

# Frequently Asked Questions

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## Learning Fund for Young Adults (LFYA)

### What is the LFYA?

The Learning Fund for Young Adults provides a one-time \$1,500 grant to eligible current and former children and youth in care to support their educational, training or life-skills development goals.

The LFYA was created from the provincial BC Training and Education Savings Grant (BCTESG) program that provides a one-time grant to RESPs of children between the ages of 6 and 9 upon application by their caregiver. The LFYA was created to ensure children in care have comparable access to the grant.

This fund is in addition to other support and benefits that youth and young adults in care receive. This includes young adults accessing Strengthening Abilities and Journeys of Empowerment (SAJE) agreements. More information about the LFYA can be found on the [LFYA website](#).

### When will the LFYA be open for applications?

Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis beginning on September 9, 2024.

### Eligibility

#### Who is the LFYA grant for?

Youth and young adults are eligible to receive the LFYA if they are planning to participate (or are participating) in an educational, employment, training or life-skills program, course or activity and meet all the following eligibility criteria:

- were born on or after January 1, 2006 and
- are at least 17 but under the age of 36 and
- have 12 cumulative months in one or more qualifying MCFD or Indigenous Child and Family Service (ICFS) Agency legal status from birth to their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Eligible legal statuses include:

- Interim Custody Order to the director (ICO)
- Temporary Custody Order to the director (TCO)
- Continuing Custody Order to the director (CCO)
- Under the guardianship of a director pursuant to the Infants Act
- Under the guardianship of the director of adoption pursuant to the Adoption Act
- Interim Custody Order with person other than a parent
- Temporary Custody Order with person other than a parent
- Youth Agreement (YAG)

Young people are encouraged to apply even if they are not sure they are eligible, as their time in care will be verified by Specialized Provincial Services (SPS) with the submission of the application.

### **What if a young person is born before January 1, 2006 but is under age 36, are they eligible for the LFYA grant?**

If a young person was born before January 1, 2006 they are **not** eligible to receive the LFYA grant even if they are under age 36. A young person must also meet all the eligibility criteria listed above to qualify for the grant.

### **What programs are eligible for LFYA?**

Any education, employment, training or life-skills program, course, or activity is considered an eligible program for the LFYA. Applicants will be asked to indicate on the form their intention to participate in one of the eligible program types. There is no confirmation of enrollment or acceptance into a program required to apply to the LFYA.

### **Can the LFYA be used to support programs eligible for the Provincial Tuition Waiver Program (PTWP)?**

Yes, the LFYA can be used to support any program eligible for the PTWP, including trades training. The PTWP waives tuition and eligible fees for B.C. students who are current or former children or youth in care and studying full-time or part-time, below the graduate level, at a B.C. public post-secondary institution, the Native Education College, or an approved union-based trades training provider.

In addition, the LFYA can be used to support expenses that would otherwise not be covered by the PTWP, such as private institutions, post-graduate courses, and Adult Basic Education, amongst other possibilities.

### **How is 12 months of care determined?**

Eligible youth and young adults must have 12 cumulative months (measured in 30-day intervals) in an eligible care status with either MCFD or ICFS agencies. The 12 months of care experience may be accumulated at any time between birth and age 19. Specialized Provincial Services (SPS) will be determining eligibility for the LFYA grant when the application is received.

### **Are young people eligible if they are accessing SAJE supports?**

The LFYA is available to all youth and young adults who meet the eligibility described above. This includes those that might be receiving support from SAJE.

## **Will eligibility be expanded to include out of care or equivalent care arrangements with Indigenous Authorities?**

At this time, we are implementing the LFYA in accordance with the *Prescribed Class of Persons and Payment Amount Determination Regulation*, which specifies the eligibility criteria. This has involved consideration of legal statuses that were in place at the time the fund was created and determining the equivalent statuses in place today.

## **What about the eligibility of youth and young adults residing out of province?**

Consistent with the approach taken by SAJE, eligibility is not impacted when a youth or young adult in care resides in another province or territory.

## **Application Process**

### **How can young adults apply?**

Young people can apply for the LFYA beginning in fall 2024 by completing a PDF-fillable form and submitting it by email to [LFYA@gov.bc.ca](mailto:LFYA@gov.bc.ca). Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis. There are no deadlines for application. The one-time-only funding will be provided directly to successful applicants via cheque or e-transfer.

Young people can apply on their own and do not require social worker approval. Some young people may need assistance to complete the application and can reach out to trusted adults such as social workers or caregivers to assist them with the application process.

### **Do young people need to know their care status and time in care experience prior to applying?**

There is no requirement for young people to know if they meet eligibility based on their legal care status or time in care. Upon receiving an application, MCFD will review an applicant's records to determine their eligibility.

### **Where can young people find the application?**

The application can be found on [the LFYA website](#).

## **After the Application**

### **What happens after the application is submitted?**

LFYA applications will be adjudicated by MCFD's Specialized Provincial Services (SPS) to ensure that the applicant meets eligibility criteria, as prescribed in the [regulation](#).

Once SPS verifies eligibility, they will notify the Victoria Foundation (VF), who is the administrator of the fund. Eligible applicants can expect to receive payment by cheque or e-transfer, based on their indicated preference, within approximately 4-6 weeks of applying.

**Who does a young person contact if their email or mailing address changes or if they have LFYA payment issues?**

Young people can contact SPS via email ([LFYA@gov.bc.ca](mailto:LFYA@gov.bc.ca)) or phone (1-866-623-3001) to update their contact information or to resolve LFYA payment issues.

**Is the LFYA considered income?**

Yes, the LFYA grant is considered income. Victoria Foundation will mail a T4A tax slip to grant recipients by the end of February of the following year. This grant must be reported in the recipient's tax return.

**Is there an appeal process for ineligible applicants?**

Unsuccessful applicants may follow the regular [MCFD Complaints Process](#). The first step is to resolve their complaint locally by calling 1 866-623-3001 or emailing [LFYA@gov.bc.ca](mailto:LFYA@gov.bc.ca) . If this process does not address their concerns, they may call 1 877-387-7027 to speak to a Complaints Specialist. More information about the Complaints Process can be found on the [ministry complaints web page](#).

Reviews or appeals may consider the applicant's declared use for the funds if that is a reason for denial. However, the eligibility of the person is clearly prescribed in regulations, and therefore is not flexible and is not subject to appeal.