



# Your Guide to Membership Assistance



## The YMCA is Open to all

At the YMCA of Niagara, we offer opportunities to all members of the community regardless of economic circumstance. Children, adults and families come to the YMCA to grow and develop into healthier more productive people. Regular participation in YMCA membership activities supports a balanced approach to personal growth, health and wellness.

Our Membership Assistance program serves those individuals and families who have the greatest need in our community. They are unable, not unwilling, to pay the full fee for a membership.

We will make every effort to accommodate those in greatest need who wish to participate in YMCA programs through a YMCA membership. Those who feel they qualify can have a private, confidential interview to discuss Membership Assistance.

## Applying for Membership Assistance

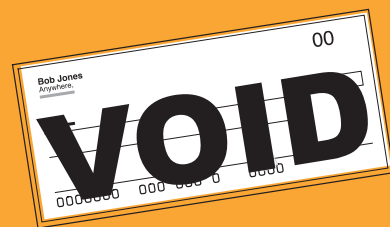
If you are interested in Membership Assistance, we invite you to visit your local YMCA, where we look forward to providing you with a tour of our facilities and information about our Membership Assistance options.

*Building healthy communities*

## Remember to bring...

The most recent Notice of Assessments for all adults in your household

- To activate your membership payments, you will need to bring a void cheque/ pre-authorized debit form, your VISA or Master Card.
- You will also make your first payment at the time you activate your membership. Payment can be made using cash, cheque, debit, Visa or Mastercard.



- We require the financial information listed above to assess a fair membership fee suited to your payment abilities. The information provided will be held in the strictest of confidence according to privacy standards.

*Your privacy matters to us. The YMCA does not make copies of your financial documents. A copy of all registration forms are kept in a secure place for auditor's purposes*

*In an effort to provide the best service to all our members, there may be a short wait during peak times.*

# YMCA Membership Assistance Commonly Asked Questions

**I could probably pay the full fee if I didn't have to pay all at once. Apart from Membership Assistance, does the YMCA offer different payment methods?**

Yes, we recognize that many people are not able to afford a single full fee payment and a contribution to the Joining Fee and would prefer a Pre-Authorized payment plan. We have several options for payment. Please speak with a YMCA staff member to help you decide which option is best for you.

**Is it possible to join the YMCA for free?**

Everyone must pay some portion of the annual Membership Fee.

**How does the YMCA determine how much I can afford to pay?**

The YMCA uses your household tax assessment(s) in combination with a standardized adjustment tool, similar to those used by other social service agencies, to calculate the percentage of assistance that the YMCA can provide. Your fee is determined based on your needs and your financial capabilities. We will come to a financial agreement that is acceptable to both you and the YMCA.

**If I receive YMCA Membership Assistance, what is expected of me?**

All information provided by you will be kept confidential. We expect the same confidentiality from you.

A YMCA Membership also requires a commitment to making your payments on time and using your membership on a regular basis. Using your membership on a regular basis ensures YMCA resources are given to those who benefit from their YMCA membership.

**Can the YMCA deny my application for Membership Assistance?**

In rare cases Membership Assistance can be denied. Applicants for YMCA Membership Assistance need to make a commitment to participate in YMCA programs as well as a financial contribution toward their YMCA membership. The result of your assessment will be based on your total household income. Our assessment tools will determine your membership rate using census data and low income cut off data specific to each of the communities our YMCA serves.

**How do I renew my membership?**

The YMCA reviews fees annually. You will need to apply annually for your Financially Assisted Membership. Your membership rate will be valid for 1 year from the time of initial assessment. Your membership will automatically expire; we suggest that you reapply for financial assistance in the 2 weeks prior to your expiry date. You can cancel your membership at any point in the year as per current cancellation policy.

**Where does the money come from to support the YMCA Membership Assistance program?**

- Donors to the YMCA Strong Kids Annual Campaign
- YMCA of Niagara

**How can I help out at the YMCA?**

1) **Volunteer** – The YMCA believes that people enrich their own lives when they enrich the lives of others. Everything we do is a partnership between volunteers and staff. Volunteers are an integral part of our organization. Visit the Membership Desk for more information or visit our website at

[www.ymcaofniagara.org](http://www.ymcaofniagara.org)

2) **Share your story** – Have you had a really great YMCA experience that you want to share with others? We want to hear about it. Stop by the Membership Desk and speak with a Membership Host or visit our website at

[www.ymcaofniagara.org](http://www.ymcaofniagara.org)

Charitable Registration #11930 7064 RR0001

## Six Locations:

Walker Family YMCA - 25 YMCA Drive, St. Catharines | 905.934.9622  
Niagara Falls YMCA - 7150 Montrose Road | 905.358.9622  
Niagara Centre YMCA, Welland - 310 Woodlawn Road | 905.735.9622  
Fort Erie EJ Freeland YMCA - 1555 Garrison Road | 905.871.9622  
Niagara West YMCA, Grimsby - 325 Main Street East | 905.309.9622  
Port Colborne YMCA - 550 Elizabeth Street | 905.835.9622

## Our Charitable Mission:

The YMCA of Niagara is a charitable organization helping people achieve personal growth in spirit, mind and body.

## Our Vision:

Creating a vibrant and healthy community where everyone belongs and has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

## Membership Assistance Statement:

As a charitable organization, the YMCA strives to serve all segments of the community, including those with limited financial means. Donors to the YMCA make it possible.

If your current financial circumstances are limiting your ability to participate, financial assistance may be provided. Please contact us for more information. All inquiries will be held in strict confidence.

[www.ymcaofniagara.org](http://www.ymcaofniagara.org)

