

Income Support Program

The Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment (HRLE) provides financial benefits and other services to eligible low income individuals and families to assist in meeting daily living expenses.

What are Income Support Benefits?

Income Support Benefits include basic and non-basic financial supports such as:

Basic Benefits:

- Family and Individual Benefit (to assist with expenses of food, clothing, personal care, household maintenance and utilities)
- Shelter (Including rent and mortgage)

Non-Basic Benefits (eligibility may vary according to your personal circumstances):

- Municipal Tax Payments
- Eye Exams and Prescription Glasses
- Housekeeper's Allowance
- Transportation
- Private Childcare
- Expenses for Burials

Income Support recipients may also obtain certain benefits and services offered by other government departments and agencies. Financial eligibility for these may be determined by HRLE. However, the extent of benefits and services are determined by individual departments. Examples of these benefits and services include:

- A Prescription Drug Card offered by the Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program;
- Medical Supplies and Medical Equipment offered by the Special Assistance Program of the Department of Health and Community Services.

Who may qualify for Income Support Benefits?

To qualify for income support a person must:

- Be 18 years of age;
- Be a resident of Newfoundland and Labrador;
- Submit an application for benefits;
- Be determined eligible according to a financial assessment.

Further information on reverse...

How do I apply for Income Support Benefits?

You must fill out an application so we can assess your eligibility for benefits. You may do this yourself or with staff assistance. You may also apply for benefits over the phone - Avalon region: 1-877-729-7888; Western Region: 1-866-417-4753; Central Region: 1-888-632-4555 or Labrador 1-866-449-3144. Applications are available at your nearest District Office, or you may phone to have one mailed to you. The application is available for download from our web site www.gov.nl.ca/hrle.

To complete your application you will need to provide personal information and copies of required documentation such as:

- Names, MCP numbers and birth information for you, your spouse and children living with you (if applicable);
- Social Insurance Numbers for you and your spouse;
- Financial information regarding assets such as your bank savings and RRSPs;
- Information about your family's living accommodations;
- All sources of income for you and your family for the past 60 days;
- All sources of income to which you believe you and your family are entitled;
- Any special needs for you or your family.

If I am eligible, how much money will I receive?

There are basic rates for benefits. However, the amount families and individuals may receive is determined by a variety of factors, such as:

- Your family income and other family resources;
- The number of adults and children in your family and your living arrangements;
- The types of benefits you may need according to your specific circumstances;
- Employment related expenses you or your spouse may have such as transportation and childcare.

When and how will I receive my benefits?

Normally, your application will only be assessed when you (and your spouse, if applicable) submit a signed, completed application including **all** required documentation. If you are eligible you can expect to receive your initial benefits within five to seven working days. Your continued benefits will generally be issued twice a month. However, this may vary according to your individual circumstances. You will receive your benefits by cheque, through the mail or by direct deposit.

What income do I need to report?

You must report **all** sources of income for you, your spouse and dependent children.

Can I receive Income Support if I am working?

If your net income is less than your basic living requirements, you may be eligible for benefits while you are working. This will be assessed when you apply. Most people have expenses associated with working, such as transportation and child care. These will be considered in assessing your eligibility for benefits.

HRLE also applies an earnings exemption in the financial assessment to support people who are working or who begin work while receiving Income Support Benefits. This means that a portion of your earnings will not be considered when assessing your eligibility for benefits.

If you are no longer eligible for Income Support Benefits due to an increase in your employment earnings, you and your family will continue to receive your drug card for six months under the Extended Drug Card Program.