

**Ministry of  
Municipal Affairs  
and Housing**

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**Ministère des  
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777, rue Bay, 17<sup>e</sup> étage  
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Tél. : 416 585-7000



March 10, 2021

Fred Eisenberger  
Mayor, City of Hamilton  
City Hall 71 Main Street West, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Hamilton ON L8P 4Y5

Dear Fred Eisenberger:

I am pleased to be writing to you today with important details regarding additional provincial funding being offered to you through the third phase of Ontario's Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF). **To receive this funding, the Ministry requires a completed Investment Plan and your sign back to the terms and conditions of the funding by March 22, 2021.**

As you know, protecting the health and well-being of Ontarians has been the government's number one priority throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Our government has made several difficult decisions to safeguard Ontarians, as well as public health and workplace safety measures made in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health and other healthcare experts.

We have also invested \$510 million to support Ontario's Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators through two iterations of the province's SSRF, as well as other provincial investments to support those suffering from mental health and addictions issues and to support isolation centre capacity in select municipalities. We know that this funding has been effective in supporting Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators to respond quickly, adapt services, and address the housing and economic impacts of COVID-19 in their communities.

However, we also know that the need for this funding will continue beyond March 31, 2021. We have heard from our municipal partners that additional funding is urgently needed to continue to protect the health and safety of vulnerable people as the province begins to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. For that reason, our government has announced an additional investment of \$255 million in one-time operating funding to enable a third phase of the SSRF, bringing the government's total SSRF investment to \$765 million.

I am pleased to confirm that the City of Hamilton will receive an additional **\$12,301,538** in provincial funding through a third phase of Ontario's SSRF.

### **Program Details – Social Services Relief Fund Phase 3**

To mitigate the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the homelessness sector, the Ministry has announced funding for a third phase of Ontario's SSRF. This funding supports operating expenses only. Funding is to be used by Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators to off-set their eligible operating expenses (in accordance with the Social Services Relief Fund Phase 3 Program Guidelines) beginning March 1, 2021 and incurred up to December 31, 2021.

Additional funding to Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators will help allow staff to:

- Maintain, monitor and improve infection prevention and control measures while there is community transmission and risk of transmission in congregate care settings such as emergency shelters; and
- Ensure stability in the homelessness sector by continuing current services and supports that address the negative impact of the on-going COVID-19 pandemic on vulnerable households and more generally on Ontario's economic recovery (e.g., impact of sustained reductions in or loss of income on housing stability and the need for rent supplements or support with rent arrears to avoid eviction).

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

Of the additional funding, Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators may use up to three per cent of their allocation for program administration in line with the approach under the SSRF Phase 2.

Note that unlike the SSRF Phase 2, capital projects are not eligible for funding under the SSRF Phase 3. The funding is only for eligible operating expenses incurred during the funding period. Consistent with SSRF Phase 2, the Ministry will require monthly updates on expenditures under SSRF Phase 3.

This amendment forms part of your Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) Service Manager Service Agreement effective January 1, 2013 with Her Majesty the Queen in right of Ontario as represented by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing ("Service Agreement") and any breach of any of the terms of the amendment shall constitute an Event of Default under the Service Agreement. All other provisions, including Section 17 – Audits and Reviews, of the Service Agreement remain in full force and effect.

## Reporting Requirements

Reporting requirements for this phase of the SSRF will be consistent with the current high-level CHPI reporting. However, these requirements will be augmented with monthly reporting to the Ministry. As well, Service Managers will be required to provide specific examples on the use of SSRF Phase 3 funding from time-to-time to demonstrate effectiveness of the investment.

To receive these additional SSRF Phase 3 funds, you are required to complete and submit the sign-back section of this letter and the enclosed Investment Plan, outlining the proposed uses of funding by each eligible spending category and projected quarterly funding needs in your service area and return it to the Ministry by **March 22, 2021**.

Service Managers are encouraged to engage with their local Public Health Unit throughout the delivery of the SSRF Phase 3, to ensure funds are being targeted where they are needed most.

You may submit your signed confirmation and Investment Plan via e-mail to:

Jim Adams, Director of the Housing Programs Branch  
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
[jim.e.adams@ontario.ca](mailto:jim.e.adams@ontario.ca)

**If the signed-back letter and Investment Plan are not received by March 22, 2021, the Ministry will not be able to commit your allocation under the SSRF Phase 3 and will need to consider reallocating your portion of SSRF Phase 3 funding to other areas of the province.** Please note that as this timeline cannot be amended, Service Managers are strongly encouraged to consider the use of emergency council sessions or other strategies to ensure they can complete and submit the required sign-back letter and Investment Plan by March 22, 2021.

Upon receipt of the sign-back and Investment Plan, the Ministry will confirm and communicate its approval of the Investment Plan, and will proceed to initiate your first payment based on your cash flow requirements outlined in the Investment Plan.

On a separate matter, at the onset of COVID-19, Ontario directed Service Managers to put in place outbreak-management plans to prepare for increases in COVID-19 cases in shelter spaces. With new COVID-19 variants of concern now in Ontario, there is an increased risk of spread to vulnerable people.

As a result, the Ministry recently directed Service Managers to add new requirements to their outbreak management plans and to sign and return updated Infection, Prevention and Control (IPAC) attestations. As communicated by the Ministry, these attestations must be signed and submitted to the Ministry by March 19, 2021.

**As a reminder, for all provincial housing programs that provide operating funding, Service Managers must acknowledge support of the province in a form and manner as directed by the Ministry.** While we understand these exciting funding

opportunities are often met with anticipation by residents and community agencies, these communication protocols have been agreed to by Service Managers. If you wish to make an announcement of funding, I would like to remind you that you are required to notify your municipal services office well in advance for consideration by the province.

Again, protecting the health and well-being of all Ontarians continues to be the government's number one priority. We sincerely appreciate your efforts to assist vulnerable people in your communities and I look forward to continuing to work together as we move forward with recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Yours truly,



The Honourable Steve Clark  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Enclosures

c. Janette Smith, Chief Administrative Officer  
Edward John, Director of Housing Services

The undersigned agrees to the terms of the above letter and to comply with the **Social Services Relief Fund Phase 3 Program Guidelines**.

**Service Manager:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

I/We have authority to bind the organization.

**Appendix “A”**

**Program Guidelines – Social Services Relief Fund Phase 3**

Please see attached.

**Appendix “B”**

**SSRF Phase 3 Simplified Investment Plan**

Please see attached.

# **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 congregate 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:

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

**Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing**  
**Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF) Phase 3 – Investment Plan**

**Instructions:** Please complete, sign, and e-mail this investment plan as an attachment to your signed SSRF Phase 3 allocation letter to the following address:

Jim Adams, Director of the Housing Programs Branch  
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
[jim.e.adams@ontario.ca](mailto:jim.e.adams@ontario.ca)

**Service Manager:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Section A: Contact Information and Attestation**

**Service Manager Contact Information:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Attestation and Signature:**

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the information in this investment plan is correct. I certify that I have the delegated authority to approve this investment plan.

I understand and agree to the reporting requirements under SSRF Phase 3 as set out in the Program Guidelines and Minister's funding allocation letter.

**Prepared By (Name and Title):** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Signature:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Date:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Approved By (Delegated Service Manager Authority):** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Signature:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Date:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Section B: Projected Use of SSRF Phase 3 Funds**

**Projected Use of SSRF Phase 3 Funds:**

The projected use of SSRF Phase 3 funding should reflect a sound financial plan and forecast of operating expenditures by service category (including program administration). Please refer to the Social Services Relief Fund Phase 3 Program Guidelines for details about eligible program expenses, program administration fees, and key dates.

**Instructions:**

- To enter the required information, **double click inside the table**.
- Enter your planned expenditures under *Q4 Planned (March 2021)*, *Q1 Planned (Apr – Jun)*, *Q2 Planned (Jul – Sep)* and *Q3 Planned (Oct – Dec)*.
- The totals will appear automatically. The table contains formulas and will calculate these figures.
- Click outside of the table once the required information has been entered and to exit the table.

Total SSRF Phase 3 Allocation					
SSRF Phase 3 Service Categories	Q4 Planned (March 2021)	Q1 Planned (Apr - Jun)	Q2 Planned (Jul - Sep)	Q3 Planned (Oct - Dec)	Total
<b>Spending Categories</b>					
Emergency Shelter Solutions					0.00
Homelessness Prevention					0.00
Homelessness Prevention - Rent Relief					0.00
Housing with Related Supports					0.00
Services and Supports					0.00
<b>Total</b>	-	-	-	-	0.00
<b>Administration Fee</b>					0.00
<b>Admin Fee % of Total (max: 3%)</b>	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
<b>Total</b>	-	-	-	-	0.00

## Section C: Comments

### 1. Types of Services – Operating

Please provide details on the types of services being funded and a projection of the total number of households supported/assisted by operating spending category and total facilities/beds (Emergency Shelter Solutions only):

Emergency Shelter Solutions: Click or tap here to enter text.

Homelessness Prevention: Click or tap here to enter text.

Homelessness Prevention - Rent Relief Only: Click or tap here to enter text.

Housing with Related Supports: Click or tap here to enter text.

Services & Supports: Click or tap here to enter text.

### 2. Additional Information – Emergency Shelter Solutions (temporary)

If funding is planned to support additional temporary shelter facilities, please provide details on the number of these temporary facilities, the number of beds and planned expenditures. Click or tap here to enter text.

### 3. Comments

Please provide any additional comments regarding the program or the financial information provided: Click or tap here to enter text.