

PWA Financial Assistance Guidelines: 2026 – March 31, 2027

PWA's Financial Assistance program helps to support the health and wellness of people living with HIV/AIDS and aims to alleviate some of the financial burdens associated with living with HIV/AIDS.

PWA strives to provide equitable programming for all PWA community members within limited resources. To this end, all requests for Financial Assistance must fall within the stated guidelines. Requests that do not meet these guidelines will not be considered. These guidelines reflect anticipated revenues and are subject to change without notice. To access this program, community members must provide written verification of their HIV status.

Children's Holiday Gift Certificate Program

Purpose: The Children's Holiday Gift Certificate Program helps HIV+ families with dependent children participate in the Holiday season.

Eligible community members must be:

- HIV positive.
- Registered community members of PWA.
- Have dependent children 17 years of age and younger.

Access by: **Contacting** your Income and Community Liaison.

Gift certificates are distributed through the Holiday Bag program and thereafter through your Income and Community Liaison.

Access by: **Contacting** your Income and Community Liaison. **Cheques are processed biweekly.**

Positive Children's Fund

Purpose: The Positive Children's Fund helps HIV+ children, and their families manage some of the financial burdens they face with daily living, including such items as outgrown clothes, school activities, diapers and formula.

Amount: \$200 between April 1st – March 31st

Eligible children must be:

- HIV positive.
- Registered community members of PWA.
- 17 years old and younger.

Access by: **Contacting** your Income and Community Liaison. **Cheques are processed biweekly.**

Positive Seniors' Fund

Purpose: The Positive Senior's Fund helps HIV+ seniors manage some of the financial burdens they face when they receive OAS (Old Age Security), including a reduced monthly income and reduced insurance coverage.

Amount: \$200 between April 1st – March 31st

Eligible community members must be:

- HIV positive.
- Registered community members of PWA.
- 65 years old and older.

Access by: **Contacting** your Income and Community Liaison.

Health and Wellness Fund

Purpose: The Health and Wellness Fund helps people living with HIV/AIDS manage some of the financial burdens they face when improving and maintaining their health and wellness.

Amount: \$300 between April 1st and March 31st

- Community members can receive a maximum of \$300 during the fiscal year to help support their health and wellness.
- Once a community member has received \$300, they must wait until the following April 1st to begin receiving financial assistance again.
- Funds not used during any year cannot be carried over to the next or transferred to another community member.

Eligible community members must be:

- HIV positive.
- Registered community members of PWA.

To access the program, please provide your case worker with the 'Receipts' for which to be reimbursed. Receipts must be dated within 30 days of the submission date or from expenses that occurred after April 1st, 2026. (Receipts are mandatory due to audit purposes).

How it works: PWA reimburses 50% of eligible expenses until a member reaches a maximum of \$300 (e.g., for a \$100 expense, PWA would cover \$50).

Expenses may fall under one or more of the categories listed below. Community members can receive up to \$300 in reimbursements per fiscal year, subject to budget availability.

- **Prescription Medications.**
 - Includes: items with a Drug Identification Number (D.I.N.), Trillium Drug Program deductible (those submitting to private insurance first then to

Trillium must provide their quarterly Trillium statement within 30 days of it being issued).

- **Traditional Medicine**
 - Accessed by clients identifying as Indigenous
- **Dental related expenses.**
- **Emergency veterinary**
 - Includes: emergency veterinary expenses related to prevention, accident and/or illness.
- **Immigration application/legal fees**
 - Includes: fees for citizenship, humanitarian and compassion, permanent residence and sponsorship applications; Legal fees associated with immigration.
- **Optical**
 - Includes: prescription eye wear including contact lenses. Eye exams are covered by O.H.I.P for HIV+ people and are not eligible.
- **Complimentary Therapies**
 - Includes: complementary therapies from practitioners registered with a professional association such as massage, acupuncture, naturopathy, chiropractic, osteopathy, etc.
- **Counseling**
 - Includes: therapy from practitioners registered with a professional association such as psychologists, psychiatrists, psychotherapists and social workers.
- **Education**
 - Includes: tuition, course fees and verified books and supplies at an accredited school/institute for professional and personal learning.
- **Exercise**
 - Includes: gym membership and fitness courses.
- **Foot care**
 - Includes: services from a registered podiatrist or chiropodist.
- **Hearing**
 - Includes: devices and exams.
- **Medical devices**
 - Includes: items with a prescription such as glucose monitoring machine, colostomy bags, SAD lamp, etc.
- **Medicinal marijuana**
 - Includes: purchases made only from the government or medicinal marijuana clinics and buyers' clubs.
 - Receipts must include client name, quantity, cost, member # and date.
 - Buyers' clubs and clinics are aware of our guidelines. Make sure to ask for a receipt when making a purchase.
- **Medical tests & procedures**

- Includes: PSA test (prostate specific antigen), anal/vaginal PAP smear, fertility procedures, etc.
- **Medical transportation**
 - Includes: 2 tokens provided for medical appointments with an official appointment card.
- **Mobility devices**
 - Includes: items with a prescription such as crutches, scooters, wheelchairs, etc.
- **Orthopedic devices**
 - Includes: items with a prescription such as braces, orthotics, etc.
- **Physiotherapy**
- **Supplements**
 - Includes: vitamins, minerals, Ensure, Boost, protein powders and other supplements.

Winter outerwear

- Boots, coats, gloves, hats, scarves and snow pants only.

Access the Health & Wellness Fund by:

- Contact your Income and Community Liaison prior to purchase to ensure expense eligibility.
- Submit your receipts (clear copies accepted) within 30 calendar days of the date on the receipt. If you experience challenges submitting your receipts on time, contact your Income and Community Liaison for assistance.
- If your receipt cannot be reimbursed, you will be contacted if you have provided an active phone number or email address.
- Approved receipts will be processed, and your cheque will be available on the 15th of the following month you submitted your receipts.
- Cheques must be picked up and deposited within 60 days from the pickup day, otherwise they will be voided and cannot be reissued.
- You can cash your cheque free of charge at Alterna Savings located at 800 Bay Street (corner of Bay/College) if you request a letter from PWA stating you are a PWA client. You can request this letter when you pick up your cheque.

Possible Financial Assistance Budget Restrictions

- PWA will strive to keep the Financial Assistance Program operating for the full fiscal year or for as long as the budget will allow.
- PWA established an Advisory Committee in 2018 to review the Financial Assistance program. The committee was made up of clients, service access volunteers and staff members. In addition, clients were engaged via a survey to provide their feedback. The recommendation is that should PWA experience budget restrictions the following steps should be taken:
 - PWA should inform clients on April 1st, that funds are limited and keep program open until the funds are exhausted.

- If such closures need to happen, PWA will strive to communicate this with as much advanced notice as possible.

Answers to Common Questions

- PWA accepts both original and copies of receipts. You are welcome to fax or email your receipts to your Income and Community Liaison.
- In emergency situations, PWA will consider paying expenses in advance of purchase directly to the payee instead of the client.
- Prescription medication includes anything with a D.I.N. (drug identification number).
- Those on Private Insurance & Trillium must submit their quarterly Trillium statement within 30 days of it being issued.
- We do not cover eye exams as they are covered by O.H.I.P. Your eye doctor needs to complete a “Request for Major Eye Exam”. Please see your Income and Community Liaison for more information.
- We accept emergency vet expenses (accidents and illness only) but not expenses related to spay, neuter, check-up, vaccinations, etc.,
- Complimentary Therapies must be provided by someone with a professional association registration number and your receipt should include their G.S.T. registration number.
- Receipts cannot be submitted twice.
- Receipts must be dropped off within 30 days of the date on the receipt.
- You can cash your cheque free of charge at Alterna Savings located at 800 Bay Street (corner of Bay/College) if you request a letter from PWA stating you are a PWA client. You can request this letter when you pick up your cheque.
- If you need any further information or special assistance please contact Ower Oberto, Linkage to Care Manager at 365-297-3490 or ooberto@pwatoronto.org

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE 2026/March 31st, 2027