

Ministry of
Community and
Social Services

Ministère des
Services sociaux
et communautaires



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December 11, 2013

MEMORANDUM TO:

Ontario Works Administrators
- Municipalities and DSSABs

Social Assistance Operations Division Directors
Regional Program Managers
Program Supervisors

FROM:

Jeff Butler
Director, Ontario Works Branch

SUBJECT:

Federal-provincial negotiations on the Labour Market
Agreement (LMA)

For your information, please find attached a memo regarding federal-provincial negotiations on the Labour Market Agreement that recently went out to Employment Ontario service providers.

Jeff Butler

Attachment (1)

c. Elizabeth Roy, Manager, Ontario Works Branch



Labour Market Agreement negotiations: potential impact on services to social assistance recipients and people with disabilities

The Ontario Ministries of Training, Colleges and Universities and Community and Social Services want to keep you up to date on Ontario's Labour Market Agreement negotiations with the federal government.

These negotiations matter to you because Ontario currently uses a portion of Labour Market Agreement funding to support employment and training programs for persons with disabilities and social assistance recipients.

On Friday, November 15, Premiers from across Canada met in Toronto at the Council of the Federation to discuss how provinces and territories can move forward in these negotiations. The meeting of Premiers followed a November 8 meeting between all of Canada's provincial and territorial labour market ministers, and Jason Kenney, Canada's Minister of Employment and Social Development.

Provinces and territories remain united in their concern with the proposed Canada Job Grant. The federal government's proposal to fund this untested program at the expense of programs dedicated to serving vulnerable Canadians will not meet the needs of our labour markets and could jeopardize programs that are proven to deliver positive results.

In Ontario alone, it would take \$232 million away from existing programs designed to help vulnerable Ontarians get back to work. These are people such as social assistance recipients, persons with disabilities, newcomers, Aboriginal persons and youth – those who are not eligible for Employment Insurance and most in need of support.

Though provinces and territories remain concerned with the Canada Job Grant, some progress has been made. The Ontario government is encouraged by Minister Kenney's willingness to consider changes that would help address the concerns of the provinces and territories.

At the request of Premiers, provinces and territories are working together to develop an alternative proposal to present to the federal government. The Ontario government is committed to working collaboratively to come to an agreement that works for the province's employers and workers. This includes a priority focus on protecting programs that deliver positive results for vulnerable workers, including those for persons with disabilities and social assistance recipients.

Our province requires a strong federal partner to help ensure our workers are equipped to succeed in the knowledge-based global economy. Our goal is a long-term funding commitment from the federal government that will help those most in need upgrade their literacy and other basic skills, and find jobs.

Although the Ontario government is optimistic that an agreement will be found, there remains a real risk that existing programs in this province could be impacted by federal government policy. These programs include those that help social assistance recipients and persons with disabilities.

Ontario continues to respond firmly to proposals by the federal government. Our goal is to work collaboratively with the federal government to find a solution.

In the days and weeks ahead, we will continue to update you on progress on negotiating a new Labour Market Agreement.

We will also keep you informed of progress negotiating a new Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities. We expect these negotiations to begin in the near future and we will work closely with the federal government to renew this agreement, so we can continue to deliver successful, jointly-funded programs to persons with disabilities. Ensuring that all of Ontario's job seekers have the opportunity to participate in the labour force remains a priority for me and Premier Wynne.

Please take the time to share your thoughts on the future of Ontario's Labour Market Agreement at jobtraining@ontario.ca.

Concerned about vulnerable workers and the programs that support them? Spread the word through twitter and facebook.

The federal gov't wants to replace programs that ARE working with the untried & untested #CanadaJobGrant: Ontario.ca/bip9

#Ontario is looking for long-term, predictable funding from the federal gov't to address Ont's labour market needs: Ontario.ca/bip9