

**Ministry of Community and
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To all Ontario Works Administrators

Re: Release of the Income Security Reform Working Groups' Roadmap for Reform

Today, the Income Security Reform Working Groups' report, **Income Security: A Roadmap for Change**, was posted at ontario.ca/incomesecurity for public feedback. I invite you to read the [Bulletin](#) for more information.

In response to the government's request, the Working Groups, comprised of Indigenous representatives, people with lived experiences, advocates, the private sector, legal and medical experts, municipal partners, thought leaders and academics, have provided a 10-year roadmap. It provides specific advice to help guide decisions for reforming social assistance, and more broadly, the income security system. I am extremely proud of the efforts of the working groups. They have taken their job seriously and have provided thoughtful and compelling recommendations.

The government recognizes the need for fundamental reform and embraces the vision of a system that invests in people, addresses adequacy and recognizes the experience of Indigenous peoples.

We know that while Ontario's economy is doing well, many people are finding it harder to meet basic needs. People face labour market instability and there is less job security. Increasingly, many of the available jobs are part-time and temporary. Many people

receiving Ontario Works and ODSP have to remain in the system, and their situations seem to be worsening. For example:

- People who come to Ontario Works with mental health issues do not get the help they need; often they move on to ODSP where they now comprise 47% of all cases.
- About 40% of children who live in families receiving ODSP rely on Ontario Works as adults.

You and I know we can do better. Investing in a fair society is the right and smart thing to do – to move people out of poverty or to prevent them from falling into poverty in the first place.

Income security reform is about making the system more effective in meeting people's needs in a fair, modern, accountable and sustainable way. It is about introducing a culture of early and active intervention focused on collaboration, trust, problem solving and faith in people's potential. It is about providing people with the help they need to improve their lives.

Over the next 60 days, Ontarians will have an opportunity to comment on the recommendations. The Roadmap and public feedback will guide the Ministry of Community and Social Services in developing a practical implementation plan for government approval in 2018.

I encourage you to share this memo with your staff. As our partners, you have an important role to play in this significant transformation. Together, we must continuously seek opportunities, whether big or small, to improve the way we work. We can make a difference in peoples' lives.

I invite everyone to read [Income Security: A Roadmap for Change](#), discuss it with your colleagues and provide feedback.

Sincerely,

Janet Menard
Deputy Minister