Passport Funding Parent Guide: Supporting Community Participation, Life Skills, and Caregiver Respite After Age 18

NorthStar Funding & Benefits Guide

When a child enters adulthood, many families worry: Where will they go after child services end? Will they still be able to participate in community activities? Who will support their everyday life and continued development?

The Passport Program is an important funding program within Ontario's adult developmental services system.

1. What Does Passport Support

Passport is for eligible adults who are 18 or older and have a developmental disability. Its goals are to help people participate more fully in their communities and live as independently as possible, while also helping primary caregivers access respite.

Officially listed uses include:

- Community classes and recreational programs
- Work, volunteer, and daily living skills development
- Support workers
- Person-directed planning
- Caregiver respite

2. How to Apply

Passport is not applied for directly through an activity provider.

Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) manages applications for adult developmental services. Families first contact DSO to confirm eligibility.

Ontario currently explains that, after eligibility is confirmed, the person is connected with a local Passport agency and may receive a basic annual Passport allocation. If a higher level of support is needed, the person may complete a further application and needs assessment. The current official page lists a basic allocation of $5,500 per year and explains that higher funding may reach up to $44,275 based on the assessment. The specific amount should always be confirmed in the individual's approval.

3. How Does Passport Reimbursement Work

Passport is a reimbursement program.

The individual or family first purchases admissible services and supports according to the rules, then submits invoices and receipts for reimbursement of eligible expenses within the annual allocation.

Families should therefore establish a reliable record-keeping system that includes:

- Approval and allocation letters
- Person Managing Funds (PMF) information
- Service agreements
- Invoices
- Receipts
- Claim submissions
- Reimbursement records

4. Can Passport Be Used for Sports and Community Activities

The official program information specifically includes community classes and recreational programs within the scope of Passport supports. However, the specific activity, support person, expense components, and reimbursement process must still comply with the Passport Program Guidelines.

It is therefore not accurate to say that "any sports class can be reimbursed."

NorthStar recommends that families review the current Passport Guidelines before registering or paying. When necessary, contact the family's Passport coordinator for confirmation.

5. The Real Value of Passport

Passport should not be understood simply as "money for activities."

Its broader policy goals are to help adults:

- Access and participate in their communities
- Develop daily living skills
- Build work and volunteer abilities
- Receive individualized supports
- Reduce the long-term caregiving pressure on families
- Live as independently as possible

These are exactly the abilities that need to be developed as a child transitions from childhood services into adult life.

Important Notice: Passport allocations, eligible expenses, claim deadlines, and administrative rules may change. Follow the latest information from Ontario.ca and the Passport Program Guidelines, together with the terms of the individual service agreement.