BEN'S FUND
Helping People with Autism Reach Their Full Potential

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
- Be a full-time Washington State resident
- Have a confirmed 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 and requested 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 **Eligible Equipment and Service** 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 2027: Jan. 7, Apr. 1 *, July 1, 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 on or before 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 a grant once our application is open.

Before You Apply

Please determine your eligibility and then gather all required documents. 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.

Grant Decisions and Purchasing

All applicants will be notified of the Committee's decision, whether approved or denied.

- **Services and Therapies:** If approved, Ben's Fund will make a one-time payment directly to the service provider. You must be enrolled in the service or therapy before payment can be made.
- **Equipment:** If approved, Ben's Fund will make payment directly to the vendor, and items will be shipped to your residential address.
- Out-of-Stock Items and Costs: If an approved item is out of stock or the total cost exceeds the $1,000 grant limit, Ben's Fund will work with you to identify alternative items that fit within the approved grant amount.

Required Documents

To apply for the Ben's Fund grant, you must upload all required documents when you submit your application. 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. Your story helps us better understand your needs and how we can best support you.

   You can either type your family story directly 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…

- **Tax Return**- Submit your **2025 IRS Filed Tax Return** for all household members, showing all dependents.
  - Applicants must provide a complete copy of their most recent federal tax return, including all pages, schedules, and forms submitted with the return.

B) If you did NOT file Taxes…

- **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)** - Submit your **2027 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:

- 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 all guardian's incomes, if under a legal guardianship.
- If your child is claimed on someone else 's 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. Some equipment and services must be recommending by a service provide with the credentials to diagnosis autism. Please contact us with any questions.

Each letter must:

- Be dated within one year
- Be on official letterhead from the service provider
- Be signed by the professional (digital signatures are ok)
- 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:

1️⃣ 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

2️⃣ 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, size, color
- Cost including 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

3️⃣ **Gather your invoices** (if applicable)

- **Services**, **Camps**, or **Therapies**, must have an invoice or estimate ready to upload.
- **Therapeutic** & **Safety Equipment** or **Assistive Technology**: upload only if it is a vendor quote for a large item (ex. Springfree Trampoline, Custom Computer, Fencing)

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.

❌ Fund's cannot be used for **past** due services, or services you are **no longer receiving**.

📝 **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.

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: 2027 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 applies to your request

Eligible Equipment and Services

The following list provides examples of equipment and services that Ben's Fund may consider for funding. All requests must be medically necessary to support the applicant's autism treatment and are subject to review and approval by the Ben's Fund Committee. All purchases must be made through trusted and reliable vendors located within the United States.

This list is updated periodically and may change over time. If you are interested in an item or service that is not listed, please contact Ben's Fund at info@bensfund.org before applying to ask if it may be eligible.

** Requires a referral letter from a qualified service provider with credentials to diagnose autism.*

+ Assistive technology requests are limited to once every two years.

Assistive Technology +

- Communication and Educational Apps
- iPads (see Ben's Fund Pack options below)
- Goally Tablets
- Laptops and computers for autism related treatment purposes only.
- Smartphones – 13 yrs and older

Therapeutic Equipment:

- 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
- Car Seats & Harnesses
- Crash pads
- Exercise Equipment
- Fidget Toys
- Incontinence Equipment
- Mattresses *
- Noise Canceling Headphones
- Oral sensory tools
- Play Gyms

- Sensory Board Games
- Sensory Room Equipment
- Specialized adaptive and sensory seating: specifically designed to address documented positioning, postural support, or sensory needs related to autism treatment. General household furniture and massages chairs are not eligible.
- Speech Tools
- Sensory Swings
- Trampolines (must have net enclosure)
- Wagons & Strollers
- Weighted Blankets & Equipment

Safety Equipment:

- Angel Sense GPS
- Child Proof Locks *
- Door Alarms *
- Fencing & Gates
- GPS Watches + *(Apple Watches must come with 2 Year Apple Care Warranty)*
- Security Cameras*

Therapies: current or upcoming services only; past services are not eligible.

- ABA Therapy
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Equine-Assisted Therapy (Hippotherapy)
- Neurofeedback Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Speech Therapy
- Vision Therapy

Services: current or upcoming services only; past services are not eligible. Transportation, travel, and related expenses are not eligible for funding

- Adaptive Swim Lessons
- Anesthesia

- Art Lessons
- Legal Fees for Disability Advocacy
- Music Lessons
- Service Animal Training
- Social Skill Groups
- Sports and Recreational Classes & League Fees

Camps

Below are examples and are not limited to these options.

- APEX Summer Camp
- Aspiring Youth
- Boys & Girls Club Summer Camp
- Camp Andy
- Connections Behavior
- Outdoors for All
- Rosemary White
- YMCA Summer Camps

Young Adults may additionally request:

- Higher Education and Textbooks
- Job Skills & Training
- Laptops for Education or Job Training

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AAC Device options

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