

Ontario Public Service
Employees Union

MEMORANDUM

OPSEU



SEFPO

Syndicat des Employé-e-s
de la Fonction Publique
de l'Ontario

TO: All Presidents with members in the Ministry of Community & Social Services
All Stewards in the Ministry of Community & Social Services

FROM: Terry Baxter, OPS Supervisor/Negotiator

DATE: January 23rd, 2006

SUBJECT: **Ministry of Community & Social Services ODSP Sub-Committee
ERC Minutes – December 1, 2005**

Attached, for your information, are the minutes of the above captioned meeting.

Please post or otherwise make them available to the members in your workplaces.

Also attached is a MERC referral form which should be used when referring unresolved local issues to the ministry level. The referral should be sent care of the Job Security Unit with all the supporting documentation, (e.g. minutes, correspondence, etc.), with any referrals.

PLEASE NOTE: THESE MINISTRY MINUTES WERE PREPARED BY THE EMPLOYER.

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cc: MERC Chairs
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MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES

**MINISTRY EMPLOYEE/EMPLOYER RELATIONS COMMITTEE (MERC)
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM (ODSP)**

MINUTES – October 11, 2005

Location: Elisabeth Bruyere Health Centre, Patrick Gillin Room, 43
Bruyere Street, 2nd Floor, Ottawa

Duration: 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Co-Chairs: Norm Pilon Marni Campbell

Attendees: OPSEU	Management
Norm Pilon	Marni Campbell
Pam Smith	Maxine Daley
Carolle Hamilton	Joanne Grandame
Leanne Pold-DellaVedova	Chris Tudela
Ron Strong	
Roxanne Barnes	
Stephen George	

Guests: Julie Zurakowski, Alex Rnic, Carolyn Ellis, Angie Pata,
Susan Fournier

Minutes: Carina Tuazon

Regrets: Joe Lucas, Pat Schlett

1.0 Welcome Guests

The Sub-committee welcomed the Local Employee Relations Committee (LERC) from Ottawa to the meeting.

2.0 Minutes

2.1 Review of September 2005 Minutes

- The group reviewed the September 2005 Minutes and provided an overview on some of the items for the benefit of the LERC.
- The Union provided their revisions to the September 2005 minutes.

Action Item: SAMO to revise the September 2005 Minutes for sign off by the Union at the next meeting.

3.0 New Business

3.1 ORU/Sponsorship Initiative (Overpayment Recovery Unit)

- Overview of ORU/Sponsorship initiative was provided by SAMO. (presentation is attached to minutes)
- The Union raised the following concerns: When a spouse is removed from the Benefit Unit and the case remains ongoing, we rarely have a forwarding address for this spouse and therefore cannot complete the notice of overpayment. Completing the VOD (Validation of Debt) becomes problematic without the notice of overpayment.
- The Union also had concerns with the completion of the VOD on both client and spouse when a file was terminated. Completing two documents is a duplication of work. Adding a line on the VOD to include the spouse's SIN and DOB should provide sufficient information for the ORU.

Action Item: SAMO to investigate the issues raised by the Union.

3.2 Special Diet

- Management advised that the Ministry is aware of issues regarding Special Diet Allowance.
- The Special Diet Allowance is currently being reviewed.
- Further communication will be sent out once review is finalized.

4.0 Business Arising

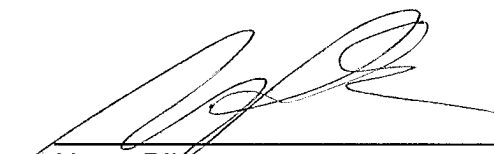
4.1 ODSP Delivery Framework

- The group sought feedback from the Ottawa LERC representatives regarding the ODSP Delivery Framework.
- The LERC indicated that the Delivery Framework received mixed reaction from the staff. Some are receptive to the idea and some are sceptical that given the long process it will fail to realize results.
- The LERC also indicated that the community is very interested in the new framework.
- The Sub-committee discussed options on how to share updates and best practices regarding the Delivery Framework process. The suggestion was made to post various Framework Checklists on the SAMO web-site. Suggestions were also made to use various communication formats, i.e. conference calls, news letters and the establishment of a contact list.

4.0 Meeting Adjourned

Approved on Jan 12, 200~~5~~ by:


Marni Campbell
Management Co-Chair

 09/01/06
Norm Pilon
OPSEU Co-Chair

Social Assistance and Municipal Operations Branch

**Presentation to
Ministry Employee Relations Committee
Overview of the Overpayment Recovery Unit and
the Sponsorship Initiative**

October 11, 2005

Purpose

- To provide an overview on the Overpayment Recovery Unit (ORU) and the Sponsorship Initiative.

Overpayment Recovery Unit

- The centralized Overpayment Recovery Unit (ORU) began operations on October 1, 2004.
- The ORU is responsible for collecting outstanding social assistance overpayments from former recipients as well as sponsorship debt.
- The ORU's areas of business are:
 - Overpayments from former Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) /Family Benefits Act (FBA) recipients (inactive files) ,
 - Debt from defaulting sponsors in both Ontario Works and ODSP (both).

Overpayment Recovery Unit cont'd

- The overall process for debt recovery is as follows:
 - Debt is referred from the local office to the ORU
 - ORU contacts the former recipient or sponsor via telephone and/or letters
 - If negotiation is successful, payments commence
 - If negotiation is unsuccessful, referral is made to Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) or considered for litigation
 - CRA notifies the debtor of intent to set off the refund
 - Debtor may chose to:
 - accept the Refund Set-Off, or
 - contact ORU to negotiate repayment plan.

Sponsorship Initiative

- Implementation of the new sponsorship recovery process was announced on December 15, 2004, as part of the overall changes to social assistance.
- A policy bulletin was provided in December 2004 to outline the process for new applications.
- In May 2005, the Ministry began to pursue debt on all defaulting sponsorship debt cases currently in the social assistance system (pre- and post-December 2004).
- The Social Assistance and Municipal Operations Branch (SAMO), in conjunction with Ontario Works delivery agents and ODSP staff, conducted an intensive “blitz” to:
 - Complete a significant number of sponsorship debt referrals to the ORU to begin collection of sponsorship debt;
 - Test and refine business processes and supporting tools;
 - Build capacity/expertise in the field.

Sponsorship Initiative cont'd

- SAMO, in conjunction with the Ontario Works and ODSP branches, held a province-wide Sponsorship Training day on June 8, 2005 for more than 150 Ontario Works Delivery Agents and ODSP staff. The key objectives were to:
 - Provide front-line staff with an opportunity to inform policy and program development, and to provide feedback on the draft operational support tools and business processes developed to support implementation;
 - Build capacity in the field for the sponsorship debt referral process (i.e., calculate/validate debt, complete the Validation of Sponsorship Debt (VOSD) form, refer cases to ORU); and
 - Provide the opportunity for feedback on the tools (e.g., sponsorship debt calculator tool).
- On August 30, 2005, the ministry released a policy bulletin on Sponsorship Debt Calculation that included key messages, Qs and As and operational support tools for the field.

Sponsorship Initiative cont'd

- An ad hoc report will be sent to each delivery agent that identifies outstanding sponsorship files for review in the near future.
- SAMO is currently refining internal ORU business processes and supporting tools, including:
 - A process and framework to negotiate payment plans where appropriate;
 - Telephone scripts for the ORU staff; and
 - A brochure on sponsorship for widespread distribution (e.g., Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program and Citizen and Immigration Canada offices).