

<b>Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board POLICY &amp; PROCEDURES MANUAL</b>	
Section: H. Ontario Works	Effective Date: <b>May 1, 2017</b>
Topic: 7B. Benefits/Discretionary Benefits	Replaces: <b>Feb. 1, 2013</b>
Subject: 7B.15. Approved Household Items	
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<b>POLICY</b>
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**Authority**                    **OW Act: Sec. 2, 5 and 10**  
**OW Directives: Dir. 7.7**

This policy deals with the replacement or repair of essential household furniture and appliances. The Case Manager is required to determine if the client previously owned such items and what happened to them. Repairs should always be considered before purchasing another.

If an appliance needs repairs, only one estimate is required. The participant is responsible to pay for the estimate. Should the estimate be approved, the cost of the estimate may be added to the cost of the repair. Please note the total may not exceed the amount allowed if the item were to be purchased.

In the instances where clients have sold previous furniture/appliances the Case Manager needs to determine where the proceeds went and why the items were not replaced by the client with those proceeds.

If item has been issued before, applicant/participant is to be questioned why another one is required. If the previous item has been left behind during a move or has been sold, another one will **NOT** be approved.

The item should also be owned by the participant. If the participant is renting an apartment with a fridge and stove included, it would be the landlord's responsibility to repair or replace such items, not Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB.

<b>PROCEDURE</b>
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**APPROVED ITEMS**

No item will be approved more than once in a previous thirty-six month period, except in extenuating circumstances. Those situations will be forwarded to the OW Supervisor who will seek approval from the Director of Integrated Social Services.

Where a dependent child requires a crib and mattress only new safety approved cribs and mattresses will be considered.

Two (2) estimates will normally be required for these items to be approved.

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Washing machines and dryers will generally only be considered where there are one (1) or more dependant children in the benefit unit. **Washing machines may be considered on a case by case basis where there are no laundromat facilities in their respective communities.**

1. Participant is required to obtain prior approval from the Case Manager by submitting verification that the Discretionary Benefit is required and an estimate of the cost (preferably two estimates where reasonably possible).
2. Case Manager reviews need and documents the request and the cost in the social assistance computer system.
3. If the Case Manager is to pay the supplier directly, they must complete the requisition form for Discretionary Benefits as well as indicate that a Purchase Order is required.
  - a) It is on this form that the Case Manager will list the item requested, why it is needed and also note their own recommendation.
  - b) The Case Manager will also copy this information into the social assistance computer system.
  - c) The Case Manager will forward the completed request for approval to the Supervisor. The Supervisor will note in the social assistance computer system if the item was approved or denied.
  - d) Once approved the request will be forwarded to the Integrated Program Assistant in Espanola.
4. The Integrated Program Assistant will:
  - a) Assign a P.O. number on the form and then mail it to the client.
  - b) Keep a copy of the P.O. in a pending file.
5. When the original P.O. is returned from the supplier with an invoice attached, the Integrated Program Assistant will :
  1. Match up the copy in the pending file, ensuring the client has not exceeded the maximum approved.

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2. Request the benefit / payment via the payment tab in the social assistance computer system. The payment will be requested in the Vendor's name.
3. Enter a notation in the social assistance computer system that the cheque was issued to \_\_\_\_\_ and for \_\_\_\_\_ in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The Supervisor will release the cheque via daily pay list reviews.
5. When a cheque is produced, the Integrated Program Assistant will:
  - a) Match the cheque with the P.O. Authorization Form ensuring it's the same amount and that the cheque is issued directly to the vendor.
  - b) Once verified, mail the cheque.
  - c) File the originals in a completed binder.

**Where NO P.O. is required:**

If the Case Manager is to pay the participant directly, the benefit / payment will be requested by the Case Manager. Case Manager will note in the social assistance computer system the details of the request.

**APPROVED ITEMS AND MAXIMUM COSTS PAID**

Actual cost of item based on estimates will be approved up to the maximums below. Clients will be responsible for any amounts exceeding the maximum. The client needs to demonstrate how balance will be paid.

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<u>ITEMS</u>	<u>MAXIMUM</u>
<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>\$480.00</b>
<b>Stove</b>	<b>\$320.00</b>
<b>Washing Machine</b>	<b>\$320.00</b>
<b>Dryer</b>	<b>\$280.00</b>
<b>Bed &amp; Mattress</b>	<b>\$200.00</b>
<b>Mattress only</b>	<b>\$120.00</b>
<b>Safety Approved Crib &amp; Mattress</b>	<b>\$160.00</b>