

<b>Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board POLICY &amp; PROCEDURES MANUAL</b>	
Section: H. Ontario Works	<b>Effective Date: January 1, 2013</b>
Topic: 7B. Benefits/Discretionary Benefits	Replaces: July 2009
Subject: 7B.12. Housing Related Benefit	
Policy No. H.7B.12.	Page 1 of 5

<b>POLICY</b>
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**Authority**                      **OW Act: Sec. 8**  
   **OW Directives: Dir. 7.5**

Housing-related benefits are discretionary and are provided on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Director of **Integrated** Social Services. The Director of **Integrated** Social Services determines the amount to be provided for housing-related benefits.

**Home Repairs**

The home repairs have been removed from the social assistance system effective July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012. Any individuals requiring home repairs are to be referred to the Ontario Renovates program.

**Moving Expenses**

Moving expenses are a non-health-related discretionary benefit. The Director of **Integrated** Social Services may approve payments to cover the cost of moving household furniture and personal effects from one place of residence to another. Storage charges incurred prior to application are not usually acceptable as an allowable moving expense unless the stored furniture is considered essential and will be used in a future residence.

- **Funding is limited to a maximum of \$300 within any 24 month period at the discretion of the Director of **Integrated** Social Services.**

**Energy and Water Conservation Measures**

Payments for low-cost energy and water conservation measures are health related discretionary benefits authorized by the Director as a special item. The Director of **Integrated** Social Services may approve payments for low-cost energy and water conservation measures to recipients who are home owners or renters.

This benefit will only be issued where the participant has exhausted all other forms of funding.

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Topic: 7B. Benefits/Discretionary Benefits	Replaces: July 2009
Subject: 7B.12. Housing Related Benefit	
Policy No. H.7B.12.	Page 2 of 5

- Energy and Water conservation funding is limited to a maximum of **\$300** within any 24 month period at the discretion of the Director of **Integrated Social Services**.

### **Alerting Systems**

Recipients or a member of their benefit unit who are deaf and hearing impaired may be eligible to receive alerting systems as an approved discretionary benefit.

An alerting system picks up sounds from fire alarms, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide monitors, baby monitors, telephones, doorbells and building security systems and transmits a signal to a light-flasher, bed-shaker or other appropriate alerting mechanism.

Discretionary benefits may be issued for the purchase of alerting systems for the Deaf and hearing impaired

In addition: the costs of new or replacement smoke alarms and batteries for recipients who own their homes and are in receipt of the maximum shelter allowance.

- **Alerting systems funding is limited to a maximum of \$200 within any 24 month period at the discretion of the Director of Integrated Social Services.**

## **PROCEDURE**

### **Home Repairs – Ontario Renovates Program**

The home repairs have been removed from the social assistance system effective July 1st, 2012. Any individuals requiring home repairs are to be referred to the Ontario Renovates program

Currently, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB contracts out the application process for the Ontario Renovates Program to:

ManTech Services  
PO Box 385, Mindemoya ON P0P 1S0  
Tel: 705-377-7143 / Toll free: 1-877-636-1181

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Topic: 7B. Benefits/Discretionary Benefits	Replaces: July 2009
Subject: 7B.12. Housing Related Benefit	
Policy No. H.7B.12.	Page 3 of 5

### **Moving Expenses**

Moving **will only** be approved for the following reasons with verification:

- victim of family violence;
  - persons who are homeless;
  - uninhabitable premises (supporting documents must be part of the request);
  - medical reasons (supporting documents must be part of the request);
  - person being discharged from institutions such as: Correctional facilities, hospitals, hostels, nursing homes, special care homes or interval and transition homes (supporting documents must be part of the request)
  - leaving a residence due to: Incapacity or death of a supporting care-giver / family member, overcrowding within the premises, documented need for children and sole-support parents to relocate, eviction from their premises, property sold, employment or training or a move to more affordable accommodations (supporting documents must be part of the request);
  - by exception as approved by the Director of Integrated Social Services.
1. Case Manager **will assess** the case to ensure that the criteria(s) to move are met. If criteria is met, a **discretionary benefit form is completed with the supporting documents** are submitted to the Ontario Works Supervisor for approval.
  2. Participant submits two estimates for cost of moving **prior** to the event.
  3. **The situation is noted in the social assistance computer program.**

**Note:** The lowest estimate is the one which is usually accepted.

- **Funding is limited to a maximum of \$300 within any 24 month period at the discretion of the Director of Integrated Social Services.**

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Section: H. Ontario Works	Effective Date: January 1, 2013
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Subject: 7B.12. Housing Related Benefit	
Policy No. H.7B.12.	Page 4 of 5

### **Energy and Water Conservation Measures**

The discretionary benefit may be issued if:

- the costs are not covered by the Energy Efficiency Assistance Program for Houses;
- the recipient is responsible for that specific utility or heating cost;
- the costs are not included in monthly rent; and
- the low-cost energy or water conservation measures are being used to reduce or limit that specific utility or heating cost.

Low-cost energy and water conservation measures may include:

- caulking
  - sealing or weather stripping for doors and windows
  - insulation for hot water pipes and hot water tanks
  - flow restrictors for showerheads
- **Energy and Water conservation funding is limited to a maximum of \$300 within any 24 month period at the discretion of the Director of Integrated Social Services.**
1. Case Manager will assess the case to ensure that the criteria(s) for the energy and water conservation measures are met. If criteria is met, a discretionary benefit form is completed with the supporting documents are submitted to the Ontario Works Supervisor for approval.
  2. Participant should submit two estimates for cost **prior** to the event.
  3. The situation is noted in the social assistance computer program.

### **Alerting Systems**

Recipients or a member of their benefit unit who are deaf and hearing impaired may be eligible to receive alerting systems as an approved discretionary benefit.

An alerting system picks up sounds from fire alarms, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide monitors, baby monitors, telephones, doorbells and building security systems and transmits a signal to a light-flasher, bed-shaker or other appropriate alerting mechanism.

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Subject: 7B.12. Housing Related Benefit	
Policy No. H.7B.12.	Page 5 of 5

Discretionary benefits may be issued for the purchase of alerting systems for the Deaf and hearing impaired

- **Alerting systems funding is limited to a maximum of \$200 within any 24 month period at the discretion of the Director of Integrated Social Services.**
1. Case Manager will assess the case to ensure that the criteria(s) for Alerting Systems are met. If criteria is met, a discretionary benefit form is completed with the supporting documents are submitted to the Ontario Works Supervisor for approval.
  2. Participant should submit two estimates for cost **prior** to the event.
  3. The situation is noted in the social assistance computer program.