



Ben's Fund Grant Eligibility & Application Guidelines

This document is intended as a general guide. Applications must be submitted online when the quarterly application window opens. This is **not** the application. The guidance in this document may change over time, so please contact us at info@bensfund.org for the most up-to-date information.

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.

Applying does not guarantee an award. All requests are reviewed by the Committee and may be approved or denied in accordance with current program guidelines.

Ben's Fund purchases all approved items and services directly. No funds are given directly to families.

Eligibility To be eligible you must:

- Ages 0–25
- Washington residents
- Have an autism diagnosis
- Requests must be recommended as a medical necessity for treating autism
- Household Income at or below 400% of the current Federal Poverty Level (below)
- Provide all required documents

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** at the end of this document. If you are unsure whether your request is eligible, please reach out to us, we'll be happy to help.

Who Can Apply

Eligible families must submit the application themselves, or young adults. Service providers may **not** apply on behalf of the families or create Submittable accounts for clients.

When to Apply

Applications are accepted and awarded quarterly:

Grant openings in 2026: Jan. 5, Apr. 1 *, July 6, Oct. 1 @ 10 am PST

The application window will close once we reach the maximum number of grants for that quarter. We encourage you to apply as soon as the grant opens.

*Summer camps must apply April 1

How to Apply

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

Our grant application is managed through a secure platform through Submittable, where you can apply, save drafts, email the Team at Ben's Fund and track your application history.

Please visit www.bensfund.org to apply for our grant.

Before You Apply

- Please determine your eligibility and then gather all required documents before you apply. Only complete applications with all necessary documents will be accepted. Please visit our website for tips and information on how to apply online.

Timeline

We aim to review completed applications and notify families of decisions within 90 days. This is an estimate, and decisions times could be longer. If you are requesting funding for summer camps, please apply in the 1st or 2nd quarter so a decision can be made before camp starts.

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 accepted or reviewed. Ben's Fund may request additional documentation to verify eligibility.

 **When you apply online, you will need to upload the following 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 for an Autism Diagnosis: 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. **Income Documents**

To qualify, your family's household income must be at or below 400% of the current Federal Poverty Level (FPL), based on household size. We determine household size based on who contributes financially to the household and their dependents through tax filings, not just who lives in the home. All household members who live in the home, as well as any members who contribute financially but live elsewhere, must provide proof of income, such as tax filings or SSI documentation.

You must submit either **A or B**, plus **C** if applicable.

A) If you file taxes

Full Tax Return- Submit your **2025 IRS Filed FULL Tax Return** for all household members, showing dependents.

- Applicants must provide a complete copy of their most recent federal tax return, including all pages, schedules, and forms submitted with the return.
- Do not submit only the first two pages of Form 1040.

B) If you did NOT file Taxes

Supplemental Security Income - Submit your **2026 SSI Award Letter, dated with the last 90 days**, listing your child as a beneficiary.

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

C) Additional Income (if applicable)

You must also provide documentation for any additional income not listed on your tax return, including but not limited to:

- All Child Support
- Social Security Income

- Social Security Disability Income
- Pensions
- Tax return's for all household members, if separate and not living in the household

Notes:

- Young adults 18–25 must include household income if living with guardians or are under a legal guardianship.
- If your child is claimed on someone else's 2025 IRS Tax Return, 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, Tax returns from before 2025, 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 in their field.

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.

 **Tip:** Focus on higher-value, meaningful items that can make the biggest impact and may otherwise be out of reach

2 Prepare your Invoice Table

It helps to gather this information ahead of time. You will enter it into the online Invoice Table when applying, so having a draft ready will make the process faster and easier.

You will need to list each item separately, including:

- Item name
- Cost (with tax and shipping)
- Direct website link or vendor/service provider.
- You may request up to 20 items in total from no more than 3 vendors.

For **iPads** (Assistive Technology), select your iPad from our online pack options and use that info in the table.

Invoice Table example:

ITEM	ITEM COST (\$)	LINK TO ITEM / SERVICE PROVIDER INFO
Weighted Vest	82.59	harkla.co/products/weighted-compression-vest
Pack 1: iPad 128 GB, 10.9"	525.00	Ben's Fund
Therapy	392.41	Sunshine Therapy

3 Gather your invoices (if applicable)

- Services, camps, or therapies, must have an invoice or estimate ready to upload.

- Therapeutic & safety equipment or Assistive Technology (non iPad) : upload only if it is a vendor quote for a large item (for example, a Springfree Trampoline).).
 - Do not upload general website lists.
 - Instead enter the website links for this type of request in your Invoice Table.

Guidelines to keep in mind:

-  **Grant Limit:** Grants cannot exceed \$1,000 total, including tax and shipping.
-  **Referral Letters:** Only items listed in your referral letter can be funded.
-  **Purchases & Shipping:** Ben's Fund purchases items directly from vendors and ships them to your home — funds are not given to families.
-  **Service Registration:** Ben's Fund cannot register your child for a service.
-  **Payment:** If awarded, we purchase all items at once and make a one-time payment to the service provider you requested.

Application Assistance

Please contact the Ben's Fund Team 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.

Terms of Use

When you submit your application, you will be agreeing to the following:

1. **True and Complete Information:** You will provide true and complete information. If any information is false or misleading, your grant may be denied, or you may be required to repay awarded funds.
2. **I confirm that I am the parent or legal guardian of the applicant.** I am submitting this application personally and have not authorized any service provider or third party to submit it on my behalf.
3. **Use of Funds:** All funds will be paid directly to the approved vendor or service provider. You may only use the funds for the items or services listed in your application. Funds cannot be transferred, sold, exchanged, or used for anything else.
4. **Responsibility for Awarded Items/Services:**
If you are awarded a grant, The Seattle Foundation, Ben's Fund, and related parties are not responsible for how the awarded services or equipment are used. They are also not responsible for additional expenses, replacement, installation, or maintenance of the items or services.
5. **Unclaimed or Unused Funds**

- Checks: Any check issued to a vendor or provider that is not cashed within 90 days may be canceled.
 - Unused funds: If awarded service funds are not used as intended, you must take action to have the service provide return them within 90 days.
 - Grant usage: You have up to one year to use the awarded grant funds for the approved items or services.
6. No Guarantee of Funding: Applying does not guarantee funding. The Ben's Fund Review Committee may approve or deny requests based on established policies and procedures, which may change over time.
 7. Confidentiality: All information you provide will be kept confidential and handled according to HIPAA standards.
 8. Anti-Discrimination: No applicant will be discriminated against based on race, sex/gender, religion, creed, disability, marital status, national origin, or similar factors.

Ben's Fund Grant Application – Checklist

Before You apply, make sure you have:

☐ **Family Story**

☐ **Autism Diagnosis**

☐ **Income Documentation**

- Option A: 2025 IRS Full Tax Return for all household members
- Option B: 2026 Supplemental Security Income Award Letter (dated within 90 days)
- Additional income (if applicable): Child Support, Social Security, SSDI, Pensions, or other tax returns

☐ **Referral Letter**

☐ **Invoice / Estimate**

1. Choose request type (Therapeutic, Equipment, Safety Equipment, Therapy, Services, Camps, Assistive Technology)
 - Up to 3 types, 20 items max, 3 vendors max
2. Prepare Invoice Table – item, cost (with tax & shipping), vendor/website link. For iPads: select online pack options from Ben's Fund
3. Invoices/quotes if available

Ben's Fund Request Guide

Below are examples of previously approved requests, along with items or services that are ineligible or have specific limitations.

- Only trusted and reliable vendors may be used.
- This list is updated periodically.
- If you are unsure whether your request is eligible, please contact us at info@bensfund.org

Example of Eligible Requests 	Ineligible Requests 
Assistive Technology <i>(May request once every 2 years)</i>	
• Apps • iPads (see Ben's Fund Pack options below). • Laptops & Computers for autism treatment only. Educational laptops are not eligible	• All Amazon items must be eligible for Amazon Prime; non-Prime items cannot be approved • Air Tags (Apple) or any GPS not intended for human use.
Therapeutic Equipment:	• Autism Diagnosis Appointments
• Adaptive Clothing & Shoes: Clothing and shoes must be clearly identified as adaptive by the vendor. • Bicycles and scooters (Non-motorized); helmet required • Blackout Curtains & Tents • Calming Tools • Crash pads • Exercise Equipment • Fidget Toys • Incontinence Equipment • Noise Canceling Headphones • Oral sensory tools	• Best Buy is an ineligible vendor • Cash Assistance • Cell Phones for anyone under 13 yo. • Down payments • Drivers Ed • E-bikes, e-scooters, motorized bicycles, motorized scooters, or any other type of motorized personal transportation or equipment. • Educational services or childcare unrelated to autism treatment

• Playsets • Sensory Games • Sensory Room Equipment • Sensory Seating (bean bag chairs, Nugget, spinning chairs, etc.) • Speech Tools • Swings • Trampolines (must have net enclosure) • Wagons & Strollers • Weighted Vest & Blankets	• Gift Cards • Household Appliances • Household Furniture: Couches, Recliners, Tables, Massage Chairs, Bed Frames, Dressers, and other general use home furnishings • Housing Assistance • Mattresses, not recommended by a medical professional qualified to diagnose autism
Safety Equipment:	• Medication or Supplements not administered by a medical professional.
• Adaptive Car seat Harnesses • Angel Sense GPS • Child proof locks • Door Alarms • Fencing • GPS Watches (<i>Apple Watches must come with 2 Year Apple Care Warranty</i>) • Security Cameras	• Memberships are no longer eligible, including but not limited to gyms, athletic clubs, YMCA, pool clubs, trampoline parks, activity centers, recreation centers, fitness centers, and other facility or recreational memberships. Individual classes and lessons may still be eligible when they meet Ben's Fund requirements.
Therapy:	• Non-Adaptive Clothing & Shoes
• ABA Therapy • Cognitive Behavioral Therapy • Equine-Assisted Therapy (Hippotherapy) • Neurofeedback Therapy • Occupational Therapy • Physical Therapy • Speech Therapy	• Out of Country Equipment or Services • Out of State services on a case-by-case basis. (contact us before applying) • Past due services that you are no longer receiving. • Pools, hot tubs, and spas

• Vision Therapy	
Services:	• Permanent Structures or Landscaping
• Adaptive Swim Lessons • Anesthesia Services • Art Lessons, including visual and performing arts • Legal Fees for Disability Advocacy • Music Lessons • Service Animal Training • Social Skill Groups • Sports Fees, including registration fees for organized and adaptive sports, gymnastics, dance, martial arts, etc.	• Reimbursements • Requests exceeding \$1,000 will not be considered unless prior arrangements for split payment have been made with Ben's Fund and the vendor. • Respite • Travel & Transportation • Subscriptions or Automatic Reoccurring payments
Camps (year-round)	
Below are examples and are not limited to these options.	
• APEX • Aspiring Youth • Boys & Girls Club • Camp Andy • Connections Behavior • Outdoors for All • Rosemary White • YMCA	
Young Adults may request:	
• Cellphones (warranty & case required) • Higher Education and Textbooks • Job Skills & Training	

• Laptops for Education or Job Training • Social Skills Groups	
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iPad Pack Options for Ben's Fund

Each iPad Pack includes:

- iPad
- 2-Year AppleCare+ Warranty
- Protective Case

 All items listed above are required.

 You may request one iPad pack once every two years.

 Please choose your iPad pack option from the list and include it in the Invoice Table (tax is included).

Item	Item Cost	Link To Item
Pack 1: iPad 128 GB, 10.9"	\$625.00	n/a
Pack 2: iPad 256 GB, 10.9"	\$725.00	n/a
Pack 3: iPad Air, 128 GB, 11"	\$955.00	n/a
Pack 5: iPad mini, 128 GB, 8.3"	\$780.00	n/a
Pack 6: iPad mini, 256 GB, 8.3"	\$900.00	n/a
Proloquo2Go APP	\$275.00	n/a
Lamps Words for Life APP	\$330.00	n/a
TouchChat w/ WordPower APP	\$330.00	n/a