



Special Needs PROGRAM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS THE SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAM?

Under the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's Department of Community & Social Services (DCSS), the Special Needs Program supports Akwesasne community members with disabilities or developmental needs by providing financial assistance for eligible services, supports, equipment, and adaptations that improve quality of life, safety and daily functions.

WHAT DOES "SPECIAL NEEDS" MEAN WITHIN DCSS?

Within the Department of Community & Social Services, Special Needs refers to children, youth, adults, and Elders who require additional support due to:

- Developmental or cognitive disabilities
- Physical disabilities or medically complex conditions
- Mental health or behavioural needs that affect daily functioning
- Age-related limitations requiring extra care

WHAT TYPE OF SUPPORTS ARE COVERED?

- Home accessibility modifications (ramps, accessible bathrooms, widened doorways)
- Vehicle accessibility adaptations (wheelchair lifts, adaptive seating)
- Specialized therapies (speech, occupational, physiotherapy)
- Sensory equipment and adaptive technology
- Medical equipment and specialized supplies
- Respite support for caregivers
- Specialized educational and behavioral supports

Please refer to the policy for the full eligibility overviews.

WHO REVIEWS THE APPLICATIONS?

- Applications are submitted to the Special Needs Program Manager and DCSS Director for review
- Applications are checked to ensure all required information and documents are complete
- Some requests may be approved immediately
- Other requests may be reviewed by the Special Needs Fund Committee at the next scheduled meeting
- Urgent requests may be reviewed sooner if immediate consideration is required
- Applicants will be notified of the Committee's decision by the Special Needs Program

WHAT TYPE OF SUPPORTS ARE NOT COVERED?

- Vehicle purchases, repairs, or maintenance
- Home construction or general home repairs
- Generators
- Large household furnishings
- Items already funded by insurance, government programs, MCA programs, or Jordan's Principle
- Dietician or nutritional services
- General family expenses (food, clothing, non-medical travel)
- Toys or electronics without a professional recommendation

HOW DO I APPLY?

Applications can be accessed through the DCSS Administration Office and the MCA Community Portal.

You will need to submit:

- A completed Special Needs Application form
- Must provide medical or clinical documentation
- Must provide quote or invoice for the service or invoice for the service or equipment requested
- Any additional documents outlined in the policy





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HOW LONG IS THE APPLICATION PROCESS?

Processing times vary depending on the completeness of your application and volume of requests. Applicants are encouraged to submit all documents together to avoid delays.

CAN I REAPPLY IF MY REQUEST IS DENIED?

Yes, through an appeal form. An appeal form can be submitted to the committee with additional information to further support your application. This is recommended so the committee has full understanding of the request.

IS THERE AN APPEAL PROCESS?

Yes. Appeals must be submitted in writing and are reviewed by the designated committee or administrative authority responsible for the program's appeals. Contact the Special Needs Program Office for an appeal form.

DOES THE PROGRAM COVER ONGOING NEEDS?

Yes. The Special Needs Program can cover approved partnership costs – including services or equipment purchased through approved vendors (such as mobility or accessibility providers) – as well as annual respite care approved by the committee.

DOES THE PROGRAM OFFER DAY PROGRAMMING OR RESPITE PROGRAMS?

At this time, dedicated day programs are not available. Day programming is included in the program's future action plan, pending administrative steps and resource development. Respite support may be available depending on funding.

IS THERE A DIGITAL COPY OF THE APPLICATION AVAILABLE?

Yes. The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne has a fillable PDF version for the Special Needs Program application available to the community.

WHO DO I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION?

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