

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

Minister's Office
7th Floor
438 University Avenue
Toronto ON M5G 2K8

Tel.: 416 325-5225
Fax: 416 325-5240

**Ministère des Services à l'enfance et
des Services sociaux
et communautaires**

Bureau du ministre
7^e étage
438, avenue University
Toronto ON M5G 2K8

Tél. : 416 325-5225
Télééc.: 416 325-5240



127-2024-7149

September 4, 2024

Dear Heads of Council:

It was a pleasure to attend the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) conference and connect with many of you in person. The opportunity to engage directly with municipal partners is invaluable for our government as we work together to strengthen communities across Ontario.

I am pleased to update you on our efforts to improve Ontario's social assistance system. We are committed to creating a more effective and efficient system that prioritizes people, supporting them on a path to sustainable employment and independence.

Since 2019, the ministry has maintained funding allocations to provide stability for municipal partners while also offering one-time funding for any extraordinary needs. This year, our government will be updating municipal funding allocations for 2025. An additional \$52 million will be made available to municipalities for Ontario Works (OW) administration in 2025 while we work with municipalities on a new funding approach for 2026 and beyond.

The steps taken to centralize intake for OW have expanded digital tools and modern service options that enhance the client experience and increase the programs integrity. These changes are designed to allow more people to achieve sustainable employment.

As we work to realize the vision for centralized intake, we are focused on applying what we have learned so far, including feedback from our municipal partners. We are working closely with them to become the formal provincial decision-making authority for OW. To make it easier for clients, we have created a single online application for both OW and the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), allowing applicants to confirm their identity, sign their application, and check its status online.

.../cont'd

The new process saves applicants an average of 74 minutes. By introducing new digital tools and automated data verification, we have strengthened the integrity of both programs and improved fraud detection, saving over \$14 million to date.

In the coming weeks, the Ministry will reach out to OW administrators with additional information about your funding and implementation plan.

Thank you for your continued partnership in helping those who can find and sustain meaningful employment and gain independence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Parsa". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Michael Parsa
Minister

c: Robin Jones, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario