



## COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, March 6, 2024

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A meeting of the Community Services Committee was held on Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at 1:43 p.m., at the County of Renfrew Administration Building, Pembroke, Ontario.

Present were:           Chair Anne Giardini  
                                Warden Peter Emon  
                                Vice-Chair Debbi Grills  
                                Councillor David Mayville  
                                Councillor Neil Nicholson  
                                Councillor Gary Serviss  
                                Councillor Ed Jacyno (City of Pembroke Rep)

Regrets:                   Councillor Neil Nicholson

Staff Present:           Craig Kelley, Chief Administrative Officer/Deputy Clerk  
                                Andrea Patrick, Director of Community Services  
                                Jason Davis, Director of Development and Property  
                                Mike Blackmore, Director of Long-Term Care  
                                Lee Perkins, Director of Public Works and Engineering  
                                Jennifer Dombroskie, Manager of Housing and Homelessness  
                                Margo Smith, Manager of Child Care & Early Years Services  
                                Kevin Raddatz, Manager of Real Estate  
                                Gwen Dombroski, Clerk  
                                Tina Peplinskie, Media Relations and Social Media Coordinator  
                                Evelyn VanStarkenburg, Administrative Assistant

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Chair Giardini called the meeting to order at 1:43 p.m. The roll was called and no pecuniary interests were disclosed.

### **RESOLUTION NO. CS-C-24-03-10**

Moved by Councillor Serviss

Seconded by Councillor Jacyno

THAT the minutes of the February 14, 2024 meeting be adopted. CARRIED.

The Director of Community Services overviewed the Community Services Department Report, which is attached as Appendix A.

The Director of Community Services advised that Councillor Nicholson has requested staff to invite the Eganville and District Seniors as a delegation to this Committee to speak about the

Age Well at Home Grant and the gaps that they face with supporting seniors in their own homes, and how they will be expanding their programs to try to fill some of the gaps.

### **Ontario Works**

The Director of Community Services overviewed the Ontario Works Division Report, which is part of the Community Services Department Report.

### **Child Care and Early Years**

The Manager of Child Care and Early Years overviewed the Child Care and Early Years Division Report, which is part of the Community Services Department Report.

Warden Emon requested a breakdown of the administrative reductions for those members of the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus in order to present this information to the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) and the Association of Municipalities Ontario (AMO).

#### **RESOLUTION NO. CS-C-24-03-11**

Moved by Councillor Mayville

Seconded by Councillor Grills

THAT the Community Services Department Report attached as Appendix A be approved.

CARRIED.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. CS-C-24-03-12**

Moved by Warden Emon

Seconded by Councillor Serviss

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Community Services Committee move into a closed meeting pursuant to Section 239 (c) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended to discuss a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality or local board. Time: 2:04 p.m.

CARRIED.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. CS-C-24-03-15**

Moved by Councillor Grills

Seconded by Councillor Serviss

THAT this meeting resume as an open meeting. Time: 2:44 p.m. CARRIED.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. CS-C-24-03-16**

Moved by Councillor Jacyno

Seconded by Councillor Mayville

THAT this meeting adjourn and the next regular meeting be held on April 10, 2024. Time: 2:46 p.m. CARRIED.

**COUNTY OF RENFREW  
COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT**

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**TO:** Community Services Committee

**FROM:** Andrea Patrick, Director of Community Services

**DATE:** March 6, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Department Report

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**INFORMATION**

**1. Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation's Child Wellbeing Law**

Attached as Appendix I is a letter dated January 30, 2024 from the Chief of the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation to advise of their new law NIGIG NIBI KI-WIN coming into force on April 19, 2024. This law will replace provincial and federal law with respect to child and family wellbeing, including Ontario's Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017. An agency has been designated, Nigig Gamik, to administer the new law. Arrangements are underway for staff from the Community Services and Emergency Services Departments to meet with agency staff to prepare for the upcoming transition.

**2. Community Services Manager Job Descriptions**

In response to evolving organizational objectives and corporate strategic goals, the job descriptions for the Community Services managers have been updated. The revisions aim to enhance alignment with current priorities and ensure that managers are equipped to drive initiatives that resonate with our overarching vision. The Community Services Manager positions are listed below with primary area of responsibility:

- Manager of Community Housing – manage programs and supports for Community Housing tenants and work collaboratively with Development and Property Department to revitalize housing stock and increase supply of affordable housing in Renfrew County
- Manager of Community Supports – manage delivery of financial programs and supports for low-income families and support implementation/operation of the mesa team to help increase community wellness
- Manager of Child Care – manage childcare programs and services, including the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care program, promoting child development, and fostering a safe and nurturing environment for children

By integrating these updates, we anticipate greater synergy between the responsibilities of the Community Services managers, other departments within the corporation, and the corporation's overall strategic direction.

### **3. Mesa Supportive Housing**

In the pursuit of tackling chronic homelessness within Renfrew County, an interdisciplinary collaborative team of county staff, in partnership with community service providers, is moving forward with a transitional supportive housing model. With a clear vision of prioritizing a "Housing First" approach, this model aims to establish supportive housing for individuals enduring chronic homelessness, defined as lasting more than six months and compounded by health complexities such as mental health disorders and/or addictions. The mesa supportive housing initiative embodies this vision, offering comprehensive wrap-around supports to facilitate independent living. While still in its early planning stages, this initiative is progressing rapidly. County staff are diligently crafting a memorandum of understanding to secure rental acquisition of approximately 20 units within the Pembroke area. The ambitious objective is to welcome the first guests into their new homes by the fall of 2024, marking a significant stride towards addressing homelessness and fostering stability and health within the community.

### **4. Age Well at Home**

Attached as Appendix II is the announcement for the Age Well at Home Initiative grant which was awarded to the Eganville and District Seniors Association. The organization will receive funding over the next two years to better support seniors in their own homes. The funds will allow the partnership between Eganville and District Seniors, Township of Whitewater, Barry's Bay Area Home Support and the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation to expand the existing and successful, primarily volunteer-lead, programs for rural and remote seniors.

### **5. Ontario Works Division Report**

Attached as Appendix III is the Ontario Works Division Report prepared by Ms. Andrea Patrick, Community Services Director, providing an update on activities.

### **6. Child Care and Early Years Division Report**

Attached as Appendix IV is the Child Care and Early Years Division Report, prepared by Ms. Margo Smith, Manager of Child Care and Early Years Services, providing an update on activities.



# Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation

January 30, 2024

County of Renfrew  
9 International Drive, Pembroke  
Ontario, Canada K8A 6W5

Attention: Warden Peter Emon  
[warden@countyofrenfrew.on.ca](mailto:warden@countyofrenfrew.on.ca)



Dear Warden Emon:

**Re: *NIGIG NIBI KI-WIN: COMING INTO FORCE APRIL 19, 2024*  
Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation's Child Wellbeing Law –  
Invitation to Discuss Coordination**

I am writing to you on behalf of Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation to bring to the attention of the County of Renfrew the steps that our community is taking to reclaim our inherent jurisdiction over child and family services, and initiate a discussion on how the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan and the County of Renfrew can coordinate to support this process.

On March 25, 2023, our citizens ratified Pikwakanagan's child-well being law, *Nigig Nibi Ki-win*. This law will come into force on April 19, 2024. Once in force, *Nigig Nibi Ki-win* will replace provincial and federal law with respect to child and family welling being, including Ontario's *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017*.

We have designated an agency, Nigig Nibi Ki-win Gamik ("**Nigig Gamik**"), to administer our law. Nigig Gamik is currently undertaking various capacity-building initiatives to prepare for the full transition of prevention and protection services from Ontario children's aid societies in relation to Pikwakanagan children, youth, and families and the delivery of child family services on our terms, in our own way, on April 19, 2024.

As you may be aware, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*, S.C. 2019, c. 24 (the "**Federal Act**") came into force on January 1, 2020. The Federal Act recognizes and affirms our inherent right of self-government, which includes jurisdiction and legislative authority in relation to child and family services. The Federal Act further provides a process for attributing force of federal law to Indigenous laws through coordination agreement

discussions. We have been engaged in such discussions with Indigenous Services Canada and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services since April, 2023.

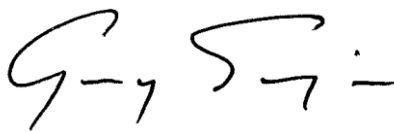
As we prepare for this transition, we recognize the need for clarity amongst external service providers who may be involved in the delivery of child and family services on the application of *Nigig Nibi Ki-win*. This is particularly the case for fire dispatch and paramedic services, which fall within the jurisdiction of the municipal government, given their interaction with the public as first responders. These are services the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan have identified as engaging numerous communications, education, and training considerations necessarily affecting the current processes for, and direction to, individuals delivering these services on the ground. We also anticipate the need to coordinate in relation to fire and police services for these same reasons and will be reaching out to relevant County of Renfrew municipalities within Pikwakanagan's territory.

In order to effectively address these matters, avoid potential service gaps that may create risk and harm for children and families, and prepare for the upcoming transition under *Nigig Nibi Ki-win*, we believe that the development of joint communications and potential protocols is likely required as between our agency, Nigig Gamik, and the County of Renfrew. I am hopeful that these efforts will build on the good relationship between the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan and the County of Renfrew and provide further certainty to workers on the ground on the coming into force of *Nigig Nibi Ki-win*.

I would be grateful if your staff could reach out to Alexandra Freed, Executive Director of Nigig Gamik, at [director@nigignibi.com](mailto:director@nigignibi.com) and Katherine Hensel, Counsel, at [khensel@foglers.com](mailto:khensel@foglers.com) to schedule a preliminary discussion between Nigig Gamik and the County of Renfrew. Any questions you may have in the interim may also be directed to Ms. Freed and Ms. Hensel.

I look forward to your responses and beginning this collaborative dialogue.

Yours truly,



Chief Greg Sarazin  
Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation

cc. Alexandra Freed, Executive Director, Nigig Gamik, [director@nigignibi.com](mailto:director@nigignibi.com)  
Katherine Hensel, Counsel, [khensel@foglers.com](mailto:khensel@foglers.com)



Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation  
1657A Mishomis Inamo  
Pikwakanagan, ON K0J 1X0  
Tel: (613) 625-2800



Nigig Nibi Ki-win Gamik  
1467 Mishomis Inamo  
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Tel: (613) 625-2173



**NEWS RELEASE:**

**For Immediate Release**

**Feb 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025**

**AGE WELL AT HOME INITIATIVE AWARDED TO EGANVILLE AND DISTRICT SENIORS**

The Eganville and District Senior Citizens Needs Association is excited to announce that thanks to funding from the Government of Canada's Age Well At Home Initiative, they will receive \$799,896 over the next 2 years to better support seniors in their own homes.

One of the main goals of the Age Well At Home Initiative is to support seniors to stay in their homes longer, with additional support to stay safe at home. For many seniors, their home is their sanctuary while residing in a community they love and have been a part of for many years, especially those living in rural and remote areas in our county.

The funds will allow the partnership between Eganville and District Seniors, Township of Whitewater, Barry's Bay Area Home Support and the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan to expand the existing and successful, primarily volunteer-lead programs for rural and remote seniors. Essential programs such as Meals On Wheels, Transportation, Home Safety Checks, Homemaking, and Frozen Meals are just a few of the examples of programs that will reach more seniors thanks to this generous funding opportunity. We look forward to looking at how we can offer sustainable models of care in our many rural pockets in these areas.

We will continue to work closely with other community partners and agencies to engage and support each other and the services we provide within Renfrew County.

This project will strongly impact the seniors who want to remain in their own homes, but have not had access to the necessary services in their rural areas.

For more information about this new initiative, or how you can volunteer, please call the Eganville and District Seniors at 613-628-2354 or via email [info@eganvilleseniors.com](mailto:info@eganvilleseniors.com).

Kayla Menkhorst  
Executive Director  
Eganville and District Seniors

Funded in part by the  
Government of Canada's  
Age Well at Home Initiative



## **ONTARIO WORKS REPORT**

Prepared by: Andrea Patrick, Director of Community Services

Prepared for: Community Services Committee

March 6, 2024

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### **INFORMATION**

1. **Social Assistance Caseload Forecast**

Attached as Appendix OW-I is a memo dated January 30, 2024, from the Director of the Social Assistance Service Delivery Branch regarding the September 2023 provincial social assistance caseload forecast. The forecast uses actual social assistance data and labour market trends up to and including September 2023 and the September 2023 unemployment rate forecast of the Ministry of Finance. The forecast report is attached as Appendix OW-II, and information about Renfrew County can be found on page 4.

2. **Ontario Works Service Plan**

Attached as Appendix OW-III is the 2024 Ontario Works Service Plan. The Service Plan outlines service delivery strategies which will be undertaken to achieve provincial performance outcome targets considering community needs, caseload demographics, and internal resources. The Service Plan is submitted to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services as a required component of the service contracting process. It provides a comprehensive outline of how the municipal Service System Manager will perform all program management and risk management activities.



**Ministry of Children,  
Community and Social Services**

Director's Office  
Social Assistance  
Service Delivery Branch

**Ministère des Services  
à l'enfance et des Services  
sociaux et communautaires**  
Bureau du directeur  
Direction de la prestation des  
services en matière d'aide sociale



January 30, 2024

**MEMORANDUM TO: Ontario Work Administrators**

**FROM: Colleen Hardie**  
Director, Social Assistance Service Delivery Branch,  
Toronto and West Regions  
**Nancy Sauvé**  
Director, Social Assistance Service Delivery Branch,  
Central, East and North Regions

**RE: September 2023 Social Assistance Caseload Forecast**

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Enclosed is the September 2023 social assistance caseload forecast for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years prepared by the Business Intelligence and Practice Division of the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

This September 2023 Social Assistance Caseload Forecast uses actual social assistance data and labour market trends up to and including September 2023 and the September 2023 unemployment rate forecast of the Ministry of Finance. It incorporates the impacts of policy and program changes implemented to date. Note that this is a forecast of what the caseload level would be if assumed economic and policy conditions prevail in the current and next fiscal years.

The document also provides a distribution of the province-wide caseload forecast by Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM)/District Social Services Administration Board (DSSAB) for planning purposes only. The distribution is based on each CMSM/DSSAB's 2023-24 year-to-date actual average share of the provincial caseload.

I trust you will find this information useful.



Colleen Hardie  
Director,  
Social Assistance Service Delivery Branch, Toronto and West Program Office



Nancy Sauvé  
Director,  
Social Assistance Service Delivery Branch, Central, East and North Regions

## Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services September 2023 Provincial Social Assistance Caseload Forecast

<b>ONTARIO WORKS AVERAGE MONTHLY CASELOAD September 2023 Forecast</b>			
	2022-23*	2023-24	2024-25
Singles with children	60,930	61,098	62,009
% change		0.3%	1.5%
Singles without children	139,950	161,031	180,435
% change		15.1%	12.0%
Couples	16,759	19,587	21,303
% change		16.9%	8.8%
Total Ontario Works	217,639	241,716	263,748
% change		11.1%	9.1%
Temporary Care Assistance	6,821	6,713	6,714
% change		-1.6%	0.0%
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>224,460</b>	<b>248,429</b>	<b>270,461</b>
% change		10.7%	8.9%

\*actual monthly average caseload

<b>ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM AVERAGE MONTHLY CASELOAD September 2023 Forecast</b>			
	2022-23*	2023-24	2024-25
Singles	328,160	330,390	338,118
% change		0.7%	2.3%
Couples	39,668	38,479	38,344
% change		-3.0%	-0.4%
Total ODSP	367,828	368,869	376,462
% change		0.3%	2.1%
Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities	26,747	28,582	29,443
% change		6.9%	3.0%
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>394,575</b>	<b>397,451</b>	<b>405,905</b>
% change		0.7%	2.1%

\*actual monthly average caseload

### 1. Forecast

- Following recent economic and caseload trends, the Ontario Works monthly caseload (including Temporary Care Assistance cases) is forecast to increase by about 10.7% in 2023-24 (compared to the actual caseload in 2022-23), primarily due to the increase in the number of asylum claimants receiving Ontario Works. In line with forecast unemployment rates that remain higher than prior to COVID, it is forecast to increase by about 8.9% in 2024-25.

- ▣ Also following recent caseload trends, the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) caseload (including Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities cases) is expected to increase by about 0.7% in 2023-24 (compared to the actual caseload in 2022-23) and by about 2.1% in 2024-25.

## 2. Caveats

- ▣ This social assistance caseload forecast uses actual social assistance data and labour market trends up to and including September 2023. It incorporates the expected impacts of approved program and policy changes to date.
- ▣ This is a forecast of what the caseload levels would likely be if current expectations prevail in the future. The forecast assumes that current policies and practices continue over the next four years. However, a variety of risks to this forecast exist.
- ▣ The Ministry of Finance's September 2023 Labour Market Forecast is a key input to this forecast. Therefore, it is a potential source of forecast risk. All else equal, an unemployment rate that is higher than forecast by one percentage point could result in a 9% increase in the Ontario Works caseload.
- ▣ The Ministry also faces the following forecast risks:
  - There has been a recent surge of asylum claimants arriving in Ontario. Actual social assistance expenditures could be higher than forecast if the actual number of asylum claimants receiving social assistance is higher than anticipated.
  - A decision to significantly reduce the number of ODSP applications pending a disability eligibility decision from the Disability Adjudication Unit or pending a Social Benefits Tribunal appeal decision would result in higher than forecast ODSP caseload.
  - A decision to significantly reduce the number of Ontario Works applications awaiting a financial eligibility decision by the Ministry's centralized Intake and Benefits Administration Unit (IBAU) would lead to higher than forecast Ontario Works caseload and expenditures.

- Actual caseload could be lower than forecast if Employment Services Transformation leads to an increase in exits from social assistance to employment.

### **September 2023 Social Assistance Caseload Forecast Distributed by 47 CMSM/DSSABs**

- ▣ A distribution of the provincial social assistance caseload forecast by CMSM/DSSAB is provided for planning purposes only. The Ministry does not produce a caseload forecast at the CMSM/DSSAB level that reflects local economic conditions. The Ministry only produces a forecast of the Ontario Works caseload and the Ontario Disability Support Program caseload at the provincial level.
- ▣ This distribution is based on each CMSM/DSSAB's 2023-24 year-to-date (April 2023 to December 2023) actual average share of the provincial caseload.

## September 2023 Ontario Works Caseload Forecast Distributed by CMSM/DSSAB

REGION	CMSM/DSSAB	Ontario Works (including Temporary Care Assistance)		
		Monthly Average Caseload		
		2022-23*	2023-24	2024-25
<b>TORONTO</b>	Toronto CMSM	68,110	76,734	83,715
<b>CENTRAL EAST</b>	Dufferin CMSM	446	502	552
	Simcoe CMSM	4,978	5,584	6,079
	Wellington CMSM	1,905	2,027	2,200
	York CMSM	8,972	10,810	11,818
<b>CENTRAL WEST</b>	Halton CMSM	1,979	2,514	2,759
	Peel CMSM	13,052	15,530	17,172
	Waterloo CMSM	8,230	8,782	9,525
<b>EASTERN</b>	Cornwall CMSM	1,816	2,130	2,285
	Lanark CMSM	834	878	950
	Leeds & Grenville CMSM	1,089	1,126	1,217
	Ottawa CMSM	15,544	17,057	18,600
	Prescott & Russell CMSM	802	827	897
	Renfrew CMSM	1,144	1,199	1,302
<b>HAMILTON-NIAGARA</b>	Brant CMSM	2,119	2,304	2,505
	Hamilton CMSM	9,950	10,605	11,562
	Niagara CMSM	10,371	12,021	13,013
	Norfolk CMSM	1,199	1,300	1,412
	Oxford CMSM	1,229	1,391	1,515
<b>NORTH EAST</b>	Cochrane DSSAB	1,863	1,913	2,067
	Greater Sudbury CMSM	3,034	3,026	3,255
	Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB	506	487	521
	Muskoka CMSM	697	719	779
	Nipissing DSSAB	1,771	1,834	1,975
	Parry Sound DSSAB	622	662	719
	Timiskaming DSSAB	668	653	699
<b>NORTHERN</b>	Algoma DSSAB	712	713	764
	Kenora DSSAB	710	697	743
	Rainy River DSSAB	242	246	266
	Sault Ste. Marie DSSAB	1,950	1,944	2,089
	Thunder Bay DSSAB	2,817	2,832	3,049
<b>SOUTH EAST</b>	Durham CMSM	7,378	8,175	8,934
	Hastings CMSM	2,135	2,163	2,348
	Kawartha Lakes CMSM	1,341	1,387	1,499
	Kingston CMSM	2,328	2,498	2,704
	Northumberland CMSM	658	758	826
	Peterborough CMSM	2,941	3,004	3,247
	Prince Edward-Lennox & Addington CMSM	836	846	919
<b>SOUTH WEST</b>	Bruce CMSM	519	565	611
	Chatham-Kent CMSM	2,307	2,381	2,572
	Grey CMSM	1,323	1,382	1,500
	Huron CMSM	401	419	456
	Lambton CMSM	2,684	2,940	3,178
	London CMSM	9,687	10,363	11,253
	St. Thomas CMSM	1,299	1,375	1,488
	Stratford CMSM	727	742	807
	Windsor CMSM	7,298	8,538	9,270
<b>First Nations</b>		11,238	11,845	12,844
<b>Provincial Total (including First Nations)</b>		<b>224,460</b>	<b>248,429</b>	<b>270,461</b>

Numbers may not add up due to rounding

\* Actual monthly average caseload

## September 2023 ODSP Caseload Forecast Distributed by CMSM/DSSAB

REGION	CMSM/DSSAB	Ontario Disability Support Program (including Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities) Monthly Average Caseload		
		2022-23*	2023-24	2024-25
<b>TORONTO</b>	Toronto CMSM	82,267	82,377	84,047
<b>CENTRAL EAST</b>	Dufferin CMSM	1,200	1,231	1,261
	Simcoe CMSM	14,816	15,001	15,336
	Wellington CMSM	5,098	5,161	5,272
	York CMSM	14,905	15,034	15,351
<b>CENTRAL WEST</b>	Halton CMSM	7,078	7,233	7,394
	Peel CMSM	22,129	22,395	22,885
	Waterloo CMSM	13,728	13,937	14,257
<b>EASTERN</b>	Cornwall CMSM	5,709	5,637	5,750
	Lanark CMSM	2,783	2,774	2,835
	Leeds & Grenville CMSM	3,795	3,765	3,841
	Ottawa CMSM	27,101	27,343	27,917
	Prescott & Russell CMSM	2,880	2,897	2,961
	Renfrew CMSM	3,830	3,857	3,940
<b>HAMILTON-NIAGARA</b>	Brant CMSM	5,723	5,742	5,866
	Hamilton CMSM	21,093	21,183	21,636
	Niagara CMSM	17,375	17,551	17,937
	Norfolk CMSM	3,258	3,288	3,357
	Oxford CMSM	3,119	3,200	3,273
<b>NORTH EAST</b>	Cochrane DSSAB	3,318	3,350	3,420
	Greater Sudbury CMSM	6,547	6,558	6,697
	Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB	1,037	1,009	1,030
	Muskoka CMSM	1,906	1,917	1,958
	Nipissing DSSAB	4,573	4,570	4,666
	Parry Sound DSSAB	1,616	1,608	1,637
	Timiskaming DSSAB	1,597	1,620	1,658
<b>NORTHERN</b>	Algoma DSSAB	1,635	1,632	1,670
	Kenora DSSAB	1,314	1,316	1,345
	Rainy River DSSAB	490	479	490
	Sault Ste. Marie DSSAB	4,143	4,105	4,187
	Thunder Bay DSSAB	5,923	5,919	6,040
<b>SOUTH EAST</b>	Durham CMSM	16,064	16,336	16,709
	Hastings CMSM	8,997	9,030	9,214
	Kawartha Lakes CMSM	2,929	2,910	2,973
	Kingston CMSM	7,453	7,447	7,595
	Northumberland CMSM	2,676	2,658	2,711
	Peterborough CMSM	5,753	5,769	5,895
	Prince Edward-Lennox & Addington CMSM	2,662	2,678	2,731
<b>SOUTH WEST</b>	Bruce CMSM	1,777	1,828	1,869
	Chatham-Kent CMSM	4,809	4,883	4,989
	Grey CMSM	3,489	3,504	3,582
	Huron CMSM	1,800	1,801	1,838
	Lambton CMSM	4,071	4,158	4,257
	London CMSM	16,791	17,131	17,520
	St. Thomas CMSM	2,926	3,013	3,084
	Stratford CMSM	1,909	1,944	1,987
	Windsor CMSM	14,991	15,190	15,521
<b>First Nations</b>		3,496	3,477	3,521
<b>Provincial Total (including First Nations)</b>		<b>394,575</b>	<b>397,451</b>	<b>405,905</b>

Numbers may not add up due to rounding

\* Actual monthly average caseload



**2024 Ontario Works Service Plan  
County of Renfrew**

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# Overview

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The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) and Social Assistance (SA) delivery sites share the common goal of improving employment results for people relying on social assistance. This service plan template is the tool used for SA delivery sites to document the service planning required activities, including the strategies to achieve performance outcomes.

## How to use this template

This template is **used in conjunction with the Main Guidelines Document**, which outlines key information, including required and optional planning activities.

This template is mandatory and is to be completed using the allotted space and uploaded to TPON as part of the service agreement.

## Corresponding Guides, Tools, and Templates

Please refer to the following guides/tool if you require assistance:

1. Main Guidelines Document
2. Supplementary Guidelines Document
3. Community Service Inventory Tool (optional)
4. Performance Outcomes Risk Assessment Template
5. Privacy Risk Assessment and Privacy Maturity Self-Reporting Tool

# Section 1 – Conduct Community Analysis

In this section, SA delivery sites provide a summary of the community context in which Ontario Works person-centered supports and services and employment assistance is delivered over the four-year service planning period

## 1.1 Key Caseload Demographics

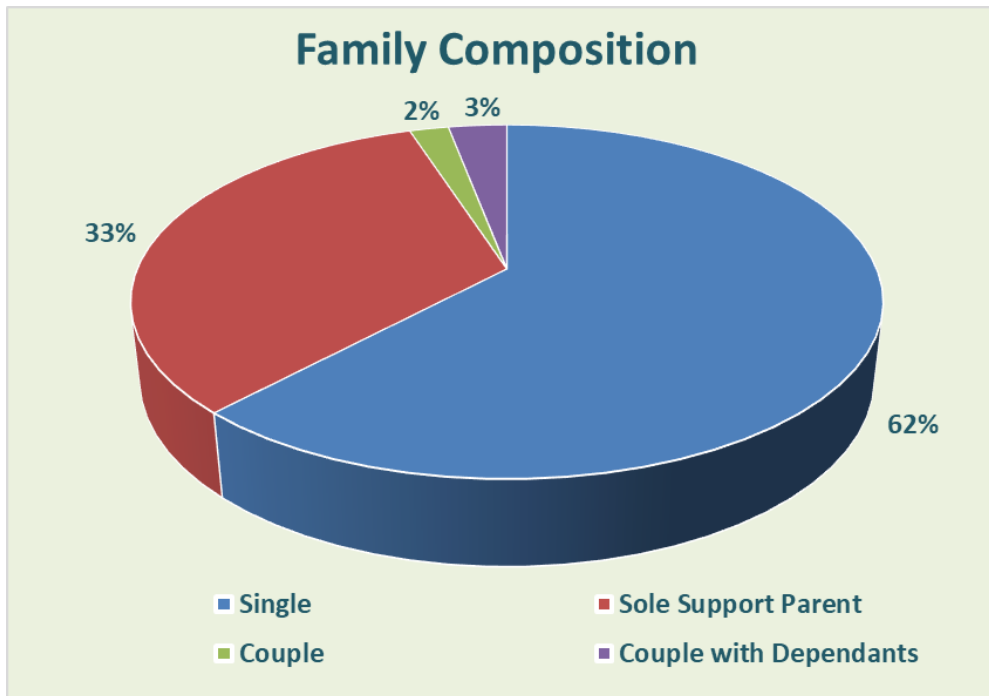
Enter a **focused overview of the key findings** from the current demographic composition of the caseload and anticipated changes over the service plan cycle:

### Enter a focused overview of key caseload findings (500 words max recommended)

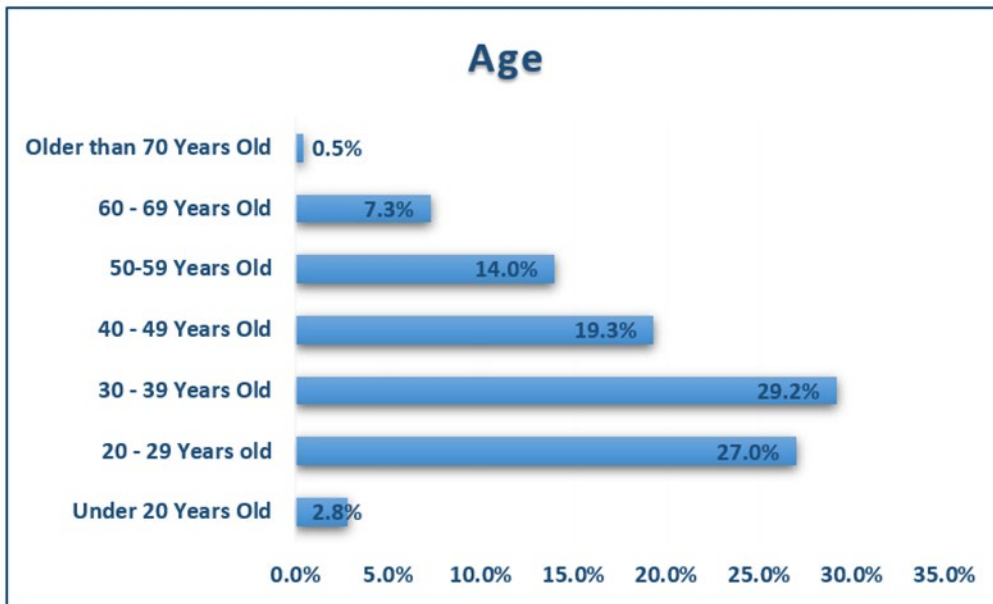
- Experienced a significant reduction in caseload during the pandemic; however, throughout 2022 and 2023 the caseload increased steadily and by the end of 2023 we had returned to pre-pandemic levels (2019 Average monthly caseload size was 1240).

Month	2023 Total Caseload	2022 Total Caseload
January	1,161	1,052
February	1,167	1,083
March	1,182	1,118
April	1,185	1,127
May	1,189	1,147
June	1,182	1,143
July	1,168	1,120
August	1,167	1,132
September	1,161	1,149
October	1,187	1,131
November	1,209	1,143
December	1,204	1,124

- Most recipients are single people (62%) followed by sole support parents (33%).



- The majority of recipients are between 30-39 years old.



Represented demographic data remains consistent in both age range and family composition type over the last 3 years.

- As of October 2023, 187 out of 1187 Ontario Works recipients in Renfrew County had reported employment earnings.

October 2023 OW Clients with Earnings			Clients Referred to Employment Ontario to date (Oct. 1/23 - Jan. 28/24)	
Number of Earners	Reported Earnings	Average Monthly Earnings Per Earner	Number of Files Referred	Monthly File Referral Average
187	\$ 210,964.81	\$ 1,128.15	174	44

## 1.2 Service Needs (EST Prototype sites only for 2024)

A **focused assessment of key service needs** (in relation to your caseload) that have linkages to meeting the performance outcomes:

### Enter focused assessment of service needs (500 words max recommended)

- Homelessness is increasing in Renfrew County. Between April 2023 and January 2024, we have recorded a total of 94 participants on our Homelessness By-Name Enumeration List. Of that total, 56 people have reported chronic homelessness. The majority of these individuals are in receipt of Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program.
- Rents have increased significantly over the past 3 years with the average monthly rent for a 1-bedroom unit in Renfrew County being \$1533. Many Ontario Works recipients are precariously housed or at an elevated risk of losing their housing as a result of rising rent costs.
- Food insecurity is impacting all Ontario Works recipients as the cost of living has increased significantly over the past several years and the OW rates have not kept pace. Foodbanks in Renfrew County are reporting higher than ever seen before demand and are challenged to keep up with the volume. They are also reporting higher numbers of employed income earners accessing their services.
- Lack of available licenced child care is a barrier for sole support parents and families with children to be able to participate in employment readiness activities. All licenced centres in Renfrew County have significant waiting lists and there are no priority spaces available for OW recipients.
- Many of our clients experience mental health challenges and cognitive impairments and the lack of primary care physicians and psychiatric supports in Renfrew County is a barrier to them receiving the care, diagnosis, treatment, and services they need. Clients requiring hospitalization for serious mental health issues would be required to travel to the Royal Ottawa Hospital in Ottawa.
- The opioid crisis is being acutely experienced in Renfrew County. Our local paramedic service reports that use of Narcan treatment occurs during nearly every shift. In 2023 there were 34 deaths in Renfrew County related to overdose. This is 2-3 times higher than in past years. Our neighbours in Pikwakanagan

have recently declared a state of emergency due to the level of opioid overdoses experienced in 2023. Renfrew County has limited addictions treatment programs, and many residents are required to travel outside of our community to access residential treatment facilities.

- There is no form of public transportation anywhere in Renfrew County, and there is no Uber service available. Many recipients live in highly rural areas without a personal vehicle and face significant barriers in accessing programs and services.

### 1.3 Community Needs Assessment

Use the information from your community needs assessment and parts 1-2 to identify the following as it relates to social assistance:

#### **Strengths: Identify existing strengths and resources**

- Strong community partnerships exist.
- Very positive working relationship with Service System Manager, Serco Canada Inc., and all Employment Ontario (EO) offices in Renfrew County. Caseworkers from EO come into our offices on a weekly basis, and SA caseworkers work out of EO offices on a weekly basis. This enables effective communication, relationship building, immediate problem-solving, and coordinated/seamless supports for clients. Our office recently hosted a working meeting/luncheon for local EO/SA caseworkers which was very well received.
- The County of Renfrew Community Services Management team participates on the local Intimate Partner Violence Committee. This enables our management staff to learn of upcoming training opportunities for staff and to discuss policy development/revision through an IPV lens.
- Local Human Services Integration efforts have taken place resulting in all Community Services staff working out of two main sites and an ability to support clients with accessing Community Housing and Child Care programs and services and working internally to identify how to wrap supports around clients.
- Our office is a part of the Renfrew County Community Risk Watch Table (formerly known as the Situation Table) which provides coordinated interventions for individuals identified to be at an acute elevated risk.
- Internal collaboration with other County of Renfrew departments (especially Emergency Services and Development & Property) occurs regularly which allows our office to access expertise, training opportunities, and innovative approaches to service delivery.

#### **Gaps: Determine where there may be gaps in services or required resources**

- Insufficient affordable housing rental units available
- Lack of primary care physicians
- Waiting lists to meet with a psychiatrist
- Waiting lists to access addictions treatment services
- Lack of affordable childcare and Early Childhood Educator (ECE) staffing shortage
- Food insecurity and limited hot meal programs in many rural areas of Renfrew County of Renfrew
- Lack of public transportation

- Cell phone service gaps
- Lack of affordable access to internet for low-income families

#### **Challenges: Common themes around concerns/challenges that impact SA**

- Low levels of education or education completed at the basic level
- Challenges accessing apprenticeship opportunities including challenges obtaining necessary educational prerequisites, lack of employers willing to take on apprentices, and difficulty navigating the system
- Many recipients have a criminal record and are unable to access in-demand occupations (such as Personal Support Workers and Early Childhood Educators) without being bondable
- Lack of housing options including a shelter or transitional/supportive housing

#### **Opportunities: Current or upcoming opportunities that can be leveraged by SA**

- The County of Renfrew Council has made it a priority (strategic goal #5) to increase the level of attainable housing
- Council has recognized the growing challenges in our community around homelessness, mental health, and addiction and has approved a multi-departmental partnership to implement mobile homelessness response teams (staffed by paramedics and crisis workers) during non-traditional service hours including evenings and weekends to increase supports to highly vulnerable clients experiencing homelessness, mental health or addictions challenges

## **Section 2 – Review Performance Outcome Targets**

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Enter the ministry prescribed targets in the “Outcome” section in the budget submission in TPON.

## **Section 3 – Develop Service Strategies**

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This section establishes the contracted expectations of all SA delivery sites and connects the first two planning components (i.e., community analysis and performance outcome targets).

### **3.1 Risk Assessment**

Complete the risk assessment using the **Performance Outcomes Risk Assessment template**. For more information refer to the Main Guidelines document

## 3.2 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

**Part A:** Articulate specific tactics that will consider the needs of equity seeking groups from the initial service planning stages through to delivery.

**Enter the local equity, diversity, and inclusion strategy here (500 words max recommended)**

- Develop an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion strategy by:
  - Building staff knowledge through training and development
  - Reviewing policies through an equity, diversity, and inclusion lens to ensure our client service strategies are inclusive
  - Meet with equity seeking groups to obtain their input and feedback on current policies and practices and new strategies to better support equity seeking groups
  - Ensure staff participation on the County of Renfrew Corporate Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Committee to ensure linkages between our office and the corporation as a whole in terms of service delivery methodologies, recruitment strategies, customer-service expectations
  - Participate in other local community groups as requested to ensure that our office continues to obtain stakeholder input and feedback into our service delivery approaches

**Part B:** Complete the French Language Services strategy using the ministry provided templates. For more information refer to the Main Guidelines document.

## 3.3 Logic Model

A logic model maps the linkages between services delivered and performance outcomes. It is a tool to support how service strategies will help to achieve targets and is included as part of the Service Planning template.

Complete one logic model for each of the 4 performance outcomes. For 2024, only complete the “Highest Risk(s) Mitigation” section for only the two identified outcomes. Add or remove rows, as needed. Refer to Main Guidelines Document, Appendix # for completed example.

### Definitions:

- Inputs:** Describe the organizational, community and/or external inputs within your organization used to coordinate services to meet the stated performance outcome (e.g., staffing, internal processes, training, relationship with community organizations, gaps in services, etc.).
- High Risk:** Identify the highest risks as indicated in the Performance Outcomes Risk Assessment Template. Note for 2024, this will only be applicable to 2 performance outcomes and will be indicated on the applicable logic model templates.
- Activities:** Operational and strategic activities (e.g., processes, tools, events, actions, etc.) that will be carried out as part of the strategy (e.g., staff training, recruitment, staff supports, community relationships, retention strategies, workshops, etc.).
- Expected outputs linked to outcome:** What are your expected results given the planned activities and what changes do you expect to realize?



<b>Performance Outcome 1:  Ontario Works adult and ODSP non-disabled adults with participation requirements have an Action Plan</b>		
<b>Inputs (e.g., organization, community, external)</b>	<b>Operational and Strategic Activities</b>	<b>Expected Outputs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in staff</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide staff with high quality training opportunities to support them in the delivery of person-centered supports</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff available to support timely case management with clients</li> <li>Clients understand their expectation to actively participate in person-centered supports and/or with EO while in receipt of Ontario Works</li> <li>Open communication and consistent understanding between SA &amp; EO caseworkers regarding appropriate referrals, utilization of the joint technology, and types of participation expenses available through both programs</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on teamwork and a healthy workplace culture</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide opportunities for team development and safe debriefing practices to prevent staff burnout</li> </ol>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective communication strategies</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure staff understand expectations of them as we transition into EST and ensure that mechanisms are in place to bring questions/issues to Serco and communicate consistently with SA &amp; all EO delivery offices</li> </ol>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support clients to ensure seamless transition to EST</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a 'Worker of the Day' model to ensure that there is always a SA caseworker available to meet with clients walking into our office or calling with an urgent matter that cannot wait for their assigned caseworker to assist with</li> </ol>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build &amp; maintain strong community partnerships to help connect clients with the external support services they need</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain a current list of Community Resources on our website so that both clients and staff can easily access contact/service information about other community agencies that they need</li> </ol>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ol>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ol>	
<b>Highest Risk(s) from Risk Assessment Template (applicable to the two in the risk assessment only):</b>		
<b>Performance Outcome 2:  Ontario Works adult and ODSP non-disabled adults with participation requirements are referred to EO</b>		

Inputs (e.g., organization, community, external)	Operational and Strategic Activities	Expected Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnership with SSM</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate actively in Super meetings with Serco and EO offices to communicate opportunities and challenges</li> <li>SA &amp; EO caseworkers working out of other agency's office on a regular basis to enhance communication and build relationships</li> <li>Enhance communication between offices to support mutual clients and collaborate where needed on the best approach to support clients with participation expenses</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased understanding of SA/EO caseworker roles, and more time for client interactions with staff will increase completion of client's participation agreement / action plans</li> <li>All EO service providers are aware of the referral process, the need to align services, communicate regularly, and work collaboratively</li> <li>Increased community engagement and relationships enable our staff to more quickly and seamlessly connect clients to the services they need</li> <li>Additional training &amp; structured business processes will help staff build confidence with the new tools and processes and complete CA/AP for all non-disabled adults more quickly</li> <li>Enhanced communications with clients and greater transparency of programs will help build trust and decrease client confusion regarding service expectations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of an EST Lead</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure dedicated focus on providing our staff with the tools and supports needed to have a successful EST transition</li> <li>Develop local business processes to outline staff expectations, service practices related to EST</li> <li>Deliver staff training and refresher training on CA &amp; AP</li> <li>Provide leadership from within the team regarding the completion of CA/AP, referrals to EO</li> </ol>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>OW-ODSP Joint Client Advisory Committee Meetings</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtain feedback from clients on the EST transformation and any areas for improvement</li> <li>Promote the use of MyBenefits and paperless communication strategies to enhance services for clients and reduce administration thereby allowing more time for delivery of person-centered supports</li> </ol>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop relationship with Meta Employment Services and Performance Plus</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite these agencies, contracted by Serco to support job seekers with disabilities, to staff meetings so SA caseworkers can learn more about what they offer</li> <li>Build relationship with agencies providing services to clients to enhance communication between organizations</li> </ol>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ol>	
<p><b>Highest Risk(s) from Risk Assessment Template (applicable to the two in the risk assessment only):</b></p>		

**Performance Outcome 3:  
Ontario Works cases exit to employment**

Inputs (e.g., organization, community, external)	Operational and Strategic Activities	Expected Outputs
<b>Highest Risk(s) from Risk Assessment Template</b> - <u>Do not complete for this performance outcome for 2024</u>		

**Performance Outcome 4:  
Ontario Works cases do not return to the program within one year**

Inputs (e.g., organization, community, external)	Operational and Strategic Activities	Expected Outputs
<b>Highest Risk(s) from Risk Assessment Template</b> - <u>Do not complete for this performance outcome for 2024</u>		

## Section 4 – Manage Program Delivery

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In this section, SA delivery sites will identify key program management activities to ensure the program supports program integrity and is delivered in accordance with legislative and policy requirements.

### 4.1 Service Delivery Expectations

Develop an outline of how service delivery expectations will be managed to ensure the program is delivered in accordance with legislative and policy requirements and that financial assistance expenditures are accurate and meet ministry expectations (refer to Main Guidelines Document)

<b>Enter outline for each are of focus below (suggest 250 words max recommended per area)</b>
<b>Essential information reviewed and verified by 3<sup>rd</sup> party checks prior to transferring to ODSP (within the last 12 months)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Caseworker to complete ODSP File Transfer Checklist to ensure all criteria are met before transferring the file to ODSP.</li></ul>
<b>24-month Reassessment (including Third Party Checks) on all OW cases</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide direction to staff to input a task on the integrated case for 24 months, (or 12 months if the client is applying for ODSP) to conduct file reviews and third-party checks.</li></ul>
<b>Timely follow up on deferrals from participation in employment related activities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide direction to staff to input a task on the integrated case to review participation deferrals. As clients are being supported in active participation with person-centered supports, the number of deferrals is much lower than prior to EST.</li></ul>
<b>EVP is assigned and completed in established timeframes</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review EVP Performance and Activity reports to ensure EVP reviews are completed within established timeframes. Supervisors will conduct regular reviews of case audits completed by the EVP caseworker to validate outcomes and ensure proper procedures are being followed.</li></ul>
<b>Application of up to 10% recovery rate for all overpayments</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review Overpayment Reports to ensure 10% recovery rate is being applied consistently and supervisors conduct file reviews to ensure notes are in place to document reason for any recovery rate lower than 10% and the approved time frame for reduced rate.</li></ul>
<b>Financial assistance expenditures (subsidy claims submissions) are accurate and meet ministry expectations</b> (list all Ontario Works benefits managed outside of SAMS and identify supporting documentation that will be provided with adjustments to subsidy claims and describe business practices for Ontario Works benefits managed outside of SAMS)

- Dedicated finance staff who complete the subsidy claims and make the appropriate adjustments using the information from the CRS880 report.
- Subsidy Claims are completed on a monthly basis, with support from the Finance & OW Managers

## 4.2 Analysis of Resources

Conduct an analysis of resources using the **Supplementary Reporting Tool**. For more information refer to the Main Guidelines document.

## 4.3 Monitoring Activities

Demonstrate how SA delivery sites will be prepared to support the monitoring activities by documenting its approach to readiness from combination of resource, awareness and understanding perspectives.

For example, the SA Delivery sites will be ready to support by reviewing and becoming familiar with all relevant materials provided by the ministry to understand the monitoring activities and OW’s roles and responsibilities.

**Enter the approach for monitoring here (suggested 250 words max recommended per area)**

**Overall Readiness** (i.e., how your site will be ready to continuously support the monitoring activities)

- We commit to having a resource ready to support the monitoring activities.

**Submission of actual expenditures** (i.e., how to ensure your site will be able to submit the actual expenditures in a timely manner and engage in discussion when varied from budget)

- We will continue to submit the actual expenditures via TPON at interim and year-end

**Submission of outcomes achieved** (i.e., how to ensure your site will be able to submit the actuals in a timely manner and engage in discussions on outcome performance)

- We will continue to submit actuals at interim/year-end and provide MCCSS with additional information upon request (further variance explanations) when performance outcome targets are not achieved

**Performance reports** (i.e., how to ensure your site will be ready to leverage ministry provided reports in monitoring outcomes and key program delivery expectations)

- We will discuss results of existing/new performance report results/analysis with program supervisor

**Quality Assurance (QA) reviews** (i.e., how to ensure your site will be ready to leverage the results from the ministry performed QA reviews to determine possible course corrections, related monitoring and need for service plan amendments)

- We will provide MCCSS with additional information on the area selected for review by the Ministry to inform planning the Quality Assurance review

**Risk Mitigation Testing** (i.e., how to ensure your site will be ready to use ministry provided testing scripts to carry out testing of mitigation for the highest risks impacting performance outcomes as well as how the results of the testing will be used by your site)

- Use ministry created test scripts / questions to carry out the testing (what is working as intended and what is not) and submit back testing templates

## 4.4 Privacy

Conduct a Privacy Risk Assessment using the **Privacy Risk Assessment Template and Privacy Maturity Self-Reporting Tool**. Instructions are included within the document, but for more information refer to the Supplementary Guidelines.

**CHILD CARE AND EARLY YEARS REPORT**

Prepared by: Margo Smith, Manager of Child Care and Early Years Division

Prepared for: Community Services Committee

March 6, 2024

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**INFORMATION****1. Ontario Municipal Social Services Association Letter to the Ministry of Education**

Attached as Appendix CC-I is a letter dated January 29, 2024, from the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) to the Minister of Education, Stephen Lecce, regarding the reduction of early years and child care administrative funding for municipal Service System Managers in 2024. The letter speaks to the importance of the partnership between the province and municipalities in the continued implementation of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system and addresses concerns relating to the many additional requirements that have been added to Service System Managers due to CWELCC and how the reduction in administrative funding is detrimental to the work involved.

The letter proposes a meeting between OMSSA's Board of Directors and the Minister of Education, Deputy Minister, and Assistant Deputy Minister to discuss a reconsideration of the administrative funding changes in order to effectively move forward with the goals of CWELCC in the province of Ontario.

**January 29, 2024**

Hon. Stephen Lecce

Minister of Education

5th Floor, 438 University Ave.

Toronto, Ontario

M7A 2A5

Sent by email to: [Stephen.Lecce@pc.ola.org](mailto:Stephen.Lecce@pc.ola.org)

## Re: Reduction in Early Years and Child Care Administrative Funding

Dear Minister Lecce,

The Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) and its members who make up the 47 Ontario's Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) want to thank you and our government for its leadership in making the Canada-Wide Early Learning & Child Care a reality for families and communities in Ontario.

We also want to acknowledge the hard work of Holly Moran and staff at the Ministry and the support they continue to provide Municipal Service Managers as the sector transitions through this significant change.

We are confident that by working in true partnership, the Province and Municipalities can and will ensure a full and successful implementation of the Canada-Wide Early Learning & Child Care (CWELCC) program in Ontario. Further, that by understanding each other's pressures and challenges and working together through them, that the planned child care spaces expansion plans will be fully developed.

Ontario's CMSMs and DSSABs are concerned with approximately \$85.5M in administrative reductions announced in December 2023. This announcement comes as a surprise to many Service Managers and will have a negative impact on municipal budgets and risks successful implementation of CWELCC in Ontario.

As the Ministry has seen in recent months, the sector needs strong Municipal Service Managers who will be able to provide supports to operators through this significant transitional phase, who will hold operators accountable for agreed upon targets and remove the politics from the real work that needs to be done in the community and for the families that are counting on the Province and Municipalities to get this right.



The reductions to CMSMs and DSSABs has inadvertently signaled a weakening relationship between the Ministry and Municipal Service Managers and is introducing a layer of volatility into the sector that is not needed or desired.

OMSSA's Board of Directors is requesting a meeting to further discuss these changes with yourself, Deputy Minister Kate Manson-Smith, and Assistant Deputy Minister Holly Moran.

### **Background and Context:**

Ontario is unique within Canada in that 47 municipal CMSMs and DSSABs are the Service System Managers for early years and child care. Service System Managers play a central role in the planning, funding, administration, and operation of early years and licensed child care services.

The Federal-Provincial CWELCC agreement, with a \$13.2B federal allocation to Ontario over five years, allows for a 10% administration threshold. The standard administration allocation for most provincial programs is 10%. Service System Managers are required to implement CWELCC and transform the existing system.

In 2019, the Province of Ontario signaled that pre-CWELCC administrative funding would be changed in two phases: first, by switching from 100% funded to a 50/50 provincial-municipal cost-share, and second, by reducing the threshold from 10% to 5%. These changes were temporarily deferred in 2019, and then further deferred given the pressures associated with managing the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2021, the province instituted the first cost-share change, and in 2022, the second change related to the decrease in expenditure threshold. However, in response to the ongoing pandemic recovery, the province instituted a one-time transitional grant that completely offset the reduction in funding arising from these policy changes, up to and including the 2023 allocation.

In April 2022, a memo from the Ministry of Education stated that *"Administrative funding will be restored, as we recognize this is not the time to implement the previously announced funding cuts."* In December 2023, the Ministry announced the administrative changes would be fully implemented with the expiry of the one-time transitional grant funding with an \$85.5M impact. Administration funding now represents 1% of the total allocation for CWELCC and is insufficient to manage the existing Early Years and Child Care system and implement the Federal-Ontario agreement that allows for up to 10% in administration support.

OMSSA calls on the Ministry of Education to reverse changes to administrative funding originally announced in 2019 and uphold its commitment communicated in April 2022 to restore the funding. One-time funding was helpful during the pandemic and recovery, but adequate and sustainable funding is required to support the implementation of CWELCC in Ontario.

### **Impact of Lost Funding and New Administrative Requirements:**

Service System Managers face a total reduction in funding of \$85,500,000. Individually urban, suburban, rural, and Northern communities will see significant reductions in funding.

For example, in the City of Toronto, the total impact is \$24M. York Region will see a reduction of \$6.7M. The City of Ottawa's reduction is \$4.7M, the City of Hamilton's reduction is \$3.7M, Niagara Region's reduction is \$1.6M, Durham Region's reduction is \$3.7M, the City of Greater Sudbury's reduction is \$1.2M. In Norfolk County, the reduction is \$432,916. The County of Dufferin's reduction is \$180,000, and Rainy River DSSAB's reduction is \$222,479. All 47 CMSMs and DSSABs will see a reduction in funding.

CWELCC implementation brought additional requirements that did not exist prior to the announcement on administration reductions. Some examples of new requirements include:

- New CWELCC implementation and management, extensive communication and change management with the sector, multiple iterations of guidelines.
- New increased oversight of CWELCC child care (monitoring of accountability requirements and financial viability, compliance audits, etc.)
- Implementation of a new CWELCC funding formula and the extensive change management that will be required for child care providers.
- New municipal role in licensing requests and revisions.
- For emerging issues, develop and implement an application process.
- New Growth Plans as an addendum to Service Plans.
- New Access & Inclusion Framework requiring collaboration with service providers and new data reporting.
- New Cross Jurisdictional Fee Subsidy Agreements.
- New EarlyON Mental Health Initiatives.
- New CWELCC expansion targets and extensive recurring reporting requirements.

CMSMs and DSSABs continue to face increased administrative pressures in its role as Service System Manager, arising from the ongoing and prescribed implementation of the CWELCC system, as well as regulatory changes, and new and changing provincial direction for program delivery.

### **Risk to CWELCC Implementation:**

Child care and early learning services are critical to the social and economic well-being of families and the community. Service Managers need to be supported with adequate and appropriate funding, tools and other resources to realize the success of the CWELCC implementation.

Timing of requirements must be adequate to achieve the intended objectives with reliable and fulsome data. Reductions in administrative funding will result in service delays and additional

costs to municipalities. It puts at risk successful and full implementation which will have a negative impact on children and their families.

The ability to implement the new policies and programs is contingent upon corresponding administration. Without adequate and sustainable funding, CMSMs and DSSABs will need to prioritize delivery based on funding. With increased administration and requirements associated with the CWELCC implementation, now is not the time, nor it is appropriate, to reduce funding to CMSMs and DSSABs.

The provincial government must follow through on the commitment it made in 2022 and fully restore this funding. An examination of the need for increasing service system planning resources must also be included the Program Review in 2024 to determine what is needed going forward.

**Partnership between Municipalities and the Province of Ontario on Early Years and Child Care:**

OMSSA and its Members appreciate the partnership and consultation that has occurred over early years and child care initiatives in Ontario.

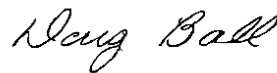
The scope of child care and early learning services provided by municipalities has increased over time and the lingering effects of the pandemic are still putting financial pressures on municipal budgets. Municipalities are facing fiscal challenges and can only raise money through property tax increases and user fees. Our members cannot run deficits and cannot afford any downloading or reductions in funding.

OMSSA and its Members respectfully ask the Ministry of Education to reconsider these administrative funding changes. We request to further discuss this issue ahead of the upcoming Ontario Budget. OMSSA and its Members stand committed to our provincial partnership and goal to fully implement CWELCC across the Province of Ontario.

Sincerely,



Henry Wall  
President



Doug Ball  
Executive Director

CC :

Kate Manson-Smith, Deputy Minister of Education

Holly Moran, Assistant Deputy Minister of Education

Hon. Jenna Sudds, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development