

DefendDignity

Defend Dignity's Survivor Support Fund – Policy

Last updated: March 2022

PLEASE READ THOROUGHLY BEFORE SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

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I. ABOUT DEFEND DIGNITY:

Defend Dignity (dD) works to end all forms of sexual exploitation in Canada. dD is an initiative of The Christian and Missionary Alliance.

Commercial sexual exploitation includes: pornography, strip clubs, escorts, massage parlors, prostitution, camming and sex trafficking. All involve the selling or exchange of sexual acts which undermine the dignity of women, men and children and are detrimental to a healthy society.

Defend Dignity works to end all forms of sexual exploitation through:

- Raising awareness on the realities of sexual exploitation through events and resources.
- Advocacy for law and policy reform with all levels of Government and with companies and organizations.
- Aiding survivors through the Survivor Support Fund and First Response Bags

Further information about Defend Dignity can be accessed at www.defenddignity.ca.

II. ABOUT THE FUND:

The Defend Dignity Survivor Support Fund was created to provide accessible financial support to individuals who have experienced any form of sexual exploitation in Canada, such as prostitution, sex trafficking, camming, escorting, massage parlours, strip club involvement, survival sex, and/or involvement in pornography. The age requirement to access the fund is **16 years of age and over**. A maximum of \$2,000 can be accessed per person who receives assistance from this fund per year. Defend Dignity recognizes that every application we receive for funding is significant. Due to the number of applications we receive and limited funds available not every application will be awarded funds. We encourage agencies/churches to reapply in the next SSF Intake session if the need is still relevant or a new need has emerged. **Please note that this fund can only be accessed by referral from a church or non-profit agency. Survivors cannot apply directly.**

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III. ACCEPTABLE USES OF THE FUND:

The Survivor Support Fund can be used to assist an individual who has experienced sexual exploitation. The list includes:

- paying off debt/ fines
- paying pardons
- tuition for further education
- paying of rent
- household items
- computers/cell phones
- medical/ dental/ counselling/ support animals.

It remains under the sole discretion of Defend Dignity to determine whether an application will be accepted or declined.

IMPORTANT: Please include specific dollar amounts for ALL needs that are submitted in your application. If there are multiple needs, please itemize the needs in order of highest to lowest priority. If the funds are being requested for a time sensitive need, please indicate so in your application.

IV. FUND DISPERSAL TIMELINE:

The fund will be dispersed twice every year, in November and May. Referrals will be accepted from October 1-29 for the fall intake with October 29, 5PM (EST) as the deadline, and from April 1-29 with April 29, 5PM (EDT) as the deadline for the spring intake, and can be completed through the [Defend Dignity website](#). **The fund will only be disbursed to the agency or church applying for the fund. It will not be disbursed to the survivor.** It is the expectation of Defend Dignity that the agency/church will then either:

- a) write a cheque directly to the institution requiring payment (such as a university, landlord, financial institution, therapist, dentist), or
- b) ensure that the funds are utilized for the intended purpose.

The financial gift can **ONLY** be used for its intended purpose as outlined in the accepted application. Defend Dignity requests that a letter advising that the funds have been utilized as approved be submitted which can be uploaded here along with a Follow-Up Questionnaire which can be completed [here](#). The agency or church receiving and dispensing the funds is responsible for any needed tax reporting of benefits on behalf of the individual(s) benefiting

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from the funds.

V. REFERRAL PROCESS/REQUIREMENTS:

The requirements for a referral to Defend Dignity Survivor Support Fund are as follows:

- The application must be completed and submitted by a staff member from a non-profit agency or church within Canada
- A completed application form (accessible from our website at the following link: <https://defenddignity.ca/ssf-application/>)
- A letter from the survivor requiring the funds describing the need, the reason for application, and how the fund will be used.

No late or incomplete applications will be accepted. Prior to submitting the application, if you have questions, contact the Survivor Support Fund Coordinator at survivorsupportfund@cmacan.org

Please **DO NOT** attach any other documents related to the applicant except for the ones listed above.

VI. FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES:

A link to the [follow-up questionnaire](#) will be emailed to all successful applicants and must be answered by the agency/church and completed within 60 days of the recipient receiving the financial gift, with a letter from the agency/church for purchases made with the funds given attached to the web form. If the fund recipient is not able to use the funds for the intended purpose, please contact survivorsupportfund@cmacan.org immediately.

The data gathered through the intake application could be analyzed to inform our research and advocacy work.

Defend Dignity reserves the right to keep a confidential basic record of those who have applied for funding.

Thank you for applying!