



What is a Community Start-Up and Maintenance Benefit (CSUMB)?

A Community Start-Up and Maintenance Benefit (CSUMB) is a *mandatory benefit* – that is, it is a benefit that you are entitled to, if you qualify.

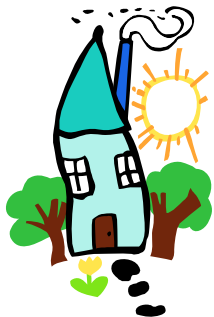
A CSUMB is money to help with expenses when you set up or move to a new home.

A CSUMB can also be used to help people stay in their home, in emergency situations.

When can I get a CSUMB?

A CSUMB will not be given every time a person moves. A CSUMB will be granted only in certain situations, including:

- Being homeless
- Moving because of family violence
- Uninhabitable living conditions
- Leaving an institution
- Moving for health reasons
- Your new rent is more affordable
- For employment or training.



You must clearly show your worker that there is a need for you to move to a new place.

What payments will a CSUMB cover?

- Last month's rent
- Hydro or gas hook-up charges
- Storage and moving costs
- Moving out of the area
- Clothing, furniture & other household goods
- Getting rid of bed bugs
- Buying new or replacement smoke alarms, or batteries for the alarms
- Buying or repairing necessary home appliances – fridge or stove, etc.

CSUMB can also make a one-time payment to help you stay in your home:

- Arrears of rent to prevent eviction, if there is an Eviction Notice
- Arrears of utility payments to prevent shut-off or disconnection
- Mortgage payment if you have received a final demand.

? How often can I get a CSUMB?

You can receive a CSUMB only **once** every 24 months – except for exceptional circumstances: flood or fire or abuse.

A woman leaving an abusive or violent home situation may be eligible for CSUMB benefits more often.



How much can I receive for a CSUMB?

How much you receive depends on your circumstances.

The maximum is \$799 for a single person/couple and \$1500 for a family.



Women living in Shelters

Women who leave violent situations and stay in shelters for abused women can receive basic needs + **shelter** costs for **3 months**, if they are trying to keep their home. This can be extended.

How Do I apply for a CSUMB?

You have to apply in writing for a CSUMB. Check to see if OW/ODSP has a form. If not, make a list of the items you wish to purchase, plus their price. You may have to get written estimates for bigger items – fridge, stove, bed, etc.

If the application is related to your health or safety, get a letter from your doctor, counselor or another health professional. Talk to your OW/ODSP worker if you are not covered by a CSUMB or you need more than what a CSUMB pays for.



Do ODSP and OW CSUMB cover the same things?



YES. However, persons on ODSP can receive additional benefits. Speak to your ODSP worker for more information about benefits that you are eligible for.

What do I do if my CSUMB is denied?



If your worker denies you a benefit and you think the decision is wrong, you can appeal the decision.

Always get the denial decision in writing, otherwise you cannot appeal it!

First, you must ask for an Internal Review in writing within **30** days of the denial letter. If your Internal Review is also denied, you can appeal this decision, by filing a Notice of Appeal with the SBT within **30** days.

NOTE: There is a **30 day time limit** for filing an Internal Review or an Appeal to the Social Benefits Tribunal (SBT). If you **miss** this deadline, you **may lose your right to appeal**. Contact your community legal clinic for help and assistance.

For Community Start Up and Maintenance Benefit Policies – see: <http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/en/mcass/programs/social/directives>

OW Policy Directive - 7.5 CSUMB

ODSP - Income Support Directive - 9.2 CSUMB

Other Pamphlets: Community Start-Up and Maintenance Benefits, Appeals and Internal Reviews and other pamphlets about social assistance, published by CLEO, are available at the Northwest Community Legal Clinic and other agencies. Or go to: www.yourlegalrights.on.ca – *Social Assistance and Pensions*.

The information in this pamphlet is current to November 2011 and will not reflect further changes to the rules or regulations.

For information about your rights or questions about OW/ODSP benefits or other issues, please contact:

In Kenora & Rainy River Districts:
Northwest Community Legal Clinic
Kenora: 468-8888 or 1-800-403-4757
Fort Frances: 274-5327 /1-800-799-2485
Atikokan (807) 597-2811

In Sioux Lookout, Dryden & area:
Legal Aid Ontario:
(807) 737-3074 or 1-800-465-7552

In all other areas of Ontario, contact your local community legal clinic. Call Legal Aid Ontario at 1-800-668-8258 or www.legalaid.on.ca to find the legal clinic closest to you.

What are



Community Start-Up and Maintenance Benefits (CSUMB)?

For People on OW or ODSP Benefits



An information brochure produced by Northwest Community Legal Clinic (November 2011)