

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency & Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	May 12, 2014
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	2013 - 2014 Ontario Works Service Plan (CS11010(a)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction: N/A

Information:

On April 1, 2013, a new two year funding cycle for Ontario Works (OW) began and program delivery funding allocations were provided by the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) based on caseload information. Program Delivery funding allocations support: program administration, the provision of employment assistance activities to eligible OW and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) recipients and the Addiction Services Initiative. The summary of funding allocations for 2013/2014 is shown in the following chart:

	2013	2014
Provincial allocation/case	\$2,054	\$2,076
<i>Provincial subsidy</i>		
Program Delivery funding-cost of administration (50/50)*	19,431,825	\$20,225,750
Program Delivery funding - upload to 2018	8,379,572	\$8,646,851
Addiction Service Initiative - upload to 2018	1,038,721	\$1,047,772
Annual available funding	\$28,850,117	\$29,920,372

*The City of Hamilton is currently only utilizing \$13,008,720 of the provincial allocation funding. To maximize the available provincial funding, the City of Hamilton would be required to match an additional \$7,000,000.

Service plans are reviewed and approved by MCSS as part of the process to allocate funding and to ensure acceptable local program management accountability. The 2013 – 2014 Ontario Works Service Plan for the City of Hamilton is attached as Appendix A

to Report CS11010(a) and the approval letter from MCSS is attached as Appendix B to Report CS11010(a).

The Service Plan is the strategic and operational plan for the City of Hamilton's OW program. This two-year plan contains:

- an analysis of Ontario Works performance over the previous funding cycle;
- an environmental scan of the internal and external factors affecting OW delivery and outcomes;
- an overview of the operations, management accountability and oversight;
- targets for the next two year cycle to achieve outcomes;
- a description of how the program is adhering to the mission and mandate of OW and also the City of Hamilton's mission, vision and values; and,
- an outline of strategies to assist recipients gain sustainable employment and/or increased employment earnings.

As well, several strategies are outlined in the 2013 – 2014 OW Service Plan to improve responsiveness to recipient needs through:

- implementation of the new Provincial database-Social Assistance Management System (SAMS);
- setting additional targets through Service Delivery Review;
- increased involvement in targeted neighbourhoods to enhance outreach and networking;
- focussed efforts on more intensive case management of the hard-to-employ cases;
- expansion of the Social Capital Opportunities Regarding Employment (SCORE) program which increases opportunities to build relationships with other program participants and achieve employment goals through networking;
- improvement of self-serve options through the City's website redesign;
- strengthened relationships with employers; and,
- strengthened relationships with community partners.

As provincial funding for Ontario Works program delivery are contingent on achieving outcomes, it is believed that the use of these strategies will increase employment and earnings outcomes, as well as decrease the time on assistance. Program staff will continue to work closely with Ministry staff to ensure these are met and/or exceeded.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix A to Report CS11010(a): The 2013 – 2014 Ontario Works Service Plan

Appendix B to Report CS11010(a): Approval letter from MCSS