

FACTSHEET

September 22, 2008

Ministry of Housing and Social Development

17-YEAR-OLD DISABILITY ASSISTANCE APPLICANTS

The Ministry of Housing and Social Development has special procedures in place to ensure that young people with disabilities can complete the Persons with Disabilities (PWD) designation application process and begin receiving disability assistance as soon as they turn 18.

If you are 17 years old and you are planning to apply for the PWD designation when you turn 18, you can begin your application six months before your 18th birthday.

To apply you must complete the following steps:

1. **Enquire:** Six months before your 18th birthday, phone (or ask your parent or guardian to phone) the Housing and Social Development Office nearest you and explain that you want to apply for the PWD designation. A ministry worker will fill out a form with you over the phone and book a first appointment for you.
2. **First Appointment:** At the first appointment, you will be asked to complete a BC Employment and Assistance (BCEA) application form and the worker will outline the following steps:
 - **Orientation:** The orientation gives you information about eligibility requirements for disability assistance and provides a list of documents you must bring to your intake appointment. The worker will help you with the orientation if you require assistance or explain how to do the Web Orientation online. If your physical or mental condition prevents you from completing the orientation, you will not have to complete this step.
 - **Three-Week Work Search:** All applicants who are able must complete a three-week reasonable work search. The worker will explain what you need to do and provide you with a Work Search Activities Record to complete. The three-week work search can be done at any time before your intake appointment. If your medical condition precludes your ability to search for work, you are exempt from completing this step. This will be determined by your worker. If your medical condition or other circumstances limit the extent of your work search but does not preclude it, you must indicate this on the record.
 - **Persons with Disabilities Designation (PWD) Application:** The worker will give you a PWD Designation application and information on how to complete the three-part form. You will need to set up an appointment with your doctor to complete the section of the form describing your medical condition. You may also have your doctor or another health professional complete the assessor part. When completed, the form should be returned in the self-addressed stamped envelope to the ministry's Health Assistance Branch. When a decision has been made, you will receive a letter from Health Assistance Branch informing you whether or not you have been approved for the PWD designation. A copy of the decision will also be forwarded to the worker.
3. **Intake Appointment:** If you are approved for the PWD designation, the worker will set up an appointment for you in the last week of the month before your 18th birthday. At the appointment, the worker will review your three-week work search and complete a current BCEA application with you to confirm your financial eligibility. The worker will also explain the various health supplements for which you may be eligible.

If you are found eligible for disability assistance, your first assistance cheque will be mailed to you on your 18th birthday.

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For more information: The Ministry of Housing and Social Development Info Line at:
1 866 866-0800