

Applying for benefits: A case study (Abdullah)

Benefits and credits directly affect the lives of the clients that we work with, providing a significant supplement to income or be the only way to make ends meet. We will use personas to help us think about the benefits and credits that we may suggest our clients to explore and apply for. Let us also consider any challenges that they may come across and the support actions that a case worker could take to assist them.

Abdulla is 42 years old and came to Canada with his wife and two young children as refugee claimants less than a year ago.

- He is receiving Ontario Works (social assistance in Ontario).
- He is behind on his hydro bills.
- He has not filed his taxes and is confused about the tax system.
- He is experiencing social isolation and depression.

Abdulla is looking to find employment and improve his income situation.



Next steps

What might be Abdullah's next course of action? What are the benefits and credits that he might be eligible for?

Anticipated challenges

What are some anticipated challenges that Abdullah might face?

Additional tips and resources

What advice or resources might a case worker be able to provide?

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Below, we provide some possible next steps for this case study using relevant federal and Ontario provincial benefits and credits. We encourage you to include any provincial, municipal, and regional benefits and programs in your area that you can encourage clients to explore. It is important to remember that every individual and situation is different and there is no one correct course of action. Consider different possibilities for each client and respect their unique challenges and wishes.

Next steps

1. It is helpful to determine the date the Abdullah and his family arrived in Canada and to encourage him to remain up to date with tax filing.
2. Abdullah was eligible for the GST/HST tax credit the moment he arrived in Canada. He will need to file an income tax return if he was a resident of Canada as of December 31st the previous calendar year and submit the RC66 Canada Child Benefits Application. This is an application form for all child and family benefit programs, including the GST/HST credit. However, since his family is not eligible for the Canada child benefit (CBB), he should clearly state via letter that he is not applying for the CBB.
3. Apply for the Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP) if hydro is in his name.

Anticipated challenges

- Martina may not be eligible for certain benefits because her income is too high. This may be frustrating or un motivating if she was expecting to receive access to more benefits and programs.

Additional tips and resources

- Refer out to financial planner to seek advice on her assets, mortgage (if any) and to work out a plan for her business.

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