



## PERSONS WITH DISABILITY SUMMARY



### Persons with Disabilities (PWD)

Persons with Disabilities (PWD) provides financial and health support for those who have a disability in BC. The PWD application is around 28 pages and is mainly filled out by a doctor/nurse practitioner and/or an assessor.

#### To be eligible for PWD you must:

- Show financial eligibility – based on income, assets and size of family unit
- Be at least 18 years old (or 17 ½ when you apply)
- Have a severe mental or physical impairment that, in a doctor’s opinion is expected to continue for at least two years
- Have a severe physical and/or mental impairment that restricts the applicant’s ability to perform daily living activities (either “continuously” or “periodically”)
- Need assistance with “daily living activities,” from:
  - Another person,
  - An assistive device,
  - An assistance animal.

#### What are “Daily Living Activities”?

Tasks that you do almost every day such as: eating, grooming, walking, toileting, & bathing.

### Assets

You must meet specific income and asset criteria to receive the PWD benefit. The general asset exemption limits are:

- \$100,000 for a single, couple, or family where one person has the PWD designation.
- \$200,000 for a couple where both adults have the PWD designation.

Some assets are allowed and do not count towards the general limit. They include your home, one motor vehicle, clothing, necessary household equipment, a Registered Disability Saving Plan, and qualified trust assets.

For a full list of exempt assets please visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/policies-for-government/bcea-policy-and-procedure-manual/eligibility/assets-and-exemptions>

### How to Apply

#### Step One – Prove Financial Eligibility

If you are already on income assistance (IA) you can request a PWD application from the Ministry. If not, you must first complete the income assistance online application at <https://myselfserve.gov.bc.ca/>.

- Make sure to answer “yes” to the question “Are you applying for PWD?”
- Follow up with the Ministry (1-866-866-0800) after 5 business days if you have not heard from them
- Request a PWD application booklet from the Ministry
- If you are not eligible for IA but believe you are eligible for PWD, speak with a Ministry worker



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### Step Two: Complete the PWD Application Booklet

The application booklet is a 28-page booklet that has 3 different sections:

Section 1: completed by you (the applicant)

Section 2: completed by a doctor or nurse practitioner

Section 3: completed by an assessor (Doctor or another approved medical professional)

### Tips for completing the application booklet

In Section 1 on the first page, the applicant needs to fill in their contact information and then has the option to check the box that asks if they do not wish to complete section one.

### What is a “Self-Report tool booklet”?

This is a booklet you fill out with an advocate, similar to the PWD application booklet, that helps explain your disability to your doctor.

To assist the Doctor in completing Section 2 of the application, it may be a good idea to meet with an advocate to complete a **“Self-Report” Tool Booklet. This is given to your Doctor to help complete Section 2 and Section 3.**

The Doctor you ask to complete Section 2 of the PWD application, should be your family doctor or a doctor that knows your medical history well. It is very important that their answers and comments reflect the fact that your disability severely restricts your daily living activities. Your doctor can also complete Section 3 but if they choose not to, there is a list in Section 3 of other medical professionals who qualify as an assessor.

**Important:** You do not have to pay the doctor or the assessor to complete their portions of the PWD application. They are paid by the provincial government for this service.

### Step Three: Submitting Your Application

Use the “Applicant Checklist” near the end of the application to make sure you have completed all requirements before submitting your application. Once complete, mail the PWD booklet to the Ministry using the pre-paid envelope found inside the booklet.

### Decision

Typically it takes 2-4 months for a decision. If you disagree with the Ministry’s decision on your PWD eligibility you have the right to appeal the decision. This must be done within 20 business days of being informed of the decision.

### Remember

Be sure to make a photo copy of your application before submitting for your own records!

If you need assistance with filling out the PWD application booklet, you can find an advocate in your area at: <http://www.povnet.org/find-an-advocate/bc>

For more information visit our website at [www.AskAnAdvocate.ca](http://www.AskAnAdvocate.ca)