

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

**Ministère des Services à
l'enfance et des Services
sociaux et communautaires**



Social Assistance
Operations Division

Division des opérations relatives à
l'aide sociale

Social Assistance Policy,
Planning and Innovation
Division

Division des politiques, de la
planification et de l'innovation en
matière d'aide sociale

June 11, 2021

MEMORANDUM TO:

Commissioners and/or Chief Administrative Officers

Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and District Social Services
Administration Boards

FROM:

Nelson Loureiro
Assistant Deputy Minister

Drew Vanderduim
Assistant Deputy Minister

SUBJECT:

Employment Services Transformation – Provincial Rollout

The Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (MLTSD) [has announced the launch of Employment Services Transformation \(EST\) in a further nine catchment areas](#) across the province. This expansion will be carefully sequenced, happening in several stages between now and the end of 2023.

As in 2019 — when EST was first launched as a prototype in three areas — MLTSD will be using a two-stage competitive selection process to select Service System Managers (SSMs) for each catchment area, beginning with the launch of a Request for Qualifications process. This will be followed by a Call for Proposals (CFP) in the lowest complexity areas (Fall 2021), and with SSMs identified in spring 2022. Medium complexity areas will proceed later with SSMs identified by the end of 2022. The competitive process for high complexity catchments (including Toronto and the North) will occur in 2023. Complexity is being defined by factors related to community readiness and interest, as well as labour market conditions.

Transformation of employment services is an important step toward [Ontario's new vision for social assistance](#), which sets out plans to build a more responsive, person-centered social assistance system. As part of this work, the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) will continue to work closely with MLTSD to better support people to overcome barriers and move towards employment and independence by connecting them to the right integrated supports in their communities.

The progress into more catchment areas will see continued collaboration between MCCSS, MLTSD and our municipal and district partners. As you know, MCCSS, MLTSD and municipal partners in the prototype catchment areas have worked closely together to integrate the social assistance and Employment Ontario systems and we will apply the important lessons learned from the prototypes as expansion proceeds. We also look forward to continued engagement with municipalities as we co-design a renewed social assistance system, including working together to make the progress on initiatives such as EST and recovery and renewal come together in the vision for a transformed system.

While this announcement starts the process of identifying possible SSMs in catchment areas across the province there are no immediate changes to day-to-day work in Ontario Works. There is also no impact to 2022 Ontario Works program delivery funding as a result of this announcement.

Thank you as always for your ongoing support of clients across the province. As we continue this journey toward a renewed social assistance system, we look forward to collaborating on the important work ahead. If you have any questions, please reach out to Sunny Sharma, Director, Business Innovation and Improvement Branch, at Sunny.Sharma@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

Original signed by



Nelson Loureiro
Assistant Deputy Minister
Social Assistance Policy, Planning and Innovation



Drew Vanderduim
Assistant Deputy Minister
Social Assistance Operations

Copy:

- Ontario Works Administrators
- Ontario Municipal Social Services Association
- Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association

Attachments:

- MCCSS Supplemental Question and Answers