



**DEPARTMENT OF OPPORTUNITIES AND SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

**Disability Support Program
Individualized Funding Policy**

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Disability Support Program – Individualized Funding Policy

As of: 15 January 2025

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

This *Individualized Funding Policy* outlines how the Disability Support Program (DSP), as part of the Department of Opportunities and Social Development (DOSD), contracts with and provides funds directly to Participants or their Authorized Representatives for supports and services.

This policy applies to all DSP participants in receipt of Individualized Funding.

2. POLICY OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to ensure the consistent application of Individualized Funding.

3. DEFINITIONS

Activities of Daily Living (ADLs)

A person's basic, routine personal care activities that are essential to their self-care. This includes activities such as bathing and dressing, toileting and grooming, and eating.

Authorized Representative

Any person authorized by an applicant/participant, or by law, to act on their behalf, or to support the participant, in relation to an Individualized Funding Agreement and includes:

- a Representative under the Adult Capacity Decision-Making Act
- a person with Power of Attorney

Assessed Needs

An applicant/participant's need for supports as determined through a functional assessment that has been completed by a DSP Care Coordinator or Eligibility, Funding, and Assessment Coordinator (EFAC).

Assessment

The determination of an applicant/participant's support needs in the area of activities of daily living and instrumental activities of daily living, as well as their level of physical, social, leisure/recreational and/or vocational functioning, as assessed by a DSP Care Coordinator or Eligibility, Funding and Assessment Coordinator (EFAC). This process is completed using the interRAI assessment.

Basic Needs

Items to meet basic needs, including: food, clothing, shelter, fuel, utilities, household supplies, and certain personal requirements.

Behaviour

How an individual responds or reacts to a specific set of conditions or circumstances.

Behavioural Support

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A component of support provided to persons with disabilities who have challenging behavioural issues and skill development needs. The identification of a participant’s behavioural supports results from a thorough assessment and is one part of their complete individual Support Plan.

Day Program

Structured community-based programs for adults with disabilities, providing pre-vocational/vocational programs or training, supported employment, and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. Some day programs may also offer recreational and leisure activities.

DSP Provider

A Service Provider that has been approved by the DSP to manage a participant’s individualized funding and provide them with services and supports.

Eligibility

The determination of whether an applicant/participant meets the DSP criteria to receive DSP funding and support.

Eligibility, Funding, & Assessment Coordinator (EFAC)

EFACs enable access to DSP funding and supports by determining Eligibility, conducting assessments, and authorizing funding and supports included in a person’s Individualized Support Plan. EFACs also manage ongoing funding and support requests, and reassessments of funding and supports for participants.

Independent/Independence

The degree to which applicants/participants can manage, on their own, their activities of daily living, and instrumental activities of daily living.

Independent Provider

An individual or organization contracted or employed by a participant to provide supports and/or services. A DSP Service Provider is not an Independent Provider.

Individualized Funding (IF)

A service model through which funds are provided directly to participants, their DSP Provider, or their Authorized Representative, to employ, contract, or purchase supports, services, and/or items as described in an approved Individualized Support Plan and Individualized Funding Agreement.

Individualized Funding Agreement

An agreement between a Participant, and/or their Authorized Representative, and DSP outlining their respective rights, responsibilities, and obligations in relation to the participant’s Individualized Funding.

Intensive Planning and Support Coordinator (IPSC)

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IPSCs work with participants transitioning into community from institutional settings, as well as participants whose assessed needs require enhanced support and collaboration across multiple supports, services and departments. IPSCs support participants and their personal support networks to develop, implement, and evaluate their Individualized Support Plans.

Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL)

A complex range of activities related to the ability to live independently in community, including budgeting and money management, medication management, maintaining a household, preparing meals, laundry and housekeeping, telephone use, making and keeping appointments, using transportation, accessing the community, finding and maintaining employment, and participating in leisure and recreational activities.

Local Area Coordinator (LAC)

LACs provide personalized support to individuals with disabilities and their personal support networks within their local communities, by assisting with navigating services and developing support plans, that enable choice, control, and independence. LACs are available to any person with a disability, regardless of whether they are determined to be eligible for the Disability Support Program and/or Individualized Funding.

Participant

A person with a disability who is eligible for Individualized Funding in accordance with this policy and the *Disability Support Program Policy*.

Reassessment

Reassessments are required when a participant's circumstances change such that their Eligibility or Support Level may be impacted.

Self-Managed Funding

A service model in which Individualized Funding is provided directly to the participant, their Authorized Representative, or a person authorized to act on their behalf under the *Adult Capacity and Decision-Making Act*, to directly purchase supports and/or employ support workers.

Service Provider

A person or organization that is paid to provide support services to a Participant in the Disability Support Program.

Service Agreement

An agreement between the Department of Opportunities and Social Development, a Participant, and/or a Service Provider that outlines the responsibilities, expectations, and financial arrangements to support a DSP participant.

Special Needs

Items and services that eligible DSP participants can access through the Basic and Special Needs Policy, which are not provided through Individualized Funding.

Support Level

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The degree of support needed by a Participant as determined through a functional assessment administered by an Eligibility, Funding and Assessment Coordinator (EFAC).

Supports Funding

Supports Funding refers to funding provided specifically to purchase supports and services as part of the Individualized Funding program and does not include the Standard Household Rate or other items funded through the *DSP Basic and Special Needs Policy*. Supports Funding is determined by the participant's Support Level and Support Plan.

Support Network

The people an individual can rely on for support through relationships that naturally exist with their family, friends, co-workers, and community.

Support Plan (SP)

A document completed with the participant that outlines the goals, actions, resources, and supports required to support their vision for a good life in community. SPs will be developed and reviewed with the participant's LAC or IPSC, within the parameters of available DSP resources and DSP and IF policies. The SP is intended to be a "living document" that changes over time with the needs and interests of the participant.

Team Lead

A DCS employee responsible for overseeing the work and decisions made by an LAC, IPSC or EFAC within the Disability Support Program.

4. INDIVIDUALIZED FUNDING PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Individualized funding is provided to participants who:

- a) Meet the general Eligibility requirements for DSP;
- b) Have had a functional assessment completed;
- c) Have been assigned a funded Support Level;
- d) Have completed a Support Plan;
- e) Have had a funding proposal approved by an EFAC; and,
- f) Have entered into a funding agreement with DSP.

4.1 Individualized Funding provides DSP participants with funding to purchase a combination of services and supports to live in community.

4.2 Participants are responsible for ensuring that the supports and services purchased with these funds meet the DSP's policy, contractual requirements and responsibilities as outlined in their service agreement and this policy.

4.3 DSP participants receiving Individualized Funding are eligible to receive:

- a) Funding for disability-related supports and services under this Policy;

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- b) The Standard Household Rate as described in the *DSP Basic and Special Needs Policy*;
- c) Funding for Basic and Special Needs as described in the *DSP Basic and Special Needs Policy*.

4.4 Individualized Funding can be used to purchase services, supports and other disability-related or community inclusion-related needs as outlined in the Allowable Usage section of this policy. The amount of funding for supports and basic needs allocated to a participant is based on:

- a) The Support Level as determined by the assessment completed by an EFAC;
- b) The individual's Support Plan;
- c) The estimated cost of the required supports and/or services;
- d) The Disability Support Program Policy.

4.5 Individualized Funding cannot be used to expand capacity in group programs or services already funded by the DSP or another government department.

4.6 DSP does not provide funding for supports or services that fall under the mandate of other government departments or programs, such as Employment Support and Income Assistance, or healthcare services.

5. SUPPORT LEVEL OVERVIEW

5.1 An applicant or individual in the DSP must be assessed as requiring supports and services consistent with one of the funded Support Levels associated with the program.

5.2 A participant's Support Level and Individual Support Plan determine the amount of funding available under this Policy.

5.3 A participant's Support Level is determined by a functional assessment which captures the individual's ability to carry out activities of daily living (ADL), instrumental activities of daily living (IADL), and the medical and behavioural support needs of the individual.

6. FUNCTIONAL ASSESSMENT

6.1 An applicant or participant in the DSP who wishes to participate in the Individualized Funding Program must be deemed eligible for and have a functional assessment conducted by an EFAC. The assessment invites the individual to provide information that is unique and meaningful to them. The information gathered through the assessment informs the determination of the individual's Support Level.

6.2 Review and Reassessment

6.2.1 An EFAC will contact participants at a minimum of every two years to determine whether the participant's financial circumstances or support needs have changed.

6.2.2 A participant may be reassessed when it appears their financial circumstances or support needs have changed.

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7. MANAGEMENT OF FUNDING

7.1 A participant may choose to Self-Manage their Individualized Funding, have a DSP Provider manage their funding, or some combination of the two.

7.1.2 A participant allocated Individualized Funding in the amount of \$75,000 per year or above must use an approved IF Managing DSP Provider to manage their supports and services.

7.2 A participant may choose to terminate their agreement with a DSP Provider and choose a different Provider or a different funding management method at any time, subject to the terms of their agreement.

7.3 Local Area Coordinators (LAC) and/or Intensive Planning and Support Coordinators (IPSCs) are responsible for providing information to individuals and their families about the different management options to support them in deciding which will best meet their needs.

7.4 Participants and IF Managing Service Providers are responsible for submitting regular reports on how funding was used, in accordance with this Policy.

7.5 DSP Provider Managed

7.5.1 A participant may choose to have part or all of their funding allocated to a DSP Provider of their choice, provided that the DSP Provider meets DSP's contractual and policy requirements.

7.5.2 A participant determines the extent of their participation with the DSP Provider in arranging and managing their supports and services.

7.6 Self-Managed

7.6.1 A participant allocated Individualized Funding up to \$74,999 per year may choose to assume responsibility for arranging and managing their own supports and services.

7.6.2 A participant choosing to Self-Manage part or all of their funding is responsible for administering and accounting for the money received from DSP.

7.6.3 A participant employing support workers through Self-Managed Funding is responsible for complying with all applicable policy, legislative and regulatory requirements.

7.6.4 Costs paid for support services under Self-Managed Funding must be reasonable and consistent with the cost typical for the industry or service.

7.6.5 A participant who Self-Manages their funding is eligible to receive up to \$210 per month to pay for administrative supports, such as bookkeeping.

8. FUNDING ALLOCATION, PAYMENT, AND OVERPAYMENT

8.1 After an individual has been assessed, an LAC or IPSC will support them to develop a Support Plan to help them achieve their goals. The EFAC, having conducted the assessment with the participant, may have information, insights and suggestions about the participant's support needs they believe should be thought about. The development of the Support Plan is intended

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to be a collaborative, and potentially iterative, process to ensure all relevant information is considered.

8.2 The Support Plan outlines the types, amounts and costs of services, supports and community inclusion activities required for the person to live inclusively in the community of their choice.

8.3 An EFAC will review the Support Plan and confirm that the cost of the plan can be met within the participant's assigned support level before approving funding.

8.4 An EFAC may approve a funding amount up to the maximum for the participant's Support Level, as outlined in **Appendix A: Support Level Funding**.

8.5 A participant self-managing their funding must use a separate bank account to manage funds received as part of the Individualized Funding Program.

8.6 The fiscal period for the Individualized Funding Program runs from April 1st to March 31st.

8.7 Unspent funds that remain from a previous fiscal year or when a participant leaves the program must be repaid to DSP, applied to their future payments, or applied to their allocation for the next year, if applicable.

9. ALLOWABLE USAGE FRAMEWORK

The Supports portion of Individualized Funding is provided to participants to purchase supports and services to live inclusively in the community of their choice. The allowable usage framework is a tool to help guide participants in using their funding.

9.1 Participants should consult with their LAC or IPSC to discuss how purchases fit into their individual Support Plan.

9.2 Participants are provided the choice to spend their Individualized Funding on supports, services, and community inclusion based on their individual Support Plan, allowing for maximum flexibility, portability and creativity.

9.3 IF can be used for purchases, services and supports in creative ways, provided they are reasonably related to the person's disability and in accordance with their Support Plan.

9.4 Supports Funding may be used for the following:

- Costs associated with supports or services that assist in activities of daily living or instrumental activities of daily living (e.g., direct support hours for meal preparation, accessing the community, housekeeping, laundry, budgeting, medication management). Costs may be in the form of salaries, insurance, background checks and may include overhead and administration charges.
- Reasonable costs intended to promote and support the participant's well-being, social citizenship, life skills and family wellness (e.g. day programs, memberships, recreation activities, fees for classes, counselling, workshops for support givers).

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- Costs associated with employment and continuing education for the participant or the staff they have hired, to support them to access paid employment, training, volunteering and educational programs (e.g. first aid, work training programs, drivers' education, Behavioural support training).
- Costs associated with management and administration of individualized funding (e.g. bookkeeping and tax preparation services, bank fees). This category applies to those self-managing their funding only.
- Costs associated with medical supports, such as nursing support for injections. *This category applies only to individuals with specific funding for medical supports outlined in their Support Plan.*
- Other reasonable disability-related items, supports and services.

9.5 Individualized Funding may not be used for the following:

- Purchasing items covered by Basic and Special Needs funding or the Standard Household Rate (e.g. rent/mortgage, household bills, clothing, groceries).
- Purchasing items or services provided through the DSP Special Needs policy, unless agreed to in the participant's Support Plan.
- Purchasing services that fall under the mandate of other government departments or programs, such as private medical procedures.
- Making charitable donations.
- Purchasing recreational substances (including but not limited to nicotine, alcohol, cannabis, etc.)
- Gambling or lottery tickets.
- Purchasing illegal items or supporting illegal activities.
- Debt repayment.
- Increasing personal income or to purchase assets.

Participants with questions about the application of this Policy to specific purchases or services should contact an EFAC.

Participants in the Individualized Funding Program should also refer to the *DSP Basic and Special Needs Policy* for items that are funded outside of this Policy.

10. FAMILY-PROVIDED SUPPORTS

10.1 Participants self-managing their funding may employ family members to provide support, except for parents living in the same household.

10.2 A family member providing support under this policy must understand the needs of the participant and be willing and able to provide the required supports.

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10.3 An LAC or IPSC may meet with the participant and the family member providing support to confirm that the family member has the required knowledge, skills, and information to support the person.

10.4 Family members may provide respite support with the approval of an EFAC Team Lead, unless the family member is a representative managing the individual's funding or is the participant's parent living in the same household.

11. REPORTING

Reporting is an accountability measure to verify that participants confirm that the funding issued has been used according to this Policy and that participants have received the services and supports they paid for.

11.1 Participants allocated less than \$9,000 in yearly funding are not required to submit reports but must maintain records of how funds were spent.

11.2 Participants allocated more than \$9,000 in yearly funding

11.2.1 Participants allocated Individualized Funding in the amount of \$9,000 per year or more are required to submit regular reports and maintain records outlining how funds were spent.

11.2.2 Participants allocated Individualized Funding in the amount of \$75,000 per year or more are required to use a DSP Approved IF Managing Service Provider to submit reports.

11.3 Reporting Requirements for Participants Self-Managing Their Funding

11.3.1 Reports for participants self-managing their funds must be submitted quarterly (every three months), within 30 days of the end of the quarter, as outlined below:

- a) April 1st to June 30th – Report is due July 30th
- b) July 1st to September 30th – Report is due October 30th
- c) October 1st to December 31st – Report is due January 30th
- d) January 1st to March 31st – Report is due April 30th

11.4 Reporting Requirements for IF Managing Service Providers

11.4.1 IF Managing Service Providers must submit a participant's spending reports on a monthly basis, along with a record of transactions and general ledger in accordance with the *Trust Policy*.

11.5 Record-Keeping Requirements

11.5.1 Participants using Individualized Funding must maintain records of all purchases for six years after the end of the reporting period and are subject to audit. If a participant is selected for audit, they will be required to provide documentation supporting their usage of Individualized Funding.

11.5.2 Records for payments to support workers must contain the following:

- a) The name, signature and contact information of the support worker(s) providing service (i.e., phone number and address)

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- b) A description of the service(s)
- c) The date(s) that the service was provided
- d) The hourly or daily rate charged by the support worker(s)
- e) The number of hours or days provided by the support worker(s)
- f) The total amount paid for the service(s)
- g) Any applicable taxes

11.5.3 Participants that purchase other services or items using Individualized Funding must keep supporting documentation, such as invoices and receipts, that itemizes and includes the details of the nature of the purchase(s), including:

- The date of the purchase(s)
- A description of the purchase(s)
- The total amount paid for the purchase(s)

11.6 Participants may be considered ineligible to receive future Individualized Funding and be required to repay some or all of their Individualized Funding if:

- Their purchases are not allowable under the Allowable Usage Framework;
- They have not complied with their agreement, and/or
- They have not kept adequate financial records/documents that demonstrate how funds were spent as outlined in their agreement.

11.7 If a participant does not submit their reports for two quarters, payments under this program will cease and will not resume until the individual has submitted their overdue reports.

11.8 If a participant's Authorized Representative fails to manage their funds in accordance with this policy and their funding agreement, DSP may require the individual to choose a new Authorized Representative.

12. EXCEPTIONS

12.1 Participants may face circumstances that fall outside of this policy. Exceptions may be considered on an individual basis and such requests should be brought to the EFAC.

13. APPEALS

13.1 Participants and applicants have the right to appeal decisions made in the Disability Support Program, as set out in the *Appeal Policy*.

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Appendix A: Support Level Funding Maximums

Individuals in each Support Level are eligible to receive annual funding, up to the amounts listed below, for supports and services with an approved Support Plan and in accordance with this Policy. Note that funding received through the DSP Basic and Special Needs Policy is not included in these maximums.

Individuals requesting Individualized Funding in excess of these amounts should contact their EFAC.

Support Level	Maximum
P	\$0
A	\$45,000
B	\$55,000
C	\$75,000
D	\$120,000
E	N/A

In addition, individuals with an identified Behavioral or Medical support need, as identified through the functional assessment, are eligible to receive additional funding up to the amounts below in accordance with this Policy:

Functional Need Area	Maximum
Behavioral	\$40,000
Medical	\$20,000