



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# OPEN DOORS SCHOLARSHIP FUND

## REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The YMCA of Ithaca & Tompkins County Open Doors Scholarship Program

**IMPORTANT: Please Read the following information carefully before completing the application process.**

The YMCA of Ithaca requires that individuals provide the requested information stated below regarding income and family size so that it can provide financial assistance in a fair and consistent manner. The YMCA requires individuals to reapply every 6 months. Your fees may or may not increase when you reapply. If you do not reapply when requested, your membership may be terminated.

**To process your application, we will need the following information:**

- Copy of most recent tax return
- Copy of two recent pay stubs for each working person
- Copy of social security or disability checks (if applicable)
- Copy of recent welfare benefits, food stamps, and/or section 8 housing letter (if applicable)
- Copy of unemployment benefits statement (if applicable)
- If you have no income, a letter from person(s) who provide your monthly living expenses.
- Documentation of any special circumstances.

**If you do not provide these forms, your application process will be delayed until you can provide us with verification of income.**

- Eligibility:
1. Assistance will be awarded on the basis of financial need.
  2. Scholarship eligibility will be reviewed and new income verification needed every 6 months.

Note: If you do not have a copy of your recent tax return, you may obtain one by calling the IRS at 1-800-829-1040.

**If you did not file taxes this year, or if you do not have the other documents required, please submit a letter explaining your personal situation. Please allow at least 7-10 business days to process your application.**

You will receive notification via email (if you provide an email address) or a letter in the mail stating whether or not you have been approved. After this period, you may call the YMCA to see if your application has been approved or to see if additional information is needed.

All YMCA members receive the same membership benefits, regardless of whether or not they are receiving assistance. YMCA members can feel great knowing they are involved in an organization that cares greatly for the health and well-being of people and is committed to youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:**

### **How long after submitting my application will I hear from the YMCA?**

The process can take 7-10 business days, depending on the time of year.

### **Can I attend the YMCA while my application is being processed?**

You will need to wait until you have received your determination letter and make your initial payment. If you wish, you are welcome to use our Guest Pass program, which allows non-members to pay an activity fee to visit our facility. Please see our policy and guidelines page for rates.

### **What is the MINIMUM monthly payment?**

Keep in mind that we will use your gross household income and the number of people in your house to determine the amount of your monthly payment. However, the standard **minimum** is roughly 25% of the total membership or program fee and goes up from there.

### **If my monthly expenses exceed my monthly income, will you consider this?**

No. The YMCA requires that you qualify based on your Gross Annual Income. We take into account your expenses for **only** the required basic needs - such as housing, gas, electric, water, and food. We **DO NOT** consider outside debts, student loans, car payments, medical bills or phone expenses.

### **What happens if I receive my letter but can't afford the payment that has been determined?**

You will need to contact Logan Oltz, Membership Coordinator, at the YMCA of Ithaca for an appeal. You will be contacted after you submit an appeal letter. The letter must explain why we should reconsider our decision and must contain supporting documentation. Appealing does not guarantee a change in scholarship decisions.

### **Will my access to the facility be any different than that of members not receiving assistance?**

No. Your membership will provide you with full access; provided your membership is kept current and you continue to qualify for assistance upon review of your financial information.

### **What should I do if there is a change in my household information?**

You must contact the YMCA immediately. You will be asked to submit the updated information and your membership will be reviewed.

### **How often must I submit new paperwork?**

Paperwork must be resubmitted after six months, unless requested earlier due to change in living situation. During the review process we reserve the right to increase or decrease the scholarship amount.

### **What is the payment process?**

Scholarships are approved for 3 month memberships. Upon approval you must go to the Welcome Center to complete the membership application and pay the amount stated on your approval letter. Renewal of the 3 month membership must occur before the membership terminates. If the membership is allowed to terminate the scholarship application must be resubmitted with current income verification.

### **Is there a certain number of times I must use the facility in order to maintain my membership?**

We ask you to keep in mind that we receive a number of applications for financial assistance. Therefore, it is important for you to actively use the YMCA. We reserve the right to consider your attendance during your six-month status review.

### **Do I get AUTOMATIC assistance for camps and programs?**

No. The financial assistance that you are applying for with this application is for Y membership only. Only programs that are requested can be considered in the scholarship process.

### **Is the process for SACC and Camp the same as other programs?**

No. We do require all SACC and Camp applicants to apply at the Department of Social Services (tel. 607-274-5237) before they apply for a YMCA scholarship. If you are declined by DSS the Y will consider your scholarship request, if you are approved by DSS, the Y will not further subsidize your payment.