

Program for Reimbursing Expenses of Living Organ Donors - PRELOD Frequently Asked Questions - Public

1 What are considered “eligible” visits for reimbursement?

Eligible visits include visits to an Ontario hospital with a living donation transplant program where a person undergoes specific testing for the purposes of organ donation. Expenses related to attending a visit to a transplant hospital are considered ‘eligible’ after the transplant hospital has determined that you are suitable to undergo further testing as a living organ donor based on your health history and blood type. The transplant hospital will document the date of each of eligible visit, the purpose of your visit, and verify that the appointment has not been cancelled. This information will be documented on the *Appointment Verification Form*.

2 I underwent donor testing and evaluation but was not eligible to proceed to donation. Can I still apply to PRELOD?

Any person who donates or intends to donate an organ or part of an organ to an Ontario resident covered by the Ontario Health Insurance Program can apply to PRELOD. These includes potential donors who were accepted by a transplant program for further assessment and proceeded to be assessed and evaluated for the purposes of living donation, but were unable to proceed to surgery.

3 I was a donor prior to August 3, 2007; can I still apply to PRELOD?

On August 3, 2007, the Premier of Ontario announced Ontario’s Organ Donation Strategy, which included the establishment of a reimbursement program for expenses incurred by living organ donors. Accordingly PRELOD will accept applications of reimbursement of actual and reasonable expenses of eligible living organ donors incurred on or after August 3, 2007. Although donors prior to August 3, 2007 are not eligible for reimbursement through PRELOD, Trillium Gift of Life Network acknowledges the altruistic gift made by potential and actual living organ donors.

4 I’m an Ontario resident and donated a living organ to someone in another province of Canada. Am I still eligible for PRELOD?

PRELOD is available to anyone in Ontario, out-of-province or out-of-country who donates or intends to donate an organ or part of an organ to an Ontario resident covered by the Ontario Health Insurance Program. At this time, Ontario living donors who donate an organ to a recipient from another province are not eligible for reimbursement through PRELOD. Other provinces within Canada have reimbursement programs or are considering development of such programs.

If you donated an organ to a resident of British Columbia (B.C.), contact the Kidney Foundation of Canada – B.C. Branch for information on their Living Organ Donation Expense Reimbursement Program (LODERP). In addition, the Government of Manitoba has announced its plans to create a living donor reimbursement program. Contact the Government of Manitoba for further details.

If you intended to donate an organ to an Ontario resident, but through Paired Exchange you donated an organ to a resident outside of Ontario, contact the PRELOD Administrator at 1-888-9-PRELOD or prelod@giftoflife.on.ca to determine if you are eligible for PRELOD reimbursement.

5 What expenses are covered?

Eligible out-of-pocket expenses covered by PRELOD include certain travel (with distance requirements), parking/transit, meals, accommodation, meal allowance, and a subsidy for loss of income after surgery. All claims must meet the requirements as set out by the PRELOD policy (see www.giftoflife.on.ca for PRELOD eligibility requirements). In special circumstances, PRELOD may consider reimbursement to non-working living donors for childcare expenses. Contact the PRELOD Administrator for further details at 1-888-9-PRELOD or PRELOD@giftoflife.on.ca.

6 Can I apply for reimbursement of prescriptions?

Eligible out-of-pocket expenses include travel, parking/transit, meals, accommodation, and meal allowance. Eligible expenses are determined the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's PRELOD policy and guidelines. At this point in time, expenses such as prescriptions are not covered by PRELOD.

7 Why doesn't PRELOD cover all expenses associated with living donation?

The purpose of PRELOD is to assist in reducing the financial burden associated with living donation. PRELOD is a last resort program available after all other sources of funding –public or private- have been exhausted. PRELOD has been designed to meet the needs of living donors who incur the greatest expenses: donors who travel significant distances and will be away from home for long periods of time, and donors who experienced a loss of income after surgery. Trillium Gift of Life Network will review the program with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care at its one-year anniversary and make recommendations on potential changes to the program policy to best serve and meet the needs of living donors.

8 Can I apply for the loss of income subsidy for the time I took off work prior to surgery?

Actual donors are eligible for the PRELOD loss of income subsidy only *after surgery* and it does not cover time off work for testing and evaluation prior to surgery. The loss of income subsidy is intended to assist those who experience a loss of income after surgery and have no other sources to support their needs. Other sources of income include but are not limited to: paid time off work (including sick and vacation time), disability benefits and Employment Insurances. Eligible applicants can apply for the loss of income subsidy after surgery for any 8-weeks in a 14-week period, but not prior to surgery. Contact the PRELOD Administrator for full eligibility requirements (1-888-9-PRELOD or PRELOD@giftoflife.on.ca).

9 Is it true that you can only apply for the loss of income subsidy if you are self-employed?

The loss of income subsidy is available to employed or self-employed actual living organ donors who experience a loss of income after surgery, and have no other income sources available to them . The loss of income subsidy is not available to non-working actual living donors.

10 How do I get \$5, 500?

Reimbursement is subject to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's PRELOD policy. Reimbursement calculation is dependent on where the applicant lives (eg. geographical distance from place of residence to transplant program) and whether other sources are available (eg. employment insurance). It is possible to qualify for the maximum \$5, 500 if expenses incurred meet the threshold of all expense categories. From the B.C. experience, few applicants have actually applied for the full \$5, 500 reimbursement.

11 Why wasn't my reimbursement the full amount I claimed for?

Reimbursement is calculated in accordance to the policy and guidelines established by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Claims are reimbursed in accordance with the PRELOD policy. Reimbursement of eligible out-of-pocket expenses and the loss of income after surgery subsidy are subject to the PRELOD policy guidelines. All categories have an upper limit that can be claimed. For further details on eligibility criteria please review the PRELOD policy (Bulletin 1) on the Trillium Gift of Life Network website (www.giftoflife.on.ca).

12 Is there a reimbursement program for transplant recipients?

On April 21, 2008, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care announced the government's intent to earmark \$500, 000 towards a fund to potentially ease the burden of patients who face living expenses away from home while waiting for an organ transplant. The Minister indicated that Trillium Gift of Life Network (TGLN) would administer the fund, solicit financial support and develop criteria as to who would qualify to receive funds. Further to the Minister's announcement, TGLN does not have any additional information or details at this time. When further information is available, TGLN will post it on our website (www.giftoflife.on.ca).

13 Can I apply for expenses incurred after surgery?

Only eligible out-of-pocket expenses incurred prior to surgery and the immediate post-surgery period after discharge from the hospital and prior to return home can be claimed through PRELOD. However, applicants may apply for the loss of income after surgery subsidy if they meet eligibility requirements.

14 I was an anonymous donor. Can I still apply to PRELOD if I haven't met the transplant recipient?

If you have been assessed by an Ontario Transplant Program and have donated an organ to an Ontario resident, you may apply to PRELOD. PRELOD is available to close friends, relatives or anonymous donors who donate or intend to donate an organ or part of an organ to an Ontario resident. There is a maximum \$5, 500 lifetime reimbursement limit per living donor.

15 Where can I obtain further information?

To learn more about PRELOD (including eligibility criteria) or to download an application package, visit the Trillium Gift of Life Network website at www.giftoflife.on.ca. If you have any further questions or comments, please contact PRELOD at PRELOD@giftoflife.on.ca, or at 1-888-9-PRELOD.