



District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board  
Conseil d'Administration des Services du District Sault Ste. Marie  
Zhawenimi-Anokiitaagewin

***DSSMSSAB REGULAR BOARD MEETING AGENDA***

*Thursday, January 16, 2025, at 4:30PM*

*548 Albert Street East, Sault Ste. Marie, ON*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I acknowledge, with respect, that we are in Robinson-Huron Treaty territory, that the land on which we are gathered is the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe and known as Bawating. Bawating is the home of Garden River First Nation, Batchewana First Nation, and the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Metis Council.

**3. ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE**

Election to be conducted by the CEO.

1. Chairperson
2. Vice-Chairperson
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer

**Resolution #25-001**

Moved By: L. Case

Seconded By: S. Spina

- 3.1 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the slate of officers in the positions of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer for the 2025 District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board executive positions be accepted as elected

Chairperson –

Vice-Chair –

Secretary –

Treasurer –

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Resolution #25-002**

Moved By: L. Case

Seconded By: S. Spina

- 4.1 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the **Agenda for January 16, 2025**, District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board meeting be approved as presented.”

5. **DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

6. **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

**Resolution #25-003**

Moved By: R. Zagordo

Seconded By: M. Bruni

- 6.1 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the **Minutes** from the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board Meeting dated **November 14, 2024**, be adopted as recorded”.

7. **PRESENTATION**

Off Load Delay-Presentation Dave Giulietti

8. **MANAGER’S REPORTS**

**PARAMEDIC SERVICES**

**Resolution #25-004**

Moved By: R. Zagordo

Seconded By: S. Spina

- 8.1 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) accept the Paramedic Services Monthly Offload Delay Report as information.”

**Resolution #25-005**

Moved By: A. Caputo

Seconded By: S. Spina

- 8.2 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the contract for RFP 2024-017 Assessment of Ambulance Offload Delays at Sault Area Hospital (SAH) and District of Sault Ste. Marie Paramedic Services be awarded as follows:  
Optimus SBR Inc. at a total lump sum pf \$165, 669 (including HST), subject to being cost shared 50/50 with SAH

**CORPORATE SERVICES**

- 8.3 **Resolution #25-006**

Moved By: R. Zagordo

Seconded By: M. Bruni

**“BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) accepts the recommendation to borrow the sum of \$4,000,000.00 to meet, until current revenue is collected, current expenditures for the year 2025; and;

WHEREAS the total amount of the estimated revenues of the Board for the year 2025 not including revenue derived or derivable from the sale of assets, borrowing, Provincial subsidy, or from a surplus, including arrears of revenues and proceeds from the sale of assets is estimated to be in the excess of \$16,000,000.00;

THEREFORE the DSSMSSAB pursuant to Section 9 of the District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSAB) Act, RSO 1990, Chapter D.15 and amendments thereto, ENACTS as follows:

1. The Chair and the Treasurer are hereby authorized, on behalf of the DSSMSSAB, to borrow from time to time by way of promissory note from the Royal Bank of Canada or any person, a sum or sums not exceeding \$4,000,000.00 to meet, until the revenues are collected, the current expenditures of the Board for the year, including the amounts required for the purpose mentioned in Section 9(3) of the DSSAB Act and to give on behalf of the Board to the Bank or lender, a promissory note or notes, sealed with the corporate seal and duly signed for the moneys so borrowed, with interest, which may be paid in advance or otherwise, with interest at the Bank's prescribed lending rate or another persons' lending rate from time to time.
2. All the sums borrowed pursuant to the authority of this bylaw, as well as all other sums borrowed in this year and in previous years from the said Bank or lender for any or all purposes mentioned in the said Section 9 shall, with interest thereon, be a charge upon the whole of the revenues of the Board for the current year and for all preceding years as when such revenues are received."

## **OPERATIONS**

### **Resolution #25-007**

Moved By: S. Spina

Seconded By: A. Caputo

- 8.4 **"BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) accept the Ontario Works Service Plan as attached for information'

### **Resolution #25-008**

Moved By: R. Zagordo

Seconded By: M. Bruni

- 8.5 **"BE IT RESOLVED** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) accept the Centralized Intake Report as information.'

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **Resolution #25-009**

Moved By: S. Spina

Seconded By: A. Caputo

- 8.6 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board continue to hold their 2025 regular monthly Board Meetings generally on the third Thursday of each month at 4:30 p.m. as listed below:”

#### **2025 Board Meeting Dates**

January 16, 2025

February 20, 2025

March 20, 2025

April 17, 2025

May 15, 2025

June 19, 2025

July 17, 2025 (tentative)

August 21, 2025 (tentative)

September 18, 2025

October 16, 2025

November 12, 2025 (Wednesday)

December 18, 2025

### **Resolution #25-010**

Moved By: R. Zagordo

Seconded By: M. Bruni

- 8.7 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSAB) now enter a closed session.”

### **Resolution #25-011**

Moved By: S. Spina

Seconded By: L. Case

- 8.8 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSAB) now return to open session.”

## **9. CORRESPONDENCE**

- 9.1 Letter from Minister Paul Calandra, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

## **10. NEW BUSINESS**

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

### **Resolution #25-012**

Moved By: L. Case

Seconded By: R. Zagordo

- 11.1 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** we do now adjourn.”



**Social Services | Services Sociaux  
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Sault Ste. Marie District

**District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services**  
Administration Board  
Conseil d'Administration des Services du District  
Sault Ste. Marie Zhawenimi-Anokiitaagewin

***DSSMSSAB REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES***

*Thursday, November 14, 2024, at 2:15 PM*

*548 Albert Street East, Sault Ste. Marie, ON*

**Present:** Stephanie Hopkin  
Lisa Vezeau-Allen  
Sonny Spina  
Angela Caputo  
Lisa Case  
Ron Zagordo

Mike Nadeau  
Jordan Couturier  
Louie Bruni  
David Peterson  
Kim Mitchell

Katie Kirkham  
Jeff Barban  
Pam Patteri  
Tanya Ritter

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I acknowledge, with respect, that we are in Robinson-Huron Treaty territory, that the land on which we are gathered is the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe and known as Bawating. Bawating is the home of Garden River First Nation, Batchewana First Nation, and the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Metis Council.

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Resolution #24-101**

Moved By: E. Palumbo

Seconded By: S. Spina

- 3.1 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the **Agenda for November 14, 2024**, District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board meeting be approved as presented.”

CARRIED

**4. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

**5. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

**Resolution #24-102**

Moved By: L. Vezeau- Allen

Seconded By: E. Palumbo

- 5.1 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the **Minutes** from the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board Meeting dated **October 17, 2024**, be adopted as recorded”.

CARRIED

**6. MANAGER’S REPORTS**

**PARAMEDIC SERVICES**

**Resolution #24-103**

Moved By: R. Zagordo

Seconded By: S. Spina

- 6.1 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) accept the Paramedic Services Monthly Offload Delay Report as information.”

CARRIED

**Resolution #24-104**

Moved By: E. Palumbo

Seconded By: L. Vezeau Allen

- 6.2 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) approve using up to \$495,000 from the Levy Stabilization Reserves for the purpose of purchasing the following capital items for Paramedic Services:

1. 1 Ambulance
2. 1 PowerLoad System
3. 1 Stair Chair
4. 1 Emergency Response Vehicle (ERV)
5. 2 Defibrillators.”

CARRIED

**Resolution #24-105**

Moved By: R. Zagordo

Seconded By: L. Case

- 6.3 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) enter into a two (2) year extension of the Land Ambulance Maintenance Agreement with the Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie. This extension will ensure the continued maintenance of all land ambulance vehicles owned by the DSSMSSAB.”

CARRIED

**CORPORATE SERVICES/FINANCE**

**Resolution #24-106**

Moved By: R. Zagordo  
Seconded By: S. Spina

- 6.4 **“BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) review the 2025 DSSMSSAB Operating Budget, as presented, and provide direction based on the options brought forward for consideration.”

CARRIED

**OPERATIONS**

**Resolution #24-107**

Moved By: E. Palumbo  
Seconded By: A. Caputo

- 6.5 **“BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) accept the Point-in-Time (PiT) Count on Homelessness as information.”

CARRIED

**Resolution #24-108**

Moved By: E. Palumbo  
Seconded By: M. Bruni

- 6.6 **“BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) approve an allocation of up to \$300,000 from Employment Related Expenses (ERE) to the Sault Ste. Marie Housing Corporation for the purpose of replenishing the Affordable Home Ownership budget.”

CARRIED

**Resolution #24-109**

Moved By: S. Spina  
Seconded By: A. Caputo

- 6.7 **“BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) approve the Canada – Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) funding reallocation as outlined within the report.”

CARRIED

**Resolution #24-110**

Moved By: E. Palumbo  
Seconded By: R. Zagordo

- 6.8 **“BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) provide up to \$313,569.91; inclusive of HST to Columbus Club of Sault Ste. Marie Housing Corporation for the purpose of roof replacement to 277A Northern Avenue East –seniors building from 2024/25 COCHI funding.”

CARRIED

**Resolution #24-111**

Moved By: L. Vezeau-Allen  
Seconded By: M. Bruni

- 6.9 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) provide up to \$103,540 to Pawating Co-Operative Homes Inc. for the purpose of roof replacement from 2024/25 COCHI funding.”

CARRIED

**Resolution #24-112**

Moved By: S. Spina  
Seconded By: A. Caputo

- 6.10 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) approve the sale of 60 London Street to Habitat for Humanity for \$2.00, to be used for future Habitat home development.”

CARRIED

**Resolution #24-113**

Moved By: R. Zagordo  
Seconded By: L. Case

- 6.11 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) accept the 2024 Licensed Child Care Spaces and Directed Growth report as Information.”

CARRIED

**Resolution #24-114**

Moved By: E. Palumbo  
Seconded By: A. Caputo

- 6.12 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) now enters a closed session.”

CARRIED

**Resolution #24-115**

Moved By: L. Vezeau- Allen  
Seconded By: M. Bruni

- 6.13 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services now returns to an open session.”

CARRIED

**7. NEW BUSINESS**

**Resolution #24-116**

Moved By: A. Caputo  
Seconded By: S. Spina

- 7.1 “**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services



Administration Board (DSSAB) fully supports the application for a HART Hub submitted by CMHA Algoma and requests that the Minister of Health approve the application in order to save lives, better support community members, and reduce the negative impacts of the local opioid crisis currently experienced by all community members;

**FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED** that the DSSAB direct the Chair to write to the Minister of Health requesting approval of CMHA Algoma's HART Hub application”.

## 8. ADJOURNMENT

### **Resolution #24-117**

Moved By: E. Palumbo

Seconded By: R. Zagordo

8.1 **"BE IT RESOLVED THAT** we do now adjourn."  
CARRIED



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District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services  
Administration Board

Conseil d'Administration des Services du District Sault Ste. Marie  
Zhawenimi-Anokiitaagewin

## **DSSMSSAB BOARD REPORT**

**AUTHOR:** Katie Kirkham

**DATE:** January 16, 2025

**RE:** Monthly Offload Delay Report - December Update

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) accept the Paramedic Services Monthly Offload Delay Report as information.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The availability of ambulance services is critically important to meet the emergency needs of a community. A significant factor affecting ambulance availability is offload delays. An offload delay is defined as the time spent waiting to transfer patient care from paramedics to Emergency Department (ED) staff. Specifically, offload delays are calculated as the time from the ambulance's arrival at the ED until Transfer of Care (TOC) is documented and acknowledged, minus the standard thirty (30) minutes required for ambulances to return to service.

Ambulance offload delays (AOD) are a well-documented challenge throughout Ontario. In the District of Sault Ste. Marie, the combination of ED crowding and high demand for ambulance services significantly contributes to these delays. Staffing pressures in health services have exacerbated this issue, resulting in resource inefficiencies that impact our emergency response times and overall community safety.

To address ambulance offload delays, several mitigating strategies are currently in place, and we are actively collaborating with SAH, the Ministry of Health (MOH), and Ontario Health (OH) to identify and implement effective solutions.

**SUMMARY/OVERVIEW**

**District of Sault Ste. Marie Paramedic Services**

	December 2023	December 2024
# of Patients to SAH	902 patients	1160 patients
Max # of minutes on offload delay	539 minutes (8 hours, 59 minutes)	241 minutes (4 hours, 1 minute)
Total pts over 30 minutes	327	316
Total offload hours for period	652 hours	257 hours
Average Offload Time per Day	21.03 hours/ day	8.29 hours / day

Offload delays at SAH improved significantly from December 2023 to December 2024. Despite an increase in the number of patients, the maximum offload delay time decreased and overall offload hours were reduced. This resulted in a substantial drop in the average daily offload time, indicating progress in managing delays and improving efficiency.

**2024 – Annual Results**

	# of Patients to SAH	Max # of Minutes on Offload Delay	Total Patients over 30 minutes	Total Offload Hours for the Month	Average Offload Time per Day
January	1002 patients	719 minutes	322	685 hours	22.10 hrs/day
February	874 patients	321 minutes	216	428 hours	14.76 hrs/day
March	736 patients	343 minutes	123	295 hours	9.5 hrs/ day
April	804 patients	276 minutes	192	366 hours	12.2 hrs/ day
May	1044 patients	340 minutes	398	341 hours	11 hrs/day
June	959 patients	263 minutes	248	228 hours	7.6 hrs/day
July	1060 patients	228 minutes	259	239 hours	7.8 hrs/day
August	1039 patients	208 minutes	249	246 hours	7.94 hrs/day
September	945 patients	204 minutes	205	191 hours	6.37 hrs/day
October	895 patients	297 minutes	227	213 hours	6.87 hrs/day
November	987 patients	227 minutes	228	234 hours	7.8 hrs/day
December	1160 patients	241 minutes	316	257 hours	8.3 hrs/ day

Offload delays at SAH steadily improved throughout 2024. While the number of patients fluctuated each month, the maximum offload delay times decreased significantly, with a consistent drop in the average offload time per day. Total offload hours also declined, especially in the latter half of the year. This demonstrates consistent improvements in the management of offload delays, indicating enhanced operational efficiency and ambulance availability for the community.

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Our ongoing collaboration with SAH to address offload delays is yielding positive results. The Dedicated Offload Nurse Program (DONP) is now more consistently staffed, offering a reliable resource for patient transitions. Along with added ED supports, there has been a positive cultural shift within the hospital, strengthening our ability to work together on system improvements. This shared commitment to enhancing process efficiency and minimizing delays for paramedic services is highly valued.

We continue to work closely with SAH as we engage a consultant to provide an in-depth analysis of the Emergency Department and paramedic practices, patient flow, and systemic challenges within the broader healthcare system. Through this initiative, we aim to identify key areas for improvement that will help streamline processes, enhance efficiency, and ultimately reduce offload delays, benefiting the Emergency Department, EMS operations, and patient care.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN IMPACT**

Several initiatives are underway to address the rate of offload delays while maintaining high-quality, person-centered care. In alignment with the pillars of Service Delivery and Community Partnerships, DSSMSSAB remains committed to working collaboratively with community partners to navigate system-wide healthcare challenges. This strategic engagement is designed to enhance community well-being and uphold a standard of service excellence.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The financial impact of offload delays is challenging to pinpoint within the paramedic operating budget. However, delayed patient offloading incurs substantial costs such as forced overtime, missed meal breaks, and the need to up-staff additional paramedic units to meet community emergency response demands. With decreasing offload delays, we expect these associated costs to lessen, allowing for more efficient and cost-effective management of paramedic operations.

### **CONCLUSION**

Managing ambulance-to-hospital offload processes remains one of our greatest challenges in delivering timely and appropriate emergency care to the community. We are working in close partnership with the Sault Area Hospital, the Ministry of Health, and Ontario Health to identify and implement the most effective solutions. We will continue to provide monthly updates on our offload statistics to maintain transparency and track progress

Respectfully submitted,



Kate Kirkham  
Chief Paramedic Services

Approved by



Mike Nadeau  
Chief Executive Officer



**Social Services | Services Sociaux**  
**Zhawenimi-Anokiitaagewin**  
Sault Ste. Marie District

District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services  
Administration Board

Conseil d'Administration des Services du District Sault Ste. Marie  
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## **DSSMSSAB BOARD REPORT**

**AUTHOR:** Kate Kirkham

**DATE:** January 16, 2025

**RE:** Awarding of RFP 2024-017 Assessment of Ambulance Offload Delays at Sault Area Hospital and District of Sault Ste. Marie Paramedic Services

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the contract for RFP 2024-017 Assessment of Ambulance Offload Delays at Sault Area Hospital (SAH) and District of Sault Ste. Marie Paramedic Services be awarded as follows:

Optimus SBR Inc. at a total lump sum of \$165,669 (including HST)

This is contingent on the agreement of a 50/50 cost-sharing agreement with SAH.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In partnership with Sault Area Hospital, the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to engage a qualified consulting firm to address the ongoing challenge of ambulance offload delays. The two organizations have committed to a 50/50 cost-sharing agreement for this initiative, which represents an important step toward improving patient care efficiency, optimizing resource allocation, and enhancing the overall delivery of healthcare services within the community.

The primary objectives outlined in the RFP focused on five key areas. First, the consultant will conduct a thorough examination of the ambulance offload process at Sault Area Hospital to identify inefficiencies and gaps contributing to delays. Second, they will investigate both internal and external factors exacerbating these delays to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue. Third, the consultant will analyze the impact of offload delays on paramedic services and hospital operations, offering actionable insights into the cascading effects of these inefficiencies. Fourth, they will develop strategic recommendations to reduce offload delays and improve system-wide efficiency, ultimately fostering better outcomes for patients, paramedics, and hospital staff. Finally, the consultant will deliver a comprehensive report that details their findings, evidence-based recommendations, and practical strategies for implementation. This report will

RE: Awarding of RFP 2024-017 Assessment of Ambulance Offload Delays at Sault Area Hospital and District of Sault Ste. Marie Paramedic Services

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serve as a guide for DSSMSSAB and Sault Area Hospital to address the root causes of offload delays and achieve sustainable improvements.

The Request for Proposals was released on October 17<sup>th</sup> and closed on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

### SUMMARY/OVERVIEW

Three proposals were received in response to RFP 2024-017 for assessing and addressing ambulance offload delays at Sault Area Hospital (SAH) and the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB). The bids included:

Company	Total Lump Sum Amount (Including HST)	Points for Consideration
Optimus SBR Inc.	\$165,669	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Extensive experience in healthcare services, demonstrating a deep understanding of the sector's complexities and challenges.</li><li>• Comprehensive grasp of project scope and objectives</li><li>• Brings a proven track record of working on government projects, delivering practical, actionable, and successful recommendations</li><li>• Operates as a well-established organization with a robust support infrastructure, ensuring a capacity to deliver high-quality outcomes.</li><li>• Fully meets all requirements outline in the RFP, showcasing through preparation and compliance</li><li>• Estimates project duration at 6 months, and commits to project completion within 12 months of award date</li><li>• Offers extensive, on-site engagement, providing valuable, hands-on experience to project execution</li><li>• Will establish benchmarks using five selected comparators of our choosing, ensuring a tailored and relevant analysis.</li></ul>
Healthcare Strategists	\$112,433	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Extensive team and support network providing adequate resources for project execution</li><li>• Primarily based in the United States, with strong history of handling American-based projects; may not have a thorough understanding of the Canadian/ Ontario Healthcare system.</li><li>• Met most of the requirements outlined in the RFP, demonstrating alignment with the project's needs</li><li>• Extensive project experience in American-based EMS system; some experience in Newfoundland EMS system</li><li>• Limited experience in Ontario Healthcare system, although individual members have Ontario EMS experience</li><li>• Does not demonstrate the same depth in project scope as other proposal</li><li>• 6 month project completion timeline</li></ul>

London Health Partners	\$48,025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates a limited understanding of the full project scope, which may impact the depth of analysis and recommendations.</li><li>• Comprises a small team of only two members, potentially lacking the infrastructure and resources to support a project of this scale; Both members have extensive backgrounds in healthcare and EMS</li><li>• The projected budget does not account for travel and on-site costs, which could result in additional unanticipated expenses.</li><li>• Limited experience – shared two similar project examples but does not demonstrate extensive experience in this sector</li><li>• 5 month project timeline</li></ul>
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Optimus SBR Inc. is recommended for the award of this bid based on its extensive experience in healthcare services, proven track record in government projects, and comprehensive understanding of the project scope. It has demonstrated the capacity to deliver actionable recommendations, and its well-established infrastructure ensures high-quality outcomes. Optimus SBR Inc. fully meets the RFP requirements, including a commitment to complete the project within 12 months, and offers valuable on-site engagement for hands-on experience.

While Healthcare Strategists submitted a competitive proposal, their limited experience in the Ontario healthcare system and lack of depth in project scope makes them less suitable for this initiative. Although offering a lower bid, London Health Partners demonstrated a limited understanding of the project scope and lacked the resources to support a project of this scale. Additionally, their budget did not account for travel and on-site costs, which could lead to unforeseen expenses.

We feel confident that Optimus SBR Inc. offers the expertise and resources required to successfully deliver the assessment and actionable recommendations needed to address ambulance offload delays.

**STRATEGIC PLAN IMPACT**

Aligning with the pillars of Service Delivery and Community Partnerships, DSSMSSAB continues to collaborate with community partners to navigate system-wide healthcare challenges. This strategic engagement will enhance community well-being and provide service excellence.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Awarding the contract to Optimus SBR Inc. assumes SAH will engage in a 50/50 cost-sharing agreement. When finalized, DSSMSSAB and SAH will each contribute \$82,834.50 (half of the total \$165,669 project cost, including HST). **The costs will be absorbed within the current budget.**

RE: Awarding of RFP 2024-017 Assessment of Ambulance Offload Delays at Sault Area Hospital and District of Sault Ste. Marie Paramedic Services

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While the project represents an immediate financial commitment, the potential for long-term improvements in efficiency and patient care could offer substantial operational benefits.

**CONCLUSION**

Approving the award to Optimus SBR Inc., contingent on the 50/50 cost-sharing agreement with SAH, presents a fair financial commitment for both organizations. The project offers potential long-term benefits in efficiency and patient care, making it a valuable investment for DSSMSSAB and SAH.

Respectfully submitted,



Katie Kirkham  
Chief of Paramedic Services





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**Zhawenimi-Anokiitaagewin**  
Sault Ste. Marie District

District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services  
Administration Board

Conseil d'Administration des Services du District Sault Ste. Marie  
Zhawenimi-Anokiitaagewin

## **DSSMSSAB BOARD REPORT**

**AUTHOR:** Louie Bruni

**DATE:** January 16, 2025

**RE:** Ontario Works Service Plan

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) accept the Ontario Works Service Plan as attached for information.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Ontario Works service plan is a mandatory document completed by all CMSM/DSSAB's each year and submitted to the Ministry of Children, Community Social Services (MCCSS) for approval in terms of the delivery of the Ontario Works program and respective funding. Service delivery sites provide an outline on how these priorities will be met locally. For the 2025 fiscal year the ministry is requesting a Service Plan that outlines our transition strategy for employment service transformation.

### **SUMMARY/OVERVIEW**

The Service Plan guidelines provided by the MCCSS details the provincial priorities for the Service year.

Service plan priorities for 2025 as outlined by MCCSS are as follows:

- Community analysis,
- Service strategies,
- Program delivery

### **STRATEGIC PLAN IMPACT**

The Service Plan aligns with the Corporate Strategic plan on all three pillars ensuring organizational excellence, high quality person focused services and strengthening partnerships with various community agencies

**RE:** Ontario Works Service Plan

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**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial impacts resulting from the Service Plan. The Service Plan is submitted to MCCSS with the annual budget request for 2025.

**CONCLUSION**

The Service Plan is submitted to MCCSS with the annual budget request for 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Aime Bruni". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A" and "B".

# Ontario Works Service Planning Template

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2025

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## Overview

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The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) and Social Assistance (SA) delivery sites share the common goal of improving employment results for people relying on social assistance. This service plan template is the tool used for SA delivery sites to document the service planning required activities, including the strategies to achieve outcomes.

**Note:** SA delivery sites will be required to provide their service plan along with their annual budget submission to support negotiations with their Program Supervisor.

## How to use this template

This template is **used in conjunction with the Service Planning Guidelines**, which outlines key information, including required and optional planning activities.

This template is mandatory and is to be completed using the allotted space and uploaded to TPON as part of the service agreement.

**If you require an accessible version, reach out to your Program Supervisor.**

## Corresponding Guides, Tools, and Templates

Please refer to the following guides/tool if you require assistance:

1. Service Planning Guidelines
2. Community Service Inventory Tool (optional)
3. Outcomes Risk Assessment Template
4. Privacy Risk Assessment
5. Privacy Maturity Self-Reporting Tool

# Section 1 – Conduct Community Analysis

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In this section, SA delivery sites provide a summary of the community context in which Ontario Works person-centered supports and services and employment assistance is delivered over the service planning period.

## 1.1 Key Caseload Demographics

Enter a **focused overview of the key findings** from the current demographic composition of the caseload and anticipated changes over the service plan cycle:

**Enter a focused overview of key caseload findings (500 words max recommended)**

- Caseload decrease of 4.4% since 2023
- Approximately 51% of the caseload has been in receipt of social assistance for more than 24 months
- 60% of the caseload is ages 25-44
- There has been a 266% increase since 2023 of SA recipients that have been in Canada for up to 3 years. Asylum claimants have increased from 0% to 1% of the total caseload since 2023.
- 27% of all cases are single with children
- 7% increase in average monthly earnings since 2023
- 81% of adult caseload has education level of Grade 12/13 or less
- 10% of caseload has no fixed address

## 1.2 Service Needs (not required for Phase 3 sites in 2025)

A **focused assessment of key service needs** (in relation to your caseload) that have linkages to achievement of target(s) relating to the performance measure(s).

**Enter focused assessment of service needs (500 words max recommended)**

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## 1.3 Community Needs Assessment

Perform a community needs assessment to identify impacts to the delivery of social assistance or the achievement of target(s) relating to the performance measure(s). Use the information from your community needs assessment and parts 1-2 of this section to identify the following as it relates to social assistance:

<b>Strengths: Identify existing strengths and resources</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There are three partner organizations that deliver local planning and services to newcomers in Sault Ste. Marie. Services range from housing supports to ESL classes.</li><li>• A local school board delivers educational upgrading programs in our community hub offices to provide opportunities for individuals to obtain their high school diploma.</li><li>• DSSMSSAB delivers services in four Community Hubs in neighbourhoods where higher proportion of OW recipients reside. Service provider partners from social services sector, education, and health care attend the locations to offer programming, deliver services and work collaboratively with Ontario Works staff to address client needs.</li></ul>
<b>Gaps: Determine where there may be gaps in services or required resources</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mental Health and Addictions services are limited in the community creating long waitlists for individuals requiring support</li><li>• Lack of family doctors in the community have created a gap in healthcare services. Many individuals are without a family doctor and rely on walk-in clinics.</li><li>•</li></ul>
<b>Challenges: Common themes around concerns/challenges that impact SA</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of affordable housing and waitlists for social housing</li><li>• Lack of available childcare spaces</li><li>• Lower educational levels impact client opportunities to secure employment resulting in a living wage</li></ul>
<b>Opportunities: Current or upcoming opportunities that can be leveraged by SA</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Walk-in counselling services through a partner organization will be available one day per week in the Social Services office to support individuals ultimately reducing the waitlist times for clients in needs of the service</li><li>• The municipality has submitted a HART Hub application and if successful will provide needed wrap-around supports for individuals facing mental health and addictions issues.</li></ul>

## Section 2 – Review Targets

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Review the ministry prescribed targets in the “Outcome” section in the budget submission in TPON.

**Note:** SA delivery sites do not need to provide information in this section since it's included in the budget submission in TPON.

## Section 3 – Develop Service Strategies

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This section establishes the contracted expectations of all SA delivery sites and connects the first two planning components (i.e., community analysis and target(s) relating to the performance measure(s)).



### 3.1 Outcome Risk Assessment Template

Complete the risk assessment using the **Outcome Risk Assessment template**. For more information refer to the Service Planning Guidelines.

### 3.2 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

**Part A:** Articulate specific tactics that will consider the needs of equity seeking groups from the initial service planning stages through to delivery.

**Enter the local equity, diversity, and inclusion strategy here (500 words max recommended)**

- Continue with current strategies implemented related to EDI (ie. Staff training, culturally responsive services/programming, internal policies)
- Ensure Client Advisory Committee has representation from equity seeking groups to identify gaps and areas for improvement
- Work collaboratively with internal Corporate Services Department to provide input into the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for the DSSMSSAB

**Part B:** Complete the French Language Services strategy using the ministry provided templates. For more information refer to the Guidelines.

### 3.3 Logic Model

A logic model maps the linkages between services delivered and outcomes. It is a tool to support how service strategies will help to achieve target(s) and is included as part of the Service Planning template.

Describe how the service strategies will help to achieve the target(s) relating to the performance measure(s) and make linkages based on the Community Needs Assessment completed in section 1.

**Complete one logic model for each of the 4 outcomes.** Add or remove rows, as needed. Refer to the Service Planning Guidelines, Appendix H for completed example.

#### Definitions:

- Inputs:** Describe the organizational, community and/or external inputs within your organization used to coordinate services to meet the prescribed target(s) (e.g., staffing, internal processes, training, relationship with community organizations, gaps in services, etc.).
- Activities:** Operational and strategic activities (e.g., processes, tools, events, actions, etc.) that will be carried out as part of the strategy (e.g., staff training, recruitment, staff supports, community relationships, retention strategies, workshops, etc.).
- Expected outputs linked to outcome:** What are your expected results given the planned activities and what changes do you expect to realize?

Outcome 1: Ontario Works adult and ODSP non-disabled adults with participation requirements have an Action Plan		
Inputs (e.g., organization, community, external)	Operational and Strategic Activities	Expected Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff Training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued implementation of training plan for all staff to receive full understanding of Employment Service Transformation and Action Plans (for current staff and new hires).</li> <li>Update policies and processes to ensure staff have clear guidelines for supporting clients with their Action Plans</li> <li>Develop and launch internal communication plan for staff to have key messages about program expectations and effective client support strategies/tools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff will be engaged in supportive service delivery through client action planning</li> <li>Clients have clear understanding of action planning leading to increased goal setting and attainment</li> <li>Increased community awareness of client needs, service gaps and opportunities for collaborative partnerships</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Client and Community Support Activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop resources for clients to have clear understanding of program expectations and benefits of action planning</li> <li>Use enhanced communication tools and technologies to ensure clients feel safe and supported to share their needs and goals</li> <li>Continue to strengthen community partner relationships for accurate referrals and simplified access to services based on client action plans</li> </ul>	

**Outcome 2:**

**Ontario Works adults and ODSP non-disabled adults with participation requirements are referred to EO**

Inputs (e.g., organization, community, external)	Operational and Strategic Activities	Expected Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Agency Partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with SSM and EO providers to ensure clear referral criteria is set and outline methods of communication between organizations for ongoing process enhancements</li> <li>Continue collaborative service delivery initiatives and conduct a community service inventory to determine additional service gaps that could be addressed through collaborative partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction of barriers for clients requiring referrals or access to supports/services in addition to Ontario Works</li> <li>Client understanding of the Action Plan requirements and referral process to EO</li> <li>SA staff and client will work together to improve individual progress to employment readiness</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Client Engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of client advisory committee to provide a platform for individuals to offer feedback, recommendations to be considered in decisions regarding OW service delivery</li> <li>Implement tools for staff to guide clients through a progress assessment process: clients will be able to take a lead role in identifying goals and measuring progress toward employment ready</li> </ul>	

**Outcome 3:  
Ontario Works cases exit to employment**

Inputs (e.g., organization, community, external)	Operational and Strategic Activities	Expected Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnership with EO Service Providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain strong relationships with EO providers through regular meetings/communication to determine opportunities for aligning services to enhance client outcomes</li> <li>Work with SSM and EO providers to create a tool or process that will aide staff with communicating client employment progress to ensure staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service provider partners will work collaboratively to increase client experience/satisfaction</li> </ul>

	understand integrated case management and clients are being properly supported to exit to employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA staff will confidently inform clients of beneficial supports and service to assist with achieving goals, addressing barriers and moving toward sustainable employment</li> <li>Clients will feel safe and supported through open communication and involvement in progress planning/assessment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff Resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce client feedback and satisfaction tools to gather information on an on-going basis that will be used to identify areas for improvement, what is working well and other information that could be used to enhance client outcomes to exit to employment</li> <li>Continue simplified access to resources (tools, guides, technology) for all staff to ensure service delivery is based on client need promoting progress to exiting to employment.</li> <li>Use the completed community service inventory to create a staff resource which will provide awareness of local supports that can be used for client referrals by connection action plan goals or barriers with appropriate services</li> </ul>	

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Outcome 4:</b> <b>Ontario Works cases do not return to the program within one year</b></p>		
Inputs (e.g., organization, community, external)	Operational and Strategic Activities	Expected Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborative Community Planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide all clients exiting Ontario Works with a support plan that outlines main contacts for essential services and support workers across various sectors. Support plans will be developed based on individual's unique needs and situation to ensure clients have access to resources after exiting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA staff will be known as an available support in community building trusting relationships with individuals to provide beneficial information and support</li> <li>Clients will feel supported and</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Hubs and Mobile Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain service in community hub neighbourhoods and identify additional high needs areas within the community where mobile services can be delivered to connect individuals with appropriate supports based on individual need.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue partnerships with community agencies to maintain wrap-around services and preventative programming in locations throughout the municipality. Engage additional partners to address service gaps.</li></ul>
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- confident at the time of exiting social assistance
- SA staff will have strong partnerships with local agencies from multiple sectors to deliver streamlined and innovative supports in community

## Section 4 – Manage Program Delivery

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In this section, SA delivery sites will identify key program management activities to ensure the program supports program integrity and is delivered in accordance with legislative and policy requirements.

### 4.1 Service Delivery Expectations

Develop an outline of how service delivery expectations will be managed to ensure the program is delivered in accordance with legislative and policy requirements and that financial assistance expenditures are accurate and meet ministry expectations (refer to Service Planning Guidelines).

<b>Enter outline for each area of focus below (suggest 250 words max recommended per area)</b>
<b>Essential information reviewed and verified by Third Party Checks prior to transferring to ODSP (within the last 12 months)</b>
Maintain the use of checklist to ensure all criteria are met before transferring file to ODSP
<b>24-month Reassessment (including Third Party Checks) on all OW cases</b>
Continue to enter tasks into SAMS for 24-month file reviews
<b>Deferrals from participation in employment related activities are still current and are short-term (6 months or less is considered short-term). Deferrals from participation in employment related activities are less than 6 months and are not expired</b>
Continue with internal process of inputting a task on the integrated case for review. Maintain on-going review participation deferrals.
<b>EVP is assigned and completed in established timeframes</b>
Maintain internal procedures and continuous improvement strategies to ensure timeframes are achieved for EVP reviews.
<b>Application of up to 10% recovery rate for all overpayments</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dedication administrative staff to lead the review current OP recovery rates and update strategy to ensure 10% recovery rate</li><li>• Communication and training with staff, on the OP recovery requirements.</li></ul>
<b>Financial assistance expenditures (subsidy claims submissions) are accurate and meet ministry expectations</b> (list all Ontario Works benefits managed outside of SAMS and identify supporting documentation that will be provided with adjustments to subsidy claims and describe business practices for Ontario Works benefits managed outside of SAMS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dedicated finance staff who complete the subsidy claims make the appropriate adjustments using the information from the control sheet reconciliation.</li></ul>

- Subsidy Claims are completed on a monthly basis, with the support of a Manager, as needed.
- Municipality provides gift cards for local grocery stores for individuals on an as needed basis.

## 4.2 Monitoring Activities

Demonstrate how SA delivery sites will be prepared to support the monitoring activities by documenting its approach to readiness from combination of resource, awareness and understanding perspectives.

For example, the SA Delivery sites will be ready to support by reviewing and becoming familiar with all relevant materials provided by the ministry to understand the monitoring activities and OW’s roles and responsibilities.

<b>Enter the approach for monitoring here (suggested 250 words max recommended per area)</b>
<b>Overall Readiness</b> (i.e., how your site will be ready to continuously support the monitoring activities)
We commit to developing a resource to support the monitoring activities
<b>Submission of actual expenditures</b> (i.e., how to ensure your site will be able to submit the actual expenditures in a timely manner and engage in discussion when varied from budget)
Submissions will continue to be made through TPON
<b>Submission of targets related to performance measures</b> (i.e., how to ensure your site will be able to engage in discussions on strategies to achieve outcomes)
Strategy to achieve outcomes will be developed. Staff training opportunities along with continued collaboration with EO and community partners is essential to achieve successful outcomes. Continue to report actuals to Ministry and other information as required
<b>Performance reports</b> (i.e., how to ensure your site will be ready to leverage ministry provided reports in monitoring targets related to performance measure(s) and key service delivery expectations)
Establish clear understanding of performance measures, and track data as it relates to targets. Monitor data and prioritize areas that may need improvement and adjust strategies as needed. Continue communication with program supervisor to discuss reports results
<b>Quality Assurance (QA) reviews</b> (i.e., how to ensure your site will be ready to leverage the results from the ministry performed QA reviews to determine possible course corrections, related monitoring and need for service plan amendments)
Maintain accurate data collection and adjust plans as needed based on QA reviews. Work collaboratively with the Ministry to discuss areas where more information is required for further review and/or planning.

**Risk Mitigation Testing** (i.e., how to ensure your site will be ready to use ministry provided testing scripts to carry out testing of mitigation for the highest risks impacting outcomes as well as how the results of the testing will be used by your site)

Analyze data to identify gaps, collaborate on findings and ensure mitigation strategies are in place.

### 4.3 Privacy

Conduct a Privacy Risk Assessment using the **Privacy Risk Assessment Template and Privacy Maturity Self-Reporting Tool**. Instructions are included within the templates, but for more information refer to the Service Planning Guidelines.





**Social Services | Services Sociaux**  
**Zhawenimi-Anokiitaagewin**  
Sault Ste. Marie District

District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services  
Administration Board

Conseil d'Administration des Services du District Sault Ste. Marie  
Zhawenimi-Anokiitaagewin

## **DSSMSSAB BOARD REPORT**

**AUTHOR:** Louie Bruni

**DATE:** January 16, 2025

**RE:** Centralized Intake

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) accept the Centralized Intake Report as information.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In 2020, the Ministry of Community, Children, and Social Services (MCCSS) introduced the Social Assistance Recovery and Renewal Plan. This plan focused on accelerating digital solutions and centralized intake. The goal of centralized intake is to “expand the provincial role in determining of eligibility decisions and authorizing initial payments for all Ontario Works applications.”

The objectives of Centralized Intake included:

- Improved, modernized client experience
- Reduced administrative burdens
- Consistent and accountable decision-making
- More time for municipalities to focus on high impact, person centered supports

In March 2024, the Ministry’s Ontario Works Intake Unit (OWIU) began working with three (3) early implementer sites to reduce the administrative burdens associated with processing Ontario Works (OW) applications. Later in 2024, the province began working to fully upload OW intake activities including authorizing the initial eligibility payment. By October of 2024, the province became responsible to issue decisions on initial eligibility and authorization of initial payment for clients in the 10 sites across the province. A phased in approach continued in late 2024, with 10 additional sites moving to centralized intake.

**RE:** Centralized Intake

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DATE: January 16, 2025

### **SUMMARY/OVERVIEW**

In 2025, the province will begin the process of moving remaining sites across Ontario to centralized intake as well as expanding the scope of the province's intake work. The Ministry's role in processing OW applications is expanding to include initial eligibility decision making, authorization of initial payments, completion of internal reviews, and defending any appeals of initial eligibility decisions.

Service Managers will continue to manage applications for emergency assistance, temporary care assistance, applications for those under 18, and on-going eligibility reviews once initial eligibility decisions have been made by centralized intake.

Regulatory changes were required to designate the Province as the Ontario Works Delivery Agent and Service Managers as delivery partners.

The DSSSMSAB has been selected as a site for the next phase of transition. These changes are expected to be effective January 27, 2025.

In preparation for these changes, the DSSMSSAB's intake team was transitioned out between 2022 and 2024 to avoid the need to issue layoffs to employees working on the intake portfolio.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN IMPACT**

This initiative aligns with the Strategic plan on all three pillars ensuring organizational excellence, and high-quality person focused services.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications as staffing levels were reduced through attrition over two years.

### **CONCLUSION**

The staff will collaborate closely with the Ministry's OWIU team to ensure a smooth transition to centralized intake, with minimal disruption to the client experience.

We anticipate that these changes will alleviate the administrative burden of local intakes, allowing frontline staff to focus more on delivering person-centered services that support clients in stabilizing and working toward the goal of exiting social assistance.

Respectfully submitted,



**Ministry of  
Municipal Affairs  
and Housing**

Office of the Minister

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Tel.: 416 585-7000

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234-2024-5838

December 13, 2024

Board Chair Stephanie Hopkin  
Sault Ste. Marie DSSAB  
S.Hopkin@socialservices-ssmd.ca

Dear Board Chair Hopkin:

Our government recently announced that we are better protecting community safety and making investments to further support homelessness prevention and provide people living in encampments with access to reasonable alternative accommodation. With this [announcement](#), we are responding to the calls for action to address encampments in our communities and restore safety to public spaces.

We are taking a strategic approach to increase resources to support and provide more long-term stable housing and temporary accommodations for those living in encampments, including:

- **\$5.5 million** to top-up the **Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB)** to immediately free-up emergency shelter spaces for people living in encampments by helping people living in shelters move into longer-term housing.
- **\$20 million** to expand shelter capacity and create additional temporary accommodation spaces, like tiny modular units and climate-controlled semi-permanent structures, to provide people living in encampments with accessible alternative living options.
- **\$50 million** in last-mile funding for ready-to-build long-term affordable housing projects across the province. This funding will be allocated based on how close a project is to completion, as well as its value for money, to help projects near completion but, in need of targeted additional funding, to open their doors faster.

Let me be clear that it is my expectation that this funding is tied to clearing out encampments. The intent is to provide funding to municipalities that demonstrate their commitment to and show results in winding down these sites. **In order for your municipality to be considered for additional funding, the Ministry must receive a written pledge from the local Service Manager to use the funds towards ending encampments in your region.**

The additional funding will be supported by new reporting and accountability measures to ensure these funds support the shared provincial and municipal goal of ending encampments by providing safe and stable housing for people at risk of homelessness. I encourage you to work closely with municipal and community partners in the coming weeks. Please share eligible funding proposals with your Service Manager, who is to forward these to the Ministry for our consideration.

This investment complements:

- proposed amendments to the *Trespass to Property Act*, which applies to private businesses, offices, stores, hotels, parks, and vacant land. These amendments, if passed, will enhance penalties for people who deliberately and continually break the law by adding the new aggravating factors of continuous trespassing and the likelihood to reoffend.
- the new *Restricting Public Consumption of Illegal Substances Act, 2024* that will, if passed, allow police officers and other provincial offences officers to direct individuals to stop using illegal substances or to leave the public space. This will allow them to issue a ticket or arrest someone who does not comply, providing an important additional tool to stop the consumption of illegal drugs in public spaces.

While these new tools address public safety directly, we know these additional investments in shelter and housing are critical for people to move along their journey to stable housing and will move us closer to our long-term goals of everyone having a place to call home.

Our government is working with all our partners across the province to keep the most vulnerable members of our society safe and housed. Ontario has dedicated \$700 million annually since 2023 to address homelessness through the Homelessness Prevention Program and the Indigenous Supportive Housing Program. This funding is part of the nearly \$1.7 billion Ontario invested in 2023-24 to grow and enhance community and supportive housing and address homelessness for vulnerable Ontarians.

Once we receive your Service Manager pledge, your community will be designated to allocate more households to the COHB program this fiscal year. This funding must be targeted to individuals in the shelter system so that space can be freed-up to address the immediate shelter needs of the individuals in encampments.

As a result of this funding top-up to COHB, your updated 2024-25 COHB allocation is as follows:

<b>Initial Funding</b>	<b>Additional Funding</b>	<b>Total Funding</b>
\$145,900	\$44,100	\$190,000

This funding will support the transition of approximately 8 individuals from shelters into longer-term housing, aligning with the program's benefit year. You are requested to submit a take-up plan within two weeks of receipt of this letter (click on [2024-25 COHB Top-Up Funding Take-Up Plan](#)).

Please note that February 28, 2025 is the last day to process applications using the additional 2024-25 planning allocation.

All conditions of funding outlined in the COHB Program Guidelines and Transfer Payment Agreement apply to this additional funding.

Let me underscore once again that this additional COHB funding will only flow once we receive a written pledge from the Service Manager to use any additional funding towards ending encampments.

#### **Call for Business Case Applications**

To access the **Encampment Response Initiative** and the **Last Mile funding**, Service Managers who have provided a pledge are invited to submit business case applications for

Ministry consideration. Please refer to the Ministry-prescribed templates attached for further guidelines.

### **Encampment Response Initiative (Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP))**

The new **Encampment Response Initiative** supports urgent expansion of shelter capacity by providing funding to support the creation of additional alternative emergency accommodations to be offered to individuals in encampments through temporary structures such as tiny cabins and sprung structures.

This funding may also be used for operations of these shelters and remediation of encampment sites up to March 31, 2025. Funding will flow through Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) Transfer Payment Agreements to approved Service Managers.

Project proposals will be evaluated based on criteria outlined in the attached business case template and should include:

- Demonstrated capacity to expand temporary shelter availability and provide alternative accommodations quickly through temporary sprung structures, tiny cabins, and other similar structures.
- Clear implementation strategy including partnerships with grassroot level agencies to move individuals from encampments to shelters.
- Plans for encampment site restoration efforts, where applicable.

As a part of the business case, Service Managers will also be required to provide an estimate of the existing number of unique encampment sites and the encampment residents within them. In addition to providing the Ministry with monthly updated reporting on the number of encampments and estimated number of encampment residents, Service Managers will be required to report on how many residents have been moved from encampments to shelter and housing.

The business case must be completed in the Ministry-prescribed templates attached to this letter and submitted as an attachment to your HPP Investment Plan (IP) 2024-25 case in the Transfer Payment Ontario System (TPON) no later than **January 3, 2025, at 5 p.m.**

### **Last Mile Funding Initiatives**

The Ministry is aware that municipalities across the province have affordable and supportive housing projects that are in advanced stages of construction where the injection of extra funds into these projects could lead to their faster completion. Service Managers are expected to work with the municipalities and non-profit organizations in their service area to identify such projects and submit them through the business case process for consideration of the Ministry's funding approval. The Ministry encourages heads of council to work with their Service Managers to identify project proposals for potential funding. The Ministry expects that all municipally endorsed proposals shared with Service Managers will be forwarded to the Ministry for its consideration. There is no restriction on the number of business cases that you can submit to the Ministry for funding consideration.

Proposed projects must be:

- Commitment-ready, with the ability to sign a contribution agreement and provide security within the fiscal year;
- Shovel-ready, with construction activities able to commence within 120 days of signing the contribution agreement;
- Able to demonstrate value for money; and
- Align with current Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) guidelines.

Last Mile business cases must be completed in the Ministry-prescribed template attached to this letter and submitted as attachments to your COCHI-OPHI Investment Plan (IP) **2023-24** case in TPON no later than **January 10, 2025, at 5 p.m.**

The Ministry reserves the right to allocate funding under these initiatives at its sole discretion based on the review and evaluation of business case submissions. Any communication regarding additional funding must remain confidential until publicly announced by the province.

We appreciate your commitment to our shared goal of restoring safety to our public spaces and expect this additional funding to help address the immediate crisis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul Calandra', with a stylized flourish at the end.

The Honourable Paul Calandra  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Enclosures:  
Encampment Response Initiative Business Case  
Last Mile Business Case

c: Joanne Pearson, Integrated Program Manager  
Burke Christian, Assistant Deputy Minister, Community and Supportive Housing  
Division