

# Checklist for the Persons With Disabilities (PWD) Benefit<sup>©</sup>

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These are some of the programs and benefits you may be eligible for if you receive the Persons With Disabilities (PWD) benefit from the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance (MEIA).

## Helpful tip

- To avoid paying long distance charges when you phone a government office in Victoria, phone Service BC at 604-660-2421 or 1-800-663-7867 and ask to be connected. If you do not know the phone number you need, Service BC will be able to help you with this also.

## Health Assistance Benefits

- Most Health Assistance Benefits must be applied for.
- If the Ministry denies your request you have the right to appeal.
- Ask to speak to an Employment and Assistance Worker (EAW) at your local MEIA office for information on the items below and any other goods or services you may need.
  
- Dental coverage of up to \$1,000 over a 2-year period.  
This \$1,000 limit can only be exceeded in exceptional circumstances such as in the emergency relief of pain. Dentists must get approval from the MEIA before they do any dental work.
  
- Denture services
  
- Diet allowance of \$10 - \$50 per month for specific diagnoses only. This is a renewable benefit. Contact an EAW 1 month before it expires.
  
- Monthly nutritional supplement benefit (MNS) of up to \$225 per month for people with nutritional needs because of a chronic health condition. You may not be eligible for both the diet allowance and the nutritional supplement. To obtain an MNS application, contact an EAW.
  
- Disposable medical or surgical supplies  
For example, personal self-care items.

- Extra chiropractic, massage therapy, physiotherapy and podiatry visits.
- The MEIA pays up to \$44.83 for an optometrist's exam and \$48.90 for an ophthalmologist's exam, every 2 years. To obtain an eye exam, you will need to provide your optometrist or ophthalmologist with your Care Card. The Medical Services Plan (MSP) may pay the full cost for an exam if you have a particular medical condition. As well, you may be able to get an exam more often than every 2 years. Check with your optometrist or ophthalmologist to see if you qualify.
- Glasses - lenses and frames every 3 years
- Health Care Services (MSP Coverage)
- Medical equipment and devices, including mobility aids  
For example, hearing aids, wheelchairs, canes, orthotics, walkers, crutches, custom-made foot wear.
- Medical transportation  
Funding for transportation to medical appointments. This must be approved in advance by an EAW.
- Transportation allowance to and from residential alcohol and drug treatment facilities.
- Prescription drugs

## Housing

- Accessible/Affordable Housing  
Phone the BC Housing Management Commission (BC Housing) at 1-800-257-7756.  
Website: [www.bchousing.org](http://www.bchousing.org).
- Additional Home Owner Grant for People with Disabilities  
For home owners with disabilities. Contact your municipal property tax department.
- Annual Property Tax Deferment  
Phone 250-387-0555. Website: [www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/rpt](http://www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/rpt); email: [ruraltax@gov.bc.ca](mailto:ruraltax@gov.bc.ca).
- Moving costs and security deposits  
See an EAW for information.

## Employment Income

- Earnings exemption  
You may earn up to \$500 income per month without affecting your benefits. If your partner (married or common law) is also on PWD, the earnings exemption for both of you is \$750. You must report all income to MEIA, but if your monthly income stays the same you do not have to report it after the first month. If your income changes (up or down), you must report it to MEIA on your cheque stub by the 5th day of the following month.

## Volunteer Programs

- Community Volunteer Program (CVP)  
You may receive up to \$100 income per month for volunteer work. Please note that there is a long waiting list for this program. See an EAW for information.
- Training Initiative Supplement (TIS)  
You may receive \$50 per month for volunteer work. Please note that there is a long waiting list for this program. The TIS is limited to 12 out of 36 months. You cannot receive both the TIS and CVP. Contact an EAW for information.

## Transportation

**For some of these programs you must have limited mobility**

- Annual Bus Pass (\$45 per year)  
Phone the Bus Pass Program at 1-866-866-0800 and ask them to mail you an application.
- Special Transportation Subsidy  
For people unable to use public transit, including handyDART. See an EAW for information.
- Autoplan Disability Discount (ICBC)  
Phone 604-661-2100 or 1-800-663-3051 if you are outside the Lower Mainland. You can also contact your local ICBC agent. You must be in receipt of the Provincial Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax Rebate. Website: [www.icbc.com](http://www.icbc.com).
- BC Ferry pass  
Apply directly to the BC Ferry Corporation. You will need a Release of Information form from an EAW. Phone 250-381-1401 for an application form or go to the website at [www.bcferries.bc.ca](http://www.bcferries.bc.ca).
- Federal Excise Gasoline Tax Refund  
Phone the Canada Revenue Agency at 1-877-432-5472. The phone lines are open from 12 p.m. to 9 p.m. (BC time). Website: [www.servicecanada.gc.bc/en/goc/gasoline\\_tax\\_refund.shtml](http://www.servicecanada.gc.bc/en/goc/gasoline_tax_refund.shtml).

- Flight Discount  
Your attendant may accompany you free of charge; ask the airline for details.
- Provincial Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax Rebate  
Phone the BC \Consumer Taxation Branch at 1-877 388-4440. Website:  
[www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/ctb](http://www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/ctb).
- Parking Permits for People with Disabilities  
To apply for a permit phone:
  - Beacon Community Services (Sydney) 250-656-5537
  - City of Kelowna 250-763-6011
  - Cowichan Valley Independent Living Resource Centre 250-746-3930
  - Kamloops People in Motion 250-376-7878
  - Nanaimo Independent Living Centre 250-758-5547
  - Richmond Disability Resource Centre 604-232-2404
  - Vernon Independent Living Resource Centre 1-877-288-1088
  - Victoria Disability Resource Centre 250-595-0044
  - Wescom Medi-Lend (Langford) 250-478-5373

For all other areas phone: Social Planning and Research Council of BC 604-718-7744
- HandyDART  
Look for the HandyDART listing in your phone book.
- HandyPass and Taxi Saver  
In the Lower Mainland, contact your local Translink office or go to [www.translink.bc.ca](http://www.translink.bc.ca).  
People in other areas should contact their local transit office.
- Greyhound (and bus lines other than transit) and Via Rail  
Attendants travel free with a Disability Travel Card from the Lions Society of BC.  
Phone 604-873-1865, or 1-800-818-4483 if you are outside the Lower Mainland.  
Blind or sight impaired individuals can present their CNIB Card.  
Obtain the application form from an EAW.

## Leisure

- Camping is free in BC Provincial Parks  
Obtain a Release of Information form from an EAW to give to campsite operators.  
Full or partial funding is available for camping at certain recognized camps.
- Fishing License fee reduction  
Look under Service BC Government Agents in the blue pages of your local phone book.  
They will be able to provide you with the information you need and an application form.

- Access to Recreation/Community Centres and Programs  
Most municipalities provide some assistance for people with disabilities who want to access their recreational programs. Call your local recreation/community centre for information.

### **Additional Supplements**

#### **Ask an EAW about these and other supplements**

- Christmas Supplements  
\$35 for a single person, \$70 for couples.
- Crisis Supplements  
Up to \$100 per year for clothing, \$20 per month for food, and emergency rent assistance. Funding may also be provided for a one-time emergency need.
- Natal Allowance of \$45 per month  
You will need to provide a doctor's letter.
- Guide Animal Supplement of \$95 per month

### **Helpful Tip**

For information on equipment and assistive devices to assist you with daily living activities, call 1-888-818-1211 (TTY: 1-800-661-8773).



**Prepared by Advocacy Access, a program of BC Coalition of People with Disabilities**  
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