

Attendant Care Services in Ontario

An attendant is a person who assists you with your basic daily physical needs. They can help you at home or in specialized homes called Supported Housing. Attendant services can be paid for by government, insurance companies, or privately. Most attendants are trained as personal support workers.

There are government programs that help pay for attendant care. Each program has different wait times and hours of service available per week. Your social worker can help you find out what is best for your needs. Spinal Cord Injury Ontario (www.sciontario.org) can also help you find the right program. Speak with one of their Regional Services Coordinators. For more about attendant care in Ontario or to find an attendant, visit www.cilt.ca.

Government programs for attendant care

| Home Care | Supported Housing |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Attendant Outreach Services | Supportive Service Living Unit |
| Direct Funding | Transitional Living |

What kind of assistance do attendants offer?

Attendants help with your basic day-to-day needs. Attendants are different than nurses. You need to instruct attendants about how they can help. This is called 'directing your care'. With your attendant, you are responsible for all decisions and training. Attendants can help with:

- Bathing and grooming
- Transferring
- Toileting (bladder and bowel care)
- Eating
- Getting dressed
- Preparing meals

Attendants do not help with medical services such as wound care or injections. Home and Community Care Support Services (<https://healthcareathome.ca/home>) can help you find medical services in Ontario. To learn more, check out the [Spinal Cord Essentials CCAC](#) handout.

Contact your Social Worker for more information.

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www.SpinalCordEssentials.ca

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How to qualify for funding in Ontario

- Have a valid OHIP card.
- Ontario resident of 16 years of age or older.
- Have a permanent physical disability. Need assistance with daily activities.
- Be able to direct your own care.

Attendant Outreach Services

Attendant Outreach Services offers attendant care in your home, workplace, or school. It is funded by the Ontario government. There is a maximum number of hours of service you can get per week. All services must be scheduled in advance (no emergency services). At times, there can be waitlists for services.

Application in Toronto: Apply through the Centre for Independent Living in Toronto. Fill out an Attendant Service Application form available at www.cilt.ca → Attendant Services.

Application outside Toronto: Different companies offer attendant care across Ontario. The Ontario Attendant Service Directory (Greenbook) lists all attendant service options. View it at www.cilt.ca/greenbook.aspx.

Direct Funding

Direct Funding offers funding for you to hire your own attendants privately. When you get Direct Funding, you are your attendants' employer and manager. You will need to interview, hire, train, and fire your attendants as needed. You will also need to handle all finances and paper work for the Direct Funding program.

Application: An application form can be downloaded at www.dfontario.ca. After you apply, you will have a meeting to discuss your needs and to see if you qualify. Approval for Direct Funding can take many months. Most people have other funding sources while they wait for Direct Funding approval. Visit their website for current wait times.

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Supportive Service Living Units

Supportive Service Living Units (SSLUs) are private or shared apartments for people with physical disabilities. Supportive living is for people who need low or medium levels of care. Scheduling attendant services must be done in advance. In many places, attendant care is available onsite, 24 hours per day.

Cost: Supportive living is not free. Like apartments, rates vary across buildings and units. Some apartments can adjust rent if you have low income. You must pay for your own meals and extra services (e.g. telephone, cable, and internet).

Application: Apply the same way as Attendant Outreach Services (see above).

Transitional/Reactivation Programs

Reactivation Programs and Transitional Living are short-term (maximum lengths of stay vary between 60 days - 6 months) residences which can be used for people who need additional time or practice to transition from living in the hospital to living in the community. Applicants must need help with their personal care. Attendant care services are available onsite 24h/day; some will require your care to be booked ahead of time.

Cost: Depending on the program you are eligible for, you may need to pay for part of your rent and expenses such as food, medications, and medical supplies such as incontinence supplies. Rent subsidies may be available. Attendant care costs are covered by OHIP.

Application: In Toronto, there are several options depending on your age, care needs, and goals. Talk to your social worker for more information. Information on some of the transitional programs can be found here:

- Reactivation Care Units: <https://bellwoodscentres.org/programs-and-services/centralized-referral-management/>

Always remember to keep a copy of your completed application package for future reference.

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