



	REPORT No.: 2021-02
MEETING DATE: JANUARY 14, 2021	DATE PREPARED: JANUARY 4, 2021
SUBJECT: SOCIAL SERVICES RELIEF FUND UPDATE	

RECOMMENDATION

For information only.

REPORT SUMMARY

To provide The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB or the Board) with updated information regarding the Ontario Social Services Relief Fund during the COVID-19 pandemic

BACKGROUND

At the April 16, 2020 meeting, the Board was provided with initial information and plans for the Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF).

The SSRF allows communities to expand a wide range of services and supports for vulnerable populations impacted by COVID-19 and allows Service Managers to assist vulnerable people who are experiencing homelessness, living in community or supportive housing, people with low incomes, those receiving social assistance benefits, or others who require social services supports.

Updated information was provided at each subsequent Board meeting and this report provides the most current information regarding the SSRF. TBDSSAB's initial SSRF funding allocation was \$1,168,300.

On August 12, 2020, TBDSSAB received notice that the province was initiating the SSRF Phase 2 to allow the continuation of support for current efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic, and to address new priority challenges. Under SSRF Phase 2, TBDSSAB received an additional \$1,840,459.

COMMENTS

Through the initial SSRF, TBDSSAB established an Emergency Pandemic Fund to assist organizations by offering housing and related supports to individuals and households experiencing financial pressures related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Eligible activities

under this funding program include the provision of shelter, food and clothing, access to cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE), transportation and other support services related to the impacts of COVID-19. To date, more than \$200,000 has been distributed to community organizations, with applications still being accepted.

Administration continues to work with several partners to facilitate an isolation shelter for homeless individuals who require separation from the general population due to possible exposure to the virus or while awaiting test results. This is planned to continue through March 31, 2021 using the SSRF allocations.

To address the needs of those requiring shelter where the existing emergency shelters are full or where individuals are unable to access the existing shelters, TBDSSAB expanded the overflow shelter program through arrangements with several hotels. Access to this overflow shelter is managed through the emergency shelters.

TBDSSAB has established a rent relief fund to assist individuals who are facing financial challenges due to COVID-19. This fund will assist with clearing rent arrears, utility arrears and other expenses related to maintaining a home. To date, more than \$137,000 has been provided to households throughout the district.

The following table outlines the SSRF initial phase allocations up to December 31, 2020:

Activity Area	Funding Provided	# Supported
Emergency Shelter Services	\$516,013	2,919 isolation bed nights/meals 961 overflow bed nights/meals
Services and Supports	\$263,141	12 payments to housing providers 66 cell phone supports
Homelessness Prevention	\$216,784	18 community grants
Homelessness Prevention – Rent Relief	\$137,362	99 individuals
Administrative Allocation	\$35,000	
Total:	\$1,168,300	

The following table outlines the planned SSRF Phase 2 allocations through March 31, 2021:

Activity Area	Funding Provided
Emergency Shelter Services	\$250,000
Services and Supports	\$70,245
Homelessness Prevention	\$110,000
Homelessness Prevention – Rent Relief	\$200,000
Capital Component – Facilities Upgrades	\$1,155,000
Administrative Allocation	\$55,214
Total:	\$1,840,459

As reported at the December 17, 2020 Board meeting the Board Chair received notification that TBDSSAB was approved for an additional \$1,836,300 in SSRF Phase 2 funding through the release of funds held back from initial allocation. TBDSSAB had prepared a submission seeking access to the hold back funds to support capital developments that would add long-term housing solutions. Administration is currently working with two community partners to finalize details for this capital work and will submit project information forms for Ministry review and approval.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Social Services Relief Fund is a 100% provincially funded program. TBDSSAB received an initial allocation of \$1,168,300 under Phase 1 of the funding, and \$1,840,459 under Phase 2. An additional allocation of \$1,836,300 was provided on December 15, 2020.



TBDSSAB was eligible to use up to ten per cent of the Phase 1 approved funding allocation for administration costs (although only 3% was used), and up to three per cent of the Phase 2 and holdback funding for administration costs.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that this report provides the Board with information relative to the Social Services Relief Fund Phases 1 and 2 and Administration’s use and plan for the investment of the funding.

REFERENCE MATERIALS ATTACHED

None.

PREPARED BY:	Crystal Simeoni, Manager Housing Programs The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board
APPROVED / SIGNATURE:	
	Ken Ranta, Director, Integrated Social Services Division The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board
SUBMITTED / SIGNATURE:	
	William (Bill) Bradica, Chief Administrative Officer The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board