



	REPORT No.: 2020-13
MEETING DATE: MARCH 19, 2020	DATE PREPARED: FEBRUARY 25, 2020
SUBJECT: CANADA-ONTARIO HOUSING BENEFIT TRANSFER PAYMENT AGREEMENT	

RECOMMENDATION

THAT with respect to Report No. 2020-13 (Integrated Social Services Division) we, The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board, authorize the Chair and CAO to execute a Transfer Payment Agreement with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and with the Ministry of Finance for the delivery of the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit;

AND THAT any necessary By-law be presented to the Board for consideration.

REPORT SUMMARY

To provide The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB or the Board) with information regarding the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit program, and to seek authorization to sign the Transfer Payment Agreement with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Ministry of Finance.

BACKGROUND

The Government of Ontario has finalized negotiations with the federal government and has received the necessary funding and program design approvals to proceed with the implementation of a new Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit Program. The program will launch in April 2020, with payments to households beginning as early as that month.

As one of the key initiatives presented in the National Housing Strategy, the new Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit aims to give more options to people who are looking for housing that will meet their needs and their budgets.

The program will offer a portable housing benefit where funding is provided directly to low-income households that are on, or eligible to be on, a social housing waitlist. The benefit will be calculated using 80% of the community's Average Market Rent (AMR), as determined by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation analysis, and 30% of the household's Adjusted Family Net Income (AFNI). Individuals currently receiving social assistance benefits may be eligible, however they will have a separate benefit calculation to avoid reducing their current social assistance entitlements.

For 2020/21, TBDSSAB's planning allocation for this program is \$308,968 and for 2021/22 it is \$404,840.

COMMENTS

The Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit will be provincially delivered through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) and the Ministry of Finance (MOF). The MOF will determine eligibility, calculate the benefit, provide payments directly to households and manage the annual renewal process. Service Managers will assist by identifying and selecting households to apply for the program and assisting households with the application process.

MOF will conduct annual Automated Income Verification using Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) income tax information. For the 2019 to 2020 benefit period (July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020), 2018 income tax information would be used for Automated Income Verification. As a result, households receiving a housing benefit must submit CRA income tax return(s) each year by April 30. Failure to submit the required income tax return(s) may result in a delay in benefit payments.

Service Managers will receive a one-time administration payment of \$250 for each application from their service area that is approved for the program.

In order to receive funding, Service Managers are required to sign a Transfer Payment Agreement with MMAH and MOF that sets out the roles and responsibilities of the parties and the accountability framework for the program, including the terms for funding and reporting requirements. Funding is conditional upon MMAH receiving the required quarterly reports from Service Managers. The Transfer Payment Agreement has been prepared by MMAH and is required to be signed and returned to MMAH by March 20, 2020.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS



As this is a 100% provincially funded program, there would be no financial impact on TBDSSAB. TBDSSAB would receive a \$250/case administration fee for each referred application approved.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that this report provides the Board with information relative to the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit program and Administration's recommendation to participate in the program as provided by MMAH. It is further concluded that the Board authorizes the Chair and CAO to execute all required agreements related to the program.

REFERENCE MATERIALS ATTACHED

None

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APPROVED / SIGNATURE:	
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SUBMITTED / SIGNATURE:	
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