

Addendum C to the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative Program Guidelines

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Program Guidelines – Social Services Relief Fund Phase 3

1 Introduction

The housing and homelessness sectors in Ontario have had to alter the ways in which they provide services to vulnerable populations due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Under the two previous phases of the Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF), \$510 million in funding was made available to Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators to help a diverse range of vulnerable people, create longer-term housing solutions for people in need, and ensure that the housing and homelessness sector has the tools and support that they need to safely and successfully transition to recovery.

Building on these investments, the SSRF Phase 3 will provide \$255 million in additional one-time operating funding. This investment will enable Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators to continue to fund the vital supports and services that were established to address the impacts of COVID-19 on vulnerable Ontarians from March 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021.

The initial SSRF was intended to support a range of vulnerable populations, including people living in community housing, supportive housing, people with low incomes, social assistance recipients, and others who require social services support as well as those experiencing homelessness.

SSRF Phase 2 built on this support and expanded the eligible uses of funding, with a focus on resiliency to future waves of COVID-19. It had the following objectives:

1. Mitigate ongoing risk for vulnerable people, especially in congregated care settings;
2. Encourage longer-term housing-based solutions to homelessness post-COVID-19; and
3. Enhance rent assistance provided to households in rent arrears due to COVID-19.

The intention of SSRF Phase 3 is to continue to help a diverse range of vulnerable people to meet their short-term critical needs, including people living in community

housing, supportive housing, people with low incomes, social assistance recipients, or others who require social services support as well as those that are experiencing homelessness.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) will again be administering this investment to Service Managers through the existing Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) Service Agreement and to Indigenous Program Administrators through the Indigenous Supportive Housing Program Agreement.

1.1 Allocations

For SSRF Phase 3, all Service Managers have been provided with their funding allocation.

The \$255 million in new provincial funding is being allocated to Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators based on their total share of previous SSRF funding, adjusted to ensure a minimum \$500,000 allocation amount for each Service Manager. This is considered the best proxy for current need given the present uncertainty as it reflects costs for existing services currently funded that will need to be supported to December 31, 2021.

Prior to funds being flowed, Service Managers must agree to the terms and conditions of the funding through the execution of a sign-back letter and submission of an Investment Plan demonstrating how their initial planning allocations will be used to meet the objectives of the program.

1.2 Investment Plan

Prior to receiving their payments under SSRF Phase 3, Service Managers will be required to submit an Investment Plan to demonstrate how their funding allocations would be used.

The purpose of the Investment Plan is as follows:

1. To assess proposed uses of SSRF Phase 3 funding, in terms of eligibility under these Program Guidelines and alignment with local needs in their respective communities; and
2. To identify projected funding needs by spending category on a quarterly basis to December 31, 2021.

1.3 Program Administration and Flexibility

Service Managers will determine local needs and distribute the funding consistent with their Investment Plans, ensuring people are receiving the support they need.

There will be no requirement for a minimum or maximum amount of operating expenses in each spending category – Service Managers are best placed to determine local needs and will be provided the flexibility to determine these amounts.

1.4 Administration Fees

Service Managers will be permitted to use up to three (3) per cent of their approved funding allocation for administration costs in proportion to the funding paid for eligible services and supports.

Program administration costs may include costs for staff involved in the planning and administration of the program. It is expected that Service Managers will ensure that program administration funds are used efficiently.

Please note that costs for staff who directly deliver services to clients are not considered administration costs under the Program Guidelines. These costs are instead considered as eligible program operating costs and may be reported as such.

1.5 Accountability and Reporting

Service Managers will be required to report quarterly on actual expenditures for the previous financial quarter and revised projections for subsequent quarters by the relevant spending category. As part of these reporting requirements, it is also expected that Service Managers will be asked to report on the number of households served.

For year-end reports, Service Managers will be required to report on actual expenditures by spending category along with data collected on specific performance indicators.

Reporting under the SSRF Phase 3 will be separate from the reporting on base CHPI funding.

MMAH reserves the right to request additional reporting as required.

1.6 Audits and Reviews

Service Managers shall support MMAH in exercising its rights to audit and inspect the Service Manager to ensure program funding is used in compliance with these Program Guidelines as is set out in section 17 of the Service Manager's CHPI Transfer Payment Agreement, with the necessary changes.

2 Funding

2.1 Eligible Use of Funding

All eligible operating expenses under the second phase of SSRF funding will be maintained under SSRF Phase 3.

Consistent with SSRF Phase 2, Service Managers are required to consider the use of operating funding for rental assistance to support renter households who may be in rental arrears and at a high risk of becoming homeless.

Eligible operating expenses refer to the use of funding in any of the four service categories under CHPI: Emergency Shelter Solutions, Housing and Related Supports, Other Services and Supports and Homelessness Prevention.

The eligible operating expenses include but are not limited to:

- Expanding homeless shelter capacity;
- Use of motels or hotels for isolation or to support social distancing;
- Rental assistance such as funding for rent arrears and short-term housing allowances;
- Transportation costs;
- Food security;
- Enhanced cleaning services;
- Non-medical staffing requirements (e.g., enhanced outreach services);
- Personal protective equipment; and
- Minor retrofits, alterations and repairs under \$50,000 that do not extend the useful life of pre-existing buildings or assets.

More broadly, this funding could also be used towards initiatives delivered through local service agencies like:

- Rent bank and emergency energy funds;
- Food banks and grocery gift cards;
- Community outreach to support vulnerable populations in self-isolation;
- Transportation for low-income individuals to get to and from medical appointments; and
- Funding administration needs, including staffing.

In the event of uncertainty regarding the eligibility of a specific expense, Service Managers are encouraged to contact MMAH staff to seek clarification. For contact information, please see the “MMAH Staff Contacts” section.

2.2 Payments and Reporting

Following receipt of an executed sign-back letter and Ministry approval of the Investment Plan, MMAH will initiate the first payment based on projected first quarter funding needs identified in the Investment Plan.

A subsequent payment will be made quarterly in July and October.

Service Managers will be required to report on the data collected on specific performance indicators in year-end reports. For operating funding, the year-end report will capture information according to the requirements in the existing program agreement (e.g., by service category). Additionally, given the SSRF objectives, year-end reports will require information on the number of vulnerable households assisted by vulnerable population group.

MMAH reserves the right to request additional reporting as required.

2.3 Return of Funding

All eligible operating expenses must be spent by December 31, 2021.

All funding provided under the operating component that is not spent by December 31, 2021 or that is not used for an eligible expense under these Program Guidelines shall be returned to MMAH on demand.

All remedies under these Program Guidelines shall survive any termination or expiry of the Program.

3 Important Dates

SSRF Phase 3 will be delivered according to the following timelines:

Activity	Date
Program Announcement	March 10, 2021
Sign-back and completed Investment Plan due	March 22, 2021
Initial payments initiated	By March 31, 2021
Q1 report-back due	July 15, 2021
Second payment initiated	By July 15, 2021
Q2 report-back due	October 15, 2021
Third (final) payment initiated	By October 15, 2021
Expenditure deadline	December 31, 2021
Q3 report-back due	January 15, 2022
Year End Report and Final Attestation due	May 31, 2022

4 MMAH Staff Contacts

Questions regarding SSRF Phase 3 may be directed to the respective MMAH Municipal Services Office (MSO) or Housing Programs Branch staff contact, as noted below:

Region & Contact	Contact Information
Toronto and Indigenous Program Administrators: Bailey Anderson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serving: Toronto, Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services and Miziwe Biik Development Corporation 	Bailey.Anderson@ontario.ca
MSO Central: Ian Russell <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serving: Durham, Halton, Hamilton, Muskoka, Niagara, Peel, Simcoe, and York 	Ian.Russell@ontario.ca
MSO Eastern: Mila Kolokolnikova <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serving: Cornwall, Hastings, Kawartha Lakes, Kingston, Lanark, Leeds and Grenville, Lennox and Addington, Northumberland, Ottawa, Peterborough, Prescott and Russell, and Renfrew 	Mila.Kolokolnikova@ontario.ca
MSO Western: Tony Brutto <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serving: Brantford, Bruce, Chatham-Kent, Dufferin, Grey, Huron, Lambton, London, Norfolk, Oxford, St. Thomas, Stratford, Waterloo, Wellington, and Windsor 	Tony.Brutto@ontario.ca
MSO Northeastern: Cindy Couillard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serving: Algoma, Cochrane, Greater Sudbury, Manitoulin-Sudbury, Nipissing, Parry Sound, Sault Ste. Marie, and Timiskaming 	Cindy.Couillard@ontario.ca
MSO Northwestern: Jessica Vail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serving: Kenora, Rainy River, and Thunder Bay 	Jessica.Vail@ontario.ca