

Social Assistance Programs Employment Services Transformation

TBDSSAB Board Meeting

February 20, 2025

Presented by:

Jennifer Lible - Manager, Social Assistance Programs

Melanie Salatino - Supervisor, Social Assistance Programs



THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD



Where is TBDSSAB in this transformation?



- Effective January 2021, Social Assistance offices have been implementing the Employment Services Transformation (EST) using a phased approach.
- TBDSSAB is part of Phase 3, the final phase.



Defining Person-Centered Supports

- Person-centered supports are services that prepare and enable clients to participate in, and to be referred to, employment services.
- Person-centered supports and services can be categorized as addressing:
 - **Crisis and Safety** – financial support, housing, crisis resolution
 - **Health** – access to health supports and benefits, including mental health and addictions
 - **Life Skills** – self sufficiency, education and literacy, language and numeracy supports
 - **Community Supports** – access to dependent care or caregiving supports, cultural connections (such as immigration and settlement supports), justice and legal support.



Defining Person-Centered Supports

Crisis and safety

Addressing basic or immediate needs by providing housing, financial, safety and crisis supports

Financial support

- Providing financial assistance through Ontario Works and ODSP – supporting the client to access additional income supports and benefits (e.g. income tax benefits)

Crisis resolution

- Providing support to manage a crisis or threat to safety (for example referral to service or supports for someone being trafficked or experiencing gender-based violence)

Housing needs

- Referring to appropriate housing services and funding (CHPI, supportive housing)

Health

Providing social assistance health benefits, supporting transportation for medical purposes and navigating a client to appropriate resources

Primary care

- Providing referrals to primary care supports (i.e. family doctor) and provide financial supports for healthcare needs to ensure an individual is getting the immediate supports they require to support their basic health

Mental health & addictions

- Helping individuals access the appropriate supports for mental health and addictions

Support for medical conditions

- Providing financial supports or referrals for individuals who have medical conditions or general health issues

Life skills

Supporting people to navigate systems independently through the development of life skills and self-efficacy

Literacy, numeracy, and ESL/FSL

- Supports for a range of literacy (financial, digital, reading and writing), language skills, basic math and computer skills

Self-efficacy

- Supporting an individual with communication skills, organizational management, household skills, motivation and commitment to goals; as well as providing supports and tools to support financial health and empowerment (e.g., access to tax services)

Education

- Addressing needs for completing Grade 12, or other educational milestones

Community Supports

Supporting people to access appropriate supports and networks

Dependent care

- Supporting people to secure reliable care for child, spouse/partner, and eldercare responsibilities

Community inclusion

- Providing opportunities to build connections to cultural and community networks (e.g., volunteering, recreational and wellness activities)

Justice & legal support

- Addressing challenges with the justice system by providing resources and access to legal, post-incarceration and integration supports



Implementation of the Common Assessment Tool and Action Plan

- The implementation of the new case management tools will assist Caseworkers in identifying and delivering person-centered supports.
- **Common Assessment**
 - a digital questionnaire accessed by Social Assistance (SA) Caseworkers through SAMS and shared across Social Assistance and Employment Services to support identification, assessment and planning for person-centered supports and employment. Module 1 will be completed by SA Caseworkers and Module 2 will be completed by Employment Ontario (EO) Caseworkers once a client is referred.
- **Action Plan**
 - a tool used to create and records a client's individual plan towards achieving goals and addressing support needs. It allows the Caseworker to track the client's goals, support needs, and community referrals.



Employment Ontario Overview

- Employment Ontario (EO), overseen by the Service System Manager, is responsible for:
 - Delivering employment and training services, including self-employment for clients ready to participate in employment services.
 - Providing financial supports to eligible clients.
- Ontario Works (OW) is responsible for:
 - Delivering case-managed services that focus on connecting OW clients and ODSP adult family members to person-centered supports and services.
 - Preparing clients for referral to EO services and making the referral when a client is ready to participate.
- EO, OW, and ODSP have a combined responsibility to provide integrated case management for shared clients through continuous communication and collaboration at all organization levels.



Common Assessment Overview

- The Common Assessment (CA) is a digital questionnaire with two modules administered by staff in both EO and SA to determine client person-centered and/or employment needs and goals.
- CA Module 1 includes a Mental Health and Addictions Screener (MHAS) used only in SA to help identify clients who would benefit from services, support Caseworkers in making informed referrals, and allows for the tracking of client outcomes across our program. EO does not see the MHAS responses.
- For EO clients, both Module 1 and 2 will be done by EO Caseworkers.



Action Plan Features

- The Action Plan (AP) is within SAMS and replaces the participation agreement, the outcome plan and individual action planning.
- The AP is used to track client progress in achieving goals and addressing support needs using the person-centered supports framework.
- SA Caseworkers will work within the AP workspace, which consists of the following tabs:
 - Goals and Support Needs
 - Referral
 - Deferral
 - Reviews
 - Compliance
 - Benefit Coordination
 - Admin



EST Implementation

CA & AP Implementation - December 2024	Full EST Integrated Employment Services Implementation - March 2025
Common Assessment (CA)	
Complete CA Module 1 without referring to EO (i.e. do not click “proceed to refer”)	Complete CA Module 1 and refer to EO upon readiness determination (i.e. click “proceed to refer” at the end of CA Module 1)
Benefits	
Issue employment benefits from the “additional benefits” tab of the integrated case as per existing process	Issue the participation benefit from the “goals” tab of the AP case
Employment Services	
Continue providing employment services as per existing process, documenting any employment service referrals accordingly in the AP	Refer clients that meet the definition of “referral readiness” to EO via completed CA Module 1 for participation in employment services. Document the referral to employment services in the AP



2025 OW Performance Measures and Targets

Performance Measure	Target
% of OW adults and ODSP non-disabled adults with participation requirements that have a proper AP created	100%
% of OW adults and ODSP non-disabled adults with participation requirements who are referred to EO	31%
% of OW cases (individual or family units) that exited to employment	10%
% of OW cases (individual or family units) who exited the program for any reason and return within one year	37%





THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD

Questions? Comments?

Social Assistance Programs

Employment Services Transformation

Jennifer Lible – Manager, Social Assistance Programs

Melanie Salatino – Supervisor, Social Assistance Programs

