



THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD

DSSAB Legislation and Guidelines

POSITION PAPER

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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.