

SPOTLIGHT

on transformation

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New Ontario photo ID is here!

More independence for people with a developmental disability

Twenty-one ServiceOntario centres across Ontario are now offering a new photo card that will provide government-issued identification to more than 1.5 million Ontarians who do not drive.

The card, for individuals 16 years of age and over, will make it easier for people with a developmental disability who don't have a driver's licence to do things that require official identification, such as:

- apply for work
- open bank accounts, and
- access government services.

David Carter-Whitney, Assistant Deputy Minister at the Ministry of Community and Social Services, says that not having official identification can be a barrier to full participation in the community.



"Imagine getting a job, but finding out that you can't complete the police check because you don't have a driver's licence or passport," says David. "We hear stories like this from members of the developmental services community. This new photo card will help people achieve greater independence and open the door for new opportunities."

Designed with input from Ontarians with disabilities, seniors and advocacy groups, the card is similar to a driver's licence. It includes the card holder's name, photo, signature, address, gender and date of birth. It also has the same security features as a driver's licence to help prevent fraud and identity theft.



To make it easy to find in your wallet, the card has a clipped top-right corner and raised lettering. It costs \$35 and remains valid for five years.

To find out where you can get a card:

- call toll-free at 1-800-387-3445, or
- dial TTY toll-free at 1-800-268-7095.

For more information:

Go to the [Ministry of Transportation's website](#) and search for "[photo card](#)."

A reason to smile

Enhanced dental care for people with disabilities

Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) recipients may benefit from enhanced dental care.

ODSP covers basic dental services, including examinations, X-rays, fillings and extractions. Under the program's Dental Special Care Plan, ODSP recipients and their eligible family members may be able to take advantage of more services.

The Dental Special Care Plan covers:

- recall examinations
- polishing

- scaling/root planing (deep cleaning)
- fluoride treatments, and
- bruxism appliances (dental guards that protect your teeth from grinding).

To be eligible for the enhanced coverage, an ODSP recipient's disability, prescribed medications or treatments must affect their oral health. This includes some people with a developmental disability.

To access the enhanced services, a person's dentist must submit a pre-approval form to the ODSP dental plan administrator (AccertaClaim Servcorp Inc.).

Once approved, Dental Special Care treatment plans are valid for five years. If the person's needs change during this time, the dentist must fill out a new pre-approval form.

In emergency situations, the plan may also cover services retroactively.

The Dental Special Care Plan also is available to children whose parents receive Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities.

If you or someone you know could benefit from the Dental Special Care Plan, talk to a dentist for more information.

New websites for your information needs

Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy

People who work in the developmental services sector make a difference every day. This new website promotes working in the sector as a career of choice in Ontario. To help create awareness of the field, the website also gives agencies easy access to professional marketing tools, such as banners, posters and brochures.

Visit: www.ontariodevelopmentalservices.ca

This strategy is a partnership between the Provincial Network on Developmental Services and the Ministry of Community and Social Services.



Developmental Services Ontario

Your access point for adult developmental services opened last month across Ontario. Check out the website for information and [locations](#).

Visit: www.dsontario.ca



[Watch our video to meet Charlie](#) and see how Developmental Services Ontario makes it easier for adults with a developmental disability and their families to apply for supports.



Elections Ontario makes voting accessible

The province's next general election day is October 6, 2011, and Elections Ontario is offering more days and more ways for people of all abilities to vote.

"Inclusiveness is important to Elections Ontario," says Chief Electoral Officer Greg Essensa. "We are determined to build a system that puts the needs of the voter first."

Elections Ontario is offering a range of tools to make it easy for people with disabilities to vote. At voting locations, you'll find:

- materials in large font
- magnifiers
- easy-grip pencils, and
- ballot templates with Braille numbering and cut-outs.

People can help you mark your ballot

If you need assistance at a voting location, you can:

- bring a friend or support person, or
- ask an election worker.

Who can vote?

To vote in an Ontario provincial election you must be:

- 18 years of age or older
- a Canadian citizen, and
- a resident of Ontario.

New ways to vote

This year, you can:

- use a [special ballot](#) to vote by mail (apply by September 30), or
- take advantage of assistive voting technology in [returning offices and satellite offices](#) from September 21 to October 5.

What is assistive voting technology?

You can use headphones to listen to instructions, then press buttons, foot pedals or use sip and puff technology to choose who you will vote for.

No matter how you cast your ballot, staff can help voters with a wide variety of needs.

"We all have different needs and abilities," says Greg. "For me, accessibility means engaging with individuals in the way that best meets their needs. It's about ensuring that all of the people we serve are treated with respect and dignity."

For more information:

- visit www.wemakevotingeasy.ca, or
- call toll-free 1-888-668-8683.



You asked...

Questions and answers about changes to Special Services at Home

In [Spotlight issue 26 \(June 2011\)](#), we told you about some changes to the Special Services at Home program. A few of you wrote to us with questions about this news. Thank you for taking the time to ask. We thought that others might have similar questions. So, we wanted to give you some more information.

Q: What will happen to children who are getting Special Services at Home funding when they turn 18? Will they have to apply for Passport, or will their funding continue?

A: Children who turn 18 before April 1, 2013, will continue to receive their current amount of funding until April 1, 2013, without applying for Passport. We are working on new Passport guidelines. These guidelines will outline how people will access Passport. We will provide more information in the near future to help individuals who are transitioning from the Special Services at Home program to Passport.

Q: What do these changes mean to adults who receive both Special Services at Home and Passport funding?

A: Starting April 1, 2012, adults who currently receive both Special Services at Home (SSAH) and Passport funding will automatically receive the same amount of funding for one year. We will increase the amount of funding they receive through Passport by the amount they would have received through SSAH. We will contact adults who receive SSAH funding to give them more information about this transition soon.

Q: How will these changes affect agencies that coordinate Special Services at Home?

A: We're currently working with the agencies that coordinate Special Services at Home (SSAH) to manage these changes. The impact on our agency partners will vary in each community, depending on their role in delivering SSAH and how much of their caseload is children and youth. Agencies will continue to coordinate SSAH for children and youth.

Q: Will the designated Passport agencies start coordinating services for adults who currently receive Special Services at Home?

A: We will work with our Passport agencies in the coming months to discuss and prepare for the changes to Passport. The change to a single direct funding program won't happen until April 2012, and we will take the months ahead to make the transition as smooth as possible.

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