

# Special Support Program Q&A

September 2023



GENERAL INFORMATION:.....	1
APPLICATION PROCESS: .....	2
RENEWAL PROCESS:.....	4
INCOME INFORMATION:.....	4
OTHER PROGRAMS AND QUESTIONS: .....	6

## GENERAL INFORMATION:

### What is the Special Support Program?

- The Special Support Program assists individuals or families with high drug costs in relation to their income.
- The Special Support Program establishes a semi-annual deductible based on total family income and a copayment percentage that is based on total family income and total family drug costs.

### Who is eligible for the Special Support Program?

- Anyone may apply for the Special Support Program.
- You must be a Saskatchewan resident with a valid health card.

**\*\*Please note that the Special Support Program does not include individuals or families who are covered under federal government programs, such as the federal Non-Insured Health Benefits Program or Veterans Affairs.**

### How do I apply for the Special Support Program?

- Individuals or families may apply by completing an application form and submitting it to the Drug Plan at:

**Special Support Program – Client Services Unit  
Drug Plan and Extended Benefits Branch  
3475 Albert Street REGINA SK S4S 6X6  
FAX: 306-787-8679  
EMAIL: [dpeb@health.gov.sk.ca](mailto:dpeb@health.gov.sk.ca)**

## APPLICATION PROCESS:

### Where do I get a form?

- Download the form online at <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/health/prescription-drug-plans-and-health-coverage/extended-benefits-and-drug-plan/drug-cost-assistance> .
- Ask your pharmacist for an application form.
- Contact the Drug Plan and Extended Benefits Branch toll-free at 1-800-667-7581 or in Regina at 306-787-3317 OR by email to [dpeb@health.gov.sk.ca](mailto:dpeb@health.gov.sk.ca).

### How do I fill out the form?

- You are asked to clearly print your name, address, phone number, date of birth, Health Services Number (Saskatchewan Health Card) and your Social Insurance Number.
- Read the Declaration and Consent section. If you agree with the consent, please sign the form and submit it to the Drug Plan. Forms must be printed and signed. Written signatures are required by Canada Revenue Agency.
- If you have any questions, contact the Drug Plan and Extended Benefits Branch toll-free at 1-800-667-7581 or in Regina at 306-787-3317 OR by email to [dpeb@health.gov.sk.ca](mailto:dpeb@health.gov.sk.ca).

### Why do I have to fill out an application form?

- An application is necessary to determine if you are eligible for coverage under the Program.

### What is the difference between Side A and Side B?

#### SIDE A

- By using [Side A](#), your coverage will be automatically renewed each year as long as you continue to file your Income Tax and Benefit Return with Canada Revenue Agency and hold a valid Saskatchewan Health Card.
- You will receive a letter the first time you apply.

#### SIDE B

- If you do not file income tax or would rather submit your financial information annually, please complete [Side B](#) and contact the Drug Plan for additional assistance.
- By completing Side B, you will be required to re-apply for coverage each year with supporting income documentation.
- In the fall, you will receive a renewal notice with the required form, details on any deadlines, contact information and instructions to renew your benefits.

For your convenience, the Drug Plan encourages you to complete [Side A](#), so you do not have to complete a form and submit income every year AND to ensure there is no lapse in coverage.

### **What if I have a power of attorney?**

- If you are applying on behalf of an individual as their power of attorney, a copy of the power of attorney document must be included with the application form.
- If you are power of attorney for more than one individual, a copy of the documents must be provided for each individual.
- Due to the variety of power of attorney documents, some may not be considered acceptable for the Canada Revenue Agency, such as power of attorney limited to a bank or financial institution. In these cases, the Drug Plan may request that you complete [Side B](#).
- If you have any questions, contact the Drug Plan and Extended Benefits Branch toll-free at 1-800-667-7581 or in Regina at 306-787-3317 OR by email to [dpeb@health.gov.sk.ca](mailto:dpeb@health.gov.sk.ca).

### **When can I apply?**

- You can apply at any time during the year for the Special Support Program.

### **Once I apply, what is the effective date of coverage?**

- The effective date is the date that a complete application with all required documentation is received in the Drug Plan.

### **How will I know if I qualify after I initially apply?**

- You will receive a letter in the mail informing you of your semi-annual deductible and copayment percentage under the Special Support Program.
- The letter is for your records only; you are not required to show it to your pharmacist to receive your benefits.

### **What if my medications or income has changed have changed?**

- You may request a reassessment if your medication or income has changed.
- If your medication has changed, your pharmacist may contact the Drug Plan at 1-800-667-7581 or in Regina at 306-787-3317 to request a reassessment.
- If your income has changed, you are required to submit a request for a reassessment in writing including supporting income documentation. You may submit that information to:

**Special Support Program – Client Services Unit**  
**Drug Plan and Extended Benefits Branch**  
**3475 Albert Street REGINA SK S4S 6X6**  
**FAX: 306-787-8679**  
**EMAIL: [dpeb@health.gov.sk.ca](mailto:dpeb@health.gov.sk.ca)**

### **I have [Seniors' Drug Plan](#), why do I have to fill out another application for the Drug Plan to get my income information from Canada Revenue Agency?**

- The Seniors' Drug Plan and the [Special Support Program](#) are separate programs and use two different income lines from your income tax form to determine your coverage.
- The Seniors' Drug Plan is based on individual total income (Line 23600).
- The Special Support Program is based on TOTAL family income (Line 15000) and TOTAL

family drug costs.

- It is required by the Canada Revenue Agency that individuals or families sign a consent form in order to release income information to the Drug Plan for each specific program.

## RENEWAL PROCESS:

### Why do I have to apply for Special Support Program each year?

- The Special Support Program is based on your annual reported total income (Line 15000).
- Each year in November, the Drug Plan must confirm your income with Canada Revenue Agency (if you complete Side A) or with you (if you complete Side B) to ensure that you remain eligible for coverage.

### How do I renew my Special Support Program coverage?

#### SIDE A

- If you applied using [Side A](#) your coverage will be automatically renewed each year in November as long as you continue to file your Income Tax and Benefit Return with Canada Revenue Agency and hold a valid Saskatchewan Health Card.

#### SIDE B

- If you applied using [Side B](#) because you do not file income tax or would rather submit your financial information annually, you will be required to re-apply for coverage each year with supporting income documentation.
- In the fall, you will receive a renewal notice with the required form, details on any deadlines, contact information and instructions to renew your benefits.
- For your convenience, the Drug Plan encourages you to complete [Side A](#), so you do not have to complete a form and submit income every year AND to prevent a lapse in coverage.

### When will my renewal form be processed?

#### SIDE A

- If you applied using [Side A](#) your coverage will be automatically renewed each year in November as long as you continue to file your Income Tax and Benefit Return with Canada Revenue Agency and hold a valid Saskatchewan Health Card. Letters are mailed in December.
- Most renewal letters are no longer mailed. If a letter is required for your records, you may call Drug Plan at 1-800-667-7581 and press option 2 to request a letter OR email [VM\\_email@health.gov.sk.ca](mailto:VM_email@health.gov.sk.ca) to request a letter.

#### SIDE B

- If you applied using [Side B](#) you will be required to re-apply for coverage **each year in the fall** with a complete form and supporting income documentation.

### I did not receive a renewal letter. How can I receive my Special Support renewal letter?

#### SIDE A

- If you applied using [Side A](#) you may call 1-800-667-7581 and press option 2 to request a letter. Leave your name and health services number (HSN). You will not receive a phone call

back if you use this option.

#### **SIDE B**

- If you applied using [Side B](#), once your annual application is received and processed, you will receive a letter.

#### **I need another copy of my letter for my files or for private insurance purposes. How can I get another copy of my Seniors' Drug Plan letter?**

- You may [request a Seniors' Drug Plan letter](#) from the online Saskatchewan Formulary.
- You will need to enter your nine-digit Health Services Number (HSN) located on your Saskatchewan Health Card and you must select the Program Type as Seniors' Drug Plan.

#### **Where will the letter be mailed?**

- Letters are mailed to the address listed on your Saskatchewan Health Card.
- If you have moved recently, it is recommended you update your address.
- To update your address, contact eHealth Saskatchewan (Health Registries) at 1-800-667-7551 (Toll-free Canada &US) or 306-787-3251.
- Once your address is updated, you may try again to [request a Seniors' Drug Plan letter](#).

#### **When will I receive my letter?**

- You should receive your letter in five to seven business days.
- If you have not received your letter in seven to ten business days, you may contact the Drug Plan at 1-800-667-7581 or 306-787-3317 (Regina).

#### **I've requested a letter using the online Saskatchewan Formulary, but I have not received a Seniors' Drug Plan letter yet. Why?**

- A letter will be mailed only if there is current Seniors' Drug Plan coverage in place for the calendar year.
- A letter may not be mailed out for a variety of reasons:
  - A recently submitted application has not been processed
  - Seniors' Drug Plan coverage has expired
  - Income could not be obtained from Canada Revenue Agency
  - A change of address or a move outside of Saskatchewan
- If you have recently moved, contact eHealth Saskatchewan (Health Registries) at 1-800-667-7551 (Toll-free Canada &US) or 306-787-3251 to update your address. Once the address is updated, you may try again to [request a Seniors' Drug Plan letter](#).
- If you have not moved, you may contact the Drug Plan at 1-800-667-7581 or 306-787-3317 (Regina) if you have not received your letter in seven to ten business days.

#### **Why am I not able to print the letter off at home? Is there a pdf or attachment to download?**

- No attachments or pdf attachments are available for download.

- The [request a Seniors' Drug Plan letter](#) option provides a printed letter that will be mailed to the address listed on the requestor's Saskatchewan Health Card.

#### **Can the Drug Plan email the letter to me?**

- Letters will not be sent by email.
- The [request a Seniors' Drug Plan letter](#) option provides a printed letter that will be mailed to the address listed on the requestor's Saskatchewan Health Card.

#### **I've received two Seniors' Drug Plan letters. Why?**

- A letter will be mailed if there is current Seniors' Drug Plan coverage in place for the calendar year.
- At certain times of the year, during the renewal process, the coverage may be in place for the next calendar year.
  - For example, if you requested a letter in November or December, you may receive a letter, if coverage is in place, for both the 2023 and 2024 calendar years.
  - For example, if you requested a letter in January, you will only receive a letter, if coverage is in place, for the 2024 calendar year. If you require a letter for the previous calendar year, you may contact the Drug Plan at 1-800-667-7581 or 306-787-3317 (Regina).

## INCOME INFORMATION:

#### **Where can I find my income information?**

- If you are unsure of your income in the previous year, refer to total income or Line 15000 on your Notice of Assessment or Income Tax and Benefit Return.

#### **What is Line 15000?**

- Line 15000 is total income.

#### **My 2022 income was higher than it is now. If I provide 2022 income information, I may not receive the correct benefits for coverage in 2024. Based on this year's 2023 income, I may be eligible. Do I have to wait a year before I can apply?**

- If your reported income from 2022 does not accurately reflect your current income, submit 2022 income tax documentation and supporting information regarding 2023 income.
- If you have more questions, contact the Drug Plan toll-free at 1-800-667-7581 or in Regina at 306-787-3317.

## OTHER PROGRAMS AND QUESTIONS:

#### **My private insurer is requesting I apply. Why?**

- The Special Support Program is not a mandatory program through the Drug Plan and Extended Benefits Branch.

- Please contact your private insurer or group benefits administrator for more information.

**My pharmacy informed me my private insurance coverage is suspended and I need to apply for the Special Support Program. Why?**

- If you already have Special Support Program coverage, you do not need to re-apply. Your private insurer may require a copy of your letter.
- Please contact your private insurer or group benefits administrator for more information.

**My private insurer is requesting a registration/reference/confirmation number for Special Support Program. What is the registration/reference/confirmation number?**

- The Saskatchewan Special Support Program does not have registration/reference/confirmation numbers.
- Please contact your private insurer or group benefits administrator for more information.

**My private insurer does not cover my medications, even though the Saskatchewan Drug Plan lists the medication on the Formulary.**

- There are many policies through private insurers with various types of coverage.
- Please contact your private insurer or group benefits administrator for more information.

**Will my private insurer/third party plan cover the Special Support copayment?**

- Please contact your private insurer or group benefits administrator for more information.

**Does the Special Support Program affect my Seniors' Drug Plan coverage?**

- For drugs covered by the Saskatchewan Formulary and approved under [Exception Drug Status](#), you will pay the lesser of the Special Support or Seniors' Drug Plan coverage.
- For example,
  - If your prescription would cost \$25 under the Seniors' Drug Plan, but \$49 under the Special Support Program, you will pay \$25 for that prescription.
  - If your prescription would cost \$25 under the Seniors' Drug Plan, but only \$9 under the Special Support Program, you pay \$9 for that prescription.
- More information is available online for the Seniors' Drug Plan: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/health/accessing-health-care-services/seniors-drug-plan>

**What happens if I receive drug coverage based on [Guaranteed Income Supplement \(GIS\)](#)?**

- For drugs covered by the Saskatchewan Formulary and approved under [Exception Drug Status](#), you will pay the lesser of the GIS drug plan coverage or Special Support coverage.

**What happens if I receive drug coverage based on [Seniors Income Plan \(SIP\)](#)?**

- For drugs covered by the Saskatchewan Formulary and approved under [Exception Drug Status](#), you will pay the lesser of the SIP drug plan coverage or Special Support Plan coverage.
- For example, if your prescription would cost \$25 under the Seniors' Drug Plan, but only \$9 under SIP coverage, you will continue to pay \$9 for that prescription.

**What happens if I have drug coverage under [Palliative Care](#) or [Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living \(SAIL\)](#)?**

- Coverage under Palliative Care and SAIL programs (paraplegia, cystic fibrosis, and end stage renal disease programs) provides benefit drugs at no cost.
- You will continue to pay no cost for benefit prescriptions.

**I take many over-the-counter and herbal products. Are they covered under the Special Support Program?**

- No. Only prescription drugs listed in the Saskatchewan Formulary or those approved under [Exception Drug Status](#) are eligible for coverage.

**The Special Support Program covers Formulary drugs only, but most of my medications are not on the Formulary. How does this program benefit me?**

- If your medication is not listed on the Formulary, you will pay the full cost.
- Some medications may be covered under [Exception Drug Status](#) if certain medical criteria are met.
- Talk to your physician or pharmacist to see if your medication is eligible for Exception Drug Status.

**How can I get more information about the Special Support Program?**

- Information is also available online at:  
<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/health/prescription-drug-plans-and-health-coverage/extended-benefits-and-drug-plan/drug-cost-assistance> .
- Contact the Drug Plan toll-free at 1-800-667-7581 or in Regina at 306-787-3317 OR by email to [dpeb@health.gov.sk.ca](mailto:dpeb@health.gov.sk.ca).