

<b>TO:</b>	<b>CHAIR AND MEMBERS COMMUNITY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON DECEMBER 10, 2018</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>SANDRA DATARS BERE MANAGING DIRECTOR, HOUSING, SOCIAL SERVICES AND DEARNESS HOME</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>PURCHASE OF SERVICE AGREEMENTS – ONTARIO WORKS EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE SERVICES</b>

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
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That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Housing, Social Services and Dearness Home, the attached proposed By-law (Appendix “A”) **BE INTRODUCED** at the Municipal Council meeting of December 18, 2018:

- a) **TO APPROVE** Agreements for Ontario Works Employment Assistance Services with 9 corporations:
  - Daya Counselling Centre, 141 Dundas St, 6<sup>th</sup> floor, London, ON N6A 1G3;
  - Goodwill Industries, Ontario Great Lakes, 255 Horton St, London, ON N6B 1L1;
  - LEADS Employment Services London Inc., 410-171 Queens Av, London, ON N6A 5J7;
  - Literacy Link South Central, 255 Horton St, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, London, ON N6B 1L1;
  - London Community Small Business Centre, Inc., 220-379 Dundas St, London, ON N6B 1V5;
  - March of Dimes Canada, 302-1550 Upper James St, Hamilton, ON L9B 2L6;
  - Pathways Skill Development & Placement Centre, 1-205 Horton St E, London, ON N6B 1K7;
  - WIL Counselling and Training for Employment, 141 Dundas St, 4<sup>th</sup> floor, London, ON N6A 5J3; and
  - Youth Opportunities Unlimited, 141 Dundas St, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, London, ON N6A 1G3.
  
- b) **TO AUTHORIZE** the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the Ontario Works Employment Assistance Services Agreements; and,
  
- c) **TO DELEGATE** The Managing Director or written designate is delegated the authority to represent the City with respect to the Ontario Works Employment Assistance Services Agreements.

It being noted that:

These changes will support the increased employment, employability and job retention of Ontario Works participants The Ontario Works Employment Assistance Services Framework 2019 to 2024 presented in this report.

<b>PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER</b>
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- 2016 Participant Profile Report – City of London Social Services, Ontario Works Program Delivery (CPSC, July 18, 2017)
- Renewal of Ontario Works Employment Assistance Purchase of Services Agreements (CPSC, March 28, 2017);
- Purchase of Service Agreements – Ontario Works Employment Assistance Services (CPSC, February 25, 2013 and December 3, 2012);
- Ontario Works Employment Services Framework 2013 to 2018 (CSC, March 5, 2012)

<b>BACKGROUND</b>
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Through the City of London 2015-2019 Strategic Plan, Strengthening our Community - caring and compassionate services is a key area of focus which sets out to “eliminate barriers for individuals facing poverty and help them find pathways to be successful.” In support of this goal, this report

requests an endorsement of an updated Ontario Works Employment Services Framework 2019 to 2024 attached as Schedule “1” and the approval of the Purchase of Service Agreements for the delivery of Ontario Works Employment Assistance Services attached as Schedule “2”.

Ontario Works currently has Purchase of Service Agreements with local community agencies for the delivery of employment assistance services. The current agreements were approved by Council on December 11, 2012 (RFP 12-07 Ontario Works Employment Assistance Services) for a three (3) year period, with options to extend the contract for two (2) additional one year periods. The Agreements were further extended by an additional one year period with Council approval on April 4, 2017 and are scheduled to expire December 31, 2018. These Purchase of Service Agreements are based on the Ontario Works Employment Services Framework 2013 to 2018. A review of the existing Ontario Works Employment Services Framework began the preparation for the Request for Proposal (RFP) which closed on June 22, 2018.

## **UPDATE TO ONTARIO WORKS EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FRAMEWORK**

Under the Ontario Works Act, the City of London has the responsibility to effectively deliver services and supports that respond to the needs of Ontario Works participants. Ontario Works is primarily an employment assistance and financial support program focused on helping people gain and maintain sustainable employment by supporting training and education, developing “hard” and “soft” employment skills, linking participants to opportunities, and providing individualized supports as needed.

An Ontario Works Employment Services Framework was introduced in 1997 when the Ontario Works program commenced in London and was revised in 2005 and in 2012 in response to funding changes and the evolution of legislation. The City of London is committed to an Employment Assistance model which contracts for specific employment assistance services with local service providers, offers a wide variety of individualized employment services and supports and leverages services funded by other Ministries and Departments (including the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) and Service Canada).

The Ontario Works Employment Services Framework 2019 to 2024 attached as Schedule “1” builds on the community expertise and collaborative efforts such as the Employment Sector Council, Local Employment Planning Council (LEPC), and the London & Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership, in responding to local labour market needs. The framework recognizes the importance of linkages to employers through multiple channels and through a diversity of service providers; community non-profits, education systems and private sector for-profit businesses.

The Ontario Works Employment Services Framework was developed through an extensive consultation process that maintained a focus on planning, research and consultation, drawing from the following:

- Consultations with employment and education service providers, Ontario Works participants, City of London Social Services staff, and key informants representing London employers and businesses;
- Analysis of the City of London’s Ontario Works caseload demographics;
- Analysis of London’s labour market and economic needs and trends;
- A review of American and Canadian literature evaluating “what works” in employment service delivery for welfare recipients, and
- Program reviews.

Overall, the review confirmed that the framework is working well as evidenced by the achievement of many targets and employment outcomes of the contracted services, the good working relationships, partnerships, and engagement of community organizations.

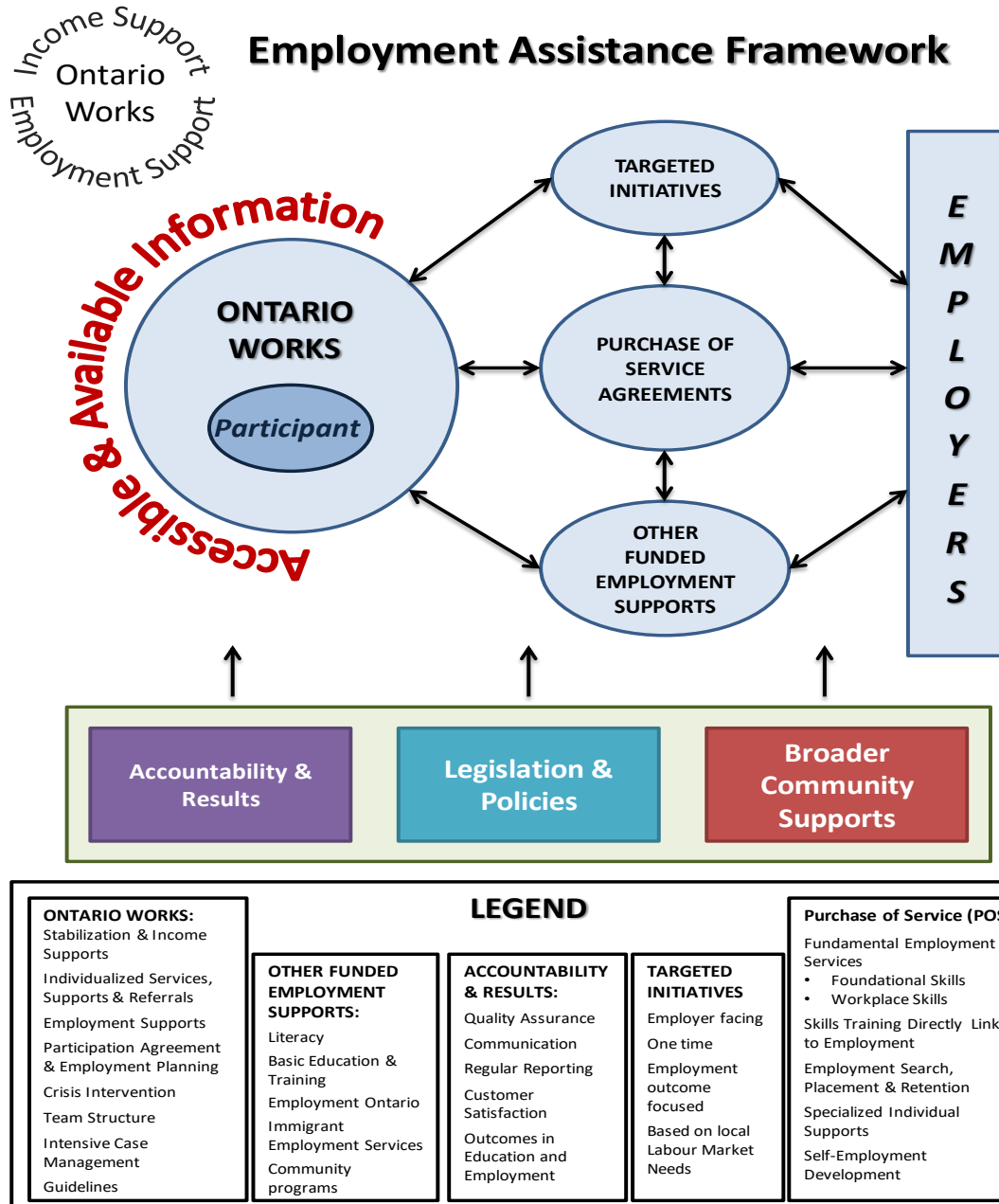
## **EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FRAMEWORK COMPONENTS**

The updated Ontario Works Employment Services Framework is comprised of four major components:

1. **Ontario Works Internal Resources & Supports** – services provided by Social Services including financial assistance, caseworker supports, referrals to community programs and specialized team supports such as Learning, Earning and Parenting (LEAP), Addiction Services Initiative (ASI), Self-Employment supports, and intensive case management services.
2. **Other Funded Employment Supports** – employment supports currently available in the community through funders such as Employment Ontario through the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, and Service Canada.

3. **Purchase of Service (POS) Agreements** - employment assistance services with local service providers that address specific needs or gaps in available services.
4. **Targeted Initiatives** – Specialized, customized program(s) that meets the hiring needs of the employer, has a direct connection to the labour market and in partnership with employer facing organizations.

Each component will contain key employment service elements such as Individualized Services and Supports, Assessments and Employment Planning, Career Management Services, Workplace



Experience, Employment Placement, Skills Training Directly Linked to Employment and Self Employment Development as outlined in the Framework.

### NEW FEATURES

The Ontario Works Employment Services Framework builds on the successes and strengths of the previous frameworks. New features of the framework include:

- Increased community engagement through decentralization, utilization of hoteling spaces, community participation, and continued promotion of employment, education and training opportunities through Employment Support Specialists;
- Increased flexibility in the use of the employment service plan (Participation Agreement) to meet the specific needs and goals of participants on a timely basis, so that referrals can be made more quickly to agencies, combined with enhanced internal employment reviews held at regular intervals;
- The use of fee for service model for core employment services enabling agencies to have flexibility in the use of existing resources when providing individualized services and supports, as well as to encourage increased agency co-operation and cross referrals;
- A greater attention to the engagement and employment retention of Ontario Works participants;

- A change in Ontario Works participants' perception of Employment Placement to also include active job search as well as retention supports;
- An increased emphasis on coaching and mentoring supports after client obtains employment;
- Strengthened accountability, evaluation and quality assurance approach;
- Strengthened focus on providing supports and referrals for all Ontario Works participants.

The Ontario Works Employment Services Framework 2019 – 2024 attached as Schedule “1” incorporates appropriate elements to help reduce, eliminate and address barriers and assist Ontario Works participants in moving forward on their employment path. The framework identifies specific services to be delivered by community partners and provided the foundation of the Request for Proposals 18-08 for Ontario Works Employment Assistance Services (RFP) issued in 2018. The organizations and services recommended as a result of the RFP will provide the range of services and supports to assist in the achievement of the principles, goals and outcomes of the Ontario Works Employment Assistance Program as outlined in the framework. The Employment Assistance Services to be delivered include the following:

**Fundamental Employment Services** – Assists participants to prepare to enter, re-enter or quickly re-enter the workforce. Employment Search, Placement and Retention is a required component of this service.

**Skills Training Directly Linked to Employment** – Provides participants with training, skills development and practical work experiences thereby improving their marketable skills. Employment Search, Placement and Retention is a required component of this service.

**Employment Search, Placement and Retention** – Assists job-ready participants in finding and maintaining suitable employment by providing structured job supports, job coaching and workplace supports.

**Specialized Individual Support** – Assists participants in addressing identified needs and barriers to support finding and maintaining suitable employment.

**Self-Employment Development** – Assists participants in developing and growing business opportunities; maintaining their self-employment and further developing business and marketing skills.

The Employment Assistance components noted in this report provide crucial skills and supports for Ontario Works participants in their movement to self-sufficiency. The Employment Assistance service providers are integral to the effective delivery of Employment Assistance services and to the achievement of Employment Assistance outcomes. Through this framework, Ontario Works employment services will be more responsive to changing Ontario Works participants, community and labour market demands.

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS & PURCHASING PROCESS**

A Request for Proposals was issued May 4, 2018 to support the service delivery components of the revised Ontario Works Employment Services Framework. Fourteen (14) submissions were received to provide services for:

1. Fundamental Employment Services
2. Skills Training Directly Linked to Employment
3. Employment Search, Placement and Retention
4. Specialized Individual Support
5. Self-Employment Development

Agencies were able to submit a proposal to provide services for one (1) or a combination of any or all programs. The submissions were evaluated by a team comprised of ten (10) members from the following Service Areas: Housing, Social Services and Dearness Home; Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services; and Finance and Corporate Services. This team evaluated submissions against criteria established to align with the needs addressed in the Ontario Works Employment Services Framework 2019 to 2024. The criteria consisted of:

- a) Proponent Profile;
- b) Experience, Expertise and Qualifications;
- c) Labour Market Knowledge, Community and Employer Connections;
- d) Capacity;
- e) Evaluation and Quality Assurance;

- f) Proposed Programs and Outcomes;
- g) Business Change Management;
- h) Pricing; and
- i) Format of Submission Presentation

The evaluation team recommended the acceptance of submissions received from nine (9) agencies as they addressed specific Ontario Works participant needs as outlined in the Ontario Works Employment Services Framework and in the RFP. The successful Proponents demonstrated strong organizational compositions, the financial capacity to deliver the programs, the technical resources and the ability to leverage existing services and supports.

The evaluation team recommended the provisions of services for all five (5) requested service areas from the following agencies:

Fundamental Employment Services

- (i) Goodwill Industries, Ontario Great Lakes
- (ii) LEADS Employment Services London Inc.
- (iii) Pathways Skill Development & Placement Centre
- (iv) WIL Counselling and Training for Employment
- (v) Youth Opportunities Unlimited

Skills Training Directly Linked to Employment

- (i) Goodwill Industries, Ontario Great Lakes
- (ii) Pathways Skill Development & Placement Centre
- (iii) Youth Opportunities Unlimited

Employment Search, Placement and Retention

- (i) Goodwill Industries, Ontario Great Lakes
- (ii) LEADS Employment Services London Inc.
- (iii) Pathways Skill Development & Placement Centre
- (iv) WIL Counselling and Training for Employment
- (v) Youth Opportunities Unlimited

Specialized Individual Support

- (i) Daya Counselling Centre
- (ii) Goodwill Industries, Ontario Great Lakes
- (iii) Literacy Link South Central
- (iv) March of Dimes Canada

Self-Employment Development

- (i) London Community Small Business Centre

**AGREEMENT DEVELOPMENT**

Staff from the City of London Solicitor’s Office has been instrumental in the development of the form and content of the Ontario Works Employment Assistance Services Purchase of Service Agreements. The Ontario Works Employment Assistance Services Purchase of Service Agreements are for a two (2) year period with the option of extending the contracts for three (3) additional one year periods. At least 30 days prior to the expiring of the Agreement, the City of London representative and the Service Provider may mutually agree in writing to renew the Agreement on the same terms and conditions as set out in this Agreement for successive one year periods up to a maximum of three (3) one year renewals. The individual Employment Assistance Ontario Works Agreements will be signed by the respective organizations. One representative contract is attached, as Schedule “2” to Appendix A.

**AGREEMENT SUMMARY**

The Agreement, attached as Schedule 2 to Appendix A, meets each of the objectives outlined in RFP18-08 and stipulates the following:

- The term of the Agreement is from January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020, with the option of three (3) one year renewals;
- The Service Provider shall provide Employment Assistance Services in accordance with this Agreement, the Request for Proposal 18-08, their Proposal, and the Outcomes as set out in Schedule D of the Agreement Outcomes Schedule;
- The requirements of the Employment Assistance Services as set out in the Request for Proposal, their Proposal and the Outcomes may be amended from time to time on the prior written mutual consent of the Managing Director or designate and the Service Provider;

- Services to be provided are dependent on the contract and can include Fundamental Employment Services; Skills Training Directly Linked to Employment; Employment Search, Placement and Retention; Specialized Individual Support; and Self-Employment Development.
- The Service Provider is obliged to provide the services on a basis which is fair, confidential, accessible, responsive, sensitive and adequate and respects the rights, dignity, culture and diversities of the participants;
- The Service Provider is obliged to use current state of the art methods and shall skilfully and competently deliver the Employment Assistance Services and shall employ only skilled and competent staff who will be under the supervision of the Service Provider;
- The Service Provider is obliged to instruct and train its staff to deliver the services required under this Agreement;
- The Service Provider will participate in program evaluation activities carried out by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, or by the City of London;
- Funding will be per participant on a fee for service basis;
- The Service Provider shall obtain prior written approval from the Managing Director, Housing, Social Services and Dearness Home, or designate, regarding advertising or media involvement surrounding Employment Assistance Services it provides under this Agreement, and acknowledge the City of London's involvement in the Employment Assistance Services; and,
- Despite any other provisions in this Agreement, the City of London or the Service Provider may, at any time and for any reason, terminate this Agreement, effective upon the giving of sixty (60) days' prior written notice to the other party.

## **TARGETED INITIATIVES**

Targeted Initiatives, as outlined in the Ontario Works Employment Services Framework, provide the opportunity for local organizations to work in collaboration and partnership with employers and the City of London to address very specific needs of Ontario Works participants in making a direct link to employment. The Targeted Initiatives will be a response to specific emerging labour market needs on a "just in time" basis. Targeted Initiatives will allow for a direct connection to the labour market and will be supported in partnership with employer facing organizations.

Projects can include a range of service elements including but not limited to job placement, post-hiring supports, life skills, skills training and work placements. At the individual level, this could be an Enhanced Job Placement opportunity resulting in the hiring of the participant. At the group level, this could be a short-term employment program that provides focused, specialized training that is specific to the immediate hiring needs of an employer or community agency.

The Managing Director and Social Services staff will be instrumental in developing one-time pilot initiatives to target identified employment and placement needs of a specific client group, community, or employer. The Managing Director or designate will present a business case to Committee once a Targeted Initiative and funding source has been identified and is being proposed.

## **ONTARIO GOVERNMENT – SOCIAL ASSISTANCE REFORM**

On Thursday November 22, the Honourable Lisa MacLeod, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services announced a high-level strategic framework related to the Government of Ontario's plan to reform Social Assistance.

During the announcement, emphasis was placed on employment outcomes and providing necessary community supports to move people to employment. The Minister's announcement stressed the importance of individualized employment planning and acknowledged that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to the delivery of social service programming in Ontario communities.

Individualized employment planning and focus on the local municipal context, are consistent with service delivery approaches outlined in the updated Ontario Works Employment Services Framework attached as Schedule "1" and the Ontario Works Employment Assistance Services Purchase of Service Agreements. The Minister described that any changes will be implemented gradually and over the next 18 months to 2 years. At this time there is no cause to adjust the service agreements, it is recognized that future Ontario government announcements may necessitate an update to the Ontario Works Employment Services Framework and an amendment to the 2-year Ontario Works Employment Purchase of Service Agreements.

<b>FINANCIAL IMPACT</b>
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The overall average cost increase anticipated as a result of the revised contracts for employment services is estimated to be approximately 12% based on 2018 participation rates for each service. Agency referrals will be closely monitored to ensure that the estimated cost of these services for 2019 of approximately \$5.2m gross (\$0.95m net) can be accommodated in the 2019 Council approved budget for the Ontario Works program.

The budget for employment services is cost shared with the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) and includes a portion that is 100% funded and a portion that is cost shared at 50%. Currently, the City's overall share of these costs is approximately 18%.

<b>CONCLUSION</b>
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The Employment Assistance activities, including the Purchase of Service Agreements, noted in this report provide crucial skills and supports for Ontario Works participants to assist them in their movement towards self-sufficiency.

<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>
<b>JACK SMIT MANAGER, EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES</b>	<b>KEVIN DICKINS MANAGER, EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME SUPPORT SERVICES</b>
<b>RECOMMENDED BY:</b>	
<b>SANDRA DATARS BERE MANAGING DIRECTOR, HOUSING, SOCIAL SERVICES AND DEARNESS HOME</b>	

Cc: Kyle Murray, Senior Financial Business Administrator, City of London  
 Lynn Marshall, Solicitor II, City Solicitor's Office, City of London  
 Elaine Sauve, Program Supervisor, Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services  
 John Freeman, CSCMP, Manager – Purchasing & Supply, City of London  
 Rebecca Machado, Executive Director, Daya Counselling Centre  
 Michelle Quintyn, President and CEO, Goodwill Industries, Ontario Great Lakes  
 Wendy Lau, CEO, LEADS Employment Services London Inc.  
 Tamara Kaattari, Executive Director, Literacy Link South Central  
 Francis Fung, National Manager, Rehabilitation and Training, Employment Services, March of Dimes Canada  
 Paul Hubert, Executive Director, Pathways Skill Development & Placement Centre  
 Steve Pellarin, Executive Director, The London Community Small Business Centre  
 Jennifer Hollis Executive Director, WIL Counselling and Training for Employment  
 Steve Cordes, Executive Director, Youth Opportunities Unlimited