



Helping People with Autism Reach Their Full Potential

Requirements for Applying for a Ben's Fund Grant

Before You Apply: Please make sure you have gathered all required documents listed in these guidelines. Only complete applications with all necessary documents will be accepted.

Important: This page is a guide to help you prepare your application—it is **not** the application itself.

Ben's Fund Grant Overview

Ben's Fund provides financial assistance to children and young adults with autism to help them access equipment and services they might not otherwise be able to obtain.

Families can apply for up to **\$1,000 per year, per child** to support the needs of their child or young adult. Ben's Fund purchases all equipment and services and sends them directly to awardees — no funds are given directly to families.

Who Can Apply

Families must submit the application themselves, or young adults. Service providers are welcome to assist in the process but may **not** apply on behalf of the families or create Submittable accounts.

When to Apply

Applications are accepted and awarded quarterly:

Jan. 5, Apr. 1, July 6, Oct. 1

The application window will close once we reach the maximum number of grants for that quarter.

How to Apply

Ben's Fund is now an online grant request program.

Our grant application is managed through a secure platform where you can apply, save drafts, and track your application history.

Please gather all required documents before you apply. The application will close once we reach the maximum number of applicants each quarter.

Eligibility

- Ages 0–25
- Washington residents
- Autism diagnosis
- Requests must be a medical necessity for treating autism
- Income at or below 400% of the current Federal Poverty Level below:

Household size	Adjusted Gross Annual Income
For an independent young adult	\$62,600
For a family of 2	\$84,600
For a family of 3	\$106,600
For a family of 4	\$128,600
For a family of 5	\$150,600
For a family of 6	\$172,600
For a family of 7 +	\$194,600

What Can I Apply For?

Families can request funding for:

- Therapeutic equipment
- Therapy
- Services
- Assistive technology
- Camps
- Security or safety equipment

Please view our *Ben's Fund Request Eligibility Guide* on our website. If you are unsure whether your request is eligible, please reach out to us - we'll be happy to help.

Who Can Recommend?

Referral letters should come from professionals who are qualified to recommend items or services related to their area of work

- **Example: SLP-CCC** → Assistive Technology, Speech Therapy, Social-communication toys to support language development.
- **Example: OT** → Sensory equipment such as swings & trampolines, Hippotherapy, Swimming Lessons for regulation.
- **Example: MD or ARNP** → Therapy, Services, Therapeutic Equipment, Assistive Technology, Security Equipment.

Required Documents

To apply for the Ben's Fund grant, you must upload **all required documents** when you submit your application. Please review the information below carefully — incomplete applications **cannot be reviewed**

✓ **When you apply online, you will need to upload the following 5 documents:**

1. Family Story

Please introduce all members of your household. Then, in as many words as you feel comfortable, tell us about your child or young adult and how the requested equipment or services will support their autism journey.

If there are any extenuating family circumstances you would like us to consider, please feel free to include them. Your story helps us better understand your needs and how we can best support you.

You can either type your family story directly in the online application or upload it as a file.

2. Autism Diagnosis

Provide a letter or full evaluation from a qualified professional confirming your child's autism diagnosis. The document must include:

- Child's name and DOB
- Confirmation of diagnosis
- Service provider's signature (digital signatures are accepted)

If an official diagnosis is unavailable, a letter from a qualified medical professional with ASD-diagnosis credentials is accepted.

Accepted professionals: A licensed neurologist; A licensed psychiatrist; A licensed psychologist; A licensed developmental and behavioral pediatrician; A center of excellence as defined in WAC [182-531A-0200](#); or One of the following professionals associated with an autism center or developmental center: A licensed physician; An ARNP; A physician assistant; or A naturopathic physician.

Note: Provisional Diagnosis & School IEPs are not accepted.

3. Proof of Income & Washington State Residency

To qualify, your family's adjusted gross income (AGI) must be at or below 400% of the current Federal Poverty Level (FPL), based on household size. Please see table below to determine your eligibility

A. If you file taxes: Your **2024 or 2025 IRS-Filed Tax Return (Form 1040)** for all household members – listing all your dependents.

- If you get SSI and filed taxes, please submit your 1040.

B) If you did NOT file Taxes: Please submit your **2026 SSI Award Letter**. It must show your child as the beneficiary and be **dated with the last 90 days**.

✗ If you do NOT file a 1040 tax return and do NOT receive SSI: You will need to file a 1040 tax return before you can apply.

C) You are also required to upload all additional income including **Child Support**, Social Security, SSDI, Pensions, all household members IRS Tax form 1040, or any income not listed on your 1040.

Notes:

- Young adults 18–25 must include household income if living with guardians
- If your child is claimed on someone else’s **2024 or 2025 IRS Tax Form 1040**, contact us for guidance
- Additional documents may be requested to verify income and residency, but cannot replace the required documents above
- Applications from families above our income limit are rarely accepted. Extenuating circumstances should only be included if truly extraordinary.
- We do **not** accept W-2s, 1099s, bank statements, 1040s from before 2024, SSI award letters older than 90 days, Social Security, SSDI, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), or Apple Health.

4. Referral Letter

Provide a referral letter from a qualified professional (doctor, therapist, special education teacher, or other professional supporting your child’s autism treatment) recommending all equipment or services you are requesting as a **medical necessity**.

Referral letters must come from professionals who are qualified to recommend items or services related to their area of expertise.

Each letter must:

- Be dated within one year
- Be on official letterhead from the service provider

- Be signed (digital signatures are accepted) by the professional
- Clearly explain how each item or service will support your child's autism treatment
- Any items not listed in the letter will not be considered
- If young adults do not have access to the professionals listed above, we can accept a referral letter from a case worker

 **Tip:** An accepted professional who diagnoses autism can confirm the diagnosis and provide the referral in the same letter.

5. Invoice or Estimate:

To make the application process easier, please be prepared to:

1 Choose your request type

- You can select up to **3** types of items or services: **Therapeutic, Equipment, Safety Equipment, Therapy, Services, Camps, or Assistive Technology.**
- You may request up to **20** items in total from no more than **3** vendors.
- We recommend choosing **higher-value, meaningful items** that can make the biggest impact and may otherwise be out of reach

2 Prepare your invoice table

- You will need to list each item individually, including **item name, cost** (with tax and shipping), and a **direct website link** or **vendor**.
- For iPads (Assistive Technology), select the option from our **iPad pack** options online.

3 Gather your invoices

- For **services, camps, or therapies**, have an invoice or estimate ready to upload.
- For **therapeutic equipment & safety equipment**, upload an invoice only required for vendor quotes for large items (e.g., a Springfree Trampoline). Do **not** upload general website lists. You will enter the website links for this type of request in your invoice table.

Guidelines to keep in mind:

- Grants cannot exceed \$1,000 in total, including tax and shipping.
- Only items listed in your referral letter can be funded.
- Ben's Fund purchases items directly from vendors and ships them to your home — funds are not given to families.
- Ben's Fund cannot register your child for a service.
- If awarded, we purchase all items at once and make a one-time lump sum payment to the service provider.

Application Assistance

Please contact **Ben's Fund** at info@bensfund.org if you need help with your application.

Families must submit the application themselves, although service providers can assist with the process. Please note that service providers **cannot submit applications on behalf of the family.**