



ARCH Bulletin on COVID-19: Ontario Temporarily Increases Eligible Expenses under the Passport Program

Passport Funds can Temporarily be Used for More Types of Expenses

On April 23, 2020, the government shared the *COVID-19 action plan: protecting vulnerable Ontarians*. This is a document that explains how the government will help persons that live or work in residential settings stay safe and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

As part of its COVID-19 action plan, the government is also making changes to the Passport program to help people labelled with developmental disabilities and their caregivers.

Many adults labelled with developmental disabilities get money through the Passport program so they can participate in their communities with support.

There is a list of things that Passport money is allowed to be used for. People who get Passport money told the government that they need to spend this money on more things than what is allowed right now.

The government listened and made the list of items and services that Passport can be used for bigger. Right now, some new things that you can spend Passport money on include:

- Supplies for **hobbies** you can do at home like puzzles and art
- Supplies to help you **exercise** like a yoga mat
- Supplies to keep you **safe** like gloves, masks, and cleaning supplies
- Service **delivery fees** for essential items like groceries or medication
- Subscription services like Netflix
- **Technology** like laptops, microphones, and videogames

These changes are helpful for many people, but do not help everyone. For example, being able to buy more technology still does not help people who need support to use the technology.

Also, there are many important things you still cannot use Passport money for like paying for internet service.

Receive 25% of Passport Funds Upfront

Many people also told the government that they need their Passport money faster. So, the government is allowing you to get 25% of your Passport money in advance.

Even though you can get more of your Passport money faster, you still are not allowed to carry over your leftover Passport money from one year to the next year.

Remember, all of these changes to the Passport program are **temporary**. This means the changes will be gone when COVID-19 is better under control.

For more information

ARCH also has a plain language video on these changes to the Passport program on its website.

Persons with disabilities who live in Ontario can call ARCH for free, confidential legal information and summary advice. To find out about the kind of legal advice ARCH provides and how to book an appointment, please use the following link: www.archdisabilitylaw.ca/services