

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

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127-2020-3735

May 4, 2020

His Worship Fred Eisenberger, Mayor
City of Hamilton
71 Main Street West, 2nd Floor
Hamilton, Ontario
L8P 4Y5

Dear Mayor Eisenberger:

Thank you for your letter concerning your request for a personal hygiene supplement for menstruation to be added to Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) social assistance rates. I appreciate you making me aware of Hamilton City Council's approval of a pilot project, and am pleased to respond.

Our government is moving forward with social assistance transformation that will restore dignity, encourage employment, and empower the province's most vulnerable to break free from the poverty cycle. Building on this work, we are taking steps to develop a new Poverty Reduction Strategy, one that puts people first. It recognizes that we need partners across sectors to be part of the solution so that we can provide people with the right supports and services, lower the cost of living, and make life more affordable.

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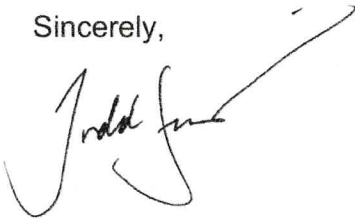
As you may know, social assistance clients are currently provided with funds for basic needs that are intended to assist with the costs of food, clothing and other personal items including personal hygiene items. In response to the outbreak of COVID-19, Ontario is also providing \$200 million in relief funding to help protect the health and safety of the province's most vulnerable people. For those receiving social assistance who need increased support, we are expanding discretionary benefits and making funds for extraordinary needs more flexible and accessible. Eligible individuals and families will receive financial assistance with the cost of food, rent, informal childcare, and other needs and services.

Our government will continue to explore new ways to support the most vulnerable and look at how all Ontarians can work together to create better outcomes. We are committed to listening and working with individuals, communities, organizations, partners and all levels of government to empower people and support those in need during challenging times or throughout their journey.

Your letter has been shared with appropriate staff in my ministry and will be taken into consideration as our work continues. I hope you will share the results of your pilot project with me when they are available.

Again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Smith", with a long, sweeping flourish extending upwards and to the right.

Todd Smith
Minister