



**Special Services at Home Passport Provincial Coalition (SSAHPC)
Has Been Re-Established With A New Name!**

1270 Walker Rd, Unit 2
Windsor, ON
N8Y 4T4
pfpfontario@gmail.com

Oct. 5, 2020

Hon. Minister Todd Smith
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
438 University Ave. 7th Floor
Toronto, ON
M5G 2K8

Dear Minister Smith:

People for Personalized Funding-PFPF - is a revitalized group, previously known as SSAHPC. We work with and for all families who want to use direct provincial funding to support our family members who have disabilities to have an everyday ordinary life within community – made possible thanks to cost-effective personalized funding, both SSAH and Passport funds.

We wrote you in May 1st, 2020 and received your reply May 13th regarding the flexible use of SSAH and Passport funds. We thank you for making the use of these two programs more flexible, especially in this long pandemic period. People and their families are finding the flexibility very useful.

People and their families have been asking many questions about SSAH and Passport funding as they struggle through Covid 19 . Many families have discontinued in-home and out-of-home support workers to keep their children/family members safe from the virus. The stress levels, for these families, have increased dramatically.

Many families with children under 18 years are still waiting for SSAH funding. It is critical that they know when that funding is coming after the most recent approvals in July. Since 1982, SSAH has strengthened Ontario families. Most disabilities are life long and SSAH has been the stepping stone to community involvement for individuals, followed by the much needed use of Passport funding after they turn 18 and become adults.

We ask that more funds be added to SSAH to support those families still waiting.

Passport grants of \$5000 per year provides less than 1 hour a day of minimum wage support – so much less than what most adults with developmental disabilities require to have a good life. Our history tells us that the average SSAH grant in 1995 was \$5000. We all know that 25 years later people still need those supports to participate in the community and that they are costing more. In 1995 most support workers were making approximately \$9.00/hr. Presently, most people can barely hire workers for \$20.00 per hour (especially during the pandemic). Therefore, the \$5000 Passport grant ultimately provides even less support now for adults with a developmental disability. How can a person who needs support to participate actually do so, with even less money than was available 25 years ago?

We ask that more funds be added to the Passport program to support more individuals still waiting plus for those needing increased adequate annualized funding to have an everyday life in community.

We ask that all families receive their SSAH and Passport funds – in advance - as they cannot afford to pay out of pocket, then wait for reimbursement. Some families, who are the working poor, are being forced out of using these vital direct funding programs because they can never pay their workers before reimbursement. This is absolutely critical during this very difficult time with increasing unemployment, cutbacks and wage loss due to the pandemic. Families need the reassurance to count on having some type of advance payment for their support workers.

Sadly families are being left alone with NO supports.

In your Jan 31st, 2020 letter to us you noted an enclosure which we never received regarding the statistics for SSAH and Passport for 2018-2019. We followed up by email but never received a reply. We understand these trying times but request that you please send those statistics by email to us.

pfpfontario@gmail.com

We ask that you would now also please send the 2019-2020 statistics for SSAH and Passport.

We await your reply and would be available for any discussions at your convenience.

Sincerely, Alison Ouellette and Susann Palmiere,
Co-Chairs, People for Personalized Funding

Cc:

The Honorable Jill Dunlop, Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues
Janet Menard, Deputy Minister of Children, Community and Social Services
Jennifer Morris, ADM Children with Special Needs
Rupert Gordon, ADM, Community Services Division
Carla O'Neill, President, Family Alliance ON