



Developmental Services Ontario

Your access point for adult developmental services

Hamilton-Niagara Region

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Administered by Contact Hamilton

Contact Hamilton
140 King St. E. Ste. 4
Hamilton, ON
L8N 1B2

Toll Free Number:
1-877-DSO-HNR4

Fax Number:
905-522-5998

info@dsohnr.ca

Welcome

Welcome to the 5th edition of this Newsletter. In here you will find answers to some common questions about Developmental Services Ontario (DSO).

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: What does DSO stand for?

DSO stands for Developmental Services Ontario. There are 9 DSOs in the province of Ontario.

*The DSO for our region is called **Developmental Services Ontario Hamilton-Niagara Region** (DSO HNR). The DSO HNR works with people living in Brant, Haldimand and Norfolk, Hamilton, Niagara and the two First Nations communities of Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation.*

The DSO HNR is administered by Contact Hamilton.

Q: Why were DSOs created?

DSOs were created to make it easier for people to get information about and apply for adult developmental services. No matter where you live in the province of Ontario, the way you get information and apply for services will be the same. DSOs across the province also use the same application package and the same database. There are some minor differences with each region but the main responsibilities are the same.

DSOs began on July 1 2011.

Q: What do DSOs do?

DSOs have many responsibilities. Here are some of their main responsibilities:

- 1. Providing information about services for adults with developmental disabilities*
- 2. Providing information about how to apply for services*
- 3. Confirming a person's eligibility to apply for adult developmental services*
- 4. Helping eligible adults apply for services*

5. *Connecting with people that are waiting for services at least once a year to make sure that their contact information is correct and that they are still interested in services*
6. *Holding information sessions about topics of interest*

For more information about what DSOs do, you can read the [Policy Directives for the DSO](#) found on: www.contacthamilton.ca (DSO section).

Q: Who can call the DSO?

Anyone can call the DSO for information or to apply for services. Family members, professionals and others can call on a person's behalf to get the process started.

The DSO HNR accepts calls Monday-Friday from 9 am – 5 pm. All phone numbers listed below are answered by the DSO HNR so every number is the right number. People can also get in touch with the DSO HNR by email, fax or mail.

Toll free number:

1-877-DSO-HNR4 / 1-877-376-4674

Local Numbers:

Brant: 519-512-0010

Haldimand and Norfolk: 905-296-0104

Hamilton: 905-297-5604

Niagara: 289-477-5305

Six Nations and New Credit: 519-512-0011

Email:

info@dsohnr.ca

Fax:

905-522-5998 (Hamilton office)

Mail:

DSO Hamilton-Niagara Region, c/o Contact Hamilton
140 King Street East, Suite 4, Hamilton, ON, L8N 1B2

Q: Who is eligible to apply for adult developmental services and supports?

*Adults over the age of 16 that have a **confirmed** developmental disability are eligible to apply for adult developmental services. A person's eligibility must be confirmed by the DSO before they can apply. This is a requirement and must happen before the application can be completed.*

To be eligible for adult developmental services, the person must:

1. *Have a confirmed developmental disability AND*
2. *Live in Ontario AND*
3. *Be 18 years of age and older AND*
4. *Provide documentation of their developmental disability and residency*

Q: What does “confirmed” developmental disability mean?

The province of Ontario has a new definition of developmental disability; this definition is found in the new Act, [Services and Support to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008](#).

*The new definition is **not** based strictly on IQ. It also considers how a person handles everyday life demands and activities and how independent they are compared to other people of similar age and background.*

*The new Act defines developmental disability as a person with **prescribed significant limitations in cognitive functioning and adaptive functioning and those limitations:***

- **Started before the person turned 18 years of age and**
- **Are likely to be life-long in nature and**
- **Affect areas of major life activity such as personal care, language skills, learning abilities, ability to live independently, etc.**

“Cognitive functioning” means a persons’ intellectual capacity, including the capacity to reason, organize, plan, make judgements and identify consequences.

“Adaptive functioning” means a person’s capacity to gain personal independence, based on the person’s ability to learn and apply conceptual, social and practical skills in his or her everyday life

To learn more about the specific eligibility criteria, please visit www.contacthamilton.ca (DSO section) for links to the DSO Policy Directives and the new Act.

Q: What documentation does the DSO need to determine eligibility?

Ideally, the person will have a psychological report or assessment that clearly states that the person has a developmental disability. Not everyone has a psychological report or assessment available to them. The DSO will review any documentation that is available, and if required, will make a referral to have a psychological assessment completed. There can be a waiting period for this assessment.

DSOs follow provincial guidelines regarding what information they need in order to confirm eligibility.

If the DSO deems the person to be ineligible (they don’t meet eligibility criteria), the person has the right to seek a review of that decision. The review process has three stages; this means that people who disagree with the DSO’s decision about their eligibility have three opportunities to have their request reviewed. They will also be able to provide, in any of the stages, additional information that they would like the DSO to look at. The decision that is made at the end of the third review stage is final.

To learn more about the review process, please visit www.contacthamilton.ca (DSO section) for a link to the DSO Policy Directives.

Q: If someone is already receiving services or is waiting for services, do they need to have their eligibility confirmed again?

No, they do not need to have their eligibility confirmed again. They are already considered eligible. They do not have to do anything else; they continue to receive their service or wait for a service opening. Sometime in the future, the person will need to complete an application package through the DSO (like

everyone else) but their eligibility will be honoured. The DSO will contact the person when it is time to complete the application.

Q: What does the application process look like?

Once eligibility is confirmed, the DSO schedules two application appointments with the person, 1 or 2 people who know the person well and an Access Coordinator who works for the DSO. The appointments are about 2-3 hours each. Application appointments usually happen during the work day but appointments can be made in the evening and on weekends where this is required. Appointments occur in the person's community in a place where the person feels the most comfortable like their home, school, day support etc.

At the appointment, the Access Coordinator completes two specific questionnaires (this makes up the application package):

- Application for Developmental Services and Supports (ADSS)
- Supports Intensity Scale (SIS)

The application package is designed so that the Access Coordinator learns as much from and about the person as possible and to understand the level of support they need to be successful. The Access Coordinator receives training on this application package and must be certified in order to use these questionnaires.

After the application is completed, the Access Coordinator talks to the person and their support network about the services in their community that may be able to help. The Access Coordinator considers all services and supports in the community.

There may be a waiting period for some services like residential supports and day supports. The Access Coordinator will try to find other services and supports that can help the person while they wait for what they need to become available.

Q: Are services offered on a first-come first-served basis or is it based on priority?

Generally speaking, people in the greatest need will be considered first for services where they are a match with the service that is available. People are only considered for services that are available in their community; they cannot be considered for services that are available in another community unless that service is available to anyone in the region (this is called a regional service).

Referrals are made for the following services: behaviour services, clinical services (e.g. swallowing assessment, social work) and Adult Protective Worker services. The agencies that provide these services determine priority and offer services first to those in the greatest need.

For residential supports, day supports and respite, people are placed on a waiting list and priority is determined. This is done because these programs are full and there is a waiting list to get into them. For the Hamilton-Niagara Region, Haldimand Norfolk REACH will prioritize people for residential, day support and respite services in their community. The DSO sends REACH a summary of the person's application package and then REACH uses this information to determine priority. REACH lets the DSO HNR know the person's priority. When a service opportunity becomes available, the DSO HNR first considers people with the highest priority who may be a good match for the service that is available.

Q: What happens after the application appointments?

The person's Access Coordinator remains the same. The Access Coordinator does the following:

- *Makes sure that all information about the person is entered in the database*
- *Makes any referrals as required (e.g. behaviour services, clinical services, APSW)*
- *For people that are waiting for residential, day support and respite services, the Access Coordinator lets the person know when there is a service opportunity that they think may be a match and with consent, makes the referral.*
- *Helps the person update their application every 5 years to make sure that the information is accurate and to capture any changes.*

The DSO HNR will contact people once a year to make sure that their contact information is correct and to make sure that they are still interested in services.

The person/their support network can call their Access Coordinator anytime if they have any questions, need any information, their situation changes, or if things are becoming urgent or a crisis. This is very important because the Access Coordinator can update the person's information, update priority (by letting REACH know) and help with the situation.

Q: Can people have DSO services provided in French?

Yes, DSO services can be provided in French. In the Hamilton-Niagara Region, the communities of Hamilton, Welland and Port Colborne are designated French communities and as such, the DSO HNR has a responsibility to make sure that people can receive their services in French. The DSO HNR extends this service to anyone in the region who is French speaking.

Q: Is a separate application form needed to apply for Passport?

No, as of July 1 2011, there is no longer a separate application form for Passport. Application for all adult developmental services and supports is now through the DSO.

Q: What is happening to Adult SSAH? Is it turning into Passport?

There are many changes happening to Passport and Adult SSAH.

- *Adult SSAH will stop operating as of April 1 2012. Instead, funding that was once provided through Adult SSAH will be transferred to Passport. Passport will now include direct funding for community participation supports as well as "adult SSAH respite".*
- *The DSOs are responsible for managing all direct funding contracts, through Passport, as of April 1 2012.*
- *The MCSS is revising the Passport Guidelines that the DSOs will need to follow. The DSOs are waiting for this information.*
- *The MCSS are letting people and their families know about this change. MCSS has advised people who currently have adult SSAH that they do NOT have to reapply for funding for the 2012-2013 year; funding will remain the same for that year. This will help make the transition a little easier.*
- *Any questions about this change should be made to the Hamilton-Niagara Regional Office of the Ministry of Community and Social Services, 905-521-7280*

Q: Where is the DSO HNR located?

The main office is located in Hamilton; however, there are local sites in each of the communities. The DSO HNR is sharing office space with each of the Contact agencies in the region:

Office Site for Brant:

DSO Hamilton-Niagara Region, Brant Site
C/O Contact Brant, 25 King Street, Brantford, ON, N3T 3C4

Office Site for Niagara:

DSO Hamilton-Niagara Region, Niagara Site
C/O Contact Niagara, 23 Hannover Drive, Unit 8, St. Catharines, ON, L2W 1A3

Office Site for Haldimand and Norfolk, Six Nations and New Credit:

DSO Hamilton-Niagara Region, Haldimand Norfolk Site
C/O Haldimand Norfolk REACH, 101 Nanticoke Creek Parkway, P. O. Box 5054, Townsend, ON, NOA 1S0

Office Site for Hamilton:

DSO Hamilton-Niagara Region, Hamilton Site
C/O Contact Hamilton, 140 King Street East, Suite 4, Hamilton, ON, L8N 1B2

Q: Will the DSO HNR satellite sites have office or walk-in hours?

Yes, this is in development. Shortly, information will be available about the walk-in service.

You can find our newsletters in English and French on the Contact Hamilton website at **www.contacthamilton.ca**. If you do not have internet access and are not already receiving our newsletter by mail, we would be happy to mail you a copy of the newsletters; please complete the form below and mail it to us.

Please mail me the newsletter: Circle: ENGLISH FRENCH

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/TOWN: _____ PC: _____

Thank you. Please detach this form and mail it to:

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