurred by the parent during the student's current study period;
- a detailed description of the travel (e.g., home and institution marked on a map of the area);
- Medical documentation is on file supporting the student's permanent disability and providing rationale for why the disability would prevent the student from using public transit; and
- Documentation in the student's file confirms the course schedule indicating the days and times in school.

### OSAP APPLICANT HAS DEPENDENT(S) IN POSTSECONDARY STUDIES

If an OSAP applicant (married student or sole support parent) has a dependent child in postsecondary studies who has also applied for OSAP funding, the income of the OSAP applicant and his or her spouse (if

any) is considered in the calculation of an expected family contribution. The same income also is considered in the dependent child's OSAP assessment, as an expected parental contribution.

This review allows the amount of the expected parental contribution in the child(ren)'s OSAP assessment to be considered an extraordinary expense in the parent's OSAP assessment. The review is intended for situations where an OSAP applicant (married student or sole support parent) has one or more dependent children who have also applied for OSAP and

- The assessment for the married student or sole support parent shows an expected family contribution; and
- The assessment for the dependent child(ren) shows an expected parental contribution.

Documentation required:

- Each dependent child who is also an OSAP applicant must provide his or her SIN and provide permission for their parent's Financial Aid Office to view their OSAP assessment to determine the expected parental contribution amount.



## Social Assistance and Other Government Income

### ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

ODSP recipients, and their expected contributors who are ODSP recipients, may be considered for the following reviews of costs and resources, if they meet the eligibility requirements:

- To add extraordinary travel costs;
- To waive student fixed contribution after program change or reinstatement or;
- To adjust international experience/travel awards and grants for correct study period;
- To adjust parental/spousal income contributions;
- Estimated Income Reviews for parent or spouse
- To adjust contributions from assets.

If a student and/or their spouse are in receipt of ODSP income support during the study period, the amount of OSAP funding they are assessed eligible to receive may have an impact on their ODSP income support. The student may choose to contact the Financial Aid Office to request an adjustment to his or her OSAP file, rather than have the ODSP income support reduced.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify their ODSP caseworker when they are receiving OSAP funding, and it is the responsibility of the caseworker to ensure that ODSP regulations and policy directives are followed when an ODSP recipient receives OSAP funding. FAAs should not initiate an adjustment to a student's OSAP file without the student's request, and should not put a hold on an ODSP recipient's OSAP file.

If the student chooses to have his or her OSAP file adjusted, the ODSP caseworker must identify to the student the amount of OSAP funding the student can keep without affecting ODSP income support. Typically, the amount confirmed by the ODSP caseworker will be one of the following:

#### **OSAP Allowable Educational Costs:**

In most cases, the total amount of OSAP funding an ODSP recipient can keep will match the amount identified as "OSAP Allowable Educational Costs" on the student's OSAP Assessment Summary Form. These costs include tuition fees, compulsory fees, and allowances for books, supplies, equipment and computer costs, and local transportation.

### **Revised Allowable Educational Costs:**

In some situations, where a student's actual direct education and/or transportation costs are higher than the calculated OSAP Allowable Educational Costs, ODSP regulations and Policy Directives allow the student to keep a different amount (see Background notes below). In these cases, the ODSP caseworker will provide a revised amount of allowable educational costs that the student is able to keep. The revised amount cannot exceed the "Total Funding" on the student's OSAP assessment.

If the amount confirmed by the ODSP caseworker is less than the amount of "Total Funding" on the student's OSAP Assessment/Reassessment form, an adjustment to the student's OSAP assessment is required.

### **Documentation required:**

- Written documentation from the student and/or the student's ODSP caseworker verifying the total amount of OSAP funding that the student can keep without affecting their ODSP income supports.
- Students whose parents are on ODSP: OSAP funding should have no impact on the ODSP income support received by the student's parents. The student's OSAP file should not be reassessed.

### **Background Notes:**

An ODSP recipient who wishes to pursue postsecondary education may receive OSAP funding for direct education and transportation costs while continuing to receive ODSP income support. The amount of OSAP funding an ODSP recipient can keep is determined by the ODSP caseworker and is based on ODSP regulation and policy. In general, ODSP recipients may keep the following OSAP funding amounts:

- OSAP loans, grants and bursaries for funding equal to their actual direct educational costs and transportation costs.
- Some grants and bursaries even in the rare case where the total value of the grants and bursaries exceed the students' actual direct educational costs and transportation costs.

Any amount of OSAP funding received by the student which exceeds the amount the ODSP caseworker has determined that the student can keep will be considered a "living allowance" for the purposes of ODSP income support. The "living allowance" is treated as income under the ODSP and deducted dollar for dollar from income support on a prorated basis for the duration of the study period if the student chooses to keep this funding.

In some cases, the student's actual costs for "direct education and transportation costs" are higher than the amount of OSAP funding allowed for those costs. Where the student informs the ODSP caseworker of higher actual "OSAP Allowable Educational Costs" they must provide verification of the actual costs to the ODSP caseworker.

In cases where the ODSP caseworker has determined that OSAP funding would affect ODSP income support (resulting in a “living allowance”), students have the option of having their OSAP reassessed or having their ODSP income support adjusted.

### ONTARIO WORKS (OW)

Single individuals are not eligible for OW funding when they are full-time students in receipt of OSAP. In some cases, a student continues to receive OW income supports during the study period until OSAP funding is in place. When OSAP funding is in place, the student is expected to notify his or her OW caseworker and the OW funding is discontinued. The student is expected to repay the amount of the OW income supports for the overlapping period.

If a single dependent or independent student reports OW income support during the study period, the amount of OW funding is deducted from the OSAP living allowance.

If a student provides proof that he or she never received OW income support during the study period, or paid back all or a portion of the OW income that they reported on their OSAP application, the amount may be deducted from the student’s government income for the study period (Item 630).

#### **Documentation required:**

- Letter from the student’s OW caseworker identifying the amount of OW income support funding that was repaid by the student, or confirming that no OW income was received during the study period.

#### **Students Whose Parents are Receiving OW Income Support**

OSAP funding may have an impact on the OW income support received by the student’s parents. If a reassessment is required, it is done on the OW file. No OSAP reassessment should be necessary.

## Adjust Contribution from Other Assets

The following review may be considered to adjust the expected contribution from other assets.

The amount listed on the OSAP application for other assets should include other assets which can be directed toward educational costs for the current study period described below.

OSAP funds from the previous study period (i.e., academic year) are not to be included in the value of financial assets available for the current study period. Students who are in receipt of OSAP during the four months prior to the start of the current study period can request an adjustment if they have included OSAP funds relating to this study period.

### ITEMS INCORRECTLY INCLUDED AS OTHER ASSETS

If a student has incorrectly included the value of personal items such as primary residence, clothing, household items, and computers as other assets on their OSAP application or incorrectly reported RRSPs or RESPs as other assets, or reported commercial (non-residential) property that is owned by the student or the student's spouse for the purpose of operating a business (e.g., self-employment tradesperson) the FAA may request clarification from the student. Note: commercial property does not include situations where a student or spouse owns real estate that is not their primary residence and is operating it as an income property.

Once the Student Awards Office is satisfied with the student's clarification, the Student Awards Office may adjust the student's asset value.

#### **Documentation Required:**

- Letter from student identifying the items that were incorrectly included as other assets on the application and the value of each item; and
- Additional supporting documentation showing the value of the item may be requested, such as, proof of value of personal item, primary residence, RRSPs, or RESPs.

### STUDENT REPORTED VEHICLE AS OTHER ASSETS

If a student has mistakenly listed a vehicle as “other assets,” they may request a review to have the amount of the vehicle removed.

**Documentation Required:**

The student must provide a letter indicating:

- That the vehicle was incorrectly included in “other assets” and requesting to remove it; and
- The dollar value to be removed from assets.

**Note:** An appraisal or additional documentation to support the value of the vehicle is not required.

### PAIN AND SUFFERING AWARDS

Pain and suffering awards, including amounts for medical costs, medications, and the general damages component of personal injury awards and WSIB Non-Economic Loss (NEL) awards are exempt from assets.

**Documentation required:**

- A copy of a letter from WSIB, legal court document, or payment stubs specifying a pain and suffering or NEL award, the amount(s) paid and the date(s) received.

### LIFE INSURANCE BENEFICIARY

The beneficiary of a life insurance policy with a payout value that is less than \$100,000 will have that amount exempt from assets. Any amount over \$100,000 is considered an asset.

The exemption only applies to one-time lump-sum payouts of a life insurance policy and does not apply towards any income-generating trust funds or insurance policies.

This exemption does not apply to the cash surrender value of a life insurance policy and is only to be used in the case of a policy payout to a beneficiary in the event of the policy holder’s death.

**Documentation required:**

- Verification of the amount of the life insurance payout and the date received, provided by the insurance company or applicant’s lawyer.

### FUNDING FROM AN IN-TRUST ACCOUNT

An in-trust account is an “informal trust” set up with a financial institution to invest funds for a minor (the “beneficiary”). A donor contributes to the plan for the beneficiary. The trustee (who can be different from the donor) manages the investments in the account and acts on behalf of the beneficiary until the

beneficiary reaches the age of majority. The assets belong beneficially to the child and must generally be held for the child until the age of majority.

As outlined below, money held in or withdrawn from a student's In-Trust Account may or may not be considered an asset or income when assessing the financial need.

**a) In-Trust Accounts as Income**

Withdrawals (payments) and/or interest/dividends received from an In-Trust Account in the current study period that are made by the student or by the account's trustee and transferred to the student must be reported as either pre-study or study period income on the OSAP application, depending on when the amount was withdrawn/paid.

**b) In-Trust Accounts as Assets**

The value of an In-Trust Account is not considered an asset.

**c) In-Trust Accounts that are Exempt from the Need Assessment**

If ANY of the following are true, then an In-Trust Account is exempt from the student's need assessment:

- The trustee of the account or the student cannot access the account for any reason until the student reaches a specified age (i.e., student/trustee cannot withdraw funds during current study period);  
or
- The student will not come of age during the current study period, and the trustee has refused to exercise discretion to remove funds from the account for the student's use; or
- The conditions attached to the account explicitly state that the funds are not to be used for postsecondary studies.

**Documentation required:**

- A copy of the documentation used to determine the conditions under which the student and/or the trustee have access to the funds;
- A letter signed and dated by the student indicating that he/she contacted the trustee to disburse the funding; and
- A letter signed and dated by the trustee indicating refusal to disburse any funds to the student during his/her current study period, if applicable, or indicating the total amount that was or will be disbursed to the student during the current study period.

**REGISTERED DISABILITY SAVINGS PLAN (RDSP) HELD BY STUDENT OR SPOUSE**

These savings **are not** considered assets.

**Documentation required:**

- Documentation showing the value of an RDSP held by the student and/or spouse.

## SAVINGS HELD BY NEW IMMIGRANTS

Independent, married or sole support parents who are new immigrants may be required to use their savings that they brought with them to Canada to cover living costs during the pre-study period, if they are unable to find employment or if they are legally unable to work in Canada. Assets for these students may be reduced by an amount equal to the amount of OSAP living allowance for the pre-study period.

### **Documentation required:**

- Proof that the individual immigrated to Canada within six months of the start of the pre-study period;
- Proof that they were seeking employment (e.g., a copy of their job search with the list of employers they have contacted) or proof that they do not have a permanent SIN; and
- Proof that they are incurring living costs for the pre-study period (e.g., copy of a lease)
- If a student is living with relatives and paying part of the living expenses or room and board, the student must provide a letter from the relatives confirming that the student resided with them during the pre-study period and the amount of room and board expenses they paid. In addition, the student would be required to provide cancelled cheques or bank statements showing the transactions occurred.

## Estimated Income

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**Note:** Eligibility for Canada Student Grants is based on previous year's income only, as per federal requirements. There is no review of Canada Student Grant eligibility based on estimated current year income.

A student may request that his/her financial need be assessed using parental or spousal estimated current year income rather than actual previous year income when the estimated income would be a better indicator of the family's current financial situation because of non-recurring and major changes to the parental or spousal income.

### Documentation Required:

- Completed [OSAP Application Update: Request to use Parent's Estimated Income](#) form for applicable academic year, **or**
- Substantiating documentation for the explanation provided;

**Note:** A request to use estimated income cannot be considered if the circumstance is recurring or does not constitute a major change in parental/spousal income (i.e., overtime wages).

### Impact of Estimated Income Reviews:

- Estimated income is used to calculate expected parental or spousal contributions in the Canada and Ontario need assessments;
- Estimated Income is used to calculate the family income used to determine amount of Ontario Student Grant (OSG)-Base and the percentage of Ontario need-based funding that is Ontario Student Loan vs. OSG.
- Estimated Income does not affect Canada Student Grant (CSG) eligibility. CSG eligibility continues to be based on prior year family income.
- Estimated income will be used in the calculation of student fixed contribution for a married student (without children) or a dependent student in the Canada need assessment.
- If Estimated Income is used for a parent or spouse, income must be verified within (24 months after study period start date, rather than 12 months).

### Verification of Estimated Income:

The ministry will verify the estimated Canadian taxable income with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) when the income tax information becomes available.



If the parent or spouse has non-taxable or foreign income, they will be required to complete a Parental or Spousal Income Verification: Non- Taxable and/or Foreign Income form when it becomes available in the academic year.

The student's OSAP application will be reassessed when income is verified through CRA and/or the Income Verification: Foreign and/or Non- taxable Income form. The student will be responsible for the repayment of any loan or grant overpayment that may be generated from this reassessment.

If income cannot be verified within 12 months of the start of the student's study period, Ontario Student Grant (OSG) issued to the student will be converted to loan.

Students will receive a notice that all OSG they received will be converted to loan if income is not verified.

Students who are able to verify their parent(s) or spouses' estimated income reported on their application subsequent to their OSG being converted to loan but prior to 24 months from the start of their study period, may have the grant to loan conversion reversed upon ministry review.

#### **Parent or Spouse Receives Second Career or Other Government Funding for Educational or training costs:**

If a parent or spouse receives Second Career funding or other government assistance for educational or training costs for a study period that overlaps with the student's current study period, income from Second Career that will be received must be included in the estimated taxable income amount since Second Career funding is taxable.

#### **Documentation Required:**

- A copy of the Second Career Agreement or documentation showing the amount of other government income.

The full amount of the Second Career or other government income must be included in the estimated income total.

If an expected parental or spousal contribution remains in the student's need assessment after the estimated income review is approved, forward the Second Career Agreement or other documentation to the Ministry for further review.

The ministry will review the file to determine whether any further adjustments are required to the student's file to recognize the portion of Second Career or other government assistance for the parent's or spouse's direct educational costs.

#### **Pain and suffering awards**

Pain and suffering awards, including the general damages component of personal injury awards and WSIB Non-economic loss (NEL) awards, in amounts less than \$100,000 are exempt from income. Any amount over \$100,000 is considered income in the period it was received. If payments are made for different incidents, the payments related to each incident are exempt up to \$100,000.

### **Locked-in retirement savings**

Students and their spouses, if applicable, are not expected to report funds that are invested in a locked-in retirement savings account (i.e., Locked-in Retirement Account (LIRA), a Life Income Fund (LIF), and/or a Locked-in Retirement Income Fund (LRIF)) as an asset on the OSAP application.

However, once a student/parent/spouse withdraws any money invested in these accounts as per the fund's usual withdrawal age, he or she must report the amount withdrawn as income on the student's OSAP application.

**Note:** A locked-in retirement savings account is an account into which an individual's pension benefit is transferred when the individual terminates their membership in a registered pension plan. The money payable to the individual from this locked-in account can be used only to provide retirement income and is therefore locked-in until the individual reaches the age of 55. In Ontario, there are three types of locked-in accounts: Locked-in Retirement Accounts (LIRA), Life Income Funds (LIF), and Locked-in Retirement Income Funds (LRIF).

### **Special Access to Locked-In Retirement Account**

Students and their parents or spouse, if applicable, who gain special access to money invested in any of these Locked-In Retirement accounts prior to the usual withdrawal age (e.g., age 55) are not to report the amount withdrawn on the student's OSAP application as income.

If a student, their parents or spouse have reported income that was withdrawn under special access (e.g., to cover uninsured medical costs), the student may request a review to remove the income.

### **Documentation required:**

- Proof of the amount withdrawn from the fund and proof that it was withdrawn under a circumstance of special access;
- To ensure the student is not disadvantaged when income is verified with CRA, the FAA must add explanatory note to the file.

### **Treatment of split pension income**

If the parent(s) or spouse of a student is splitting pension income, the amount to be reported on the LEI form should be an "estimate" of their total income, less any pension income that they believe they will be

splitting with the other parent/student. The declared information will be verified upon the completion of the income verification process for the current year.

### **Spouse or parent unable to sign documents**

If a spouse or parent is unable to complete the Consents, Declarations, and Signature pages due to medical reasons or illiteracy, every effort should be made to have the spouse or parent use his or her mark (e.g., an X) and have that mark witnessed. There is no common law requirement for any particular form for a signature. Anything capable of linking a person with a text can be a signature, if done with the intent to create that link.

The person witnessing the mark must be someone other than the immediate family, including the student. The printed name of the witness and an address at which they can be contacted must be provided and retained on the student's file. The witness is attesting that they believe the signatory understands and agrees to the sections being signed.

If a power of attorney is in place, the person holding the power of attorney can sign for the spouse or parent.

A spouse or parent who resides outside of Canada is required to complete the applicable sections. There is no allowable review for exclusion of the signatures based on the fact that the spouse or parents does not reside in Canada, unless Canada Post has indicated that mail is not being received in that country due to civil unrest. Students who make this claim will be required to produce documentation from Canada Post stating that mail cannot be delivered to that specific country.

If a signature is missing for any reason other than the situations described above, the case must be submitted to MTCU for review. It should not be anticipated that many other situations will be considered; however, extreme circumstances are considered (e.g., spouse cannot be reached because they are in a refugee camp).

### **Married student changes status to separated and sharing marital home with spouse**

Married students may indicate that they are separated, and wish to apply for OSAP funding as a single independent student or a sole support parent, while continuing to live in the marital home with their ex-spouse. Typically, the couple will indicate that they are remaining together in the same home for the sake of the children or for financial reasons.

#### **Documentation required:**

- Copy of a separation agreement or custody and support agreement;
- If the student and spouse do not have a formal separation or custody agreement, the student must provide a description of their informal agreement, signed by the student and the spouse, and an affidavit signed by both the student and the spouse confirming the custody arrangement of any dependent children;

- Notice to CRA (e.g., proof of having filed taxes as separated; in the case of the recent separation, proof of having given notice to CRA that they intend to file taxes as separated and proof of notifying CRA of who will claim child tax credits/benefits).

**Note:** in these cases, the requirement that the spouse sign the above documents cannot be waived (e.g., for reasons of an adversarial relationship).

## Bankruptcy

Several factors are considered to determine whether a student may be eligible for further OSAP funding, including the following:

- Whether or not the student received student loans prior to filing the bankruptcy or related event;
- Whether the student was released from the obligation to repay student loans. Bankruptcy legislation has changed several times since the late 1990s in terms of how soon after completing studies student loans may be included in the claim;
- Whether the bankruptcy is discharged or undischarged and if undischarged, whether Ontario or Canada is a creditor.
- Whether the bankruptcy or related event occurred within three years of the current study period and student was continuously enrolled in the same program of study.

Bankruptcies and/or Consumer Proposals or other related-events filed outside of Canada are not considered for review.

Bankruptcy and related events reviews are Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities authority in order to ensure that student files are being reviewed per current OSAP policies and in keeping with legislation that was in effect at the time of the bankruptcy-related events, etc. Students' prior OSAP funding history must be reviewed in conjunction with the date the student filed for bankruptcy or related event.

**a) Documentation required for bankruptcy reviews:**

- Copy of the Notice of Bankruptcy.

If Bankruptcy is **discharged**:

- Copy of the Certificate of Discharge **OR**
- Copy of paid in full letter **OR** Order of Absolute Discharge from the Courts; **OR**.
- Bankruptcy and Insolvency Records Search Extract from Superintendent of Bankruptcy.

If Bankruptcy is **undischarged**:

- Student must provide a letter from their Trustee indicating the date they filed for bankruptcy or initiated a related event and that the following two conditions have been or will be met:
- Neither Ontario nor Canada is a creditor in the Bankruptcy or related event as a result of financial assistance given to them through OSAP;
- No financial assistance given to them through OSAP will be seized to repay any creditor(s) listed in the Bankruptcy or related event.

If there are prior student loans that have not been discharged, additional documentation (one of the following):

- A letter from the student's financial institution, the National Student Loans Service Centre, and/or the student's collection agency confirming that there is no outstanding balance on any student loans issued to the student; OR
- If student meets in-study bankruptcy requirements, a letter from the student's Financial Aid Office confirming that the program of study in which the student was enrolled at the time the student filed for Bankruptcy is the same as the program of study the student is applying for assistance to attend.

Note: If none of two situations applies, the student is not eligible for further student loans.

#### **b) Documentation Required for Consumer Proposal reviews**

If the Consumer Proposal is **incomplete**:

- Student must provide a copy of the Notice to creditors of Consumer Proposal **AND**
- Student must provide a letter from their Trustee indicating the date they filed for bankruptcy or initiated a related event and that the following two conditions have been or will be met:
- Neither Ontario nor Canada is a creditor in the Bankruptcy or related event as a result of financial assistance given to them through OSAP;
- No financial assistance given to them through OSAP will be seized to repay any creditor(s) listed in the Bankruptcy or related event; **AND**

If Consumer Proposal is **complete**:

- A copy of the "Certificate of Full Performance, or
- Bankruptcy and Insolvency Records Search Extract from Superintendent of Bankruptcy.

If Consumer Proposal is **annulled**:

- A letter from the Trustee attesting to the annulment; or
- Bankruptcy and Insolvency Records Search Extract from Superintendent of Bankruptcy.

If there are prior student loans, additional documentation (one of the following):

- A letter from the student's financial institution, the National Student Loans Service Centre, and/or the student's collection agency confirming that there is no outstanding balance on any student loans issued to the student; OR
- If student meets in-study requirements, a letter from the student's confirming that the program of study in which the student was enrolled at the time the student filed a consumer proposal is the same as the program of study the student is applying for assistance to attend See Section 3 below for details on confirming continued program of study).
- If neither of the two situations above apply, the student is not eligible for further student loans.

**c) Documentation required for Consolidation Orders (Orderly Payment of Debts Program reviews):**

If the Consolidation Order is **incomplete**:

- Student must provide a copy of the Consolidation Order under the BIA orderly payment of debts provision which includes the Consent of Creditor letter; **AND**
- Student must provide a letter from their Trustee indicating the date they filed the Consolidation Order and that the following two conditions have been or will be met:
  - Neither Ontario nor Canada is a creditor in the Consolidation Order or as a result of financial assistance given to them through OSAP; and
  - No financial assistance given to them through OSAP in the current academic year will be seized to repay any creditor(s) listed in the Consolidation Order.

If Consolidation Order is **complete**:

- A copy of the “Certificate of Full Performance” which proves that their obligations have been met and debt is paid in full; or
- Bankruptcy and Insolvency Records Search Extract from Superintendent of Bankruptcy.

If there are prior student loans, additional documentation (one of the following):

- A letter from the student’s financial institution, the National Student Loans Service Centre, and/or the student’s collection agency confirming that there is no outstanding balance on any student loans issued to the student; OR
- If student meets in-study requirements, a letter from the student’s FINANCIAL AID OFFICE confirming that the program of study in which the student was enrolled at the time consolidation order is filed is the same as the program of study the student is applying for assistance to attend (See Section 3 below for confirming continued program of study).
- If neither of the two situations above apply, the student is not eligible for further student loans.

**Notes:**

- Part X of the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, Orderly Payment of Debts (OPD), provides for a mechanism to facilitate the repayment of debts by a debtor. A court can provide a consolidation order allowing the debtor to make orderly payments to be distributed pro rata among creditors. Not all provinces and territories have implemented the OPD program, and it is not a debt management option for Ontario residents.
- The effective date for a court-ordered Consolidation Order is the date of the Consent of Creditor letter plus one month. (e.g., if the Creditor letter is dated March 1, 2013, then the effective date for ministry purposes is April 1, 2013).

- Consolidation orders issued for example, by credit counselling agencies, cannot be considered under this review unless the court has instructed a credit counselling agency to administer the file on their behalf.

**d) Orderly Payment of Debt pursuant to Provincial/Territorial Legislation**

Some provinces or territories may have separate provisions for orderly payments of debt under provincial or territorial legislation that are not under the Orderly Payment of Debt provisions under Part X of the BIA. Contact the Financial Aid Office.

## Academic Progress

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Students are required to satisfactorily complete the academic requirements of their program of study to continue to be eligible for financial assistance.



## ACADEMIC PROBATION

### Approving release of OSAP funding during academic probation period

An academic probation warning will hold any subsequent OSAP application from processing until the supporting documentation requirements are satisfied.

#### Required Documentation:

Students must provide a letter (“letter of explanation”) that explains all the following:

- the circumstances that led to the failure;
- the steps/strategies they will take during their probationary period to improve their academic progress;
- if the student has self-identified as having a permanent disability, strategies/supports that they will receive from and/or discussed with the Office for Students with Disabilities;
- a description of their academic/career goals

The letter of explanation is required only once during the probationary period unless the student switches institutions during the probationary period. If a student switches institutions during the probationary period, they are required to provide a letter for their study period beginning at the new institution.

**Note:** Transcripts are not required during the probationary period. They are, however, required for the review after the probationary period is over.

#### Reviewing after the probationary period is over

When the probationary period is over, the student’s academic progress must be reviewed to determine whether the student has met the requirements of the probationary period.

Students are not required to study or apply for Full-Time OSAP assistance during the probationary period; however, if a student receives Full-Time OSAP assistance for any study periods during the probationary period, the student is required to meet academic progress requirements for those study periods.

If the student received Full-Time OSAP for study period(s) at a different institution during the probationary period, transcripts from the previous school are required to determine whether the student has been successful at the previous school.

If the student’s final grades or transcripts are not available for spring/summer courses at the time academic progress is reviewed, use information that is available to determine current academic status in the spring/summer courses. The file must be reviewed again when final grades are available.

#### Required Documentation:

- Students are required to provide transcripts, including transcripts from any previous institution that they attended in the academic year.

## ACADEMIC RESTRICTION

An Academic Restriction may be downgraded after the duration of the restriction period is met. The restriction cannot be cleared until the first day after the end of the restriction period.

The following issues are not requirements for clearing an academic restriction:

- Students are not required to self-fund during a period of academic restriction;
- If a student does self-fund, the student is not required to maintain satisfactory academic progress during the period of academic restriction;
- To clear the Academic Restriction, it is not a requirement that students kept outstanding loans in good standing during the academic restriction period. However, students who have not kept their loans in good standing will have a loan default restriction on their file that will hold further OSAP assistance

### Required Documentation:

- Letter of explanation from the student, explaining the circumstances that led to their failure, what steps they are taking to ensure future success and an explanation of their academic goals.

## PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES REVIEW

Students who did not meet OSAP's academic progress requirements and, as a result, have had an academic warning or an academic restriction placed on their OSAP account, may request a Personal Circumstances Review if their failure to meet OSAP's academic progress requirements was because of circumstances beyond their control.

Acceptable circumstances include the following:

- medical conditions;
- family crisis;
- disability (see below for exceptions and conditions);
- pregnancy or parental leaves;
- code was put on the file in error;
- student was coded with two academic failures in one year (for example, student attended two institutions and failed at both).

### Required Documentation:

- (a) A letter explaining why the student is requesting the review.
- (b) Additional supporting documentation applicable to the nature of the student's situation:
  - For a medical condition, documentation must be provided by a physician showing that the student's ability to participate in postsecondary studies was restricted for a portion of, or

the entire, study period. Medical documentation should confirm student is well enough to continue their studies on a full-time basis.

- For a disability, the documentation may include medical documentation, in the case of a previously undiagnosed disability.
  - If the disability was diagnosed prior to the start of the study period, students must explain why they did not seek and/or receive supports to accommodate their disability, and what supports/strategies will be in place to address their disability-related needs in the future, including recommendations from the Office for Students with Disabilities, such as advice to take a reduced course load.
  - If Office for Students with Disabilities advised the student to take a reduced course load and the student chose to disregard that advice, the student is not eligible for a removal of the academic probation or downgrading of the restriction code for reasons relating to their disability.
- Documentation includes information about the student's participation in, or failure to participate in, programs at the institution that support students academically, if applicable.
- For a family crisis or other circumstance, students must provide a letter outlining the circumstances, plus a letter from a third party confirming the dates of the event and circumstances:
  - Additional third party documentation as applicable, such as insurance documents; police reports; eviction notices; documentation from daycares, schools, or police; travel documents, death certificates; medical records; documentation from the school ombudsman or dean's office.
- For a code put on the file in error, documentation in the file must show the error, such as transcripts with actual grades or proof of recalculation of grades.
- For two failures in one academic year, documentation in the file must show the two academic failures and why the student should have only one.

## Loan Overpayment and Eligibility

Students are considered to have an overpayment if they have been issued grant and/or loan in excess of their entitlements at the end of their academic year.

For the purposes of calculating overpayments, grants include Canada Student Grant for Students with Dependents, Canada Student Grant for Persons with Permanent Disabilities and the Canada Student Grant for Full-time Students, as well as the four components of the Ontario Student Grant. Overpayments are not calculated for the Living and Learning Grant.

Beginning in 2017-18, only grant and/or loan overpayments of \$2,000 or more are counted as payable toward an overpayment restriction.

Students are ineligible for Full-time OSAP in subsequent academic years if they have:

- Overpayments in three (3) or more academic years of \$2,000 or more; or
- Overpayment(s) in one or more academic years totalling \$10,000 or more.

### REMOVING AN OVERPAYMENT RESTRICTION

To become eligible for further Full-time OSAP, students who have an overpayment restriction must pay back the following:

- \$2,000, if there are three (3) instances of overpayments totalling less than \$10,000.
- The amount over \$8,000 if the total of the overpayment(s) is greater than \$10,000.

The student is required to repay the overpayment amount to the National Student Loan Service Centre (NSLSC). Payment can be made from the student's personal resources or the FAA can exercise discretion in the use of their own bursary or tuition set - aside funds.

OSAP entitlements are updated for a number of reasons once the academic year has ended. The amount of overpayment may increase or decrease as information changes. The amount of overpayment owed by the student will reflect current information on file. Therefore, if a prior payment(s) is less than the current balance owing, the student is ineligible until the loan overpayment has been addressed in full.

#### Documentation requirements:

- The student must provide a copy of issued receipt(s) from the National Student Loans Service Centre (NSLSC) showing the date and amount of payment made by the borrower;

#### Notes:

- If the student made partial payments toward an overpayment incurred prior to 2017-18, the payments may be considered eligible payments toward the required repayment for the 2017-18 overpayment;
- If a prior overpayment restriction was fully repaid, the payments cannot be counted towards a 2017-18 overpayment;

- Repayment Assistance Plan payments and any other form of government assisted repayments, cannot be used to contribute to the removal of an overpayment restriction.

Note: The NSLSC now provides the capacity for students to print their own receipt by going to the NSLSC on-line services through the [CanLearn](#) site.

## HARDSHIP REVIEW FOR BURSARY OVERPAYMENT RESTRICTION

Beginning in 2013-14, the minimum threshold for collecting a bursary overpayment (e.g., Child Care Bursary, Bursary for Students with Disabilities, and the Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Students with Permanent Disabilities) is increased to \$250.

The minimum bursary overpayment that will generate a bursary overpayment restriction is \$500. Child Care Bursary overpayments generated in 2014-15 and subsequent years are not repayable.

The FAA may use the financial hardship review process above to waive the requirement to repay a prior year's bursary overpayment in the current year so that the student can apply for Full-Time OSAP if repayment of the bursary overpayment would result in financial hardship. However, the Collection Management Unit's collections activities on the bursary overpayment do not stop as a result of a financial hardship review.

The FAA must clearly advise the student in writing that this decision is a one-year waiver only and that it does not remove the requirement to repay the bursary overpayment before they can be eligible for additional bursary funding

## REMOVING LOAN OVERPAYMENTS WHEN LOANS PAID IN FULL

When a student has repaid all previous loans in full, loan overpayments may be removed from the student's file. Note: If the student only had one overpayment, this review cannot be considered.

### **Documentation Required**

- Proof that the loans have been paid in full from the National Student Loan Service Centre.
- Proof that the loan (provincial, federal or both) have been paid in full while in collection either from the Ontario PCA or CMU for provincial loans and/or CRA/HRSDC for CSLP. A Conditional letter (i.e., payment subject to audit) is not acceptable.

## Exceptional Circumstances

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If a student has experienced exceptional circumstances beyond their control that have led to a reassessment of their OSAP entitlement that results in one of the following, they may request a review:

- In-year overpayment
- Overpayment Restriction (i.e., where a financial hardship review is not applicable);
- Grants converted to loan.

A student is considered to have exceptional circumstances if they have experienced a sudden and/or unexpected event that is beyond the student's control and temporarily prevents or significantly restricts their ability to perform the daily activities necessary to participate in postsecondary studies, including the following:

- An event that seriously aggravates an existing disability or medical condition;
- A serious injury or surgery that results in hospitalization and/or an extended period of rest/recovery;
- Complications relating to a pregnancy;
- Unexpected parental leave related to the birth of a child (e.g., premature birth) or care of a dependent child with a disability or medical condition (e.g., new disability or condition or existing disability or condition that has worsened);
- Mental health crisis that required an extended period of medical intervention or emergency hospitalization;
- Family crisis, such as an unexpected leave required to care of a parent, spouse or sibling with a disability or medical condition that is new or worsened.

## Provincial Residency

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### RESIDED IN CANADIAN PROVINCE OR TERRITORY LESS THAN 12 CONSECUTIVE MONTHS

This review is for situations where the applicant and his or her supporting individuals have never lived in a Canadian province or territory for 12 consecutive months.

If the student can document the following conditions, the Financial Aid Administrator will consider the student for purposes of both Ontario and Canada portions of the Canada-Ontario Integrated Student Loan.

- The student has never lived in a Canadian province or territory for 12 consecutive months (excluding time in full-time postsecondary studies); or
- If the student has a spouse, neither the student nor the student's spouse has ever lived in a Canadian province or territory for 12 consecutive months (excluding time in full-time postsecondary studies); or
- If the student is a dependent student, neither the student nor his or her parent(s), step-parent(s), legal guardian(s), or official sponsor(s), if applicable, has ever lived in a Canadian province or territory for 12 consecutive months. Where parents/step-parents are separated or divorced, this requirement refers to the residency of the parent with whom the student normally resides, or who financially supports the student; and
- The student resides in Ontario at the date of his/her application for student assistance through OSAP; and
- The student is applying to attend/is attending an approved Ontario postsecondary institution and program.

#### **Variation on this Review:**

Students who are applying for assistance to attend an out-of-province or out-of-country institution can also be considered under this review for purposes of the Canada portion of the Canada-Ontario Integrated Student Loan provided that they meet one of the first three conditions and both the fourth and fifth conditions outlined above.

#### **Documentation Required:**

- A detailed letter or a completed [History of Canadian Residency for Student Form](#) from the student outlining his or her residency history and participation in full-time postsecondary education since the time he or she arrived in Canada; and
- If the student has a spouse, a detailed letter or a completed [History of Canadian Residency for Student and Spouse Form](#) from the spouse outlining his or her residency history and



participation in full-time postsecondary education since the time he or she arrived in Canada;  
and

- If the student is a dependent student, a detailed letter or a completed [History of Canadian Residency for Student and Parent\(s\) Form](#) from his or her parent(s), step-parent(s), legal guardian(s), or official sponsor(s); and
- Documentation that confirms the date of arrival in Canada, if applicable (e.g., a copy of the Canadian immigration record, Permanent Resident Card, or Protected Person Status Document).

### **DENIED STUDENT ASSISTANCE BY ANOTHER PROVINCE OR TERRITORY BASED ON RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS**

This review is for situations where the applicant or his or her supporting individuals last lived in another Canadian province or territory for 12 consecutive months, but the applicant was denied student assistance by that province or territory on the basis of that jurisdiction's residency requirements.

Provided that the following criteria are met, a student can be considered for both the Canada and Ontario portions of the Canada-Ontario Integrated Student Loan.

- The student was denied student assistance in the last province or territory in which he or she lived for 12 consecutive months
- (excluding time in full-time postsecondary studies), on the basis of that province's residency requirements; and If the student has a spouse, the student was refused student assistance in the last province or territory in which his or her spouse lived for 12 consecutive months (excluding time in full-time postsecondary studies), on the basis of that province's residency requirements; or
- If the student is a dependent student, the student was refused student assistance in the province or territory in which his or her parent(s), step-parent(s), legal guardian(s), or official sponsor(s), if applicable, last lived for 12 consecutive months, on the basis of that province's residency requirements; and
- The student resides in Ontario at the date of his/her application for student assistance through OSAP; and
- The student is applying to attend/is attending an approved Ontario postsecondary institution

#### **Variations on this Review:**

If the student has been denied assistance from the student assistance program operated by the Canadian jurisdiction in which he or she last lived for twelve consecutive months (or in which his or her spouse/expected contributor last lived for twelve consecutive months) for one of the following reasons, and the student meets the last two criteria above, the student may be assessed for the Canada portion of the OSAP assessment only:

- The student's program of study (e.g., at a postsecondary institution in Ontario) is also offered by a postsecondary institution located in the province/territory of residence;
- The province or territory does not recognize the program as a postsecondary program (e.g., personal support worker is not a recognized postsecondary program in Quebec).

**Documentation Required:**

- A detailed letter or a completed [History of Canadian Residency for Student Form](#) from the student outlining his or her residency history and participation in full-time postsecondary education since the time he or she arrived in Canada;
- If the student has a spouse, a detailed letter or a completed [History of Canadian Residency for Student and Spouse Form](#) from the spouse outlining his or her residency history and participation in full-time postsecondary education since the time he or she arrived in Canada;
- If the student is a dependent student, a detailed letter or a completed [History of Canadian Residency for Student and Parent\(s\) Form](#) from his or her parent(s), step-parent, legal guardian(s), or official sponsor(s) outlining residency history since arrival in Canada;
- Documentation that confirms the date of arrival in Canada, if applicable (e.g. copy of Canadian immigration record, Permanent Resident Card, or Protected Person Status Document).
- A letter of refusal from the student assistance program operated by the Canadian jurisdiction in which he or she last lived for twelve consecutive months (or in which his or her spouse/expected contributor last lived for twelve consecutive months) identifying provincial residency criteria as the basis for refusal.

## PROVINCIAL RESIDENCY PREVIOUSLY ACCEPTED

Supporting documentation for previously accepted provincial residency reviews will carry forward consistent with the supporting documentation carry-forward rules. This means that approval of residency supporting documentation in the previous year will carry forward to the current application if the student indicates the same residency status on the application as the previous application.

If there is a break in studies of two years or more or the student indicates a different residency status from that indicated on the previous application, a new supporting documentation requirement will be generated on the student's file. The student would be required to submit supporting documentation for a new review.

**Documentation Required:**

- A letter from the student confirming that their Province of residence and the Province of his or her supporting individuals has not changed from the time the initial review was approved.

## CHANGE OR CORRECTION TO RESIDENCY DURING STUDY PERIOD

While a student's residency status is determined based on their status as of the first day of their study period, occasionally a student's residency status will change during the study period:

- Student has received first instalment of OSAP funding as an Ontario resident but prior to the second instalment, it is determined that the student meets residency requirements for another province or territory that is participating in the Canada Student Loans Program.
- If it is determined that the residency error did not result in funding being received concurrently by two provinces and that the error was not with the intent of defrauding the program but simply an error resulting from confusion over residency requirements, the student's residency can be changed part way through the academic year.
- If the residency is changed and the student begins to receive student assistance from another province, then the OSAP file must be adjusted to reflect the study period in which the student received OSAP funding, and the FAA must make a note to the file.

Student becomes eligible to be considered a resident of Quebec part way through the study period. Due to Quebec's method of determining residency, the student may meet both Ontario and Quebec residency.

- It is the student's choice whether they will continue to apply for assistance from Ontario or switch to Quebec; however, students cannot receive assistance from both Ontario and Quebec at the same time.
- If the student chooses to continue to receive OSAP funding, the student is required to provide proof that he or she is not receiving student assistance from Quebec.
- If the student chooses to start receiving student assistance from Quebec, the OSAP file must be adjusted to reflect the study period in which the student received OSAP funding, and FAA must make a note to the file.

## Asset Valuation Date

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This section describes reviews to adjust the amount of assets for the student, and their spouse, if applicable, under the following circumstances:

- The individual has taken out loans to purchase RRSPs;
- The individual is paying taxes on RRSP withdrawals;
- Amounts were incorrectly reported as assets;
- ODSP or OW recipient has reported assets.

The asset valuation date is the first day of the student's study period.

## Adjust Contribution from RRSPs

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### RRSP LOANS TAKEN OUT TO PURCHASE AN RRSP

RRSP loans taken out to purchase RRSPs can be used to reduce the value of the RRSPs used in the student's need assessment.

When adjusting the value of RRSPs to be used in the need assessment, the RRSPs purchased by the student/spouse and the outstanding RRSP loan must be valued as at the asset valuation date.

#### **Documentation Required:**

- Letter of explanation from student; and
- Signed and dated statement from the student's/spouse's financial institution/investment broker/investment company stating the amount of the RRSP loan outstanding as of the asset valuation date.

### TAXES ON RRSP WITHDRAWALS

If a student/spouse reports the gross value of RRSPs withdrawn without taking into account the tax implications/hold-back for the withdrawal, the value of the RRSPs used in the need assessment can be reduced by the amount of tax the student/spouse would be required to pay for withdrawing the RRSPs.

#### **Documentation Required:**

- Signed and dated statement from the student's/spouse's financial institution/investment broker/investment company indicating the value of the RRSP after taxes have been deducted.

### LOCKED-IN RETIREMENT SAVINGS

Students and their spouses, if any, are not required to report amounts in locked-in retirement savings accounts as an RRSP on their OSAP application if they do not have access to the funding in the accounts.

## Exemptions for Non-Employment Income

### INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL (IRS) PAYMENTS

As per Government of Canada direction, Indian Residential School (IRS) payments, including Personal Credits for educational programs and services, should not be included in the calculation of the income contribution for parents of dependent students, students or their spouses.

#### Who is eligible for this review?

- Parents of dependent students who have received payments in the year for which they are reporting their income for assessment purposes;
- Married students and their spouses who have received payments in their pre-study and/or study period;
- Students who are single or sole support parents who have received payments in their pre-study and/or study period.

#### Documentation required:

- Documentation showing the amount of the settlement that has been reported on the application.

### HEPATITIS C COMPENSATION PAYMENTS

Hepatitis C Compensation Payments should not be included in the calculation of income contributions, as per Government of Canada direction.

#### Who is eligible for this review?

- Parents of dependent students who have received payments in the year for which they are reporting their income for assessment purposes (i.e., estimated current year income or actual previous year income);
- Students and their spouses who have received payments in their pre-study and/or study period.

#### Documentation required:

- A copy of the Compensation Agreement.

### PAIN AND SUFFERING AWARDS

Pain and suffering awards, including the general damages component of personal injury awards and WSIB Non-Economic Loss (NEL) awards, in amounts less than \$100,000 are exempt from income. Any amount over \$100,000 is considered to be income in the period it was received. If payments are made for

different incidents, the payments related to each incident are exempt up to \$100,000. Pain and suffering awards) should not be reported as assets on the student's OSAP application form.

Students may request a review if they or their spouses or parents have reported a pain and suffering award in their income that can be exempt.

**Note:** "pain and suffering" is the legal term for the physical and emotional stress caused by an injury. A pain and suffering award would typically be part of a settlement resulting from a lawsuit. Some settlements will identify a portion that is for economic loss and a portion for pain and suffering or general damages; others do not. It is only the non-economic portion that can be exempt. Only an identified non-economic portion can be exempt.

#### **Who is eligible for this review?**

- Parents of dependent students who have received awards in the year for which they are reporting their income for assessment purposes
- Students and their spouses for awards received in pre-study and/or study period.

#### **Documentation required:**

- A copy of a letter from WSIB, legal court document, or payment stubs specifying a pain and suffering or NEL award, the amount(s) paid and the date(s) received.

#### **SPECIAL ACCESS TO LOCKED-IN RETIREMENT ACCOUNT (LIRA), LIFE INCOME FUND (LIF), OR A LOCKED-IN RETIREMENT INCOME FUND (LRIF)**

Students and their spouse, if any, are not to report funds that are invested in a locked-in retirement savings account (i.e., Locked-in Retirement Account (LIRA), a Life Income Fund (LIF), or a Locked-in Retirement Income Fund (LRIF)) as an asset on the OSAP application. In addition, parents, students and their spouse, if any, who gain special access to money invested in any of these funds prior to the usual withdrawal age (e.g., age 55) are not to report the amount withdrawn as income on the student's OSAP application.

#### **Exception:**

Once a student, spouse, or parent withdraws any money invested in these accounts as per the fund's usual withdrawal age (e.g., age 55), he or she must report the amount withdrawn as income in the applicable section of the student's OSAP application.

#### **Note:**

A locked-in retirement savings account is an account into which an individual's pension benefit is transferred when the individual terminates their membership in a registered pension plan. The money payable to the individual from this locked-in account can be used only to provide retirement income and

is therefore locked-in until the individual reaches the age of 55. In Ontario, there are three types of locked-in accounts: Locked-in Retirement Accounts (LIRA), Life Income Funds (LIF), and Locked-in Retirement Income Funds (LRIF).

**Documentation required:**

No documentation is required; student/spousal income will be verified through the Income Verification Process.

### MARRIED STUDENT AND SPOUSE ELECT TO SPLIT PENSION INCOME

An adjustment to the pre-study period or study period income contribution may be made if a student and spouse make a joint election to split pension income on their current income tax returns.

**Documentation required:**

- A copy of the student's and spouse's Notice of Assessment from Canada Revenue Agency.

### WITHDRAWALS FROM A REGISTERED DISABILITY SAVINGS PLAN (RDSP)

Withdrawals by the student and/or spouse from an RDSP are exempt from income during the pre-study period and the study period.

**Documentation required:**

- Documentation showing that an RDSP has been set up for the student or spouse;
- Proof of the amount of withdrawals that have been made from the RDSP during the pre-study period and/or study period, as applicable.

### REGISTERED EDUCATION SAVINGS PLANS (RESP) SET UP BY CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY

Funding from a Registered Education Savings Plans (RESP) that a student intends to use for the period of study may be exempt from income if the RESP was set up for the individual by a Children's Aid Society using federal Universal Child Care Benefit funding.

**Documentation Required:**

- A Verification of Status with Children's Aid Society form providing proof of the individual's status with an Ontario Children's Aid Society; and
- A letter from the Children's Aid Society or other documentation providing proof that the RESP was set up for the individual by the Children's Aid Society using Universal Child Care Benefit funding.



**Notes:** For income verification purposes the student is expected to report on his or her application, the amount of the RESP that will be withdrawn for the study period.

#### **FIRST NATIONS/INUIT LAND CLAIM SETTLEMENT**

The amount of a land claim settlement should not be included in the calculation of the income contribution for parents of dependent students, students or their spouses.

#### **Who is eligible for this review?**

- Parents of dependent students who have received payments in the year for which they are reporting their income for assessment purposes;
- Students and their spouses who have received payments in the student's pre-study and/or study period.

#### **Documentation required:**

- Documentation showing the amount of the settlement received.

## Ontario Distance Grants

### SITUATIONS THAT ARE NOT CONSIDERED

There are no reviews for situations such as the following:

**Student chooses to attend an institution that is more than 80 kilometers away from home when there is an institution of the same type within 80 kilometers from home;**

- Student chooses to attend an institution more than 80 kilometers from home because he or she was not accepted in a program of choice at an institution less than 80 kilometers from home;
- Student lives less than 80 kilometers from a postsecondary institution of the type the student is attending, but has chosen a program that is not offered at that institution, except in the case of students who are continuing their education in French at bilingual or French language institutions (see below).
- Student's permanent address or parent's home address changes during the study period;
- Driving route is less than 80 kilometers but route of public transportation (e.g., bus) is indirect and greater than 80 kilometers.

### **Students commuting more than 250 kilometers:**

If the ministry's distance calculation determines that a student is commuting more than 250 kilometers one way, the student will be issued a ministry-generated paragraph on the Notice of Assessment or Notice of Reassessment explaining that the ministry has determined that it is unlikely that the student is traveling daily to the institution and as a result, the student has not been assessed for the Ontario Distance Grant – Commuting. Additionally, if the student is commuting this distance daily, the student is advised to contact their financial aid office to initiate a review to prove that he or she meets the Ontario Distance Grant – Commuting criteria.

A commuting distance of more than 250 kilometers may be calculated erroneously, for example, in situations where the distance calculation is based on the main campus of a college or university and the student is attending a satellite campus that is nearer to home.

While it is unlikely that a student would be commuting more than 250 kilometers one-way to attend postsecondary studies, students who are found through the review to be commuting at least 80 kilometers are eligible for the Commuting Grant.

The FAA is required to confirm the actual driving distance between the student's home address and the address of the postsecondary institution campus that the student is attending.

### **Documentation required:**

- If the commuting distance is confirmed to be greater than 250 kilometers;
- For married students and sole-support parents, a letter from the student attesting to the fact that he or she is commuting that distance; or
- For single students, a letter from the student and the students' parents attesting to the fact that he or she is commuting that distance and is living at home with his or her parents during the study period; and
- Documentation that proves that the student is commuting 80 kilometers or more (i.e., a postal code to postal code check on Google maps).

### **STUDENTS MAINTAINING SECOND RESIDENCE (MARRIED/SOLE SUPPORT)**

Currently, students who are married/common law or a sole support parents will be assessed for the Commuting Grant if their home address is more than 80 kilometers and less than 250 kilometers from the institution they are attending, regardless of whether or not the student is maintaining a separate residence from his or her family.

Under this review a student who is married/common-law or a sole support parent and has a home address that is more than 250 kilometers away from the institution they attend, would be eligible for the Commuting Grant, if the student actually commutes or if the student maintains a secondary residence closer to the institution. In cases where the student maintains a secondary residence, it is expected that they would be travelling regularly and frequently to their home to be with their spouse and/or children.

### **Documentation required:**

- Documentation that proves that the student's permanent home address is 80 kilometers or more away from the institution they attend (i.e., a postal code to postal code check on Google maps); and,
- Documentation that proves that the student's spouse and/or children are living at the permanent address during the study period.

### **MISCALCULATION OF COMMUTING/TRAVELLING DISTANCE**

There may be situations where the distance calculator used in the assessment process miscalculates a distance and does not identify a driving distance that is more than 80 kilometers one-way between student's home address and the nearest postsecondary institution of the type the student is attending.

- For the travel grant, the student must be a dependent student living away from home during the study period;
- For the commuting grant, the single dependent or independent student must be living at home with his or her parents during the study period.

## SINGLE DEPENDENT STUDENT - LOCAL ADDRESS REPORTED AS PERMANENT ADDRESS

While dependent students are expected to report their parent's home address as their permanent address when they move away from home to attend postsecondary studies, some dependent students may provide their local address on their OSAP application form. To consider these students for an Ontario Distance Grant – Travel, the FAA must confirm the following:

- Parents' home address;
- Driving distance from parent's home address to the nearest postsecondary institution of the type the student is attending; and
- Driving distance from parent's home address to the postsecondary institution the student is attending.

### Documentation Required:

- A letter from the student and the student's parents confirming the parents' address; and
- Documentation that proves that the student is commuting 80 kilometers or more (i.e., a postal code to postal code check on Google Maps)

## SINGLE DEPENDENT STUDENT COMMUTING AND FAMILY BREAKDOWN

If a single dependent student is commuting more than 80 kilometers and is not living at home due to a family breakdown, the student may be considered for a commuting grant:

### The FAA must confirm the following:

- There is no postsecondary institution of the type the student is attending within 80 kilometers of the student's permanent address; and
- The student is eligible for a family breakdown review.

### Documentation Required:

- If the student has met the requirements for a family breakdown review no further documentation is required.

## Joint Custody and Kinship Service

### JOINT CUSTODY

Single independent students can be assessed as sole-support parents for the entire study period if they have joint custody of their child(ren) with their former spouse and the children reside with the applicant for a minimum of 50% of the study period.

If the formal custody agreement indicates that the student has custody, but the child(ren) do not reside with the applicant for a minimum of 50% of the study period, the review cannot be considered. A student with visitation rights only will be considered a single independent student during the study period.

If the children are not living with the student during the pre-study or study period, he or she can initiate an extraordinary expense review based on the amount of any child support payments he/she has made.

#### Documentation required:

- A copy of the separation/divorce agreement, custody agreement or court order which specifies that the student will have custody for 50% or more of the study period. An update from the student's lawyer is required if the agreement differs from the current living arrangements. If the student and former spouse did not legally update the custody/living arrangements, then a signed statement from the former spouse is required. If the student and spouse do not have a formal custody agreement, the student must provide a description of their informal agreement, signed by the student, and an affidavit signed by both the student and the spouse confirming the custody arrangement.
- A letter from the applicant detailing the joint residence agreement during the pre-study period and the study period. The amount of support received from the former spouse during the time the child(ren) reside with the applicant must also be listed in the statement.

### KINSHIP CARE, KINSHIP SERVICE OR CUSTOMARY CARE REVIEW

Single independent students may be assessed as sole support parents for the purposes of Full-time OSAP if one or more child(ren) under the age of eighteen, has been placed in their care on or before the study period start date through one of the following:

- a Kinship Service Arrangements;
- Kinship Care Agreement;
- Formal Customary Care Agreement

- Informal agreement (e.g., Traditional Care Agreement).

Single dependent students may not be assessed as sole support parents for the purpose of Full-time OSAP as a result of a care arrangement/agreement unless they also meet the requirements for a family breakdown review and the child has been placed in their care on or before the study period start date.

If an agreement or arrangement has placed one or more child in the care of a single independent student or dependent student with a family breakdown review during the study period, the FAA may override the current study period end date and have the student apply for the remaining terms as a separate study period, if applicable, as described above.

A sole support parent or married student may be considered to have one or more additional dependents, if one or more child has been placed in their care through a care agreement or arrangement. If the arrangement begins part way through the study period, the addition of the dependant(s) is effective the date of the arrangement, agreement or Court Order.

**Documentation required:**

- Proof of the agreement or arrangement from the Children's Aid Society/Family and Children's Services that includes:
  - The start date and expected length of the arrangement;
  - The number and age of child(ren) placed with the student (and spouse, if applicable);
  - Whether or not the student (and spouse, if applicable) will receive any financial support to assist with the care of the child(ren);
- Proof of the amount of financial support received to assist with the child's care (e.g., temporary care allowance). Any support received must be considered income;
- If the arrangement is informal that does not involve the Children's Aid Society/Family and Children's Services, such as a traditional Customary Care, proof of the arrangement may be provided through a copy of the written arrangement, if applicable, or a letter from a professional third party who was involved in or is aware of the arrangement (e.g., social worker, physician, minister/leader from church or elder and/or spiritual leader from the Indigenous community) that confirms the arrangement and includes:
  - The start date and expected length of the arrangement;
  - The number and age of child(ren) placed with the student (and spouse, if applicable);
  - Whether or not the student (and spouse, if applicable) will receive any financial support to assist with the care of the child(ren);
  - If no financial support is received, a letter from the student explaining how the costs of caring for the child(ren) are being met;
- Proof of the amount of financial support received to assist with the child's care (e.g., temporary care allowance). Any support received must be considered income;

- If a care arrangement or agreement is shared between the student and one or more siblings, such as may occur when younger siblings are placed in the care of older siblings, the student would be required to provide documentation to show:
- how the costs of care for the children have been divided between the older siblings;
- that he or she is incurring at least 50% of the costs in relation to the child(ren); and
- that the children are living with the student, and separate from the other older siblings, for at least 50% of the time.
- If the child(ren) is eighteen years of age or older, proof would be required that they meet the OSAP definition of a dependent child.

## Breach of Contract

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Students who have been restricted based upon an audit of their individual files are issued a detailed letter by the Ministry outlining the reason for the restriction and the duration of the restriction.

Reinstatement of eligibility after receipt of this restriction cannot occur until:

- The end of the restriction period identified in the letter; and
- The day the student repays all interest and principal owing on the outstanding Ontario portion of any Canada-Ontario Integrated Student Loan (issued on or after August 1, 2001), Ontario Student Loans (issued prior to August 1, 2001, if applicable) and other funding identified in the letter.

Students who meet the reinstatement conditions and who wish to be considered for further assistance must contact:

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities  
OSAP Inspection and Compliance Unit  
Student Financial Assistance Branch  
77 Wellesley St. W. Box 276  
Toronto ON M7A 1N3  
Fax: 416-325-3096

Student must include supporting documentation, as set out in the letter from the Ministry.

If all criteria for reinstatement are met, and the student becomes eligible to receive OSAP funding during a study period, the student will only be assessed from the date the restriction was lifted to the study period end date.



## Additional Local Travel

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Additional local travel costs may be considered extraordinary expenses in the situations outlined below:

- For students using a vehicle to commute to and from their postsecondary institution, costs incurred for car insurance and maintenance cannot be included for review purposes.
- A student can only claim travel expenses for the days that he/she has classes at the postsecondary institution.
- The student's actual travel costs must exceed the local travel allowance in the OSAP assessment.

### Conditions

- Only travel between the student's home and place of employment (pre-study period) or between home and postsecondary institution (study period) may be considered.
- The distance that the student travels must be more than 30 kilometres; or more than one hour by public transit, or there must be no public transit.
- The student's actual travel costs must exceed the local travel allowance in the OSAP assessment.
- For students using a vehicle to commute to and from their postsecondary institution or for employment during pre-study period, costs incurred for car insurance and maintenance cannot be included as travel costs.
- Travel expenses can be claimed for a maximum of five days.
- As a general rule, travel expenses can be claimed without documentation for five days per week of study if a student is enrolled in 100% of a full course load; four days if the student is enrolled in 80% of a full course load; three days if enrolled in 60% of a full course load, etc.
- If a student wishes to claim travel expenses for more days per week than outlined above, the student must provide documentation to show that he or she is travelling to school on a regular basis (e.g., the student has classes, labs or seminars or other regular, recurring activities on more days).

### TRAVEL TO OBTAIN/MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT DURING THE PRE-STUDY PERIOD

If a sole-support parent or single student is required to travel to obtain/maintain employment during the pre-study period, actual local transportation costs can be claimed by the student.

#### Documentation required:

- A letter from the student indicating the total cost of local transportation incurred during the pre-study period;
- A detailed description of the travel (e.g., home and employer marked on a map of the area); and,

- Documentation from the student's employer that shows the student was employed and states the number of weeks of employment.

### A SINGLE DEPENDENT OR INDEPENDENT STUDENT LIVES WITH PARENTS AND COMMUTES TO SCHOOL

A single dependent student is expected to reside with his/her parents if the parents' principal residence is in the same community as the postsecondary institution and the residence is less than 30 kilometers from the postsecondary institution or less than one hour from the postsecondary institution by public transit. This review can also apply to a single independent student who lives at home and commutes to the postsecondary institution rather than maintaining a separate residence.

#### Documentation required:

- Completed Request for Review: Adjust Local Travel in Study Period Form;
- Letter from the student indicating the total weekly cost of local transportation incurred during the study period;
- A detailed description of the travel (e.g., home and institution marked on a map of the area)

### A SOLE SUPPORT PARENT OR MARRIED STUDENT COMMUTES TO SCHOOL

During the study period, if a sole-support parent or married student maintains a residence in his/her home community to ensure continuity for his/her children and spouse, if any, and commutes to a postsecondary institution that is more than 30 kilometers from the student's home, or more than one hour by public transit, or there is no public transit, a sole-support parent or married student can claim additional local transportation costs.

#### Documentation required:

- Completed Request for Review: Adjust Local Travel in Study Period Form;
- A letter from the student indicating the total weekly cost of local transportation incurred during the study period;
- A detailed description of the travel (e.g., home and institution marked on a map of the area); and
- A copy of the student's course schedule to indicate days and times in school

### SINGLE INDEPENDENT STUDENT COMMUTES TO SCHOOL

If a single independent student commutes from their home to a postsecondary institution that is 30 or more kilometres from the student's home, or more than one hour by public transit, or there is no public transit, the student can claim additional local transportation costs if there is a reasonable justification for commuting rather than moving. For example:

- Student owns his or her own home;

- Student is living in subsidized housing.

**Documentation required:**

- Completed Request for Review: Adjust Local Travel in Study Period Form;
- A letter from the student indicating the total weekly cost of local transportation incurred during the study period;
- Proof of home ownership or subsidized housing or other documentation to support the reason for travelling;
- A detailed description of the travel (e.g., home and institution marked on a map of the area);
- If the student is an ODSP recipient, a letter from the ODSP caseworker indicating that the additional funding being requested will not have an impact on their ODSP income support;
- Documentation confirming the student's course schedule indicating the days and times on campus.

**PARENTS OF STUDENT WITH DISABILITY DRIVING STUDENT TO SCHOOL**

If the parents of a student with a permanent disability drive a student to school because the student is unable to use public transportation for reasons related to his or her disability, the parent can be considered for extraordinary expenses. Note: acceptable reasons for not using public transit would include, but not be limited to mobility-related reasons. Maintenance or insurance for the vehicle are not allowable costs.

**Documentation required:**

- A letter from the parent indicating the total weekly cost of transportation incurred by the parent during the study period;
- A detailed description of the travel (e.g., home and institution marked on a map of the area); and
- The school must have medical documentation on file supporting the student's permanent disability and providing rationale for why the disability would prevent the students' from using public transit.

## Adjust Student Fixed Contributions

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For the purposes of the Ontario portion of the OSAP need assessment, students are expected to contribute a fixed amount of \$1,800 per term to a maximum of \$3,600 per academic year.

Because students are expected to use pre-study period income, study period income, savings, gifts, etc., to come up with the flat contribution amount, reviews to waive the fixed contribution are limited to those students who have no resources, including income, savings and assets, that they can reasonably be expected to use toward their educational expenses.

Students who have insufficient resources to cover their fixed contribution may be considered for a review to reduce the amount of their fixed contribution. Reviews to waive or reduce the student fixed contribution may not be considered before the halfway point of the study period.

However, if the student has a disability/medical or academic related reason for not being able to work during the study period the review may be considered earlier in the study period.

To be eligible to have their fixed contribution waived students must meet all of the following conditions:

### **Pre-study Period Income:**

- Student was unable to find any employment in the pre-study period; or
- Student was unable or unavailable for employment for the entire pre-study period.

### **Study Period Earned Income:**

- Student has no study period employment income as of the half-way point in the study period; and
- Is taking a maximum (100%) course load; or
- Have a disability/medical or academic related reason for not working; or
- Have been unable to find employment as of the half-way point of the study period.

### **Savings and Assets:**

- Student had less than \$250 in their bank account(s) as of the OSAP asset valuation date (or total of \$500 in student and spouse's bank account(s) for married student); and
- Student has no other assets (e.g., tax-free savings accounts, bonds, stocks, term deposits, GICs, or mutual funds); and
- Student has no remaining amounts that could be withdrawn from a Register Education Savings Plan (RESP) or Scholarship Trust Fund (e.g., group RESP).

### Documentation Required:

- Copies of student's, and spouse's, if applicable, Income Tax return Schedule T1 from the most recent taxation year showing zero \$0.00 on Lines 120, 121, and 208;
- Copies of the student's (and spouse's, if applicable) complete Canada Revenue Agency Notice of Assessment (or Notice of Reassessment, if applicable) from the most recent taxation year.
- Copy of student's (and spouse's, if applicable) bank account statements from the OSAP asset valuation date;
- If unable or unavailable to work in the pre-study period for one of the acceptable reasons, the student must provide required documentation as indicated for the applicable reason(s).
- If unable to find employment in the pre-study period, the student must provide required documentation
- If the student is taking a maximum (100%) course load, they student must provide a letter explaining why they cannot work during the study period.
- Students taking less than a maximum (100%) course load must provide documentation to show that they cannot work during the study period (e.g., a letter recommending a reduced course load from their physician for medical or disability-related reasons, or their program academic advisor, for academic reasons) or documentation of their job search showing they have been unable to find work as of the half-way point of the study period.

## Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities

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Students and their spouses or parents, if applicable, are not required to report income received through the Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (ACSD). Students may request a review to have this income removed from their OSAP assessment if they have reported it.

### **Documentation required:**

- Breakdown of income reported on OSAP application showing amount of ACSD income that was reported.
- Proof of ACSD income (e.g., pay stubs).

## Supporting Documentation for Protected Persons

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Some protected persons may not be able to provide some of the required documentation in support of an OSAP application (e.g., marriage certificate, signatures from family members still residing in the home country). Reasons for the unavailability of the supporting documentation may include, but are not limited to:

- Political conditions have resulted in the documents being destroyed;
- Documents being unavailable to protected persons and/or their family members because of race, religion, nationality, membership in a social group or political opinion.

The FAA may reconsider the OSAP application without all of the required supporting documentation as long as the protected person's request for review includes an explanation of why some or all of the supporting documentation is unavailable.

Supporting documentation reviews cannot be considered for a protected person who is experiencing delays in accessing his or her Protected Persons Status Document or who is experiencing delays with mail service.

## Entrepreneurial (Seed) Grants

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Entrepreneurial or seed grants that students receive to start a business can be considered exempt for purposes of the OSAP need assessment since these grants are not intended for educational or living costs. Students should be instructed not to enter this funding as pre-study or study period income in their OSAP applications.

If a student has reported the income, FAAs may remove the funding from the student's OSAP application.

### **Documentation required:**

- The student must provide proof of the grant and the amount of grant received or will receive during the applicable period (pre-study or study period).



## Youth Employment Fund

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The ministry's new Youth Employment Fund, delivered through Employment Ontario, creates employment opportunities for youth aged 15 to 29 to gain employment skills. To participate, youth must be unemployed and not participating in full-time education or training.

While the program funding is directed primarily to employers to create jobs, the program also includes Individual Supports of up to \$1,000 to make it possible for the youth to participate in the job placement. The Individual Supports cover costs such as transportation, work clothing, special equipment, supplies, etc.

The Individual Supports are not taxable and a T4 is not issued. OSAP recipients or their spouses who receive the individualized supports are not required to report the funding as income.

If a student or spouse has inappropriately reported the grant as income, Financial Aid Office may remove the amount of the funding from the student's OSAP application.

### **Documentation required:**

- Proof of the amount of Individual Support funding received.

## Veteran Affairs Disability Benefits

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Students, spouses and parents are not required to report Disability Benefits from Veteran Affairs Canada. Financial Aid Office may remove the income if it has been reported on the student's OSAP application.

### **Documentation required:**

- Breakdown of income reported on OSAP application showing amount of Veteran Affairs Disability Benefits income that was reported;
- Proof of Disability Benefits income (e.g., pay stubs);
- To ensure the student is not disadvantaged when income is verified with CRA, the Financial Aid Office must add explanatory note to the file.