Ministry of Community
and Social Services

Ministère des Services
sociaux et communautaires

Ontario

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June 21, 2010

Mr. Gary Scripnick
Chair
Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association
180 Brock Street
Sault Ste Marie, ON P6A 3B7

Dear Mr. Scripnick,

Thank you for your letter dated May 17, 2010 regarding the Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) resolutions pertaining to the Territories without Municipal Organization (TWOMO) elections, length of term for the chair of a District Social Services Administration Board (DSSAB) and Ontario Works incentive funding. It has been forwarded to me by the Honourable Madeleine Meilleur, Minister of Community and Social Services, for response.

As you know, funding provided by this ministry to a DSSAB for TWOMO, including election expenditures, is 100% provincial funding. Based on input from NOSDA, as well as individual DSSABs, the ministry increased funding by 33% for each DSSAB to administer the 2010 TWOMO elections. While the 2010 planning envelope is $20,000 per DSSAB, the ministry's regional offices have the flexibility to reallocate unspent election funding to a DSSAB that requires additional election funds. I would encourage any DSSAB with questions or issues concerning their TWOMO election expenditures to contact their regional office.

Further, Ontario Regulation 278/98 of the District Social Services Administration Board Act provides for the term of office of DSSAB members to coincide with the term of office for municipal elected officials, that is, four years as of January 1, 2007. The regulation further stipulates that the DSSAB chair term is one year and aligns the chair's appointment and any re-appointment with the term of office of members. There is no provision to prevent a member, appointed as chair during a four year term of office of members, from being appointed as chair in a subsequent four year term of office of members. However, I appreciate that the length of term for the DSSAB chair has been misunderstood and the ministry is reviewing how best to address the matter to avoid confusion in the future.

As you are aware, the ministry has ended Ontario Works incentive funding and reinvested the full funding envelope from these initiatives into Ontario Works base administration funding.

This change aligns with the feedback we received from our delivery partners through the Provincial-Municipal Fiscal and Service Delivery Review (PMFSDR) about the need to simplify and streamline the administration budget. This change reduces an administrative burden for our delivery partners as there is no longer a requirement to track and meet performance targets in order to receive the full funding allocation and allows for more flexibility in how administration funding is directed to support service delivery and local program needs.

Consistent with the ministry's regular business practice when distributing new base funding, initial distribution is based on the most recent caseload, which ensures an equitable distribution of funding across the province. Recognizing that some of our delivery partners may be negatively impacted as a result of distributing the reinvested funding by caseload, the ministry is investing additional funding to ensure that no delivery agents are negatively impacted by this change.

Through the PMFSDR, the province committed to work with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (MOU) and the City of Toronto to review Ontario Works administration funding and develop principles to guide future funding. In response, the Ontario Works Funding Principles Working Group was established to develop funding principles and discuss considerations for a revised funding approach to Ontario Works administration. Please note that there have been no decisions on a revised approach to funding administration based on a particular funding model.

I trust that this information is helpful to you.

Sincerely,

Erin Hannah
Director, Ontario Works