



## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

### Healthy Communities without Poverty

**Date: Wednesday, June 24, 2020**

**Time: 12:00 PM**

**Location: By video conference while pandemic protocols are in place**

**Join Zoom Meeting:**

<https://zoom.us/j/99847111680?pwd=UWI2WkZBVDFBa2FXUU93ZXoxQXJUUT09>

**Meeting ID: 998 4711 1680**

**Password: 768978**

**One tap mobile**

+14388097799,,99847111680#,,1#,768978# Canada

+15873281099,,99847111680#,,1#,768978# Canada

**Dial by your location**

+1 647 374 4685 Toronto

+1 647 558 0588 Toronto

**Members: Councillor Dan Roveda (Chair), Councillor Dave Mendicino (Vice-Chair), Mayor Dean Backer, Councillor Mac Bain, Mayor Jane Dumas, Councillor Terry Kelly, Councillor Mark King, Councillor Chris Mayne, Mayor Dan O'Mara, Councillor Scott Robertson, Representative Amanda Smith, Councillor Bill Vrebosch.**

Item	Topic
1.0	1.1 Call to Order 1.2 Declaration of Conflict of Interest
2.0	Opening remarks by the Chair

Item	Topic
3.0	<p><b>Approval of the Agenda for June 24, 2020</b></p> <p><b><u>MOTION #CSC01-2020</u></b></p> <p>THAT the Committee of the Whole members accept the Agenda as presented.</p>
4.0	<p><b>DELEGATIONS (none at this time)</b></p>
5.0	<p><b>CONSENT AGENDA - Reports for Information Only – All items in the consent agenda are voted on collectively. The Chair will call out each item for consideration of discussion or removing any items from the Consent Agenda. Any item can be singled out for debate or a separate vote; then, only the remaining items will be voted on collectively.</b></p> <p><b><u>MOTION #CSC02-2020</u></b></p> <p>That the Committee receives for information purposes Consent Agenda items 5.1 to 5.5.</p>
	<p><b>5.1 SSE03-20 Emergency Response Benefits to COVID-19</b></p> <p>Report SSE03-2020 describes several of the federal and provincial emergency financial supports available to assist individuals and families in receipt of social assistance in response to COVID-19 and is brought to the Board for information purposes.</p>
	<p><b>5.2 B03-20 Not For Profit COVID Funding</b></p> <p>Report B03-20 describes Federal and Provincial funding programs related to COVID-19 and the clients and tenants we serve, and is brought forward for information purposes.</p>
	<p><b>5.3 SSE04-20 Basic Income Report</b></p> <p>Report SSE04-20 is brought to the Board for information as it relates to the concept of a Basic Income model as a poverty reduction strategy, along with a brief overview of the Basic Income Pilot launched in Ontario in 2017.</p>
	<p><b>5.4 CS05-20 Reopening of Child Care Spaces</b></p> <p>That the District of Nipissing Social Services Administrative Board (DNSSAB) accepts Briefing Note CS05-20 for information purposes only.</p>
	<p><b>5.5 HS19-20 Service Manager Annual Information Return</b></p> <p>Report HS19-20 describes the 2019 Service Manager Annual Information Return (SMAIR) submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing</p>

Item	Topic
	(MMAH) and is brought to the Board for information purposes. The SMAIR report is enclosed as Attachment A.
6.0	<b>MANAGERS REPORTS</b>
	<p data-bbox="370 380 967 411"><b>6.1 SSE06-20 Landlord Pay Direct Policy - OW</b></p> <p data-bbox="370 457 669 489"><b><u>MOTION #CSC03-2020</u></b></p> <p data-bbox="370 535 1360 659">That the District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board approve the Ontario Works Pay Direct local policy, attached as Appendix A, and as set out in report SSE06-20.</p>
7.0	<b>OTHER BUSINESS/CORRESPONDENCE</b>
8.0	<p data-bbox="370 779 652 810"><b>NEXT MEETING DATE</b></p> <p data-bbox="370 825 976 856">Wednesday, September 23, 2020 at 12:00 PM</p>
9.0	<p data-bbox="370 924 586 955"><b>ADJOURNMENT</b></p> <p data-bbox="370 976 1365 1045"><i>Resolved</i> THAT the Community Services Committee meeting be adjourned at p.m.</p>



## BRIEFING NOTE SSE03-20

For Information or  For Approval

**Date:** June 24, 2020

**Purpose:** Provincial and Federal Benefits Responding to COVID-19

**Prepared by:** Michelle Glabb, Director of Social Services and Employment

**Reviewed by:** Catherine Matheson, Chief Administrative Officer

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### INFORMATION:

Report SSE03-2020 describes several of the federal and provincial emergency financial supports available to assist individuals and families in receipt of social assistance in response to COVID-19 and is brought to the Board for information purposes.

### BACKGROUND:

- COVID-19 has had a major economic impact on individuals and families in the District of Nipissing and around the world.
- The federal and provincial government have worked closely together to ensure that there are adequate supports available to minimize the economic, social and health impacts of the pandemic.
- There are a number of new benefits and tax credits along with changes to existing ones aimed at providing financial relief to Canadians.

### CURRENT STATUS/STEPS TAKEN TO DATE:

Table 1 below provides a brief overview of some of the financial benefits available to assist vulnerable individuals and families in response to the pandemic along with information on how these benefits are treated under the Ontario Works program.

Table 1

Name of Benefit	Purpose of Benefit	Amount of Benefit	Treatment of Benefit under Ontario Works
<b>Ontario Works COVID-19 Emergency Benefit</b>	Discretionary Ontario Works benefit to assist social assistance recipients with prescribed COVID-19 related	\$100 for singles \$200 for families (One-time payment for March and April) Extended Emergency Benefit	Additional benefit for on-going social assistance recipients on top of basic financial assistance.

	expenses, upon request only. <sup>1</sup>	available in the same amounts for the months of May, June and July)	
<b>Ontario Works Emergency Assistance</b>	Short term financial support of up to 48 days for people facing economic hardship to assist them with basic needs, such as food and rent during this public health emergency.	\$52 million invested province wide to expand access to the emergency assistance program administered by Ontario Works.  Ontario Works emergency assistance amount varies depending on individual circumstances, needs identified, benefit period and benefit unit size.	Expansion of emergency Ontario Works benefits already available. Needs tested. Not available to on-going social assistance recipients.
<b>“Support for Families Initiative” Benefit</b>	Funding to help parents access additional tools for children to use while at home and studying remotely while schools and daycares are closed. <sup>2</sup>	One time \$200 payment per child up to 12 years of age, and \$250 for those with special needs.	Exempt Income
<b>COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program (CEAP)</b>	To support consumers struggling to pay their energy bills during the pandemic. CEAP will provide one-time payments to consumers to help pay down any electricity bill debt incurred over the COVID-19 period. <sup>3</sup>	\$9 million provincial investment	Exempt if Ontario Works has not covered these costs through basic financial assistance or other benefits.
<b>Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)</b>	Financial support for people experiencing job loss due to COVID-19 to help them with basic needs, such as food	\$2,000 per month up to a maximum of 16 weeks  Period to apply for CERB extended to	<b>Scenario 1</b> - Recipients in receipt of Ontario Works prior to March 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2020: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First \$200 fully exempt and a 50% exemption applies on each dollar thereafter.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> MINISTRY OF CHILDREN, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES, *EXTENDED EMERGENCY BENEFIT*, retrieved on June 3, 2020 from <https://www.sa.mcscs.gov.on.ca/communications/extended-emergency-benefit-2/>

<sup>2</sup> ONTARIO NEWSROOM, *Ontario Government Supports Families in Response to COVID-19, Province Providing One-time Financial Assistance During School and Child Care Closures*, April 6, 2020, retrieved on June 3, 2020 from <https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/04/ontario-government-supports-families-in-response-to-covid-19.html>

<sup>3</sup> ONTARIO NEWSROOM, *Ontario Supports Those Struggling with Electricity Bills during COVID-19, New Initiatives Help Keep Rates Stable and Affordable, while Offering Greater Choice*, June 1, 2020, retrieved on June 3, 2020 from <https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/06/ontario-supports-those-struggling-with-electricity-bills-during-covid-19.html>

	and rent during this public health emergency.	October 2020.	<p><b>Scenario 2</b> - Recipients granted Ontario Works on or after March 1, 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Income is not exempt with the following exception. Youth under 18, adults in full-time secondary school, and full-time post-secondary students – 100% exempt.<sup>4</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB)</b>	Financial support for students who are experiencing financial hardship over the summer months.	\$1,250 per month for eligible students from May through August 2020, and \$1,750 for students with dependents and those with permanent disabilities.	<p><b>Scenario 1</b> - Students or recent graduates in receipt of Ontario Works prior to May 1, 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student under 18 years of age or full-time secondary school student – 100% Exempt</li> <li>Adult secondary school graduate enrolling in post-secondary - 100% exempt for 16 week pre-study period</li> <li>Part-time post-secondary school student – \$200 fully exempt and a 50% exemption applies on each dollar thereafter.</li> </ul> <p><b>Scenario 2</b> – Students or recent graduates granted on or after May 1, 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No exemption in the first three months of assistance.</li> </ul> <p>Note: Three-month qualifying period does not apply to youth under 18.<sup>5</sup></p>
<b>One Time Canada Child Benefit Increase</b>	Financial support to assist parents with the increased costs associated with raising a family during the pandemic.	Individuals who received CCB in April 2020 will receive \$300 per child more in their May 2020 instalment.	Exempt income

<sup>4</sup> MINISTRY OF CHILDREN, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES, *The Treatment of Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB) Income – Ontario Works*, May 25, 2020, retrieved on June 3, 2020 from <https://www.sa.mcscs.gov.on.ca/communications/75-20-the-treatment-of-canada-emergency-student-benefit-cesb-income-ontario-works/>

<sup>5</sup> GOVERNMENT OF CANADA, *Support for Students and Recent Graduates Impacted by COVID-19*, April 22, 2020, retrieved on June 3, 2020 from <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/04/support-for-students-and-recent-graduates-impacted-by-covid-19.html>

<b>GST Special One Time Payment</b>	Financial support to assist individuals and families with the increased cost of living during the pandemic.	2019-2020 benefit year will increase from:  Single - \$443 to \$886 Couple - \$580 to \$1,160 Children - \$153 to \$306 for each child under the age of 19 (excluding the first eligible child of a single parent) Children - \$290 to \$580 for the first eligible child of a single parent. <sup>6</sup>	Exempt Income
<b>Guaranteed Annual Income System (GAINS top-up payments)</b>	Financial support to assist low income seniors who may need help to cover essential expenses during the COVID-19 outbreak.	GAINS amounts doubled for a period of six months (April 2020 to September 2020) <sup>7</sup>	The top-up amount is exempt as income and the GAINS amount prior to the top-up will continue to be treated as income.
<b>Pandemic Pay Increase for front-line workers</b>	Pandemic pay increase for eligible workers that recognizes the level of risk in prescribed workplaces. <sup>8</sup>	Temporary pandemic pay of \$4 per hour on top of regular wages for up to 16 weeks from April 24 to August 13, 2020	Pandemic pay increase is subject to regular Ontario Works earnings rules and exemption rates. <sup>9</sup>

#### RISK IDENTIFIED AND MITIGATION:

- It is anticipated that the pressure on the Ontario Works program and community organizations that support low income people, will occur when the revenue sources described above in Table 1 conclude. There are concerns in the sector that if the labour market does not rebound quickly, high numbers of people will be left with Ontario Works being the only source of income available. This will present significant challenges for these individuals, families and communities due to the significant variance between the federal benefit and social assistance rates.

<sup>6</sup> GOVERNMENT OF CANADA, *COVID-19 - Increase to the GST/HST credit amount*, April 1, 2020, retrieved on June 3, 2020 from <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/child-family-benefits/covid-19-gsthstc-increase.html>,.

<sup>7</sup> MINISTRY OF CHILDREN, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES, *Exemption of Temporary COVID-19 Increase to Guaranteed Annual Income System Payments*, May, 13, 2020, retrieved on June 4, 2020 from <https://www.sa.mcsc.gov.on.ca/communications/69-20-exemption-of-temporary-covid-19-increase-to-guaranteed-annual-income-system-payments/>

<sup>8</sup> PROVINCE OF ONTARIO, *COVID-19: Temporary Pandemic Pay*, June 2, 2020, retrieved on June 4, 2020 from <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-temporary-pandemic-pay>

<sup>9</sup> MINISTRY OF CHILDREN, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES, *COVID-19 Q&A for Ontario Works Staff*, June 3, 2020, retrieved on June 4, 2020 from <https://www.sa.mcsc.gov.on.ca/qa/covid-19-qa-for-ontario-works-staff/>

- It will be imperative that the Ontario Works program monitor local labour market activity along with other economic indicators in the coming months to ensure that it is well positioned to respond to a potential influx in applications.
- Basic financial assistance is funded 100% by the province, therefore with respect to a recipient's basic needs and shelter, there is no impact on the municipal levy when the caseload rises or falls. However, program delivery and employment services remains partly cost shared with municipalities, and as a result these costs do impact the levy when the caseload fluctuates. In addition, discretionary benefits issued beyond a cap set by the Ministry become a 100% municipal cost (cap removed by MCCSS for March and April 2020). For these reasons, close attention must be paid to the provincial and federal policy decisions that interact with the delivery of social assistance.
- As the federal and provincial governments implemented the benefits described in Table 1 above quickly, the impact on the Ontario Works program has been negligible to date. In fact, as you can see below in Table 2, the average caseload and average number of applications for 2020 for the period of January to April is lower in comparison to the same period in 2019.

Table 2

	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20
OW Caseload	2159	2144	2155	2158	2229	2210	2151	2132	2075	2020	2011	2007	2104	2104	2124	2146
Number of Applications	168	140	100	176	146	114	140	99	92	150	120	108	153	123	182	107

### COMMUNICATION:

It is not expected that the labour market will fully rebound prior to the expiration of the various federal benefits being received by individuals and families negatively impacted by COVID-19. Therefore, additional intervention at the provincial and/or federal level may be required to ensure that there is adequate funding available at a systemic level, to support the work that may be involved in responding to this crisis. For this reason, every effort to communicate this concern with both levels of government should be made to ensure that that this responsibility does not fall onto municipalities.

### CONCLUSION:

This report highlights some of the financial benefits that have had the most significant impact on Ontario Works recipients. Numerous other strategies that are more systemic in nature have also been implemented at both the provincial and federal levels, such as funding allocated through the Social Services Relief Fund and Reaching Home program, funding to support women's shelters and food banks, and assistance for business owners through wage subsidies to name just a few. It is the combination of all of these strategies that has been essential to stabilizing the social assistance population during this unprecedented time.

While there has been some criticism over the cost of these measures and questions related to how Canada will financially recover from this period, there is no denying that the speed by which these benefits were implemented alleviated pressure on the Ontario Works program and municipal levy over the short term. Close attention will need to be paid in the coming months to assess what the future impact on municipalities will be to ensure that the Board is well informed to make the important decisions that may be required as we move forward.



## BRIEFING NOTE B03-20

For information    For Approval

**Date:** June 24, 2020

**Purpose:** Not-for-profit COVID-19 Funding

**Prepared by:** Melanie Shaye, Director of Corporate Services

**Reviewed by:** Catherine Matheson, CAO

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### INFORMATION:

Report B03-20 describes Federal and Provincial funding programs related to COVID-19 and the clients and tenants we serve, and is brought forward for information purposes.

### BACKGROUND:

In April 2020, the DNSSAB received an emergency funding allocation through the Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF) and the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI), and \$589,200 was distributed to organizations across the District to help support vulnerable people during the pandemic. These programs target organizations that provide food support, personal protective equipment and housing supports in our District, in response to the pandemic.

### CURRENT STATUS/STEPS TAKEN TO DATE:

Outside of the SSRF and CHPI funding, the following sectors have had funding made available, including:

- **Families, small business and farms:** Provincial electricity relief, Federal Regional Recovery Fund
- **Frontline essential workers:** pandemic pay
- **Gender-based, human trafficking and sexual assault related:** Provincial funding to help organizations supporting these issues continue their work during a period of Provincially recommended remote work programming
- **Homeless:** Reaching Home funding
- **Indigenous, Inuit and the Metis Nation:** Indigenous Community Support Fund
- **Landlords:** Ontario-Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (OCECRA)
- **Not-for-profit organizations:** Emergency Community Support Fund (ECSF)

- **Small businesses:** Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS), tax deferrals
- **Students and new graduates:** Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB), Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) suspensions
- **Workers:** Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)

## **CONCLUSION:**

The DNSSAB will continue to monitor these programs to ensure our funding supports align, but do not overlap with Provincial and Federal programs.



## BRIEFING NOTE SSE04-20

For Information    For Approval

**Date:** June 24, 2020

**Purpose:** Basic Income

**Prepared by:** Michelle Glabb, Director of Social Services and Employment

**Reviewed by:** Catherine Matheson, Chief Administrative Officer

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### INFORMATION:

Report SSE04-20 is brought to the Board for information as it relates to the concept of a Basic Income model as a poverty reduction strategy, along with a brief overview of the Basic Income Pilot launched in Ontario in 2017.

### BACKGROUND:

- On February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016, through the Liberal provincial budget entitled “Jobs for Today and Tomorrow”, the concept of a Basic Income model as a poverty reduction strategy in Ontario was introduced.<sup>1</sup>
- On June 24, 2016, Hugh Segal, a vocal proponent of a Basic Income approach for decades, was appointed as an advisor on how to design and implement a Basic Income Pilot in Ontario.<sup>2</sup>
- On December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Social Services made a presentation on the Basic Income to the Social Services Committee, a copy of which is attached as “Appendix A”.
- In March 2017, the Province launched a three year Basic Income Pilot with staggered start dates involving 4,000 participants living on low incomes, inclusive of social assistance recipients, in the regions of Hamilton, Brantford, Brant County, Thunder Bay and Lindsay.
- In March 2019, the Conservative government cancelled the Basic Income Pilot along with the planned evaluation of its merit as a service delivery model, claiming that the program was failing.<sup>3</sup>
- In March 2020, the federal government introduced the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) in response to COVID-19. The implementation of this benefit re-ignited the conversation about the concept of a Basic Income approach to social assistance delivery in Ontario.

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<sup>1</sup> CHARLES SOUSA, MINISTER OF FINANCE, *JOBS FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW*, 2016 Ontario Budget, retrieved on June 3, 2020 from [https://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/budget/ontariobudgets/2016/papers\\_all.pdf](https://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/budget/ontariobudgets/2016/papers_all.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> ONTARIO NEWSROOM, *ONTARIO MOVING FORWARD WITH BASIC INCOME PILOT*, Province Appoints Special Advisor Hugh Segal, retrieved on June 3, 2020 from <https://news.ontario.ca/mcys/en/2016/6/ontario-moving-forward-with-basic-income-pilot.html>

<sup>3</sup> GLOBAL NEWS, *MARCH 2019 TO MARK END OF ONTARIO'S BASIC INCOME PILOT*, retrieved on June 2, 2020 from <https://globalnews.ca/news/4422214/ontario-basic-income-pilot-end/>

## CURRENT STATUS/STEPS TAKEN TO DATE:

- Basic Income is defined as a payment, made to eligible families or individuals, that ensures a minimum income level regardless of employment status.<sup>4</sup>
- While the current government chose to not pursue further evaluation at the provincial level, regions involved in the Pilot did do some work in this area. In a report coming out of Ryerson and McMaster University entitled “Southern Ontario’s Basic Income Experience”, the authors worked to “fill this gap by providing an overview of the effects of basic income on the lives of recipients in Hamilton, Brantford and Brant County. By utilizing an online survey and qualitative interviews, they sought to uncover how basic income impacted people in key areas of their lives. The self-reported outcomes of participants help shed light on basic income’s potential as a policy instrument to alleviate poverty and raise the standard of living of individuals in today’s precarious labour market”.<sup>5</sup>

The following represents some of the findings from this research paper:

- Everyone who received basic income reported benefitting in some way.
- Many recipients reported improvements in their physical and mental health, labour market participation, food security, housing stability, financial status and social relationships.
- Basic income also had a noticeable impact on the use of health services, with many of the survey respondents indicating less frequent visits to health practitioners and hospital emergency rooms.
- For a significant number of participants, basic income purportedly proved to be transformational, fundamentally reshaping their living standards as well as their sense of self-worth and hope for a better future.
- The majority of those employed before the pilot reported working while they were receiving basic income. Many reported moving to higher paying and more secure jobs.
- Those working before the pilot reported even greater improvements on some measures of well-being than those who were not working before. During the interviews, several patterns emerged amongst working basic income recipients. One common pattern was for recipients to report moving from low paying dead-end jobs to jobs with better working conditions and with improved long-term opportunities. For some, receiving a basic income meant they could take chances on a new job or career. Several took up self-employment opportunities. For others, it meant the freedom to leave behind a job where the employment relationship had become toxic and to spend time searching for something better”.<sup>6</sup>

In order to take a position on whether or not the implementation of a Basic Income model in Ontario is a viable solution to poverty reduction, the following represents some of the questions that would require answers:

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<sup>4</sup> PROVINCE OF ONTARIO, *Ontario’s Basic Income Pilot, Studying the Impacts of a Basic Income*, retrieved on June 5, 2020 from [https://files.ontario.ca/170508\\_bi\\_brochure\\_eng\\_pg\\_by\\_pg\\_proof.pdf](https://files.ontario.ca/170508_bi_brochure_eng_pg_by_pg_proof.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> FERDOSI, MCDOWELL, LEWCHUK AND ROSS, *Southern Ontario’s Basic Income Experience*, retrieved on June 5, 2020 from <https://labourstudies.mcmaster.ca/documents/southern-ontarios-basic-income-experience.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> FERDOSI, MCDOWELL, LEWCHUK AND ROSS, *Southern Ontario’s Basic Income Experience*, retrieved on June 5, 2020 from, <https://labourstudies.mcmaster.ca/documents/southern-ontarios-basic-income-experience.pdf>

- How would a Basic Income model be financed?
- Would municipalities be required to invest more than they are contributing now to support this new approach to social assistance delivery?
- Which poverty line would be utilized to establish the benchmark for a Basic Income?
- What outcomes are sought by this change and how would these outcomes be monitored and measured?
- The CERB established a benchmark of \$2,000 per month as being the amount needed to support individuals impacted by COVID-19. What is the appropriate level of financial support that would need to be provided to truly influence poverty reduction through a Basic Income model?

The previous Basic Income Pilot in Ontario in 2017 set the benchmark at 75% of the Low Income Measure (LIM). Table 1 below illustrates how this calculation was applied and the significant difference between the annual Basic Income benefit and the Ontario Works rate at the time.

Table 1

Basic Income vs Ontario Works			
Household Size	Annual Benefit (LIM)	Basic Income (at 75% LIM)	Annual Ontario Works Basic Needs + Max Shelter
Single Adult		\$16,989	\$8,472
Single with one child		\$24,027	\$11,592
Single with two children		\$29,427	\$12,228
Couple		\$24,027	\$13,140
Couple with one child		\$29,427	\$13,776
Couple with two children		\$33,979	\$14,460
*Up to an additional \$6,000 per year for a person with a disability.			

Through a brief review of the literature, it is clear that there is polarization of both political and public opinion with respect to the value of a Basic Income approach to reducing poverty.

On the “pro” side of the debate, the following represents some of the potential benefits of a Basic Income approach:

- A decrease in poverty in communities.
- A reduction in systemic problems like income inequality.
- A better alignment between social assistance rates and the actual cost of living.
- A positive influence on the social determinants of health.
- An increase in social inclusion for individuals and families who have not been able to fully participate in their communities due to their low incomes.
- The potential for cost savings in other social systems such as healthcare and the justice system.
- The simplification of a complex and invasive social assistance delivery system.
- An increase in administrative efficiencies.

## **RISK IDENTIFIED AND MITIGATION:**

On the “con” side of the debate over the merit of a Basic Income approach, the following represents some of the potential risks associated with this change in social policy:

- Concern that there will be a negative impact on the municipal levy.
- Challenges associated with serving people with complex barriers without in-person contact.
- The cost associated with collapsing the current model of social assistance delivery to implement a guaranteed annual income approach.
- The lack of clarity related to the difference between the cost of the current model and that of a Basic Income approach.
- The potential to erode relationships with community partners who work with the same population at the local level.
- The potential for a negative impact on labour force participation.
- Decreases in program responsiveness when a person’s circumstances change on short notice (family structure, income, addresses etc.)
- Depending upon the Basic Income rate, there is potential to make it more difficult to fill minimum wage jobs.

## **NEXT STEPS:**

- Upon direction from the Board, the Director of Social Services and Employment along with the Manager of Analytics and Outcomes could conduct a fulsome review of a Basic Income approach utilizing information and labour market data specific to the District of Nipissing. However, please note that without answers to the questions noted above, taking a position beyond urging the province to further explore this concept through a third party non-partisan review would be difficult.





## **CONCLUSION:**

In February 2017, in a letter sent to the former Minister of Community and Social Services Helena Jaczek, the former President of the Association for Municipalities of Ontario Lynn Dollin stated “while supportive of provincial action, reform must have no new costs for municipal governments. Municipal governments are already doing their part by investing in critical services such as transportation, community recreation, child care, social assistance, and housing”. In this letter Dollin further stated that “the provincial income tax is the most appropriate source of revenue for new and enhanced income security programs. This would be consistent with the shift from the property tax base to the provincial income tax base with the upload of social assistance benefits” that became fully funded by the Province in 2018.<sup>7</sup>

There is no indication that the current provincial government is considering a Basic Income model. However, depending upon the outcome of the next election in 2022, this approach to social assistance delivery could once again become a political hot topic open for debate.

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<sup>7</sup> ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPALITIES IN ONTARIO, *Letter from AMO, Office of the President*, December 7 2017, retrieved on June 5, 2020 from <https://www.amo.on.ca/AMO-PDFs/Letters/2017/MCSS-LTR-AP-Income-Security-Reform-2017-12-07.aspx>

<h2 style="text-align: center;">Basic Income Pilot in Ontario</h2> <hr style="border: 2px solid #FFD700; width: 100%;"/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Potential Risks and Benefits associated to Guaranteed Annual Income</b></p>	<h3>Guaranteed Annual Income (GAI)</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Universal income support program</li> <li>□ Everyone is guaranteed to receive a minimum level of income each year</li> <li>□ The level of income, who receives payments and how the program is delivered varies. Three basic models;             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Universal Basic Income</li> <li>■ Income Top-Up</li> <li>■ Negative Income Tax program</li> </ul> </li> <li>□ Examples of targeted GAI programs in Canada include;             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) – low income seniors</li> <li>■ Canada Child Benefit (CCB) – low income families with children</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				
<h3>Income Support in Ontario</h3> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Federal Programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Old Age Security (OAS)</li> <li>□ Canada Pension Plan (CPP)</li> <li>□ Employment Insurance Benefits (EIB)</li> <li>□ Canada Child Benefit (CCB)</li> </ul> </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Provincial Programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Ontario Works (OW)</li> <li>□ Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)</li> </ul> <p>NOTE: OW and ODSP programs offer more than just financial supports. They also provide employment supports designed to meet the needs of the citizens they serve.</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>Federal Programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Old Age Security (OAS)</li> <li>□ Canada Pension Plan (CPP)</li> <li>□ Employment Insurance Benefits (EIB)</li> <li>□ Canada Child Benefit (CCB)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Provincial Programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Ontario Works (OW)</li> <li>□ Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)</li> </ul> <p>NOTE: OW and ODSP programs offer more than just financial supports. They also provide employment supports designed to meet the needs of the citizens they serve.</p>	<h3>Poverty</h3> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Causes of Poverty</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Inadequate financial assistance rates</li> <li>■ Low wages</li> <li>■ Lack of affordable housing</li> </ul> </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Effects of Poverty</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increased health risk</li> <li>■ Longer hospital stays</li> <li>■ Inadequate housing</li> <li>■ Food insecurity</li> <li>■ Social exclusion</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>It is estimated that approximately 1 in 7 (or 4.9 million) people in Canada live in poverty.</p> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 10px;">     </div>	<p><b>Causes of Poverty</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Inadequate financial assistance rates</li> <li>■ Low wages</li> <li>■ Lack of affordable housing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Effects of Poverty</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increased health risk</li> <li>■ Longer hospital stays</li> <li>■ Inadequate housing</li> <li>■ Food insecurity</li> <li>■ Social exclusion</li> </ul>
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<h3>Basic Income Pilot Recommendations</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Hugh Segal released a discussion paper <i>Finding a Better Way: A Basic Income Pilot Project for Ontario</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Eligibility Criteria                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Residence of one year or longer in one of the designated sites in Ontario</li> <li>□ Age 18-64</li> <li>□ No other criteria (eg. Individuals not yet Canadian Citizens should not be excluded from the pilot)</li> </ul> </li> <li>□ Participation in the pilot is voluntary</li> <li>□ Replace OW and ODSP with Basic Income</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<h3>Basic Income Pilot Recommendations</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Eligible Participants who agree to participate will receive a guarantee that if their income falls below a threshold it will be supplemented</li> <li>□ Payments based on need</li> <li>□ Some participants will not receive payment at all</li> <li>□ Ensure that benefits currently available through existing supports are not lost (eg. Prescription drug coverage through OW and ODSP)</li> <li>□ Individuals with disabilities and caregivers for dependents with disabilities should receive an additional \$500 per month</li> </ul>				
<h3>Basic Income Pilot Recommendations</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Negative Income Tax program and deliver payment through the tax system             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Collaborate with CRA</li> <li>■ Issue payments monthly</li> <li>■ Changes to household composition (marriage, change in income, birth of child etc..) can be declared throughout the year so that Basic Income payments can be adjusted</li> <li>■ Develop specific strategies for individuals without bank accounts, fixed address or those who do not file their income tax returns</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<h3>Basic Income Pilot Recommendations</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Site selection             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Represent Ontario's population and include members of indigenous communities, immigrants, social assistance recipients and low income workers</li> <li>■ Dynamic labour market (important to evaluate employment outcomes and labour force participation)</li> <li>■ Geographically contained and reasonably isolated from other communities</li> <li>■ Three sites: Southern Ontario, Northern Ontario and Indigenous Community</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				



## Basic Income Pilot Recommendations

### 10 outcome measurements recommended;

1. Health
2. Life choices
3. Education
4. Work behaviour
5. Community level changes (crime rate, local labour market)
6. Food insecurity
7. Administrative efficiency compared to our current social assistance structure
8. Perception of citizenship and social inclusion
9. Housing stability and quality
10. Interactions between Basic Income and other benefits like the OCB

## Basic Income vs Ontario Works

Household Size	Annual Basic Income Benefit Amount (at 75%LIM)	Annual Ontario Works Basic Needs + Max Shelter
Single Adult	\$16,989	\$8472
Single with one child	\$24,027	\$11,592
Single with two children	\$29,427	\$12,228
Couple	\$24,027	\$13,140
Couple with one child	\$29,427	\$13,776
Couple with two children	\$33,979	\$14,460

## Basic Income vs ODSP

Household Size	Annual Basic Income Benefit Amount (at 75% LIM) + \$500/month	Annual ODSP Basic Needs + Max Shelter
Single adult	\$22,989	\$13,536
Single with one child	\$30,027	\$18,540
Single with two children	\$35,427	\$19,296
Couple	\$30,027	\$20,256
Couple with one child	\$35,427	\$21,012
Couple with two children	\$39,979	\$21,852

## Public Consultations

- Province of Ontario is seeking public input regarding;
  - Who should be eligible?
  - Where should the pilot take place?
  - Basic Income amount?
  - How to design, deliver and evaluate the pilot?
- Consultation Guide available online; <https://www.ontario.ca/page/consultation-guide-basic-income-pilot-project>

## Public Consultations

- Consultations will take place November 2016 to January 2017. Participation options;
  - Attend a regional in-person discussion
    - Sudbury at the Lexington Hotel and Conference Centre on December 12, 2016 6:30 to 9:30 pm
    - Complete list online
  - Comment online: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/basic-income-pilot-consultation>
  - Send an email with your ideas to; [basicincome@ontario.ca](mailto:basicincome@ontario.ca)

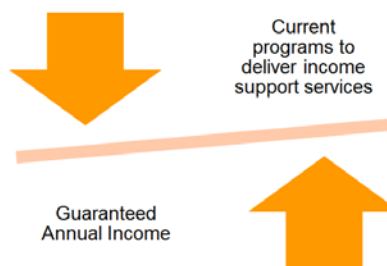
## Potential Benefits

- Reduce or eliminate poverty by guaranteeing the financial means to meet the cost of living
- Increase personal autonomy and control
- Simplify the system
  - Easier to navigate
  - Reduce administrative duplication that exists delivering multiple programs
- Savings in other social programming (health)
- Reduce gap between the wealthy and poor

## Potential Risks

- Cost to merge current programs and implement
- Impact of additional costs
  - Increase in taxes
  - Funding cuts for other social programming
- Responsiveness to changing needs
  - Unexpected costs
  - Income fluctuations
  - Family structure changes
- Negative impact on labour force participation
- Universal program cannot meet the needs of everyone

## Conclusions





## Questions

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## BRIEFING NOTE CS05-20

For information  For Approval

**Date:** June 24, 2020

**Purpose:** Re-Opening of the Licensed Child Care Sector

**Prepared by:** Lynn Démoré-Pitre, Director Children's Services

**Reviewed by:** Catherine Matheson, CAO

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### INFORMATION:

That the District of Nipissing Social Services Administrative Board (DNSSAB) accepts Briefing Note CS05-20 for information purposes only.

### BACKGROUND:

On March 17, 2020, the Premier of Ontario declared a state of emergency, and ordered the closure of all licensed childcare centres and all facilities providing indoor recreational programs including EarlyON Child and Family Centres.

Although the state of emergency remains in place, the closure order for licensed childcare centres was lifted as of June 12, 2020, however, the closure order continues for EarlyON Child and Family Centres.

The order to close did not apply to the licensed childcare centres approved to provide emergency childcare services for health care and other eligible frontline workers. Additionally, it did not apply to home-based childcare (licensed and unlicensed).

On April 22, 2020, the Board received Briefing Note CS02-20 related to COVID-19 Emergency Child Care Update which described the actions taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and emergency childcare services for essential workers.

On April 27, 2020 the Ontario government released [A Framework for Reopening Ontario](#), which outlines the criteria as well as guiding principles for the safe, gradual reopening of businesses, services and public spaces.

## **CURRENT STATUS/STEPS TAKEN TO DATE:**

On May 29, 2020, DNSSAB released a survey to service providers in order to support planning and gain a better understanding of childcare sector's needs as the childcare sector reopens. The survey sought input related to the timelines for reopening centres, prioritization, needed guidance/information, operational considerations and funding pressures. Some of the planning considerations brought forward by agencies included:

- Clear guidelines and requirements (i.e. PPE, health and safety, ratios and group sizes, social distancing expectations, cleaning and sanitizing practices, procedure for someone showing symptoms, health check requirements, drop-off or pick up, etc.).
- Requirements of parents (i.e. waiver forms, clear communication protocols, etc.).
- Additional funding (i.e. PPE, extra staff, etc.) and clear reporting expectations.
- Direction on prioritizing families given limited spaces/smaller ratios.
- Direction on overlap between emergency childcare and 'new norm' childcare.
- Training for professionals working in the sector (i.e. protocol of PPE, mental health and wellbeing, etc.).

In their responses, the service providers also expressed concern in regards to the financial viability of programs due to the restrictions and additional costs (i.e. reduced ratios and group sizes, increased staffing, cost of PPE, etc.) related to operating child care centres during a pandemic.

On June 2, 2020, DNSSAB released another survey in order to better understand the needs of families as the childcare sector reopens. The following provides a brief overview of the results:

- Total of 770 responses: 661 were in licensed childcare prior to closure, 109 were on the waitlist hoping for services.
- Children returning to care:
  - Yes = 403 respondents
  - No = 38 respondents
  - Undecided = 191 respondents
    - Mostly due to COVID concerns or dependent on work schedules (i.e. whether parents would be called back).
- Care required (timeline):
  - Immediately = 454 children
  - When they return to work = 385 children.
- Family's current work situation:
  - Outside of the home: 162 both full-time; 26 both part-time; 32 one full-time and one part-time.
  - From home: 56 both full-time; 7 both part-time; 8 one full-time and one part-time.

- In School/taking classes online: 22 at least one parent/caregiver was in school/taking classes.
- Out of work/laid off: 12 both parents out of work; 40 at least one parent out of work.
- Some of the planning considerations brought forward by families included:
  - Smaller ratios and group sizes.
  - Screening and testing.
  - Increased cleaning/sanitizing/ handwashing.
  - Mental health of children and staff.
  - Priority for front line workers where both parents are working outside of the home.
  - No increases to childcare fees.
  - Strict policies about attending when sick.
  - Clear communication with parent (i.e. policies, etc.).
  - Allow families to keep spots even if they choose not to come back immediately.
  - No visitors or parents in the building.
  - Waive two weeks' notice if pulling children from care.
  - More outdoor time.

On June 8, 2020, the [Ontario government announced](#) its plan to permit more business and services to open throughout the province with promise that as more people return to work, the services they rely on will need to be available regardless of the stage a region is in. The province indicated that additional details would soon be released which will include information related to childcare services and summer camps.

On June 9, 2020, the [Ontario government announced](#) its plan to reopen licensed child care centres across the province as of June 12 and released a set of [guidelines](#) that child care operators must adhere to in order to reopen safely. Some of the requirements found in the provincial guidelines include:

- Providers will be required to place children in groups referred to as cohorts. This grouping of children will move together for a period of seven days and providers will not allow new any spots within a cohort to be shared or swapped.
- Limiting cohort sizes to a maximum of 10 individuals per classroom (this includes children and staff).
- Screening staff and children prior to entering the centre and having a COVID-19 response plan if someone connected to the centre is exposed to the virus.
- Enhanced cleaning and sanitation practices throughout the day.
- No visitors permitted in the centres.

- Implementing drop-off and pick-up protocols in a way that facilitates physical distancing.

The provincial guidelines also require that all licensed home childcare providers adhere to new operational requirements.

In accordance with these provincial guidelines, licensed childcare providers are not permitted to charge fees to existing childcare families if they do not have access to a space or decide not to accept a space. During the reopening phase, childcare fees must also remain at the same rate as they were prior the closure if the increase was not communicated to families prior to March 1, 2020.

The province also announced that emergency childcare services, including associated provincial funding, will end on June 26, 2020. The province will continue to cover childcare fees for these families until June 26, whether they continue to access emergency child care during this time or have transitioned to another child care arrangement. Individual centers are not permitted to run more than one type of service at a time. Locations must be either emergency child care services or transitional services, not a mixture of both.

On June 10, 2020, Children's Services met with services providers in order to begin planning for re-opening of the system. Based on the experience of opening emergency child care centres, reopening the licensed child care sector in Nipissing will need to be gradual to allow service providers time to properly prepare and meet all local requirements as well as those outlined in the Ministry's guidelines. In most cases, the service providers have advised that they will require approximately 2 weeks to reopen childcare centres.

In order to support the child care sector as it prepares to reopen, the Children's Services team, in collaboration with licensed child care providers, will support with the development of various guidelines and professional learning opportunities (i.e. prioritization of spaces, enhanced health and safety practices, etc.).

On June 11, 2020, the province released the funding guidance document which provides the funding parameters that DNSSAB must follow when supporting the licensed childcare sector during the childcare reopening period until the end of August. The objective of the funding approach is to build upon the principles set out in the sustainability plan, and to support the childcare sector financially as it transitions to reopening and serving families.

The memorandum summarizes the funding parameters in the following points:

- Available federal supports in [Federal COVID-19 Economic Response Plan funding](#) must continue to be maximized;

- Funding will be provided to assist with reduced capacity in childcare centres that reopen and increased personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning costs (over and above regular cleaning costs prior to COVID-19), though neither has been defined by the province as of yet nor do we have information on how either benefit will be reconciled.
- Funding will also be provided to support the increased staffing levels required in childcare centres for reopening (such as, screening, cleaning, coverage etc.).
- Funding continues to be provided following the sustainability plan principles (i.e. funding parameters during the closure period) for childcare centres and EarlyON Child and Family Centres that remain closed in the reopening phase, to support eligible fixed overhead costs and EarlyON virtual programming.

The province has also advised that School boards will continue to not charge rent to childcare or EarlyON centres located in schools until schools reopen in September.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

On June 11, 2020, a provincial funding plan for reopening the licensed childcare sector was released. This plan assumes that through a combination of federal supports (i.e. CEWS, OCECRA, etc.), available provincial and municipal funding, and parent fees, the operating costs of re-opening the licensed child care sector will be fully funded with no undue pressure to licensed child care agencies, families, or municipal/DSSAB budgets.

Services providers must continue to research and optimize the federal funding supports available to them, retroactively to March 15, 2020. Some of the federal supports include:

- The [Ontario-Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program \(OCECRA\)](#) which is available to landlords. Service providers have been directed to work with their landlord to determine if they could retroactively benefit from this support or not.
- Service providers are also required to apply for [Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy](#) to support staffing costs. There are challenges with this program as it only covers 75% of the costs.

Based on provincial guidelines and the licensed childcare capacity within the Nipissing District, approximately 42% of the licensed capacity will be available during this period. The cost for providing these services will increase significantly with the parameters that have been put in place by the province. It is currently unclear what the true capacity and operational costs will be until each agency determines which location will reopen. DNSSAB will work on establishing a plan to best support the early years and childcare sector through this phase within its current budget allocations until additional information is received by the province.

## **RISK IDENTIFICATION AND MITIGATION:**

The administrative burden associated to this plan continues to be substantial and will have great impact on DNSSAB and service providers. There are details in the latest memorandum that require clarification as it is unclear what the financial impacts will be for the district's licensed childcare sector who have already been impacted by the closures due to COVID-19. With the childcare pressures that already exist and additional pressures to reopen the sector, the service providers have expressed much concern regarding the viability of services. At this time, it is unclear if additional funding will be provided to support the sector with additional costs as they relate to enhanced sanitary/cleaning practices, PPE, additional staff, etc. DNSSAB will continue to work with service providers until additional information is provided by the Ministry.

With the adjusted ratios, required distancing, and inability to "share spaces" there is no doubt that there will be a negative impact on the services available in the district. When requirements are adhered to there is no doubt that:

- There will be a "loss" of available child spaces.
- There will be an increase in cost to operate child care services.
- There will be increased stress and confusion as DSSABs, providers, and parents work through case specific issues.

This is also not business as usual for the childcare sector as the province is still functioning in a pandemic. There continues to be evidence of COVID-19 community transmission within the district; therefore, there is an increased risk of exposure in settings delivering childcare services. The Health Unit will continue to provide consultative support on infection prevention and control issues however it cannot assure the safety of staff and children nor prevent a COVID-19 outbreak in the emergency childcare settings.

Enhanced precautions have been put into place to try and reduce the spread of COVID-19 keeping the health and wellbeing of children, families and professionals at the forefront. All locations are expected to follow the health practices and requirements that align with the Ontario's Ministry of Health and local direction.

## **COMMUNICATION PLAN:**

DNSSAB's Children's Services Department will ensure that ongoing communication and messaging from DNSSAB continues to be handled in a proficient manner through various methods (i.e. memorandums, zoom conferences, agency meetings, group meetings, etc.) which in turn will ensure that the necessary information reaches early years and child care service providers, school board and community partners.

## **NEXT STEPS:**

Ongoing conversations and planning, in collaboration with service providers and school

boards, will continue to occur in order to ensure that early years and childcare sector is well supported throughout this period.



## BRIEFING NOTE HS19-20

For information     For Approval

**Date:** June 24, 2020

**Purpose:** Service Manager Annual Information Return (SMAIR)

**Prepared by:** Stacey Cyopeck, Manager, Housing Programs

**Reviewed by:** Catherine Matheson, CAO

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### INFORMATION:

Report HS19-20 describes the 2019 Service Manager Annual Information Return (SMAIR) submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) and is brought to the Board for information purposes. The SMAIR report is enclosed as Attachment A.

### BACKGROUND:

- The Service Manager Annual Information Return (SMAIR) is a legislatively required report, which serves as an assessment of a Service Manager's compliance with the *Housing Services Act, 2011*, and is the primary reporting tool for social housing data utilized by the Province in its reporting to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).
- The SMAIR is a summary of selected financial, operating and statistical information from the suite of legacy social housing programs, centralized waiting list, and the Strong Communities Rent Supplement Program for the year ended December 31, 2019.

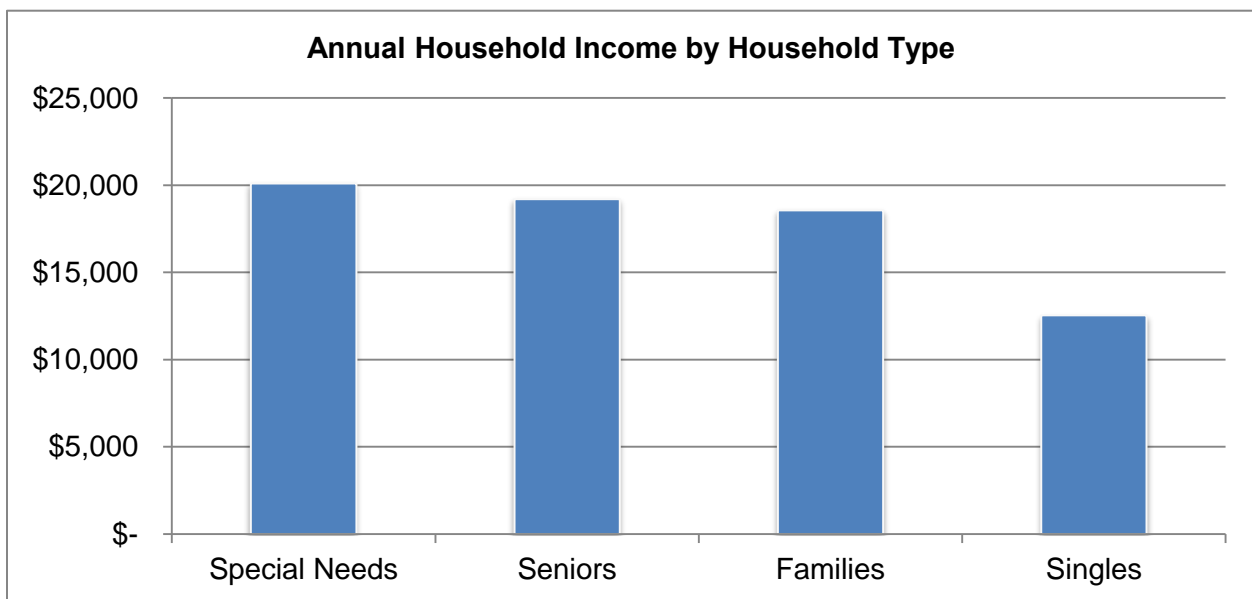
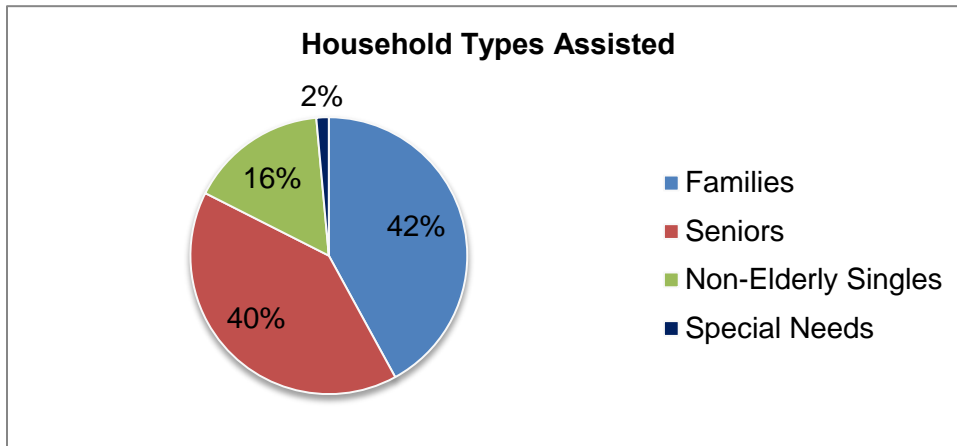
### CURRENT STATUS:

In the 2019 calendar year the legacy program funding is as follows:

**Table 1- Total funding for legacy programs in 2019.**

Program	Total Funding 2019	Year Over Year Growth
<b>Public Housing</b>	\$3,043,579	18.14%
<b>Rent Supplement (Excludes SCRS)</b>	\$446,288	0.96%
<b>Section 95 – PNP</b>	\$225,737	0.00%
<b>Section 95 – MNP</b>	\$1,142,393	-4.07%
<b>Provincial Reformed</b>	\$5,786,748	-0.16%
<b>Post-85 Urban Native</b>	\$922,954	-5.70%
<b>Pre 86 Urban Native</b>	\$107,816	-22.92%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,675,514</b>	<b>2.87%</b>

With regard to households assisted, below is the breakdown to types and average income by household type:



To continue, the tracking of Service Level Standards (SLS) is a key component of the SMAIR. Based on the table below, DNSSAB has seen a modest increase to SLS in 2019.

	2019 SMAIR	2018 SMAIR	Year Over Year Growth
<b>Households Receiving RGI</b>	1297	1266	2.45%
<b>High Needs Households</b>	519	510	1.76%
<b>Units Modified to Provide Physical Accessibility</b>	53	39	35.90%
<b>Households Receiving Support Services</b>	75	91	-17.58%

In terms of the Centralized Waiting List for social housing, DNSSAB saw a year over year decrease, as the table below illustrates.

	2019 SMAIR	2018 SMAIR	Year Over Year Growth
Households without Dependants	497	506	-1.78%
Households with Dependants	172	174	-1.15%
Senior Households	190	234	-18.80%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>859</b>	<b>914</b>	<b>-6.02%</b>

Finally, in terms of the Strong Communities Rent Supplement Program, DNSSAB met the program's disbursement targets and utilized previous year surplus program funding, as seen in the table below.

Program Component	2019 SMAIR	Program Targets	Variance
Regular	\$221,262	\$218,005	(\$3,257)
MCSS	\$81,699	\$84,404	\$2,705
MOHLTC	\$46,258	\$42,203	(\$4,055)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$349,219</b>	<b>\$344,612</b>	<b>(\$4,607)</b>

**RISK IDENTIFIED AND MITIGATION:**

Once all SMAIR data has been received and compiled by the Province, a selected external audit firm will choose and visit a representative sample of Service Managers to verify the information reported on the SMAIR. It is, therefore, essential that the SMAIR data is collected and stored appropriately while maintaining statistical accuracy and that the final report is thoroughly reviewed.

**CONCLUSION:**

In summary, the SMAIR is a valuable tool to continuously monitor the legacy social housing programs, centralized waiting list, and Rent Supplement programs to ensure that we are meeting our obligations set out in the *Housing Services Act, 2011*. In 2019, there have evidently been several achievements including lowering the centralized waiting list and increasing our Service Level Standards. The DNSSAB will need to continue to follow its Service Level Standards Action Plan to ensure that yearly SLS increases align with or exceed the plan.

## Social Housing Service Manager Annual Information Return

For the year ended December 31, 2019

### District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board

**Identification**

Page 1

<b>Service Manager</b> District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board	<b>I.D. No.</b>	<b>Year end (yyyy-mm-dd)</b> 2019-12-31
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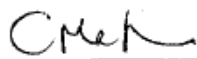
<b>Service Manager Address</b> 200 McIntyre Street East North Bay, ON P1B 8J8	<b>Service Manager Mailing Address (if different)</b> P.O. Box 750 North Bay, ON P1B 8J8	<b>Program Type</b>	<b>Number of Providers*</b>
		1 Public housing	1
		2 Rent supplement	17
		3 Limited dividend	0
		4 Sect 25/27	1
		5 Sect 95 - PNP	3
		6 Sect 95 - MNP	2
		6 Provincial reformed	10
		7 Post-85 urban native	3
		8 Pre-86 urban native	1
		<b>TOTAL Number of Unique Providers</b>	<b>28</b>

<b>Contact name</b> Stacey Cyopeck	<b>Position</b> Manager, Housing Programs	<b>Telephone number</b> 705-474-2151 ext. 3346	<b>Fax number</b> 705-474-8985
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<b>eMail address</b>	stacey.cyopeck@dnssab.ca
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**DECLARATION**

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the information provided in this Service Manager Annual Information Return and the representations on Page 2 is true and correct.

<b>Signature</b> 	<b>Name</b> Catherine Matheson	<b>Position</b> CAO	<b>Date</b> March 15, 2020
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\*Please include all providers for each program type sub-total.  
 This may mean counting the same provider under different program types.  
 For the TOTAL number of providers line, only include each provider once.

# Social Housing Service Manager Annual Information Return

For the year ended December 31, 2019

**District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board**

**Service Manager Representation Report**

Page 2

*Note: The Housing Services Act, 2011 and its regulations are referred to as the HSA.*

Please add a note in the space below the question or attach additional sheets, as requested. The row height will expand to fit the text.

Col. 1	Column 2	Col. 3	Col. 4
0101	<p>1) Did the service manager ensure that the amount of federal funding provided was used only for permitted costs under section 102 (9) of the HSA?</p> <p>Notes: Please enter notes if you answered "NO" or attach additional information.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> Y	<input type="checkbox"/> N
0120	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Cell expands to fit text.</div>		
0130	<p>1a) Additional information is attached.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Y	
0201	<p>2) Were any federal funds used to pay for losses, costs or expenses related to loans where CMHC is the lender?</p> <p>Notes: Please enter notes if you answered "YES" or attach additional information.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> N
0220	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Cell expands to fit text.</div>		
0230	<p>2a) Additional information is attached.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Y	
0301	<p>3) Were any units in projects transferred through the authority of the SHRA removed from the program?</p> <p>Attachments: If "YES", please attach a schedule identifying those units and an explanation.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> N
0330	<p>3a) A schedule is attached.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Y	
0401	<p>4) Does the service manager have a waiting list system that meets all of the requirements of the HSA?</p> <p>Notes: Please enter notes if you answered "NO" or attach additional information.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> Y	<input type="checkbox"/> N
0420	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Cell expands to fit text.</div>		
0430	<p>4a) Additional information is attached.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Y	
0501	<p>5) Has the service manager a system to ensure that required housing providers use the waiting list system for the placement of all applicants other than special needs applicants?</p> <p>Notes: Please enter notes if you answered "NO" or attach additional information.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> Y	<input type="checkbox"/> N

# Social Housing Service Manager Annual Information Return

For the year ended December 31, 2019

## District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board

### Service Manager Representation Report

Page 2

0520	Cell expands to fit text.	
0530	5a) Additional information is attached.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y
0601	6) Did the service manager comply with or have a system in place to ensure compliance with the HSA with regard to:	
0610	(a) eligibility for RGI assistance?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
0611	(b) eligibility rules, occupancy standards and priority designations?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
0612	(c) decisions and reviews?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
0620	Notes: Please enter notes if you answered "NO" to (a), (b) or (c) or attach additional information. Cell expands to fit text.	
0630	6a) Additional information is attached.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y
0701	7) Did the service manager meet the service level standards set out in O.Reg. 367/11 Schedule 4 for the service area for each of the 3 Service Level Standards that are listed? (Compare actual Service Levels on page 5 with those shown in O.Reg. 367/11 Schedule 4)	
0710	1. Met Service Level Standard for Households receiving RGI whose income is at or below the HILs.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N
0711	2. Met Service Level Standard for RGI High Needs Households.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N
0712	3. Met Service Level Standard for RGI units modified to provide physical accessibility.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N
0713	4. Used the municipally funded Portable Housing Benefit to meet Service Level Standards.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
0720	Notes: If you answered "NO" to #1, #2 or #3, please enter notes or attach additional information. If you answered "YES" to #4, please complete Page 7 - Portable Housing Benefit and enter notes below or attach additional information. In 2019, DNSSAB piloted a municipally funded Portable Housing Benefit program. This program has been successful to date and we will be looking to expand it in the coming years to assist us in meeting our Service Level Standards. The DNSSAB also submitted a Service Level Standards Action Plan to the Ministry, which details how we will meet and maintain our Service Level Standards within the next 10-Year period.	
0730	7a) Additional information is attached.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y
0801	8) Did the service manager report all the projects in difficulty as required under Section 72 of the HSA?	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N



# Social Housing Service Manager Annual Information Return

For the year ended December 31, 2019

## District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board

### Service Manager Representation Report

Page 2

	Notes: Please enter notes if you answered "YES" or attach additional information.	
0820	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Cell expands to fit text."/>	
0830	8a) Additional information is attached.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y
0901	9) Did the service manager provide services with respect to the administration and provision of housing in both English and French in areas designated in the French Language Services Act?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
	Notes: Please enter notes if you answered "NO" or attach additional information.	
0920	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Cell expands to fit text."/>	
0930	9a) Additional information is attached.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y
1001	10a) The ministry is interested to know about projects with expiring operating agreements and / or mortgages. Please answer the following voluntary questions below:  How many housing projects in your area have reached the end of their operating agreement or their mortgage during the reporting year? How many RGI units do these projects have?	
1020	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="1 project located at 671-689 Mattawan Street in Mattawa ON. This project has 10 RGI units and is within the Public Housing program owned and operated by the Nipissing District Housing Corporation."/>	
1030	10b) Have you entered into contractual arrangements, rent supplement agreements, with these housing providers, to continue to provide RGI units?	
1040	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="The DNSSAB continues to fund the Local Housing Corporation as is required under legislation."/>	

Housing Division - Transfer Payment Accountability Unit - Updated December, 2019





**Social Housing**  
**Service Manager Annual Information Return**  
 For the year ended December 31, 2019

**Combined Statistical Information**  
**District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board**

**All Units Under Administration by Service Manager**

Unit of Measure	Public Housing Program 01	Rent Supplement Program 02	Limited Dividend Program 03	Section 26 Program 04	Section 27 Program 04	Section 95 PNP Program 05	Section 95 JINP Program 06	Provincial Reform Program 06	Post-1985 Urban Native Program 07	Pre-1985 Urban Native Program 08
<b>I. Households assisted by program type</b>										
RGI households with incomes at or below the HILs	541	90					59	600	76	13
Targeted households assisted by program (at year end)										
RGI households with incomes above the HILs and all non-RGI households	5					85	31	219	9	2
Total number of non-targeted households (at year end)										
Vacant Units	11					5		24		
Households										

**II. Household types assisted and average gross incomes (at year end)**

<b>Families</b>										
RGI households with incomes at or below the HILs										
Total number of targeted households surveyed	211	177	5				29	272	53	13
Average annual gross household income surveyed	\$ 20,304	\$ 20,929	\$ 20,745			\$ 12,083	\$ 14,562	\$ 19,990	\$ 23,559	\$ 23,559
RGI Households with incomes above the HILs and all non-RGI households										
Total number of non-targeted households surveyed	215	5				57	21	85	7	2
<b>Seniors</b>										
RGI households with incomes at or below the HILs										
Total number of targeted households surveyed	211	172	51				30	274	15	
Average annual gross household income surveyed	\$ 17,489	\$ 19,745	\$ 13,359			\$ 20,542	\$ 20,575	\$ 17,702	\$ 12,334	\$ 12,334
RGI Households with incomes above the HILs and all non-RGI households										
Total number of non-targeted households surveyed	215					21	10	124	1	
<b>Non-elderly singles</b>										
RGI households with incomes at or below the HILs										
Total number of targeted households surveyed	211	192	34					32	7	
Average annual gross household income surveyed	\$ 11,958	\$ 13,359	\$ 13,359			\$ 12,083	\$ 14,562	\$ 19,990	\$ 23,559	\$ 23,559
RGI Households with incomes above the HILs and all non-RGI households										
Total number of non-targeted households surveyed	215					7		6		
<b>Special needs</b>										
RGI households with incomes at or below the HILs										
Total number of targeted households surveyed	211									
Average annual gross household income surveyed	\$ 11,958	\$ 13,359	\$ 13,359			\$ 12,083	\$ 14,562	\$ 19,990	\$ 23,559	\$ 23,559
RGI Households with incomes above the HILs and all non-RGI households										
Total number of non-targeted households surveyed	215					4				

Young Division - Transfer Payment Accountability Unit - Updated December, 2019

**District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board**  
**Combined Statistical Information**

**Definitions for reporting to CMHC page 4 of the SMAIR:**

Seniors - 60 or older  
Non-elderly singles - below 60

Special Needs category covers households receiving care or support services. Care or support services means:

- (i) on site personal support services where personal medical or nursing care, rehabilitation or counselling activities is provided to project residents on a regular basis on-site;
- (ii) special facilities where special dedicated spaces, facilities or equipment is provided to support the provision of personal medical or nursing care, rehabilitation or counselling activities;
- (iii) special needs where an individual requires on-site special facilities, and/or on-site personal support services due to physical, social or emotional condition or disability; or
- (iv) special purpose housing where hostel or self-contained housing is used as a principal residence and includes on-site care services and facilities, excluding food, relating to residents' common physical, social and emotional condition or disability.

Within each client-type category, the total number of Households assisted will be reported along with the number of Targeted Households reporting their incomes and their average gross incomes.

Gross Household income for the purpose of this report is as defined by CMHC in the HLLs.

Currently, gross Household income is the total income of the Household (before tax) from all sources for all persons in the Household before tax) from all sources for all persons in the Household 15 years of age and over.

For 2019 calendar year reporting, "Year End" means December 31, 2019.

**CMHC expects all annual gross household incomes to be reported for all targeted households in each category.**

**Social Housing  
Service Manager Annual Information Return**

For the year ended December 31, 2019  
Page 5A

**District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board  
Service Level Standards**

Unit of Measure	Social Housing					Column 05
	Program 01 Public Housing	Program 02 Rent Supplement	Program 06 Section 95 MNP	Program 06 Provincial Reformed	Program 06 Portable Housing Benefit	
Households receiving RGI whose household income is at or below the household income limit established in regulation.*	2151	90	59	600	7	
High need households.**	2152	43	17	268	5	
Units modified to provide physical accessibility	2153	-	5	48	-	
Households receiving support services	2154	-	0	75	-	

*Housing Division - Transfer Payment Accountability Unit - Updated December, 2019*

**Links to e-Laws Ontario**

For prescribed Service Levels see O. Reg. 367/11 Schedule 4:  
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/110367#BK213>

See O. Reg. 370/11 for:

\*Current Household Income Limit amounts by Service Manager (Schedule 2)

\*\*Current High Needs amounts by Service Manager (Schedule 1)

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/110370>

For information on the Portable Housing Benefit see O. Reg. 367/11, Schedule 4.1:

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/110367#BK214>

**Social Housing<sup>1</sup>**  
**Service Manager Annual Information Return**  
 For the year ended December 31, 2019  
 Page 5B

**District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board**

**Municipally Funded Tenant Rent Reduction**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this table is to identify municipal expenditures for tenant rent reduction – in addition to expenditures for service level standards.

Municipally Funded Tenant Rent Reduction, by Type

Municipal Expenditures, by Type

\*Describe "Other"

(Please provide a short description)

Cell expands to fit text.

**Municipally Funded Tenant Rent Reduction**

Top-up in Existing Non-RGI Social Housing Unit Column 01	-	HH	2160	-	-	-	-
\$	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
\$	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
\$	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
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**Social Housing  
Service Manager Annual Information Return**

For the year ended December 31, 2019

Page 6

**District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board**

**Centralized Waiting List Information**

	Households with No Dependents Column 1	Households with Dependents Column 2	Senior Households Column 3	TOTAL Column 4
Number of Households	100	172	190	859

**Strong Communities Rent Supplement Program**

	Regular Component Column 1	MOHLTC Supportive Housing Column 2	MCSS Supportive Housing Column 3	TOTAL Column 4
Number of Households Served	200	8	10	49
Program Administration Costs (\$ (as part of Total Expenditures)	\$ 220	\$ 2,670	\$ 3,720	\$ 17,670
Total Expenditures (\$)	\$ 230	\$ 46,258	\$ 81,699	\$ 349,220

*Housing Division - Transfer Payment Accountability Unit - Updated December, 2019*

**Portable Housing Benefit (PHB)**

**SMAIR**

For the year ended December 31, 2019

**District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board**

Page 7

**A. Household Types Receiving the Portable Housing Benefit (PHB) & Average Adjusted Family Net Income (AFNI)** (XReference: SMAIR Page 4)

Families	Unit of Measure	Column 1
TOTAL number of Family households receiving PHB	2111 Households	1
Average Adjusted Family Net Income (AFNI)	2113 \$	\$ 8,055
<b>Seniors</b>		
TOTAL number of Senior households receiving PHB	2121 Households	4
Average Adjusted Family Net Income (AFNI)	2123 \$	\$ 16,627
<b>Non-elderly Singles</b>		
TOTAL number of Non-elderly Single households receiving PHB	2131 Households	2
Average Adjusted Family Net Income (AFNI)	2133 \$	\$ 22,226
<b>TOTAL Households</b>		
TOTAL number of households receiving the PHB	2151 Households	7

**B. Municipal Expenditures for the Portable Housing Benefit**

	Municipal Expenditures for PHB
	Column 1
TOTAL municipal expenditures for the Portable Housing Benefit (Exclude Service Manager administration charges)	421 \$ 5,586

**C. Households receiving the Portable Housing Benefit**

	Column 1
Households receiving the Portable Housing Benefit whose household income is at or below the Household Income Limit (HILs) established in regulation.†	2161 Households 7
High need households receiving the Portable Housing Benefit**	2162 Households 5

**D. Households on the Centralized Waiting List that Applied for the PHB** (XReference SMAIR Page 6)

	Households with No Dependents	Households with Dependents	Senior Households	TOTAL Households
	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Number of Households on the Centralized Waiting List (Automatically populated from Page 6)	100 497	172	190	859
Number of Households on the Centralized Waiting List that applied for the Portable Housing Benefit	105 0	0	0	0

Housing Division - Transfer Payment Accountability Unit - Updated December, 2019

**Links to e-Laws Ontario**

For prescribed Service Levels see O. Reg. 367/11 Schedule 4:

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/110367#BK213>

See O. Reg. 370/11 for:

\*Current Household Income Limit amounts by Service Manager (Schedule 2)

\*\*Current High Needs amounts by Service Manager (Schedule 1)

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/110370>

For information on the Portable Housing Benefit see O. Reg. 367/11, Schedule 4.1:

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/110367#BK214>





## BRIEFING NOTE SSE06-20

For Information or  For Approval

**Date:** June 24, 2020

**Purpose:** Pay Direct Policy

**Prepared by:** Michelle Glabb, Director of Social Services and Employment

**Reviewed by:** Catherine Matheson, Chief Administrative Officer

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### RECOMMENDATION:

That the District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board approve the Ontario Works Pay Direct local policy, attached as Appendix A, and as set out in report SSE06-20.

### BACKGROUND:

- Over the years there have been notable challenges related to establishing a balance between the needs of landlords and Ontario Works recipients with respect to the stabilization of housing. While there are some guiding principles included in the Ontario Works Legislation, there are also gaps where there is a need for local policy.
- Prior to the pandemic, a review of DNSSAB's Ontario Works local processes on pay direct payments to Landlords was underway. The pandemic interrupted this review. In April after operations stabilized, this work resumed and a new local policy was drafted.
- On April 15th, the draft policy was forwarded to the President of the Near North Landlord's Association (NNLA) who is also a member of the Affordable Housing Providers of Ontario (AHPO) Steering Committee, along with the co-chairs of the Community Advisory Board (CAB) to obtain feedback. The feedback received from this targeted engagement of community partners has been very positive.
- Further to engaging leadership from the NNLA and the CAB, the draft policy was also forwarded to the local Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) for review. This step was taken in an effort to increase the impact of this local policy throughout the social assistance population. Once again, the feedback was positive and it has been confirmed that the ODSP program in Nipissing will also be adopting DNSSAB's approach.



- It is important to note that most Ontario Works recipients pay their rent directly to their landlords on time without the need for a Pay Direct arrangement. In fact, for the benefit month of April 2020, there were only 466 recurring pay direct to landlord payments issued, which represents approximately 21.7% of the Ontario Works caseload.

### **CURRENT STATUS/STEPS TAKEN TO DATE:**

The purpose of this policy is to define the difference between mandatory and voluntary pay directs, increase communication with landlords, increase accountability, expedite the intervention required when a person falls into rent arrears and mitigate other risks associated with the destabilization of housing. The most significant changes included in the policy that are anticipated to improve the overall housing stability of Ontario Works recipients, and better meet the needs of Landlords, are highlighted below:

- Notice Period

**Previous Process:** a voluntary pay direct to landlord as defined in the policy attached as Appendix A, could be removed from a recipients file immediately upon their request.

**New Policy:** Landlords will now be granted **one month's** advance notice that the Ontario Works pay direct payment will be terminated. This notice period will provide landlords more time to contact their tenants to discuss new payment arrangements. Please note that this change only applies in situations where the recipient remains living at the same address.

- Landlord/Tenant Disputes

**Previous Process:** In voluntary pay direct situations where a recipient advises their Case Manager that they are having problems with their landlord and want to remove the pay direct on their file, the voluntary pay direct would be removed.

**New Policy:** In situations where it is clear to the Case Manager that the recipient does not intend to pay their rent, shelter costs will be removed from the file until the recipient and the landlord resolve their issues together or through a Hearing at the Landlord Tenant Board.

- Communication

**Previous Process:** Landlords have always had the ability to contact Ontario Works directly when a tenant who they knew was in receipt of Ontario Works assistance failed to pay their rent. Landlords could also utilize the Provincial Fraud Hotline process.

**New Policy:** Landlords continue to be able to contact the Provincial Fraud Hotline when a tenant they know is in receipt of Ontario Works assistance falls into rent arrears. However, direct communication with the Ontario Works office is encouraged and the process has been streamlined to expedite an appropriate response. The NNLA has now been provided with one Ontario Works phone extension along with an email address that goes directly to members of the Ontario Works management team. A member of the Ontario Works

management team will then connect with the Case Manager involved to review the case to determine what steps need to take place to remedy the situation.

**RISK IDENTIFIED AND MITIGATION:**

The following list represents some of the ways this policy is expected to reduce risk and influence positive outcomes for social assistance recipients, landlords and ultimately the municipal levy:

- Reduced financial pressure on Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative benefits as Ontario Works recipients with rent arrears are addressed sooner through the implementation of a Pay Direct.
- Earlier interventions will result in lower Ontario Works discretionary benefit expenditures for rent arrears. This is important as expenditures above the cap set by the Ministry become a 100% municipal cost.
- Reduced financial pressure on community organizations that assist social assistance recipients with rent arrears.
- Landlords will incur fewer costs associated with the filing of Notice to End a Tenancy Early for Non-Payment of Rent forms with the Landlord Tenant Board.
- A decrease in the number of Notice to End a Tenancy Early for Non-Payment of Rent forms filed with the Landlord Tenant Board. This, in turn, can have a positive impact on the wait times being experienced by landlords and tenants to have other matters heard at the Tribunal.
- A decrease in the number of situations where it is more cost effective for a recipient to move due to the amount of arrears owed, provided Ontario Works is made aware of the arrears before this amount becomes unmanageable at the program level.
- A reduction in the number of social assistance recipients facing evictions for non-payment of rent.
- A reduction in the number of recipients declaring no fixed address or homelessness.
- Reduced admissions to the Crisis Centre and other shelters for social assistance recipients who have been evicted due to the non-payment of rent.
- Decrease in the number of Landlords with concerns over their own viability as property owners due to the rent arrears of Ontario Works recipients.
- Decrease in the number of landlords with concerns over renting to Ontario Works recipients due to past negative experiences related to rent arrears.

**COMMUNICATION:**

As the draft policy was reviewed with key stakeholders prior to it being implemented, communication with these groups is complete. However, it will be important as we move forward to continue to engage these stakeholders to ensure that the policy is achieving the desired outcomes.

**CONCLUSION:**

It is well documented that people living in poverty and those who are experiencing homelessness are extremely vulnerable especially within the context of a pandemic. In fact, in a recent comment made by the United Nations it was stated that “housing has become the frontline defense against the Coronavirus. Home has rarely been more of a life or death situation”.<sup>1</sup>

It is important to note that while the Ontario Works program has a role to play in the stabilization of housing for social assistance recipients, ultimately it is the responsibility of recipients to pay their rent. Due to the complex barriers of some social assistance recipients, there are no guarantees that this policy will address every situation, as landlord tenant disputes often go beyond rent arrears. In these situations, landlords and social assistance recipients will need to continue to utilize the processes made available to them through the Landlord Tenant Board. Moving forward, the Ontario Works team will monitor the implementation of this policy to ensure that it is achieving the intended outcomes and to ensure that it is being implemented consistently throughout the District.

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<sup>1</sup> UN News, Global Perspective Human Stories , *UN health chief announces global ‘solidarity trial’ to jumpstart search for COVID-19 treatment*, March 18, 2020, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/03/1059722>

<b>Title: Pay Directs to Landlords</b>	<b>Department: Social Services and Employment</b>
<b>Date: April 8, 2020</b>	<b>Ontario Works Policy #14</b>
<b>Resolution #:</b>	<b>Date of Revision: New Policy</b>

## **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

Section 18 of the Act.

Section 61 of Regulation 134/98

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

The District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board (DNSSAB) strives to ensure that all Ontario Works (OW) recipients residing within the District of Nipissing have access to sustainable, safe and affordable housing. It recognizes stable housing as being the foundation of strong and healthy communities and the role that Pay Direct payments play in supporting Ontario Works recipients to manage their finances.

## **INTENT**

- to ensure that pay directs to Landlords are implemented in accordance to this Policy
- to define the difference between Mandatory and Voluntary Pay Directs
- to outline the circumstances by which a Pay Direct can be entered and/or terminated
- to ensure that adequate documentation is on file to support the level of shelter benefits being paid directly to a Landlord.
- to ensure that all of the appropriate forms and letters are used consistently to support the effective administration of pay directs to Landlords.
- to comply with the requirements and minimum standards as established in Ministry Directives
- to establish DNSSAB Ontario Works Standards

## **PERSONS OR GROUPS AFFECTED**

- Recipient of Ontario Works assistance with shelter costs
- Private Landlords and Social Housing Providers

## **POLICY**

All OW recipients are eligible up to a maximum amount for shelter costs. Shelter means the cost for a dwelling place used as a principal residence. Adequate documentation must be submitted to verify a recipient's living arrangements. Pay Direct payments can assist recipients to manage their finances and provide a greater level of assurance for Landlords that the rent will be paid. However, the rental agreement whether formal or informal, is an agreement between the Tenant (recipient) and the Landlord.

Pay Direct payments to Landlords are utilized as a payment option that falls into one of the following two categories as defined below:

## **1. Mandatory Pay Directs**

Payments made to Landlords up to the maximum allowable for shelter costs or above, **WITH OR WITHOUT** a recipient's consent, to cover rent costs in situations where the recipient has demonstrated their inability to utilize Ontario Works financial assistance for the intended purpose.

## **2. Voluntary Pay Directs**

Payments to Landlords to cover rent costs upon the request of the recipient where the Landlord may or may not have also requested a Pay Direct arrangement, where there is no history of non-payment of rent and no other valid reason to impose a Mandatory Pay Direct.

# **MANDATORY PAY DIRECTS**

## **Criteria for Implementing a Mandatory Pay Direct**

According to the Provincial Ontario Works Policy Directive 3.7 "Pay Direct", Section 18 of the Act and Section 61 of Regulation 134/98, Ontario Works Staff will consider the following factors in determining whether or not a pay direct payment arrangement is appropriate:

- the recipient has demonstrated a pattern of misuse of assistance resulting in a lack of funds for food or shelter during a month or months;
- the misuse of assistance has been harmful or is likely to be harmful to the recipient and members of the benefit unit;
- the recipient frequently makes late payments for rent or utilities to the Landlord or utility company;
- rental or utility payments are currently in arrears; or
- the recipient is at risk of being evicted or having his/her utilities disconnected.

In situations where one or more of the above conditions apply, the Ontario Works staff will enter a Mandatory Pay Direct for shelter costs.

## **TERMINATION OF PAY DIRECTS**

The Provincial OW Policy Directive is silent on the termination of Pay Direct payments however the ODSP Policy Directive 10.1 "Pay Direct", Section 13 and 21(2)3 of the ODSP Act and Section 50 of the ODSP Regulation provides the following guidance in this area:

- where a caseworker has approved a recipient's request to have a pay direct arrangement terminated, as a courtesy, the landlord/third party should be advised.
- the resolution of any outstanding landlord-tenant disputes or any other issues related to a third party payment, including arrears, remains between the recipient and the landlord/third party.

In situations when a recipient requests to terminate a **Mandatory Pay Direct** and in addition to the guidance provided by the ODSP Policy Directive above, Ontario Works Staff will:

1. Confirm if the recipient is moving
  - If yes, obtain verification of the recipient's new address and the effective date of the address change.
  - Advise the recipient that contact will be made with their current Landlord to advise the Landlord that the Pay Direct will be terminated and the effective date of termination.
  - Enter a new Mandatory Pay Direct for the new Landlord and notify the new Landlord of same.

If the recipient is **NOT** moving:

- Advise the recipient that ongoing Mandatory Pay Directs cannot be terminated unless overturned through the internal review process when it was originally implemented noted below under "Appeals".

## TERMINATION OF VOLUNTARY PAY DIRECTS

In the case of a request to terminate a Voluntary Pay Direct and in addition to the guidance provided by the ODSP Policy Directive, Ontario Works Staff will:

1. Confirm if the recipient is moving.
  - If yes, obtain verification of the recipient's new address.
  - Advise the recipient that contact will be made with their current Landlord to advise the Landlord that the Pay Direct will be terminated and the effective date of termination.

If the Recipient is **NOT** moving:

- Ask the recipient for an explanation on why they want to terminate the Pay Direct arrangement.
- Advise the recipient that the pay direct can only be terminated after contact has *been made with the Landlord. Strongly recommend to the recipient that the Pay Direct remain on their file and review the advantages of Pay Directs with them.*
- Advise the recipient that once a Voluntary Pay Direct has been entered, it cannot be terminated while they reside at the same address without the Landlord being advised **1 MONTH** in advance.

Example: A recipient contacts the Case Manager to request that their Pay Direct for rent be terminated on January 10<sup>th</sup>. As the recipient's rent has already been

paid direct for January, the notice period for the Landlord is the benefit month of February therefore the pay direct cannot be terminated until March.

## APPEALS

According to the Provincial Ontario Works Policy Directive 3.7 “Pay Direct”, Section 18 of the Act and Section 61 of Regulation 134/98, the decision to implement a pay direct arrangement cannot be appealed to the Social Benefits Tribunal (SBT). However, if the recipient disagrees with a pay direct decision and requests an internal review, the internal review must be completed.

## LANDLORD/TENANT DISPUTES

- In situations where a recipient advises the Ontario Works staff that they want their Pay Direct terminated as they do not want or intend to pay their rent due to an unresolved matter with their Landlord, the Ontario Works staff will advise the recipient that Ontario Works shelter costs can only be issued if the rent is being paid.
- If the Pay Direct is Voluntary and the recipient insists that it be terminated, shelter costs will be removed from the file until the recipient and Landlord resolve their issues together or through the Landlord Tenant Board. This will ensure that when the dispute has been resolved shelter costs will be available to maintain the recipient’s housing but only up to the maximum shelter allowance available (see note below)



**Please note:** As many Ontario Works recipients have to use part of their food allowance to cover the cost of their rent, Ontario Works staff cannot hold back more than the recipient’s maximum shelter allowance. This means that there could be a shortfall in the amount that is available to cover rent arrears in these circumstances.

- In these situations the recipient will be advised that the pay direct can only be terminated after contact has been made with the Landlord. Strongly recommend to the recipient that the Pay Direct remain on their file and review the advantages of Pay Directs with them.



Advise the recipient that once a Voluntary Pay Direct has been entered, it cannot be terminated while they reside at the same address without the Landlord being advised **1 MONTH** in advance.

- If the Pay Direct is Mandatory, the recipient will be advised that the Pay Direct cannot be terminated and that they will need to exercise their rights as a Tenant through the Landlord Tenant Board.



## EXAMPLES OF SITUATIONS WHEN MANDATORY AND VOLUNTARY PAY DIRECTS WILL NOT BE ISSUED

- In cases where a recipient's earnings or income fluctuates and their monthly eligibility falls below the amount of the Pay Direct, the software management system (SAMS) cannot issue payment. In these situations the recipient would be required to pay their Landlord directly. The Landlord and recipient will be notified that the Pay Direct will not be issued for the affected month.
- Cases where a person for any reason becomes ineligible for Ontario Works assistance such as determinations of non-compliance with participation requirements, incarcerations etc. In these situations the recipient would be required to pay their Landlord directly. The Landlord and recipient will be notified that the Pay Direct will not be issued for the affected month.
- In cases that are being transferred from the Ontario Works Program (OW) over to the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). The Social Assistance Management System requires that Pay Directs be ended when files are transferred. Ontario Works staff commit to advising ODSP that a Pay Direct is required. Depending on the timing of the transfer, in these situations the recipient would be required to pay their Landlord directly if the Pay Direct was not entered on the ODSP file. The Landlord and recipient will be notified that the OW Pay Direct will not be issued for the affected month.
- File transfers to other municipalities when clients have relocated to another region and did not notify Ontario Works staff in advance. In these situations the Landlord will be notified that the Pay Direct will not be issued for the affected month.
- Administrative or software system errors. In these situations the recipient would be required to pay their Landlord directly. The Landlord and recipient will be notified that the Pay Direct will not be issued for the affected month.

**Please note:** In all of the situations noted above and depending on when this information becomes known to the Ontario Works staff, there may or may not be time to provide notice to the Landlord in advance that the Pay Direct payment will not be issued. However, all efforts will be made to provide as much notice as possible.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

- Due to privacy laws under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Ontario Works staff are unable to disclose confidential information about a Recipient with anyone. One of the exceptions to this rule relates to when Ontario Works staff inform Landlords of a Pay Direct being implemented or terminated. However, Ontario Works staff are able to receive information from Landlords or any other member of the community.

## COMMUNICATION



- Timely communication is essential to minimizing the impact that the removal of Pay Direct payments can have on recipients and Landlords. Landlords are encouraged to contact the Ontario Works Office immediately by calling 705-474-2151 ext. 3110 or by emailing [thirdpartyinquiries@dnssab.ca](mailto:thirdpartyinquiries@dnssab.ca) when rent falls into arrears. Landlords are also encouraged to provide an email address to their contact information as this may expedite communication when there may be a disruption in a Pay Direct payment.

## REFERENCE MATERIAL

OW Ministry Policy Directive	#3.7:	Pay Direct
ODSP Ministry Policy Directive	#10.1:	Pay direct
OW Ministry Policy Directive	#6.3:	Shelter