


Hamilton

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	March 26, 2020
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Ontario Works Funding Update - Employment Services (HSC20005(a)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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COUNCIL DIRECTION

Not Applicable

INFORMATION

In February 2019, the Province announced its plan to transform Ontario's employment services by introducing a new model to manage the Employment Services System more effectively to meet the needs of its job seekers, businesses and communities. The new employment services model will be implemented in 2020 in three prototype communities including Hamilton-Niagara, the Region of Peel and Muskoka-Kawarthas. The Hamilton-Niagara area includes Hamilton, Niagara, Haldimand-Norfolk and Brant.

The new Employment Services System includes the selection of a Service System Manager (SSM) within each prototype community who will plan and deliver employment services at a local level and receive funding based on achieving results. On February 14, 2020, the Province announced the Fedcap Consortium as the Service System Manager for the Hamilton-Niagara area.

The Province also announced that as of October 2020, delivery responsibility for employment services to social assistance recipients in the prototype communities will transfer to the new SSM. As a result, some Ministry of Children, Community and Social

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OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

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Services (MCCSS) 100% funding will be transferred from these prototype communities to the Ministry of Labour, Training, and Skills Development (MLTSD) for the purposes of delivering employment services. The 100% Provincial funding transfer amounts from the City of Hamilton's Ontario Works (OW) budget to MLTSD are as follows:

2020	2021
\$1.1 million (pro-rated from October to December)	\$4.5 million

This transfer has no net levy impact and is not considered a reduction in funding. It is a transfer of funding between provincial ministries with a goal to support clients in an integrated employment system.

These provincial decisions have an impact on 34 City of Hamilton staff, as well as customers and various community partners. The Director of the Ontario Works Division has assigned a project team within current staffing resources to develop a transition plan to wind down employment services. This staff team is working with Human Resources, Labour Relations and CUPE 5167 to support this transition.

While specific activities to support the transition of employment are still being finalized, staff will be taking a phased approach over the coming months. As directed by the province, Ontario Works will continue to be responsible for life stabilization activities for individuals receiving financial assistance from Ontario Works. Staff will also continue to refer individuals to the existing community employment system for employment counselling and job placement services.

Appendix "A" to Report HSC20005(a) provides an overview of the transition plan, including the number of staff and OW individuals affected by these changes.

While specific details of how the new SSM in Hamilton will manage the system are unknown at this time, staff are committed to working with Fedcap and community service providers to support a seamless transition for Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support individuals.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix "A" to Report HSC20005(a) – Transition Plan Overview