

What are common eligibility requirements to consider when applying for Income Assistance or Disability Assistance?

Eligibility for BC Employment and Assistance programs (income and disability assistance) is based on your family's situation and circumstances. You will be asked questions on a variety of topics including: Living Arrangements, Family Composition, Income, Assets and Employment.

Here are some of the eligibility criteria you should consider prior to applying. For more information see the [BCEA Policy and Procedures Manual](#).

A. Pursuing Income or Other Means of Support

Applicants and recipients of income assistance, disability assistance and hardship assistance who may be eligible for other income or other means of support are required to pursue and accept the other income or means of support.

You need to be able to show that you have explored all possible income resources for which you may be eligible. Some possible resources include: WorkSafe BC, Canada Pension Plan, Student Financial Assistance, Old Age Security, or personal assets (cash-on-hand, or items that you can sell or convert into cash).

Those who fail to accept or refuse to pursue other income, or other means of support, may be ineligible for assistance or eligible at a reduced rate.

B. Work Search and Participating in an Employment Program

Under the BC Employment and Assistance Program, employable clients (both the applicant and their partner, if both are employable) are expected to complete a work search and participate in other employment-related activities for the purpose of achieving financial independence unless they meet exemption criteria.

For more information on employment programs to support you in your work search, visit the WorkBC Employment Services Centre serving your community. These centres provide resources and support available free of charge. For more information see the [WorkBC site](#).

C. Two-Year Financial Independence

If you have not been financially independent for a period of two consecutive years, you may not be eligible for income assistance (this requirement does not apply to persons with disabilities).

Some exceptions may apply, if you are:

- Under age 19
- Pregnant
- Have dependent children
- Are a foster parent or a parent of a Child in the Home of a Relative (CIHR)
- Fleeing from or left an abusive situation in the last 6 months;

Or if you have:

- been supported by an employed spouse for at least two years;

- a medical condition that will prevent you from working at least 30 days from the date of your application, or prevented you from working at least 6 months during the past two years;
- been incarcerated (in jail or prison) for six months in the two years immediately before applying for income assistance;
- a diploma, bachelor's degree, or a post-graduate degree
- persistent multiple barriers to employment;
- a spouse with a physical or mental condition that prevents you from working outside the home.

D. Disability Assistance

To be eligible for disability assistance, a person must:

1. meet financial and other eligibility to receive assistance and
2. meet the criteria for the *Persons with Disabilities Designation* and be designated as such by the ministry

For more information see: [Persons with Disabilities brochure](#)