

## Community Start-Up Benefit

If you are receiving Ontario Works (OW) or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), you may be eligible for a benefit called Community Start-Up Benefit. This money can be used towards expenses you may have as a result of moving. This can include:

- Putting a deposit on a new place called last month's rent
- Hydro, gas and telephone hook-up charges
- Furniture
- Storage costs
- Moving expenses such as renting a truck



You may also use this money towards something that will help you stay in your home now. This can include:

- Rent that you owe so that you will not be evicted
- Paying for hydro or gas bills to keep the utilities from being cut-off or to get them back on if they have been cut-off



To get this benefit you must be eligible for OW or ODSP and need to move because you are being evicted, need a place that is more affordable, staying where you are living is harmful to your health and well-being or your utilities are about to be cut-off as well as other reasons.

Every 24 months a single person is entitled to \$799 in addition to his/her regular monthly cheque and a family would be eligible for \$1500 in addition to their regular monthly cheque. This can only be accessed once every 24 months if you use the entire amount at once or can be used in smaller portions as needed until you reach the maximum over the 24 month period. Under special circumstances you may be able to get more than you would normally be allowed in the 24 month period otherwise once you have used the whole amount you must wait until 24 months have passed since you first used it.



If you do not have any more Community Start-Up Benefit left and you are facing difficulties with your hydro or gas bill you may call 519-883-2100 x 1 to speak to someone about Energy Assistance. You must have a cut-off notice. If you are no longer able to access that you can call Share the Warmth during the winter months. They are able to help with gas, wood, oil and propane bills. This service is only available once all other resources have been used and only once in a 12 month period.

If you are facing an eviction because you owe rent money or if you are moving and need help with your last month's rent deposit you can also call the Rent Bank and Eviction Prevention Program at 519-743-2460 x 406 to see if you would qualify for assistance. You will need to leave a message and someone will return your call.



If there are questions about any of these programs please stop by the Housing Help Desk between 1-3 daily and someone will be available to assist you or you may call the Housing Services Coordinator at 519-743-2460 x 401.