

**Ministry of Labour, Training  
and Skills Development**

Office of the Assistant Deputy  
Minister

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**Ministère du Travail, de la  
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**Memorandum**

**To:** Employment Ontario Delivery Partners  
**From:** Cordelia Abankwa, Assistant Deputy Minister  
**Date:** June 10, 2021  
**Subject:** Employment Services Transformation – Provincial Rollout

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Dear Employment Ontario partners:

Throughout this pandemic, the Employment Ontario Network has continued to help employers get the workers they need and has helped jobseekers find meaningful employment. There are however, three large, separate employment services systems currently in place: Employment Ontario, Ontario Disability Support Program, and Ontario Works.

To address this, as you know, MLTSD introduced a new outcome-focused employment services model. Employment Services Transformation is grounded in providing job seekers with a clear path to employment. MLTSD's approach to select the new Service System Managers (SSM) uses a fair, competitive process that is open to non-profit, private, and public entities, including municipal governments. We've already rolled out this new system in three prototype areas in Peel, Muskoka-Kawartha and Hamilton-Niagara where we've introduced SSMs to oversee the design and delivery of employment services in their communities. Early results are positive.

Today, the government is [announcing](#) another step in the integration and ongoing transformation of the province's employment services system. The launch of the SSM model across the rest of the province begins today, starting with a further nine catchment areas. This

expansion will be carefully sequenced, happening in several stages between now and the end of 2023.

As in 2019 – when the three prototypes were established – the ministry will be using a two-stage competitive selection process to select new SSMs for each catchment area. This process will consist of a Request for Qualification (RFQ) to identify organizations that are interested and best qualified to fulfil the role of SSM. These documents will be available today on the [Ontario Tenders Portal](#) under reference Tender #14920. This will be followed by a Call for Proposal.

Our phased approach for the next nine catchments will see the ministry move to finalize agreements with an initial group of catchments by April 2022. A second group of catchment areas will complete the competitive process and finalize agreements by December 2022. The sequencing of individual catchment areas will be based on complexity, competitiveness and municipal engagement. The competitive process for the remaining catchments with higher levels of complexity such as Toronto and the two northern catchments will occur in 2023.

Additional details about the competitive process will be provided through information sessions in mid-June. Details about these information sessions are available in the Request for Qualification document on the [Ontario Tenders Portal](#). Further information about what is happening now, and next steps, can be found on the [Employment Ontario Partners Gateway](#).

The pandemic has created additional challenges that highlight the importance of working together to support a recovery that is responsive and inclusive. We will continue to work with service delivery partners across the province to plan and deliver stronger, locally focused employment services that help more people find and keep jobs. Thank you for your ongoing support of clients across the province.

Sincerely,

***Original signed by***

Cordelia Abankwa  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Employment and Training Division

**Cc:**

David Carter-Whitney, Assistant Deputy Minister, Workforce Policy and Innovation Division,  
Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development

Nelson Loureiro, Assistant Deputy Minister, Social Assistance Policy, Programs and Innovation  
Division, Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services

Drew Vanderdium, Assistant Deputy Minister, Social Assistance Operations Division, Ministry  
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