

Background

On November 22, 2018, the Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services (MCCSS) announced that there would be reforms to the social assistance programs in the Province of Ontario. These reforms would be built on the following priorities:

- **Moving People to Employment**
Reduce administration and paperwork so people receiving Ontario Works and front-line staff can focus on individual action plans that set out a path to health, wellness, and preparations to return to work.
- **Locally Focused Social Services**
Streamline social assistance and employment programs and increase local responsiveness and flexibility to help all job seekers reach their potential.
- **Supporting People with Disabilities with Dignity**
Redesign the Ontario Disability Support Program to provide annualized income support with far fewer reporting requirements for Ontarians with severe disabilities.
- **Cutting Red Tape and Restoring Accountability**
Eliminate barriers for people receiving social assistance and for those delivering support by simplifying rates, reducing administration, cutting unnecessary rules, and restoring service accountability through a simplified system to better focus on improving outcomes.

November 2018 Announcement:

https://news.ontario.ca/mcys/en/2018/11/ontarios-government-for-the-people-announces-plan-to-restore-dignity-independence-and-empowerment-to.html?_ga=2.6993842.1459570466.1549896942-824493764.1481826112

Provincial Announcement on Employment Programs

On February 11, 2019, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Education (MTCU) announced that the Province would be creating a new service delivery model for Employment Ontario that will include the integration of employment services from Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). The vision for the new integrated system is that it be managed locally through a system manager that will be determined through a future competitive process.

The Province has indicated that the transition will be a multi-year process and that they will be consulting with the Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSM), including the City of Greater Sudbury. The first step in the process will be the selection of three pilot sites in the Province to test local service system management of an integrated system. Key learnings from the pilots are expected to inform the design of the system and the competitive process by which system managers will be selected. Currently, the

Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) is working on a joint submission to have Northern Ontario, as a whole, included as one of the pilot sites.

News Release:

<https://news.ontario.ca/maesd/en/2019/02/province-helping-job-seekers-and-employers-make-ontario-open-for-business.html>

Impact to Community Service Reports – February 4, 2019 Meeting

In line with the November 2018 announcement, work was initiated to ensure the Social Services Division was aligned with the Province and a report was released for the Community Services Committee meeting of February 4, 2019, entitled "Social Services - Employment Assistance Contracts" which would have reviewed current employment contracts with outside providers. The direction for this report has now changed given the new provincial announcement and is no longer relevant because the contracts identified in the report will be closed out as part of a transition process.

The second report that was submitted to the Community Services Committee for the February 4, 2019, meeting was entitled "Employment Ontario – Service System Management Proposal" and the report indicated that a joint submission from the NOSDA was submitted to MCCSS for review. This report is also no longer relevant, as a competitive process will determine system managers for local service areas in the future.

Next Steps

As further details are announced the Social Services Division will continue to keep the Community Services Committee informed. The City of Greater Sudbury will have to make a decision in the future to determine whether or not it wants to bid on a competitive process for local system service management. Various factors including the size of the service area along with the costs involved will be brought forward to inform this decision once the process is known.