

## Post-Doctoral Support Fund Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Post-Doctoral Fellow (PDF) Support Fund?

The PDF Support fund was won during bargaining between CUPE 3906 and McMaster University. The purpose of the fund is to help address the needs of Post-Doctoral Fellows that cannot be covered by their current salary, benefits, and research support. This fund will adjudicated on a needs basis.

2. Who is eligible to apply for the Post-Doctoral Fellow Support Fund?

All Post-Doctoral Fellows employed at McMaster University, regardless of contract length or union membership, are eligible.

3. What types of expenses will be considered for reimbursement?

The purpose of the fund is to cover, **unanticipated, and/or emergency expenses** that are causing you financial hardship. These expenses can be related to either your personal or professional life.

The following are examples of expenses which would normally be approved or denied. These lists are not exhaustive and are for illustration purposes only. Each application will be assessed on its own merits in consideration of the details provided.

Eligible Items include:

- Emergency expenses to property resulting from theft, fire, or similar unexpected events, not covered by other benefit/insurance plans
- One-time, significant, emergency expenses, including non-recurring costs incurred in child care, vision, dental or health not covered by other benefit/insurance plans
- Travel due to unexpected family reasons such as bereavement or illness
- UHIP expenses not covered by the Employer

4. What types of expenses will NOT be considered for reimbursement?

Ineligible Items include:

- Settlement expenses including immigration, work permit, transportation, housing
- Ongoing Monthly cash short-falls
- Research-related expenses that should normally be supported by a supervisor or department, such as technical or professional development training, textbooks and computers, conference registration and travel

5. The expense I am claiming for is not listed in the above examples, should I apply for the fund?

Yes. The examples you see in the above lists (and on the application form) are not exhaustive. As long as your expense the result of unanticipated circumstances or an emergency; we encourage you to apply to the fund.

6. I have an expense that is partially covered by my insurance plan, but it exceeds my maximum entitlement. Can I claim the remainder of this expense through the PDF fund?

Yes. The fund can be used to top-up other health plans, or to account for shortfalls in other plans.

7. Can I apply to the fund for approval prior to incurring the expense?

Yes. You can apply for pre-approval, and your expense will be reimbursed once you have submitted the receipts or can show proof of the expense.

8. Can I receive the funds prior to incurring the expense?

Unfortunately this is not possible.

9. How much can I be awarded through the fund?

There is no limit for which you can apply as the fund is needs-based.

10. What documents do I need to submit as an application?

- A written explanation about the nature of the request and the amount of money being requested.
- A completed application form which includes a monthly budget showing expenses, income, and demonstrates the need for the funds.
- Only completed applications including a complete Budget Form and written explanations will be considered.

11. Where can I get a copy of the application form?

- Online: <http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/post-doctoral-affairs>
- Online: <http://www.cupe3906.org/wordpress/benefits-forms/unit-3-benefits/postdoctoral-fellow-support-fund>

12. How do I submit an application for the fund?

- Send completed forms electronically to [postdoc@mcmaster.ca](mailto:postdoc@mcmaster.ca) with the subject line: **PDF Support Fund Application**

13. How and when will I know if my application was successful or not?

You will be contacted by email once your application has been received. You will be informed within 10 business days if your request is funded in full, in part, not funded, or if additional information/documentation is required for the committee to make a decision.

14. How long will it take for me to get the reimbursement after I submit my application?

If your application is successful, the amount of the award will be added onto your next paycheck.

15. Who do I contact if I have questions about the fund or the application forms?

Correen Smith: [smithcf@mcmaster.ca](mailto:smithcf@mcmaster.ca)

Peter Self: [peteself@mcmaster.ca](mailto:peteself@mcmaster.ca)

CUPE: [staff@cupe3906.org](mailto:staff@cupe3906.org)