



## BOARD REPORT

REPORT No.: 2022-72

MEETING DATE: NOVEMBER 17, 2022

SUBJECT: ROMA 2023 POSITION PAPERS

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### RECOMMENDATION

THAT with respect to Report No. 2022-72 (Chief Administrative Officer Division), we The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (the Board) receive the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) 2023 Position Papers as presented;

AND THAT we direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to incorporate any edits to the position papers recommended by the Board by consensus into a final delegation package;

AND THAT we direct the CAO to send the final delegation package to the appropriate provincial Ministries;

AND THAT a copy of the approved delegation briefings package be sent to Thunder Bay District municipal councils;

AND THAT the CAO attend the 2023 ROMA conference to provide support to the Board Chair and other Board members in their meetings with provincial officials regarding these issues.

### REPORT SUMMARY

To provide the Board with the position papers for the 2023 Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Annual Conference for review and approval.

### BACKGROUND

ROMA will be holding its 2023 Annual Conference on January 22-24, 2023 in Toronto. As part of the conference programming, organizations may submit requests to meet with a Minister or Parliamentary Assistant.

## COMMENTS

Position papers have been drafted by the Integrated Social Services Division team in consultation with the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer on four issues that are recommended to the Board for advocacy with provincial representatives.

The four proposed advocacy topics include:

- 1) Supports for Migration into Homelessness
- 2) Supports for Alcohol Dependency
- 3) DSSAB Legislation and Guidelines
- 4) Landlord and Tenant Board hearing wait times

## STRATEGIC PLAN IMPACT

This report aligns with the following Strategic Direction: Advocacy

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS



There are no immediate financial implications related to this report.

## CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the ROMA 2023 position papers be reviewed and approved as presented.

## REFERENCE MATERIALS

Attachment #1 [Draft Position Papers – ROMA 2023](#)

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SIGNATURE	
APPROVED BY	William (Bill) Bradica, Chief Administrative Officer
SIGNATURE	
SUBMITTED BY:	William (Bill) Bradica, Chief Administrative Officer



THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD

# Advocate for the Federal Government to Provide Adequate Housing and Support Services on First Nation Communities in Ontario

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## POSITION PAPER

January 2023

**Rural Ontario Municipalities Association (ROMA) Conference**

Prepared by:

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board

Prepared for:

Hon. Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

# Brief

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) urges the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to establish a working table to address migration into homelessness, including the Federal Minister of Indigenous Service and the Federal Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, to promote adequate housing and support services in Ontario's First Nations communities.

## Summary

The TBDSSAB recognizes the complexity involved with establishing services in remote First Nation communities in Ontario. However, more needs to be done to provide for individuals and families to ensure an adequate level of service exists. A recent study into homelessness shows a high percentage of individuals that are homeless in the District of Thunder Bay have migrated here, and of those that have migrated a high percentage are from a First Nations community in Ontario. The Government of Canada needs to do more to provide for individuals living in First Nations communities in Ontario and provide assistance to ensure that those who leave do not become homeless in Ontario's urban centres.

## Background

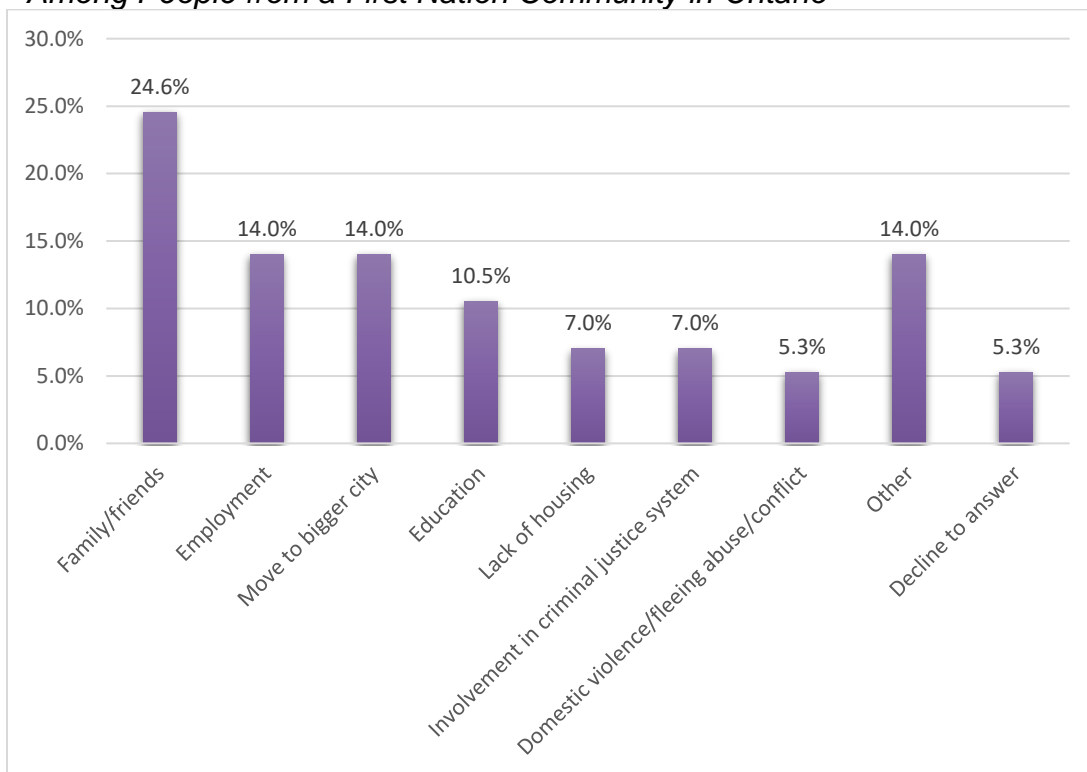
In 2021, the TBDSSAB partnered with faculty from Lakehead University to conduct a mixed methods research study that sought to better understand the following:

1. From which home communities are people migrating?
2. Why do people leave their home communities in the first place?
3. Why do people choose to come to Thunder Bay?
4. Why do people choose to remain in Thunder Bay?
5. What factors predict if someone stays or leaves Thunder Bay?
6. If a person does stay, how long are they likely to stay?
7. What factors predict how long someone stays?

The research questions were inspired by findings from the 2018 District of Thunder Bay Point in Time (PiT) Counts that showed that a high percentage of homeless individuals had migrated.

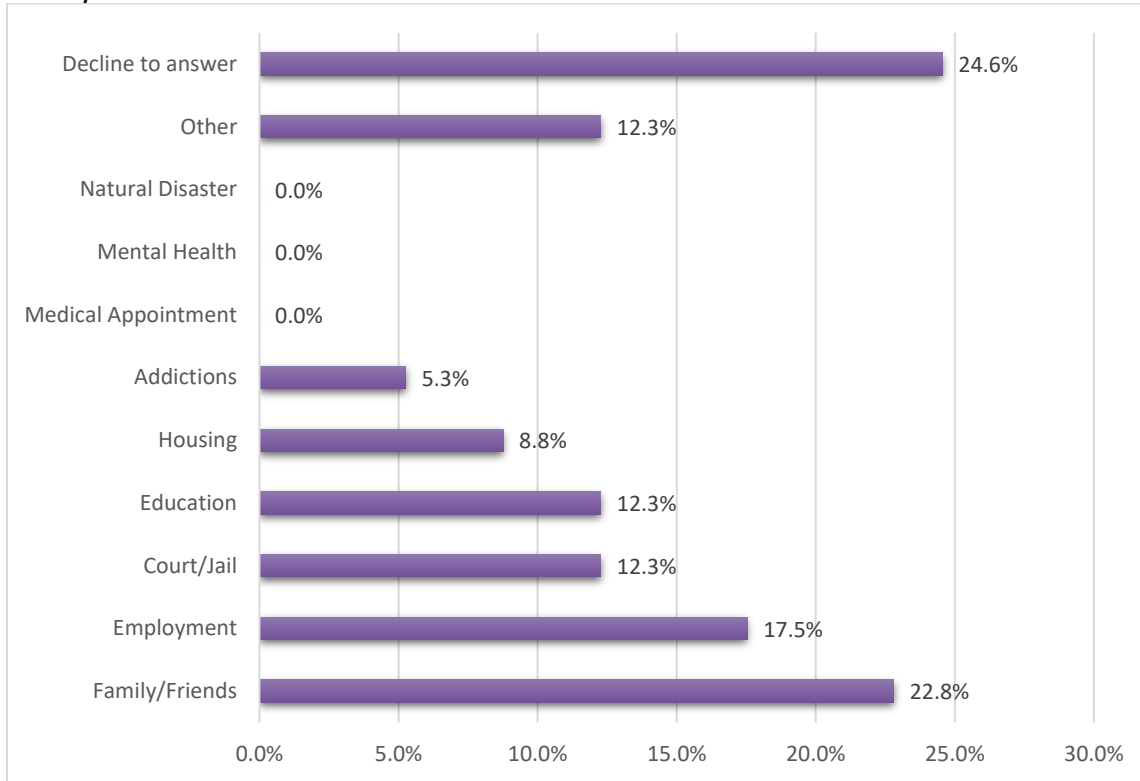
During the data analysis stage of the study the research team created a subset of responses that represented individuals from First Nation communities in Ontario. In total, 68.4% of the individuals that had migrated to Thunder Bay and are now homeless indicated that their home community is a First Nation community in Ontario. The responses to why an individual left their home community are shown in the graph below.

*Figure 1. Why Did You Leave Your Home Community? Frequency of Response Among People from a First Nation Community in Ontario*



From these responses, it can be seen that 43.8% of participants stated that they left their home community for socio-economic reasons. Similarly, when asked what brought an individual to Thunder Bay, 56% of homeless individuals from a First Nation community in Ontario indicated that it was for socio-economic reasons.

*Figure 5: What Brought You to the City of Thunder Bay? Frequency of Response by People from First Nation Communities in Ontario*



The follow-up question regarding housing among the individuals from a First Nation community in Ontario shows that 71.9% reported having a home before coming to the City of Thunder Bay, 21.1% did not have a home before moving, and 7% are unsure if they had a home.

When people were interviewed, responses found only a handful of clues about why people left their home or previous communities. But the most salient observation here is that most people interviewed reported having unstable housing or unsafe housing of some kind in their previous or home communities.

More needs to be done to ensure individuals living in First Nations communities in Ontario enjoy a better quality of life with access to stable and safe housing, employment, and social services to prevent migration into homelessness in Ontario's urban centres.

Therefore, TBDSSAB requests that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing establish a working table to address migration into homelessness, including the Federal Minister of Indigenous Service and the Federal Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, to promote adequate housing and support services in Ontario's First Nations communities.



**THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD**

# Landlord and Tenant Board hearing wait times

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## **POSITION PAPER**

**January 2023**

**Rural Ontario Municipalities Association (ROMA) Conference**

Prepared by:

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board

Prepared for:

Hon. Doug Downey, Attorney General of Ontario  
Hon. Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing



# Brief

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) calls on the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Minister of the Attorney General to address the long Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) hearing wait times by fast tracking applications from landlords for priority applications related to high-risk issues (crime, behaviour, damages), as these have typically gone through extensive mediation efforts prior to the request for a hearing date.

## Summary

The TBDSSAB recognizes that Community Housing is essential for the well being of many low-income individuals and families across Ontario. As such, TBDSSAB staff work to support successful tenancies and avoid evictions by using the parameters set out in our eviction prevention policy. However, attempted interventions aimed at maintaining a tenancy are not always successful. The TBDSSAB does not take the decision to move for an eviction lightly. However, there are situations that arise where eviction is necessary to protect the safety of other tenants, to avoid further damage to properties and to avoid stigmatizing Community Housing as a place that is unsafe or undesirable.

## Background

Since January 1, 2021, the TBDSSAB has filed 212 applications with the LTB. Of these 212 applications, 124 are related to the non-payment of rent and the remaining 88 are related to interference with reasonable enjoyment resulting from behavioural matters, illegal activities, or violence. In addition, the TBDSSAB has 64 hearings waiting in the queue as of November 2022 to be adjudicated at the LTB.

The LTB is experiencing a backlog of up to 6 months before allocating a hearing date. Delays are expected to be even longer with the recent announcement that the LTB will

be prioritizing applications from landlords asking for above guideline rent increases through to the end of 2022. This backlog is creating greater safety issues for tenants and will result in approximately \$100,000 in lost rent revenue to the TBDSSAB over the 6-month waiting period. This lost revenue becomes an additional burden on the municipal levy.

There is an opportunity to establish a priority system where applications from landlords with high-risk issues are expedited and addressed separately from other applications. This would allow for dedicated time to address high-risk issues impacting landlords, and provide for administrative savings at the LTB by streamlining scheduling and hearings.

Further, the current LTB booking system doesn't cross reference already scheduled appointments with the same landlord and will book two hearings on the same date and time. When the hearings were in person the adjudicator would call one at a time, so the overlap was not an issue. However, recently a TBDSSAB representative had two virtual hearings booked simultaneously and was actively in one hearing when called to the other. The Adjudicator marked the SPM as absent for that hearing. This type of disconnect must be addressed and would be streamlined through a priority system for Community Housing providers. Hearings could be grouped, and conflicts avoided.

With the time delays related to the LTB, the majority of tenants are negatively impacted for a longer period by the actions and activities of high-risk individuals who would otherwise be evicted. This results in a reduction to the quality of life for the majority of tenants in the building, hardens relationships between frustrated tenants and TBDSSAB staff and stigmatizes Community Housing as a less desirable option for housing.

Therefore, TBDSSAB requests that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Minister of the Attorney General address the long Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) hearing wait times by fast tracking applications from landlords for priority applications related to high-risk issues.



**THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD**

# Dedicated Support Services for Individuals with an Alcohol Addiction

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## **POSITION PAPER**

**January 2023**

**Rural Ontario Municipalities Association (ROMA) Conference**

Prepared by:

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board

Prepared for:

Hon. Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health

Hon. Michael Tibollo, Associate Minister Mental Health and Addictions, Ministry of Health

## Brief

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) requests that the Ministry of Health provide the financial resources necessary to ensure that the appropriate level of support is available for individuals with alcohol addiction in the District of Thunder Bay.

## Summary

The TBDSSAB recognizes and applauds the government of Ontario's supportive approach to addressing mental health and addictions. Recently, a great deal of focus has been placed on the growing opioid and stimulant issue. However, year over year emergency room visits and hospitalizations due to alcohol use outnumber other substances. This impacts tenants of TBDSSAB properties and the homeless population serviced throughout the District of Thunder Bay.

## Background

The common use of opioid and stimulant substances has increased over the past decade resulting in a public health crisis, not only in the District of Thunder Bay, but across Ontario. The North in general, and the District of Thunder Bay specifically, has some of the highest rates of Emergency Department visits, hospitalizations, and deaths due to opioid use in Ontario.

However, what is often overlooked is that alcohol use continues to be the substance that leads to the highest number of ConnexOntario contacts for services.

### ConnexOntario Contact Reason – January 1, 2021- December 31, 2021<sup>i</sup>

Substance	Number of Contactors
Alcohol Use Disorder	209
Stimulant Use Disorder	157
Opioid Use Disorder	54
Polysubstance Use Disorder	42
Cannabis Use Disorder	25
Inhalant Use Disorder	2

The data presented for 2021 above is mirrored in the data back to 2017. In fact, in each year Opioid Use Disorder and Stimulant Use Disorder combined are less than Alcohol Use Disorder.

The District of Thunder Bay also has a very high number of Emergency Department visits attributed to alcohol at a rate significantly higher than the rate for opioids.

### ED Visits for conditions entirely attributable to alcohol, crude rates<sup>ii</sup>

Calendar Year	TBDHU total number of visits	TBDHU crude rate per 100,000 population	ON crude rate per 100,000 population
2017	4,127	2,679.8 per 100,000	585.4 per 100,000
2018	4,419	2,865.0 per 100,000	599.5 per 100,000
2019	4,715	3,052.0 per 100,000	587.0 per 100,000
2020	4,222	2,729.9 per 100,000	509.4 per 100,000

Each year from 2017-2022, the District of Thunder Bay has had the second highest rate of all the Public Health Units in Ontario. To put the numbers into perspective, the 2020 crude rate for Emergency Department visits related to opioids in the District of Thunder Bay was 174.6 per 100,000<sup>iii</sup>, compared with Emergency Department visits attributed to alcohol with a rate of 2,728.9 per 100,000.

Beyond the individual and family cost of substance use, there is a high fiscal cost as well. In the 2017, *Canadian Substance Use Costs and Harms* report it is noted that substances cost Canadians almost \$46.0 billion, led to over 275,000 hospitalizations, and contributed to the loss of nearly 75,000 lives. Of this total, almost 63% of the costs of substance use were due to alcohol and tobacco with alcohol accounting for \$16.6 billion or 36.2% of the total costs. Additionally, alcohol use accounted for the greatest costs to the criminal justice system at \$2.8 billion or 30.2% of all criminal justice costs.<sup>iv</sup>

Despite the increasing use of opioids and stimulants and the dangers associated with these substances, alcohol use continues to be a major concern that needs to be addressed through appropriate supports.

regarding nepotism and a policy regarding land disposition.

Therefore, TBDSSAB requests that the Ministry of Health provide the financial resources necessary to ensure that the appropriate level of support is available for individuals with alcohol addiction in the District of Thunder Bay.

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<sup>i</sup> Extracted from the ConnexOntario Health Services Information Database on August 24, 2022

<sup>ii</sup> Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Snapshots: Alcohol Harms Snapshot [Internet]. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2021 [updated 2021 Dec 1; cited 2022 Sept 1]. Available from: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/data-and-analysis/substanceuse/alcohol-harms>

<sup>iii</sup> [Interactive Opioid Tool | Public Health Ontario](#)

<sup>iv</sup> [Canadian Substance Use Costs and Harms \(2015-2017\) \[report\] \(csuch.ca\)](#)



**THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD**

# DSSAB Legislation and Guidelines

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## **POSITION PAPER**

**January 2023**

**Rural Ontario Municipalities Association (ROMA) Conference**

Prepared by:

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board

Prepared for:

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services

# Brief

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) calls on the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) to proceed with changes to the DSSAB Act and Regulations and finalize the DSSAB Governance and Accountability Guidelines further to the June 2019 Report of the Expert Advisor.

## Summary

The TBDSSAB appreciates the Ministry's history of consulting with DSSABs about possible amendments to the Act and the *2006 Interim Governance and Accountability Guidelines*. However, final changes have yet to be made from the feedback provided by service managers between 2017-2019.

Therefore, TBDSSAB calls on the Minister to consider the Board's recommendations and finalize changes to the DSSAB Act legislation and governance requirements further to the June 2019 report.

## Background

In 2017, the Ministry announced that a review of the *DSSAB Act, (1999)* would be undertaken. The review was conducted, with the resulting report from the consultant set aside.

In response to a request for input from the province in 2017, TBDSSAB passed a resolution that included suggested changes (Resolution 2017-82 and resultant

Board Report 2017-55 attached). The recommendations to the Minister contained in the resolution included the need to update the legislation and DSSAB Governance and Accountability Guidelines, provide greater clarity on the services that DSSABs can deliver and to define whether DSSABs have the ability to exceed legislated or regulated cost sharing formulae.



A further review process was completed by the Ministry in 2019 with a Report of the Expert Advisor to MCCSS completed in June 2019. DSSABs were advised by MCCSS in December 2019 that work would be done in 2020 to “finalize the DSSAB Accountability and Governance guidelines and explore other opportunities to support transparency and accountability of the Boards and ensure they are supported and functioning well.”

It is understood that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, certain activities needed to be deferred. With the return to a more normal working environment, it is time to move forward with changes to the legislation and guidelines.

Since the inception of TBDSSAB there have been concerns raised by its member municipalities regarding the provision of funding for programs and/or requests that they consider to be beyond the scope of a DSSAB.

The DSSAB Act outlines responsibility for the delivery of the Ontario Works program and childcare, but the only reference to social housing is to the requirement to make payments under the Social Housing Funding Act, 1997. One must refer to the *Housing Services Act, 2011* to determine DSSABs responsibilities for Social Housing. It may be appropriate to identify each mandated program in the revised DSSAB Act, and to further identify any programs that DSSABs *may* provide.

Although the *Municipal Act, 2001* does not apply in its entirety to DSSABs, there are a few references to DSSABs in that Act. It would be administratively less cumbersome if those references were removed from the Municipal Act and included instead in the revised DSSAB Act and/or Regulations to the DSSAB Act. For example, Section 270 of the Municipal Act, 2001 requires that DSSABs have a purchasing policy, a policy regarding nepotism and a policy regarding land disposition.

Therefore, TBDSSAB calls on the Minister to proceed with changes to the DSSAB Act and Regulations and finalize the DSSAB Governance and Accountability Guidelines further to the June 2019 Report of the Expert Advisor.