

Special Services at Home (SSAH) funding can be used to cover registration and support costs for summer camp programs. Summer camp registration fees for siblings can also be paid for with SSAH funding.

When using SSAH funding for camps remember

- SSAH funding will cover registration fees but not *additional costs* such as camp T-shirt if they are not covered in the registration fee.
- Funding for transportation costs are reviewed on a case by case basis, speak with your SSAH coordinator or ministry representative if you may need to use your SSAH funding for transportation to camp.

If you use a **transfer payment agency** for your funding, such as CMHA WWD, (*Invoices sent to CMHA WWD not sent directly to the Ministry of Community and Social Services or the Ministry of Children and Youth Services*).

Here are some steps to remember when using funding for recreation programs include:

1. Make sure the program is eligible under the SSAH Guidelines (*see fact sheet link below or contact your SSAH Coordinator if you are unsure*).
2. Complete the registration process for the camp or recreation program
 - a) If you are paying for the program and will be reimbursed by your transfer agency, **request two copies of your receipt** – one to submit and one to retain for your records
 - b) To receive **REIMBURSEMENT** for camp programs you have paid for : Submit an ***“Invoice for Services Provided”*** sheet with your **receipt**
 - c) If you would like the transfer agency to pay the program directly, request an **invoice** from the camp program
 - d) To have the transfer payment agency pay the camp program directly: Submit an ***“Invoice for Services Provided”*** with your **invoice**

For more information about what Special Services at Home (SSAH) funding can be used for, the SSAH Fact Sheet can be found at

<https://cmhaww.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/SPECIAL-SERVICES-AT-HOME-SSAH-FACT-SHEET-April-2015.pdf>



HIRING AN INDEPENDENT SUPPORT WORKER

While many camps do offer support for children with special needs, you may be more comfortable contracting with a worker that is screened and paid by your family. These suggestions for contacting and contracting with independent workers have been received from families, agencies, camp programs and support workers in Wellington County and are intended as a resource which may be helpful however the questions will be applicable to all situations.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN AN INDEPENDENT SUPPORT WORKER

What you are looking for in a worker will obviously depend on the needs of your child.

Consider the following questions...

- ❖ Would you like to contract with a university or high school student, or someone who provides support as their profession?
- ❖ Are you looking for more of a peer support or someone who can provide higher level support such as personal care or supporting challenging behaviours?
- ❖ Do you need the worker to transport the individual to camp?
- ❖ What skills will the worker need to fully participate in the camp program? The ability to swim? A comfort level with animals? All workers will need lots of energy, enthusiasm and a commitment to inclusion and ensuring your child has a great summer experience!
- ❖ Does the worker need to be comfortable administering medications or will the camp handle that?
- ❖ Does the worker need any certifications or specific training? First Aid? CPR? Non-violent crisis intervention? Training in different communication systems? Remember that many camps make some of these requirements for their staff.
- ❖ Would you like to have one worker for the entire summer, or connect with a few different workers? Working with 2 or 3 different staff may help to prevent burn-out and provide some options if the primary worker becomes ill during the summer.
- ❖ If the worker *is* ill, would your child still be able to attend camp?
- ❖ What is the rate you are comfortable paying a worker? Typical hourly rates tend to be around \$12-\$15/hour with a flat rate between \$400 and \$500. A typical camp week is 40 hours.

WHERE TO LOOK FOR AN INDEPENDENT SUPPORT WORKER

Some places where you can advertise for or inquire about independent support workers are:

- ❖ Community or parent groups
- ❖ Churches Schools (Educational Assistants or Peer Supports)
- ❖ Recreation programs (Programmers or volunteers)
- ❖ ***Respiteservices.com***
 - ❖ To avoid any delays, state special requirements in the ad, such as the need to attend a camp orientation or obtain a police check.
 - ❖ ***If you are communicating by e-mail, set up an anonymous e-mail account (that does not include your family's name) for the purposes of recruiting a worker.***

SAMPLE "FILL IN THE BLANKS" CLASSIFIED AD

Our family requires a _____ (*gender*) respite provider provide service for a _____ (*age range*) _____ (*gender*) who is _____ (*positive qualities*) and requires support for _____ (*needs – i.e. physical, developmental, cognitive*) needs.

The service provider will be responsible for supporting the child during their time at camp. Availability from/on _____ (*time, days and note flexibility if possible*) is required as well as _____ (*required skills – i.e. creativity, enthusiasm, patience, experience supporting children with your child's needs*). _____ (*additional skills*) would also be an asset.

We would like someone who is able to provide service in _____ (*Approximate location of camp*) and the rate of pay is (*weekly or hour rate*) _____ .

If you feel you would be a fit with our family, please contact us at (XXX) XXX XXXX or _____ (*e-mail*).

INFORMATION TO PROVIDE TO A CANDIDATE OVER THE PHONE

The first phone call is an excellent opportunity to provide more information about your child, and conduct the first screening of a potential worker.

Some information to provide over the phone

- ❖ Your child's gender, age, interests, strengths
- ❖ Time and location of work
- A reminder that it is a camp position
- ❖ What kind of camp your child will be attending
- ❖ Your child's support requirements (personal care, communication needs, support required for behaviours, etc).

Some questions to ask the candidates over the phone

- ❖ What experience he/she have providing support
- ❖ Why they have chosen this field of work
- ❖ What would the last family he/she worked for say was his/her greatest strength?
- ❖ Has he/she worked at camp or gone to camp in the past? What does he/she think will be the best part of working in a camp environment?
- ❖ What does he/she think will be the hardest part of working in a camp environment?
- ❖ Can he/she tell you about a situation they he/she has handled well in the past?
- ❖ Does the candidate meet your requirements (i.e. certifications, access to a vehicle, etc)?

INFORMATION TO PROVIDE A CANDIDATE DURING AN INTERVIEW

- ❖ An “*All About Me*” profile about your child (The “*One Form*” or a *personal profile* form used for camp applications hold a lot of great information for a potential worker)
- ❖ A chance to ask questions about your child
- ❖ A brochure or pamphlet about the camp program, including a schedule and list of things they will need to bring (this list will be similar to what your child needs)
- ❖ How they will be paid
- ❖ An opportunity to interact with your child (which you can carefully watch – what are you looking for? Energy, enthusiasm, positive attitude, listens to your child, encourages him or her, interested in activities, dressed appropriately, speaks age appropriately or suggests age appropriate activities, makes eye contact with your child on their level)
- ❖ Your goals for and expectations of the worker (are they there to facilitate social interaction? Hand over hand support for activities? Personal care?)
- ❖ An opportunity to visit the camp or talk with the camp staff if possible
- ❖ How the worker will travel to and from camp (i.e. bus, car, with you and your child)

INFORMATION A WORKER SHOULD PROVIDE TO YOU AT THE INTERVIEW

- ❖ References
- ❖ Police check including vulnerable sector screen
- ❖ Copy of his/her resume
- ❖ Copy of any certifications they have listed on their resume (i.e. first aid/CPR)

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Describe the work you have been doing. What has been the most difficult aspect of your job and what has been the most positive aspect of your job?
2. When you worked at or attended camp, what was your favourite activity and how would you ensure our child could participate in that activity?
3. How would you support our child in making a new friend during their time at camp?
4. Describe how your experience and skills that are in your resume benefit you as a respite provider?
5. How/Why do you think you will add value to our child’s camp experience?
6. What do you see as the most challenging aspect of this role?
7. How will you help ensure good communication between yourself, the camp staff and us?
8. What are your greatest strengths/attributes?
9. How would you deal with a situation where your views about how to proceed with a goal for our individual differed significantly from our/my views? How would you deal with a situation where our views of inclusion were similar, but the camp’s view was different?
10. What hobbies or special skills do you have?
11. What strategies have you used in the past to handle...(specific challenges the individual may have i.e. transitioning).

SAMPLE REFERENCE QUESTIONS

1. In what capacity do you know candidate and for how long?
2. Would you be pleased to have him/her work with you again?
3. Have you observed his/her work with children/adults?
4. What qualities does s/he have that would work well as a respite provider supporting individuals with a developmental disability?
5. How would you describe his/her personal characteristics?
6. Can you comment on the independence level of the applicant?
7. From your experience, please give an example of this person's reliability and commitment
8. Do you know of any reason why the applicant should not be considered suitable to work as a respite provider?
9. Is there anything we should know about this applicant that could affect their ability provide support as a respite worker with our family?

SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK DURING THE CAMP WEEK

1. Is the worker on time and prepared?
2. Are they still engaged with your child at the end of the day?
3. Are they dressed appropriately to have fun?
4. Does your child tell you about any activities he/she enjoyed during the day?
5. Does the child talk more about the support worker than any children or staff at the camp?
6. Does the worker ask about the child's evening and morning to adjust expectations for the day?
7. Does the worker have positive things to say about the staff?
8. Do the camp staff have positive things to say about the worker?



Information put together by Supporting Kids in Camp and Respiteservices.com/Wellington

