

Community and Social Services

2017 Budget Briefing Note

Description

The Department oversees an integrated continuum of support that includes long-term care, affordable housing, emergency shelters, homelessness prevention, residential services, financial and employment assistance, child care services and community capacity building. Collaborating with community partners, we deliver, develop and fund services and programs that respond to our community's needs and that foster inclusion, self-sufficiency and improved quality of life. Most services and programs are governed by specific provincial legislation and are cost-shared at various levels. The City also makes significant investments in the social services sector that may include 100% of the required funding in some areas.

Programs/Services Offered

Nursing and Personal Support

- Operates four Long Term Care (LTC) homes with 717 beds, representing 15% of the City's 4,694 LTC beds. Services include nursing and personal care, medical services, physiotherapy and activation services, nutrition and food preparation, housekeeping and laundry services.
- Offers two day programs to help seniors continue living independently
- Purchases an average of 2.5 hours per week of homemaking services for approximately 1400 social assistance and low-income residents to help them continue living independently

Housing Services

- Emergency Shelter Response - Supports homeless residents and those at risk of homelessness by providing emergency shelter, housing search, and stabilization and housing loss prevention services
 - Funds services for over 650 community emergency shelter beds
 - Manages two emergency family shelters with 64 units
- Supported Housing Services
 - Funds agencies that house and support over 1,000 residential hostel clients
 - Provides an interdepartmental, system-wide coordinated response to rooming house issues
 - Administers funding contracts with non-profit community agencies that prevent and reduce homelessness
- Social Housing
 - Oversees funding, administration and monitoring of the social housing portfolio, housing over 50,000 people
 - Oversees Centralized Wait List for social housing with rent-geared-to-income; an average of 10,000 active applications
- Affordable Housing
 - Administers several programs that invest in creating and maintaining affordable and supportive housing

Financial and Employment Supports

Staff at four Community and Social Support Centres assess, issue, monitor and evaluate clients' eligibility for financial assistance that help families and individuals meet basic needs such as food, shelter and prescription drugs. The centres offer employment services including job search and preparation, training and education, employment placements and retention services to reduce reliance on social assistance by helping clients find and maintain employment. Staff assess,

contract and monitor employment plans and activities, develop partnerships with employers, refer and match recipients to opportunities, and determine and verify eligibility.

Child Care Services

Provides local service planning for Provincial early year's programs and services. This includes managing the fee subsidy budget for approximately 7,100 qualifying children; managing provincial initiatives such as wage enhancement and pay equity funding; special needs resourcing; and Special Purpose/Capital Funding; and Family Support Programs.

- Purchases services from 175 community child care Service Providers, both for-profit and not-for-profit, representing more than 300 programs
- Operates 11 municipal child care centres, primarily located in areas of the City with a high-percentage of vulnerable children and administers the informal OW child care programs
- Manages the Child care Waitlist for parents who require fee subsidies and provides a Registry for parents who are waiting for child care spaces but who can pay full fees
- Acts as Service System Manager to plan and build an integrated model of child and family programs (Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres) by January 2018.

Strategic Community Initiatives (SCI)

SCI staff develops strategies and support policy and program planning to respond to emerging community issues and needs. Leads City-wide strategic initiatives including the Youth Action Plan, the Older Adult Plan, the Municipal Immigration Strategy, the Aboriginal Working Committee, the Community Conversation, the Equity and Inclusion Lens, and community development and community engagement initiatives with our community stakeholders.

Community Funding

Staff collaborates with community partners, funders and stakeholders to support and strengthen community agencies in the promotion of improved quality of life and inclusion of people who are low-income, at-risk or isolated. The community agencies deliver a range of services that include food programs, day programs, counselling and support services, Community Health and Resource Centre services, community houses and seniors' services and programs..