



INCOME SECURITY ADVOCACY CENTRE  
Centre d'action pour la sécurité du revenu

1500 – 55 University Ave.  
Toronto, ON M5J 2H7  
Tel: 416-597-5820  
Fax: 416-597-5821  
Toll-free: 1-866-245-4072  
[www.incomesecurity.org](http://www.incomesecurity.org)

Monday, July 25, 2022

VIA EMAIL [premier@ontario.ca](mailto:premier@ontario.ca); [Minister.fin@ontario.ca](mailto:Minister.fin@ontario.ca); [MinisterMCCSS@ontario.ca](mailto:MinisterMCCSS@ontario.ca)

Dear Premier Doug Ford, Minister Peter Bethlenfalvy, and Minister Merrilee Fullerton,

**RE: Raising social assistance rates in the August 2022 Budget**

We are legal clinic workers, health care providers, social service providers, settlement workers, gender equity and racial justice advocates, disability justice advocates, housing service providers, community advocates, and other not-for-profit and non-profit organizations who advocate for poverty reduction and income security.

We are writing to urge you to raise social assistance rates in Ontario to adequate levels in the upcoming August 2022 Budget. We are encouraged by the election promise made on May 9, 2022, and affirmed on June 27, 2022, to raise the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) rates by 5%. However, there are two urgent concerns that we call on you to address so that people on social assistance can live with dignity:

- Ontario Works (OW) rates must also be raised; and
- Both ODSP and OW rates must meet the cost of living.

**Background**

The inadequacy of social assistance rates in Ontario was a central issue during the 2022 election. Every party recommended raising the rates. Rates have been frozen since 2018 at \$733 for a single person on OW and \$1169 for a single person on ODSP. This leaves recipients living at 40% to 60% below the poverty line.

With over 11% inflation since 2018, the real value of the rates has declined, and the depth of this poverty has increased. This historic inflation, combined with the COVID-19 pandemic, has disproportionately impacted low-income Ontarians who are Indigenous, racialized, women, single, or live with a disability. The current dire financial situation is making social assistance recipients' ability to pay for housing, food, medication, digital access, transportation, clothing, disability supports, and other basic needs impossible.

A 5% increase amounts to just over \$58 more per month for ODSP recipients. This is not enough for groceries, and certainly not enough to secure housing. An ODSP increase



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also offers nothing for people who rely on OW to survive. We therefore call on your government to address the following two urgent concerns in the upcoming Budget.

### **Include OW in the social assistance rates increase**

The proposed 5% ODSP increase leaves the 458,000 beneficiaries on OW living in destitution. These are the poorest people on social assistance, the majority of whom are unattached singles and women. They cannot afford the necessities of life on \$733 per month. By maintaining the current rate, this government bears the added cost of paying for these individuals' interactions with shelters, hospitals, the criminal justice system, and other social services. **We implore you to also raise the rates for OW.**

### **Raise the rates for both OW and ODSP to meet the cost of living**

With continued inflation, and the associated increase in cost of living, 5% is not nearly enough of a rate increase to survive. This government has saved on social assistance costs during the COVID-19 pandemic due to federal benefits and lowered caseloads. These savings must be reinvested. **We call on this government to double both OW and ODSP rates, and to index these rates to inflation.**

Ontario will not recover fully from the pandemic if people on social assistance are left behind. We look forward to action and to your commitment to Ontario's most vulnerable in the August 2022 Budget.

Sincerely,

The Income Security Advocacy Centre (ISAC)  
and  
ACCES Employment  
Access Alliance Multicultural Health & Community Services  
Access County Community Support Services  
Accessible Housing Network  
Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario  
Advocacy Centre for the Elderly  
Age of Majority Singers  
Alzheimer Society Waterloo Wellington  
Anthony Frisina  
ARCH Disability Law Centre  
Asian Community AIDS Services (ACAS)



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Autistic Bridge Inc.

Autistics for Autistics: Canadian Self Advocacy

Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services (BCS)

Barrie Food Bank

Basic Income Speaker School

Basic Income Waterloo Region

BGC Peel

Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention

Black Legal Action Centre

Brain Injury Services of Northern Ontario (BISNO)

Bridges to Belonging

Bruce Villa Manor

Caldwell Family Centre Inc.

Cambridge Council on Aging

CAMH

Campaign for Adequate Welfare and Disability Benefits

Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives, Ontario Office

Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture

Canadian Mental Health Association- Niagara Branch

Caribbean African Canadian Social Services

CARLINGTON COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

Carranza LLP

Carrefour communautaire francophone de London

Centre d'éducation financière EBO

Centre des services communautaires Vanier

Centre espoir Sophie

Centre for Spiritual Living On the Lake

Centretown Community Health Centre

CERA - Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation

Chatham-Kent Legal Clinic

Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic

City for All Women Initiative (CAWI) / Initiative: une Ville pour Toutes les Femmes (IVTF)

Claire Littleton, Provincial Co-Chair, Steering Committee on Social Assistance

Clinique Juridique Bilingue Windsor-Essex Bilingual Legal Clinic



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Clinique juridique Grand-Nord Legal Clinic  
Club GAIN  
CMHA Peel Dufferin  
Colour of Poverty - Colour of Change  
Community Advocacy & Legal Centre  
Community Development Council Durham  
Community Family Services of Ontario  
Community Legal Assistance Sarnia  
Community Legal Clinic - Brant, Haldimand, Norfolk  
Community Legal Clinic of York Region  
Community Legal Services of Ottawa/Services juridiques communautaires d'Ottawa  
Community Living Essex County  
Community Living Ontario  
CONTACT Community Services  
Cornerstone Housing for Women  
Council of Agencies Serving South Asians  
Council of Canadians - Ontario-Quebec Regional Office  
Council of Elizabeth Fry Societies of Ontario  
Country Lane Co-op  
CUIAS Immigrant Services  
Davenport Perth Neighbourhood and Community Health Centre  
Deaf Literacy Initiative  
Debra Dynes Family House  
Decent Work and Health Network  
Defend Disability  
Delta Family Resource Centre  
Down Syndrome Association of Simcoe County  
Downsview CLS  
Durham Association for Family Resources and Support  
Durham Community Legal Clinic  
Durham Deaf Services  
Ecohesian  
Elgin-Oxford Legal Clinic  
Elizabeth Fry Society Simcoe Muskoka



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Elizabeth Fry Toronto  
Embrave Agency to End Violence (Formerly Interim Place)  
Empowered Kids Ontario  
Epilepsy Toronto  
Family and Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County  
Family Service Ontario  
Family Service Toronto  
Family Services Windsor-Essex  
Federation of Metro Tenants Associations  
Feed Ontario  
Fred Victor Centre  
Fusion Global Education  
Giishkaandago'Ikwe Health Services  
Gloucester Emergency Food Cupboard  
Good Jobs for All Coalition  
Green Haven Shelter for Women  
GTA Disability Coalition  
Guelph Community Health Centre  
Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Centre  
Hamilton Community Legal Clinic  
Hamilton Social Work Action Committee  
Health Providers Against Poverty  
HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario  
HMC Connections  
Homeless Health Peel  
Hong Fook Mental Health Association  
House of Lazarus Matilda Resource Centre Inc.  
Industrial Accident Victims Group of Ontario (IAVGO)  
Injured Workers Action for Justice  
Injured Workers Community Legal Clinic  
Injured Workers of Wellington & Dufferin Counties  
Institute for Advancements in Mental Health  
Interval House of Ottawa Maison Interval d'Ottawa  
IRIS Residential Inns and Services



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ISARC Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition  
IWC - Hamilton  
Jane Finch Community Legal Services  
Jewish Family Services of Ottawa  
John Howard Society of Simcoe and Muskoka  
Keewaytinok Native Legal Services  
Kensington-Bellwoods Community Legal Services  
KidsAbility Centre for Child Development  
Kingston Community Legal Clinic  
Kinna-aweya Legal Clinic  
Kitchener Waterloo Chapter, Council of Canadians  
Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre  
Legal Clinic of Guelph and Wellington County  
Listening Post Barrie  
London InterCommunity Health Centre  
Low-Income Family Empowerment Sole-Support Parents Information Network  
(LIFE\*SPIN)  
Madison Community Services  
Mississauga Community Legal Services  
Mount Forest Family Health Team  
Moyo Health and Community Services  
Neighbourhood Legal Services  
Neighbourhood Legal Services London-Middlesex  
Network for the Advancement of Black Communities  
New Canadians Centre Peterborough  
Newcomer Centre of Peel  
Niagara Folk Arts Multicultural Centre  
North York Community House  
North York Harvest Food Bank  
North York Women's Centre  
Northern Human Association  
Northumberland Community Legal Centre  
OCASI - Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants  
ODSP Action Coalition



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Ontario ACORN  
Ontario Alliance to End Homelessness  
Ontario Association of the Deaf  
Ontario Campaign 2000: End Child and Family Poverty  
Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care  
Ontario Disability Coalition  
Ontario Federation of Labour  
Ontario Network Of Injured Workers Groups  
MCCSS MERC Chair, OPSEU/SEFPO  
Orillia Christian Centre - The Lighthouse  
Orillia Community Church  
Ottawa & District Labour Council  
Ottawa Coalition of Community Houses  
Ottawa Day Program Coalition  
Ottawa Food Bank  
Parkdale Food Centre  
Partners in Mission Food Bank  
PASAN (Prisoners with HIV/AIDS Support Action Network)  
Peel Alliance to End Homelessness  
Peel Injured Workers  
Peterborough Community Legal Centre  
Poverty Free Halton  
Poverty Free Thunder Bay  
Pozitive Pathways Community Service  
Project READ Literacy Network Waterloo-Wellington  
PSC  
PTP Adult Learning and Employment Programs  
Punjabi Community Health Services  
Quinte Immigration Services  
Race and Disability Canada  
Reception House Region of Waterloo  
Redwood Park Communities  
Regeneration Outreach Community  
Renfrew County Legal Clinic



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Rexdale Community Legal Clinic  
RISE Norfolk  
S.H.I.F.T.  
Scarborough Community Legal Services  
Shelter Now Transitional Support Program  
Silent Voice Canada Inc.  
Skills for Change  
Social Assistance Coalition of Scarborough (SACS)  
Social Development Centre Waterloo Region  
Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton  
Social Planning Network of Ontario  
Social Planning Toronto  
Somerset West Community Health Centre  
South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario  
South Asian Women's Rights Organization  
South Etobicoke Community Legal Services  
Steering Committee on Social Assistance  
Sudbury Workers Education and Advocacy Centre  
The 519 Community Centre  
The Centre for Active Transportation  
The Dam - Develop Assist Mentor  
The Guesthouse Shelter  
The Legal Clinic  
The Literacy Group of Waterloo Region  
The Mississauga Food Bank  
The Neighbourhood Group Community Services  
The Ontario Network of People Who Use Drugs  
The Salvation Army – Ontario Division  
The Salvation Army Harbourlight Ministries  
The Salvation Army Scarborough Citadel  
Thrive Northumberland: Coalition to End Violence Against Women  
Thunder Bay & District Injured Worker Support Group  
Thunder Bay Health Coalition  
Toronto Neighbourhood Centres





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Toronto People With AIDS Foundation  
Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council  
Toronto South Local Immigration Partnership  
Turning Point Counselling  
United Way/Centraide Windsor-Essex County  
Vibrant Communities - Our Safety and Well-being Plan - Cornwall, SDG and Akwesasne  
Victorian Order of Nurses for Canada - Ontario Branch  
West Scarborough Community Legal Services  
West Toronto Community Legal Services  
Willowdale Community Legal Services  
Women & HIV/AIDS Initiative (WHAI)  
Women's Support Network of York Region  
WoodGreen Community Services  
Workers' Action Centre  
Workers' Health and Safety Legal Clinic  
Working for Change  
Working Women Community Centre  
Youth Diversion  
YWCA Cambridge  
YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin  
YWCA Toronto