

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

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



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April 15, 2021

**MEMORANDUM TO:** Provincial Municipal Human Services Collaborative Members

**FROM:** Janet Menard  
Deputy Minister

**SUBJECT:** **Enabling a new vision for Ontario's Social Assistance System**

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As part of [Ontario's new vision for social assistance transformation](#) that was announced on February 11, 2021, the government is proposing amendments to *the Ontario Works Act, 1997*, within the [Supporting Recovery and Competitiveness Act, 2021](#).

The proposed amendments, if passed, would:

- Enable further codesign and re-alignment testing of Ontario Works functions among municipalities, District Social Service Administration Boards (DSSAB) and the Ministry in support of the new delivery model; and,
- Support the vision's enhanced focus on life stabilization to enable people in receipt of social assistance to achieve greater independence and financial resilience.

As we discussed on March 26, 2021, at the Provincial–Municipal Human Services Collaborative (PMHSC) meeting, the amendments being proposed today are a key first step towards a new social assistance delivery model that takes a person-centred approach to human services. This approach has 'results for people' at its core.

These proposed changes recognize and further strengthen the critical role for municipalities to support social assistance recipients to access needed supports on their path to independence and employment. The proposed changes also enable provincial

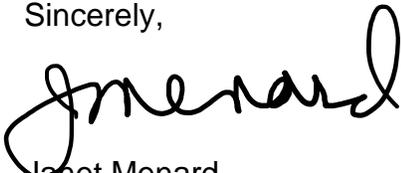
staff to oversee financial assistance, making it quick and easy for people to access the system while ensuring program integrity.

Given the role of municipalities and DSSABs in this important work, we will continue to partner and co-design with you to improve outcomes for social assistance recipients.

It is important to note that there would be no immediate changes to the program if these proposed amendments are passed. Regulations would be required to implement the realignment of provincial and municipal roles. We would use the co-design and stakeholder engagement process to inform those regulations. There would also be no direct impacts to benefits or eligibility as a result of the proposed legislative amendments.

Attached are some materials regarding the proposed legislative changes introduced today to support discussion with your municipal councils and partners, answer questions and identify any early concerns. If you have any questions, please reach out to Laura Belfie, Director, Social Assistance Program Policy Branch, at [Laura.Belfie@ontario.ca](mailto:Laura.Belfie@ontario.ca).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janet Menard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter "J" being particularly large and stylized.

Janet Menard  
Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services

**Attachments:**

- Question and Answers
- Proposed Updates to the Ontario Works Act Placemat