



Legal  
Services  
Society

British Columbia  
www.legalaid.bc.ca

Know more about . . .



# Applying for Welfare Online

This fact sheet is about how to apply for welfare  
**online** (using a computer or mobile phone).



TRASH



CAT PICS



INTERNET

09/17

## Before You Start Your Online Application

The welfare ministry has changed how you apply for welfare online. It may be a more efficient and faster way for you to communicate with the ministry and get the benefits you're entitled to. But it takes time to do the Application for Assistance online.

### If you need help applying

Have a friend or family member with you when you sit down at the computer. You can start the application process and come back to it later if you find you need help (*you have 30 days to complete it*).

Or

Get help from an advocate. You can find one online at [povnet.org](http://povnet.org) (click Find an Advocate).

**TIP:** The My Self Serve website is in English only. If you need help and don't have anyone to interpret for you, the ministry provides an interpreter. Give the ministry 24-hours' notice to get you help from an interpreter.

## Overview



You need an email address to apply online.

Use the My Self Serve (MySS) website to fill out the online Application for Assistance.



The online application has three stages:

### A. Register

1. Create a My Self Serve (MySS) account.
2. Create a Basic BCeID.

### B. Apply

1. Log into your MySS account.
2. Create a service request.
3. Complete and submit your application.
4. Submit documents the ministry needs.

### C. Follow-up — What Happens Next

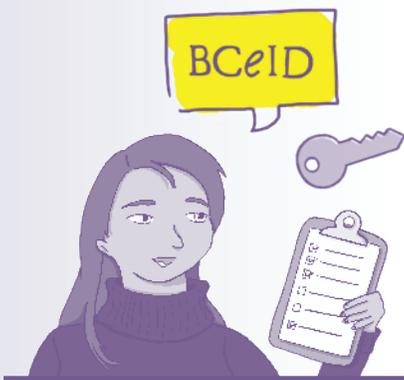
The ministry contacts you about whether you qualify for welfare. They may ask for more information or ask you to do something, such as a job search.

## TIPS:

You have to give your Social Insurance Number (SIN) and other personal information to create a MySS account.

You can use free public computers in community centres, public libraries, ministry offices, and Service BC offices. Ministry and Service BC offices are listed at [myselfserve.gov.bc.ca](http://myselfserve.gov.bc.ca).

For detailed steps and a video on how to register and apply online for welfare, go to [myselfserve.gov.bc.ca](http://myselfserve.gov.bc.ca). You don't have to register for anything to view this information.



It's a good idea to make a chart, with the steps, your BCeID user ID and password, and your MySS PIN, and keep it somewhere safe. Or send it to yourself in an email.

Follow these steps to start the online application process.



## A. Register

1. At [myselfserve.gov.bc.ca](http://myselfserve.gov.bc.ca), create a My Self Serve (MySS) account if you don't already have one. You get a four-digit **PIN** (Personal Identity Number). This is your **electronic signature** for all the documents you send online to MySS.
2. At [bceid.ca](http://bceid.ca), create a Basic BCeID to log into your MySS account to apply for welfare. The MySS application process directs you to the BCeID website to create your BCeID user ID and password.

You only have to create a BCeID once. If you registered for another government service, you may already have a Basic BCeID.

Once you create your BCeID, click the button Continue to My Self Serve Production. That takes you back to the MySS website. Then start your application for welfare.

## B. Apply

1. **Log into your MySS account** with your BCeID.
2. Go to Service Requests and **create a Service Request to Apply for Assistance**.
3. **Complete and submit your application.** Open the Application for Assistance and answer the questions on the form. Each section of the application form tells you what you need to do.

You can save the information you enter and return later. Just log in again to your MySS account with your BCeID user ID and password.

*You have 30 days to finish your online application — you don't have to do it all at once.*

The online system automatically saves your application form. To find it again, just sign into your MySS account with your BCeID user ID and password. But keep in mind any delay in submitting your application can also delay when you get payment.



4. **Submit documents the ministry needs.** To find out what documents you need to send with your application, go to [myselfserve.gov.bc.ca](http://myselfserve.gov.bc.ca). On the right-hand side, above the calendar, click How to apply for assistance. On the next page, click Document Checklist to see the list of documents.

## Immediate Needs Assessment

The application form includes questions about whether you have an immediate need for food, shelter, or urgent medical attention. If you answer yes to any of those questions, the ministry should contact you within 24 hours to fast track your application. If you don't hear from them within 24 hours, phone **1-866-866-0800** and tell them you're in urgent need of help.

## How to upload documents

Your MySS account gives you the option to upload the documents the ministry needs to decide about your application.

- **Upload** means you attach and send a document from one computer to another. The documents have to be on your computer or mobile phone to upload and send with your online application.
- If you have access to a scanner, you can scan documents you have on paper, save the scans on your computer or phone, and attach them to your online application. Or you can take photos of your documents and attach and send the photos.
- If you wait until you finish the online application before you upload any documents, you will see a list of all the documents you need to send. You can upload them then. You must upload and send each document separately, so the system can save them and the ministry workers can find each one.

## If you can't upload your documents

If you have problems uploading your documents, you can drop them off at a ministry office, mail them, or fax them. In your package of documents, be sure you include a cover sheet with your:

- name,
- date of birth, and
- Service Request number.

Your Service Request number appears at the top of the online application and shows in your MySS account under Service Requests.

## Drop off documents

You can put your documents into the drop box at ministry offices — you don't have to stand in line to do that. The ministry date-stamps the documents once they're scanned into the system. They mail back originals if you say in your online application form you want them returned.

If you want ministry staff to date-stamp your documents when you take them in, or want the originals back right away, you have to stand in line for that.

## Mail or fax documents

If you mail your documents to the ministry, make copies for yourself first. Your local library, community centre, or food bank can help you find the address of the ministry office closest to you.

Ministry offices are listed on the website [myselfserve.gov.bc.ca](http://myselfserve.gov.bc.ca) —> [Common questions](#) —> [Where can I find an office near me?](#)

- To fax your documents, use the number **1-855-671-8801**.
- Include a cover sheet (see above) whether you mail or fax your documents.

## C. Follow-up — What Happens Next

Once you have your MySS account, you can check your application status (where it is in process) and for messages from the ministry. Just sign in with your BCeID.

- The ministry contacts you by email to let you know when you have a message from them in your account. The ministry should contact you within five business days.
- The ministry may be able to do an eligibility assessment based on the information you give in your online application. Sometimes they will ask for more information before they make a decision.
- Once you're in the system, you can track any changes in your benefits, find out cheque dates, apply for service requests, and email the ministry from your account.



**TIP:** Check your email regularly for messages to avoid any delay that may lead to the ministry closing your file.



### Getting help from the ministry: 1-866-866-0800

If you have trouble with your online application, call the ministry at the above number to apply for welfare.

If you don't have a computer, mobile phone, or email, and want to apply online, you can go into a ministry office or Service BC office and speak to staff. When you show them identification, they can give you a Service Request number and PIN. You can then apply online for welfare using a public computer at the office. You use the Service Request number to track your application.

The booklet *How to Apply for Welfare* has more information about the application process. See [mylawbc.com/pubs](http://mylawbc.com/pubs) to read the booklet online or order a free print copy.