

Income Security and Ontario's Roadmap for Change “Narrative Slides”

Income Security: An Overview

- Ontario's income security system provides a range of benefits to individuals and families who have low or no income, or who have experienced a job loss.
- It is a complex system with numerous programs funded, overseen and delivered by municipal, provincial, federal and First Nation governments.
- These programs aim to:
 - Make sure people don't fall below a certain income level
 - Support health, well-being and community inclusion
 - Connect or reconnect people to jobs.
- While improvements have been made to the income security system over the years, much more work needs to be done to support the diversity of people who rely on it.

Why This Matters - The Problem

- The income security system was designed for the workforce of the past, where many people had long-term, well-paying jobs.
- Today, low-paying, part-time jobs of short duration are much more common.
- Many people have long-standing barriers to work and social inclusion due to:
 - intergenerational poverty
 - history of colonialism
 - mental health and addiction issues.
- More people turn to social assistance as a “first resort” despite the limitations of these programs.

Why This Matters - The Human Toll

- Essential needs are increasingly out of reach for many people.
- It's harder for people to climb out of poverty.
- More people have disabilities and are facing barriers to employment and social inclusion and higher costs of living.
- Poverty and low-income are negatively impacting people's health and well-being.
- Systemic racism and discrimination are contributing to entrenched inequity.

The Cost of Inaction

Poverty is expensive and costs us all.

In 2008, it was estimated that poverty costs \$32 to \$38 billion a year in Ontario -- around \$2,300 a year for every household in the province.

The cost of inaction is high.

The status quo is not free. It comes with a high price tag and worse outcomes for people living in poverty. Investing in a fair society requires moving people out of poverty as well as preventing people from falling into poverty in the first place.

Ontario has taken steps to combat poverty through the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), as well as efforts aimed at ending homelessness and forging a new relationship with Indigenous peoples through reconciliation.

Income security is a thread that connects all of these efforts to address poverty in Ontario.

Creating a Roadmap for Change

In 2016, the Ontario government tasked three Working Groups to examine the income security system and make recommendations on how to improve it.

Income Security Reform Working Group (ISRWG)

- Facilitated by George Thomson

Membership included:

- Delivery partners
- Legal, poverty and disability advocates
- Private sector representatives
- Thought leaders, academics and experts
- Municipal partners
- People with lived experience

First Nations Income Security Reform Working Group (FNISRWG)

- Facilitated by Nancy Johnson; Co-chaired by the Chiefs of Ontario and the province

Membership included:

- Chiefs of Ontario
- Ontario Native Welfare Administrator's Association
- Provincial Territorial Organizations
- Independent First Nations
- Six Nations of the Grand River
- Ontario Works Group Delivery Sites
- Ontario First Nation Young Peoples Council
- Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

Urban Indigenous Table on Income Security Reform (UIT)

- Chaired by the province

Membership included:

- Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres
- Ontario Native Women's Association
- Métis Nation of Ontario

These working groups have developed A Roadmap For Change; a multi-year plan that identifies the steps needed to reach a modern, responsive and effective system that would help those most affected by poverty, keep others from falling into poverty, and improve our overall prosperity.

Income Security - Vision

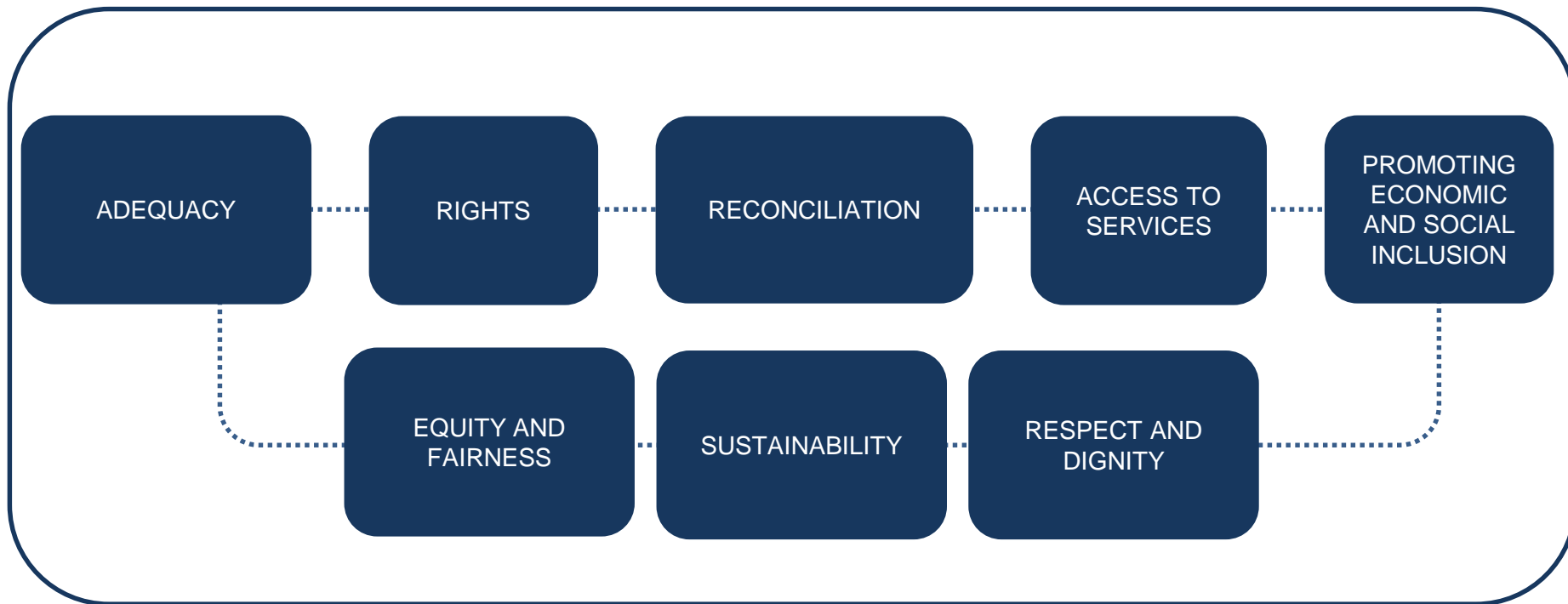
All individuals are treated with respect and dignity and are inspired and equipped to reach their full potential. People have equitable access to a comprehensive and accountable system of income and in-kind support that provides an adequate level of financial assistance and promotes economic and social inclusion, with particular attention to the needs and experience of Indigenous peoples.

Income Security - Future State



Income Security - Guiding Principles

These principles guide the Roadmap recommendations:



Income Security – Roadmap Themes

Investing in People

People are Ontario's most important resource.

All elements of the income security system need to work effectively together to meet a diverse range of needs and experiences, in support of better financial stability and health and well-being for all individuals and families.

Addressing Adequacy

It is unacceptable that so many people live in deep poverty and critical need in Ontario. It is vital that the province establish and commit to a floor below which no one should fall.

Urgent and immediate action and significant investments are required in the income security system, including social assistance, to make this a reality over the next ten years.

Recognizing the Experience of Indigenous Peoples

Income security reform must support the province's commitments to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples through its Journey Together framework, and help rebuild relationships with Indigenous peoples.

This will require the income security system to actively address and guard against systemic and institutional racism and recognize the profound impact of colonization, residential schools and intergenerational trauma.

Reform must respect First Nations' right to self-governance and respond to the unique needs and perspectives of all Indigenous peoples, including those who are not members of a First Nation.

The Roadmap to Change – Recommendations

- The roadmap includes 98 recommendations, which provide a priority sequence with a focus on the first three years. Some of the key areas for reform and notable recommendations include (see *the Appendix A for a full list of recommendations*):

Achieving Income Adequacy

- The Province should publicly commit to a **Minimum Income Standard** that will be achieved over a 10-year period (by 2027–28).
 - Established at PRS Low-Income Measure (LIM) (PRS LIM-50, plus an additional 30% for persons with a disability)
- Begin work immediately to define a **made-in-Ontario Market Basket Measure (MBM)** that would include a modern basket of goods reflecting true costs and adjusted for all regions in the province.

Engaging the Whole Income Security System

- Introduce a **housing benefit** to assist all low-income people with the high cost of housing.
- Create a supplement to the Ontario Child Benefit for the lowest income families as social assistance rate structure is redesigned.
- Work with the federal government to enhance the effectiveness of the **Working Income Tax Benefit (WITB)**.
- Make essential health benefits available to all low-income people, beginning with ensuring those in deepest poverty have access to the services they need.

Transforming Social Assistance

- Redesign the **social assistance rate structure** so that all adults have access to a consistent level of support regardless of living situation.
- Introduce an approach to serving people receiving social assistance that promotes a culture of trust, collaboration and problem-solving as a priority.
- Maintain and strengthen **Ontario Disability Support Program** as a distinct program for people with disabilities and co-design an “assured income” approach.

Helping Those in Deepest Poverty

- **immediately increase the income support available through social assistance** as a readily available means for early progress towards adequacy.
- Over the next three years implement the following **rate increases**:
 - Ontario Works
 - 10% (2018-19)
 - 7% (2019-20)
 - 5% (2020-21)
 - ODSP
 - 5% (2018-19)
 - 5% (2019-20)
 - 5% (2020-21)

Indigenous and First Nations

- Take steps to ensure that social services are ultimately controlled by, determined by and specific to First Nations.
- Broaden program outcomes to encompass social inclusion.
- Simplify processes and provide tools for a more holistic, individualized approach that offers wrap-around services.
- Programs, services and supports provided through social assistance should better reflect the realities of living within First Nations communities.

The Roadmap to Change – Sequencing Reform

- The reforms recommended in the Roadmap are designed to be phased-in over time to allow for planning and design with partners and experts and based on “lessons learned”.
- Some changes should be tested in advance, so adjustments can be made prior to broad implementation.
- Actions in the first three years are designed to target those most in need and build momentum for further change.
- Many of the reforms will require ongoing dialogue with people affected by change, front-line workers, service managers and delivery partners, advocates, Indigenous peoples and organizations, and other experts.

The Roadmap to Change – Where it Leads

Outcomes for Individuals

- People have greater control over their own lives.
- They are able to meet their essential needs.
- They find it easier to use the system and connect to the supports and services they need.
- They are empowered and equipped to better achieve personal success.
- They have improved sense of personal agency, respect and dignity.
- They have greater social and economic inclusion.

The Roadmap to Change – Where it Leads

Outcomes for the System

- Supports and services are modern, effective, responsive and sustainable.
- Supports and services are delivered efficiently, with improved transparency.
- Supports and services are accessible and respectful — reducing barriers that do not support people's abilities, capacities or goals.
- The system is simpler and less confusing.
- The system is more flexible and better able to adapt to people's diverse and changing needs.
- The system recognizes the value of early intervention.
- Front-line staff and delivery partners are empowered to make a positive difference in people's lives.
- As income adequacy improves, there will be a multiplier effect as the funds work through the economy.

The Roadmap to Change – What's Next

- Ontario has received the Income Security Reform Working Groups' report with its advice and recommendations for helping Ontarians living in poverty and on low incomes get ahead.
- The government agrees with the need to fundamentally reform the income security system, including the transformation of social assistance, to ensure all individuals are treated with respect and dignity and are inspired to reach their full potential, with particular attention to the needs and experience of Indigenous peoples.
- The Roadmap has been posted online at ontario.ca/incomesecurity, and there is a 60-day period for the public to provide feedback.
- The government will be developing a multi-year implementation plan that draws on the Roadmap recommendations, with a particular focus on the first four years.

APPENDIX – FULL LIST OF ROADMAP RECOMMENDATIONS

Appendix B - Full List of Roadmap Recommendations

1. Adopt a Minimum Income Standard in Ontario to be achieved over the next ten years through a combination of supports across the income security system

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| 1.1 | <p>The Province should publicly commit to a Minimum Income Standard that will be achieved over a 10-year period (by 2027-28)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Minimum Income Standard should initially be established at the Low-Income Measure currently used by Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy (LIM-50 linked to a base year of 2012), plus an additional 30% for persons with a disability, in recognition of the additional cost of living with a disability |
| 1.2 | <p>Begin work immediately to define a "Made in Ontario" Market-Basket Measure (MBM) that would include a modern basket of goods, with prices reflecting true costs, and adjusted for all regions in the province, including the remote north, for use in evaluating progress towards the Minimum Income Standard; and potentially revising or replacing the PRS LIM as the measure used to set the standard. The "Made in Ontario" MBM could also be used to guide and evaluate investment decisions over the long-term</p> |
| 1.3 | <p>Implement the recommendations in the roadmap to move toward adequacy in the income security system by 2027-28</p> |

2. Introduce a housing benefit to assist all low-income people, whether or not they receive social assistance, with the high cost of housing so they are not forced to choose between a home and other necessities

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| 2.1 | <p>Confirm the design and implementation details for a universal, income-tested portable housing benefit for people who rent their homes</p> |
| 2.2 | <p>Implement the portable housing benefit in 2019-20 at a modest "gap coverage" of 25% with the gap defined as the difference between the actual cost of housing and a minimum household contribution given household income</p> |
| 2.3 | <p>Increase gap coverage to 35% in 2020-21 and continue to increase gap coverage, reaching 75% by or before 2027-28</p> |
| 2.4 | <p>First Nations need to be meaningfully included in the housing benefit and may need modifications or an alternate benefit to ensure it works in the reserve context</p> |

Appendix B - Full List of Roadmap Recommendations (cont'd)

3. Continue to move income support for children outside of social assistance so all low-income families can benefit fully, regardless of income source. Ensure supports are sensitive to the needs of children and youth who are experiencing difficulties in their family life

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| 3.1 | Provide bridging child supplements within social assistance to ensure families are not worse off during the transition, as the social assistance structure is transformed to include flat rates |
| 3.2 | Re-brand the Temporary Care Assistance program to focus on child well-being, increase the amount of income support provided to better align with foster care levels, and provide clear flexibility for Ontario Works Administrators to determine where it is best accessed |
| 3.3 | Shift the remaining amounts paid in respect of children's essential needs in social assistance to the Ontario Child Benefit as a supplement targeted to the lowest income families |
| 3.4 | Require Children's Aid Societies to place Children's Special Allowance payments into a savings program for youth in care 15 years and older so the funds can be disbursed to the youth when transitioning from care |
| 3.5 | Provide support to low-income people including those living in First Nation communities to ensure that benefits paid through the tax system are accessed and equitably distributed |

4. Work with the federal government to enhance the effectiveness of the Working Income Tax Benefit so that it plays a greater role in contributing to income adequacy for low income workers in Ontario

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| 4.1 | <p>The federal government enhance the WITB so that it better reflects the realities faced by low-income workers in Ontario. This should include examining:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the level of earnings at which an individual begins receiving the WITB and how the WITB is adjusted when earnings increase, including the threshold at which the WITB begins to be reduced• the overall amount of support provided through the WITB• the net income at which individuals are no longer eligible to receive the WITB• <u>ensuring that it equally benefits First Nations whose income is tax exempt</u> |
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Appendix B - Full List of Roadmap Recommendations (cont'd)

5. Make essential health benefits available to all low-income people, beginning with ensuring those in deepest poverty have access to the services they need

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| 5.1 | Expand access to mandatory core health benefits to all adults receiving Ontario Works and adult children in families receiving ODSP, and add coverage for dentures (including initial and follow up fittings) for all social assistance recipients |
| 5.2 | Expand existing and introduce new core health benefits for all low-income adults over the next 10 years starting with the expansion of prescription drug coverage to adults 25 to 65, followed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expanding Healthy Smiles Ontario to adults age 18 to 65 and adding dentures as part of the benefit• Designing and implementing a new vision and hearing benefit for low income individuals and families• Expanding access to medical transportation benefits |
| 5.3 | Review the Assistive Devices Program to ensure the program is maximizing its reach to low-income people, both in terms of the list of devices that are covered and the maximum coverage |

6. Procedural fairness should be embedded in all aspects of the income security system through adequate policies, procedures, practices, and timely appeal mechanisms

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| 6.1 | Request a research body such as the Law Commission of Ontario or academic institution review the existing appeal process for tax delivered benefits and develop recommendations for enhanced or new mechanisms that support fair, transparent and efficient access to those benefits and appeal processes |
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Appendix B - Full List of Roadmap Recommendations (cont'd)

7. Fundamentally change the legislative framework for social assistance programs to set the foundation for a culture of trust, collaboration and problem-solving

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| 7.1 | Develop and introduce new legislation to govern and re-brand the current Ontario Works program. As a starting point for legislative change, draft and publicly consult on a new purpose statement in the first year of reform that explicitly recognizes and supports: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individual choice and well-being, and• Diverse needs and a goal of social and economic inclusion for all |
| 7.2 | Identify and amend regulations under both the Ontario Works Act and the Ontario Disability Support Program Act before new Ontario Works legislation is introduced in order to jump start and reinforce a positive culture of trust, collaboration and problem-solving |
| 7.3 | Provide First Nations with the opportunity to develop and implement their own community-based models of Income Assistance under provincial legislation |

8. Introduce an approach to serving people receiving Ontario Works and ODSP that promotes a culture of trust, collaboration, and problem-solving as a priority – one that supports good quality of life outcomes for people in all communities, including Indigenous peoples

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| 8.1 | Position frontline workers as case collaborators whose primary role is to act as supportive problem solvers and human services system navigators in a way that allows people to share information without fear of reprisals. This includes working with individuals in both individual and group settings |
| 8.2 | Introduce a comprehensive assessment tool to identify needs for, and barriers to, social and economic inclusion that uses an equity and trauma-informed approach to connect people to appropriate supports |
| 8.3 | Use pilots to test the comprehensive assessment tool and the case collaborator role with an initial focus on people seeking to access ODSP through Ontario Works, long-term social assistance recipients, youth and persons with disabilities (cont'd) |

Appendix B - Full List of Roadmap Recommendations (cont'd)

8. Introduce an approach to serving people receiving Ontario Works and ODSP that promotes a culture of trust, collaboration, and problem-solving as a priority – one that supports good quality of life outcomes for people in all communities, including Indigenous peoples (cont'd)

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| 8.4 | Eliminate financial and eligibility penalties related to employment efforts and rigid reporting requirements to support a new person-centred approach, promote trust and respect between frontline workers and people accessing help, and place a firm emphasis on problem-solving and addressing urgent needs first (e.g., risk of homelessness). This includes revising policies that create barriers to safety and well-being (e.g., fleeing an unsafe home) |
| 8.5 | Ensure front line workers have the necessary skills and knowledge to act as case collaborators through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory professional development and learning, including critical social work skills (i.e., anti-racism, contemporary professional development and anti-oppressive practice), and Indigenous cultural safety training and awareness, and • Provincially set and governed quality standards and controls tied to staff performance plans |
| 8.6 | Regularly situate Ontario Works and ODSP case collaborators in Indigenous service delivery offices to improve cultural awareness and understanding and support better inter-agency relationships |
| 8.7 | Clearly recognize Indigenous peoples' right to choose service in their preferred location |
| 8.8 | Ensure staffing at all levels reflects the diversity of Ontario, and model truly inclusive offices that are welcoming spaces and reflect the multitude of culture and communities served across the province, including the diversity within and across Indigenous communities |
| 8.9 | Continuously review and adjust the service approach, professional development and tools and resources based on feedback from partners and people accessing programs |
| 8.10 | First Nations-developed and implemented program based on self-identification, self-worth and true reconciliation leading to life stabilization |
| 8.11 | Conduct analyses on current and proposed policies and services to ensure they do not increase vulnerability or undermine safety of those receiving support. This should include a culture gender-based analysis to ensure safety of Indigenous women |

Appendix B - Full List of Roadmap Recommendations (cont'd)

9. Maintain and strengthen ODSP as a distinct program for people with disabilities. Ensure that both ODSP and Ontario Works are well equipped to support people with disabilities in meeting individual goals for social and economic inclusion

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| 9.1 | Recognize the continued need for a distinct income support program for people with disabilities |
| 9.2 | Retain the current ODSP definition of disability of disability |
| 9.3 | Continue work with the Disability Adjudication Working Group to streamline and improve the ODSP application and adjudication process |
| 9.4 | Provide provincial-level assistance and accommodation for people who need help with the ODSP application process, building on lessons learned from community groups |
| 9.5 | Include specific review with First Nations and urban Indigenous service delivery partners to ensure the assistance and accommodation reflect the unique experience of Indigenous peoples |
| 9.6 | Ensure that both ODSP and Ontario Works accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities as part of the person-centred, collaborative approach to support individual goals and aspirations |

10. Co- design an “assured income” approach for people with disabilities

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| 10.1 | Co-design an “Assured Income” mechanism for delivering financial support to people who meet the ODSP definition of disability. Consultation with First Nations people is essential |
| 10.2 | <p>Include the following features in the assured income mechanism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income-tested only (i.e., no asset test) • Stacking of income benefits to reach adequacy • Tax-based definition of income (i.e., does not include financial help (gifts) from family or friends) • Continued responsibility of the provincial government to determine disability, with the right of appeal to the Ontario Social Benefits Tribunal • Flexibility to adjust to in-year income changes • Safe to move into employment and back to the program (cont'd) |

Appendix B - Full List of Roadmap Recommendations (cont'd)

10. Co- design an “assured income” approach for people with disabilities (cont'd)

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| 10.3 | Provide an initial Assured Income benefit at least as high as the ODSP Standard Flat Rate at the time of transition. Provide continued increases until the Minimum Income Standard is achieved in combination with other income security components (see Setting a Goal for Income Adequacy) |
| 10.4 | Ensure that people receiving the Assured Income have full access to ODSP caseworker services and support |
| 10.5 | Provide First Nations with the ability to administer and deliver ODSP in their own communities in the same manner as Ontario Works |

11. Redesign the social assistance rate structure so that all adults have access to a consistent level of support regardless of living situation (i.e., rental, ownership, board and lodge, no fixed address, rent-geared to income housing, government-funded facility)

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| 11.1 | <p>Transform the social assistance rate structure so that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single adults receive a Standard Flat Rate that does not distinguish between basic needs and shelter. • Couples receive a Standard Couple Flat Rate equal to 1.5 of the Standard Flat Rate. • In recognition of the additional cost of living with a disability, single adults with a disability receive a higher Standard Flat Rate – Disability and couples receive a Standard Couple Rate – Disability of 1.5 the Standard Flat Rate-Disability • Adult children aged 18-24 (without a disability) who live with their parent(s) on social assistance receive a Dependent Rate (75% of the Standard Flat Rate for the first dependent and 35% for each additional dependent). Non-disabled adult children over age 24 who live with their parent(s) receive the full Standard Flat Rate. People with disabilities will continue to qualify in their own right for ODSP at the age of 18 |
| 11.2 | Align the definition of spouse under social assistance with the <i>Family Law Act</i> (i.e., deemed a spouse after 3 years) |
| 11.3 | In moving to a Standard Flat Rate structure, eliminate the rent scales currently used for those receiving social assistance. Require municipal housing services managers to invest the increased revenues resulting from the elimination of rent-geared-to-income rent scales (due to the transformed rate structure) into local housing and homelessness priorities |

Appendix B - Full List of Roadmap Recommendations (cont'd)

12. Improve social assistance rules and re-design benefits through a co-design process to make it easier for people to pursue their employment goals and realize the benefits of working

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| 12.1 | Re-design, using a co-design process, existing employment-related benefits (except the ODSP Work-Related Benefit) into one benefit with consideration given to: whether the new benefit should be mandatory or discretionary, the level of prescription in the activities the benefit can support, and the level of support that is provided to meet a broad range of needs; and test the new benefit before province-wide roll out |
| 12.2 | Reduce the wait period for exempting employment earnings to one month (from three months) in Ontario Works |
| 12.3 | Designate First Nations Ontario Works delivery agents to deliver and administer the Employment Ontario employment assistance program to better assist their community members in becoming employable through the array of programming and benefits that are not available to them for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to vast distances from municipalities or urban centres where Employment Ontario programs are placed, lack of services focused on developing employability skills available through the Ontario Works program, and the recent removal of assisting programs (e.g., First Nations Job Fund) |
| 12.4 | Support case collaboration in both individuals and group settings |

13. Modernize income and asset rules so people can maximize the income sources available to them and save for the future

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| 13.1 | Exempt as assets funds held in Tax Free Savings Accounts and all forms of Registered Retirement Savings Plans so people do not have to deplete resources meant for their senior years |
| 13.2 | Initially exempt 25% of Canada Pension Plan-Disability, Employment Insurance, and Workplace Safety and Insurance Board payments from social assistance (i.e., social assistance would be reduced by 75 cents for every dollar of income from these sources rather than dollar for dollar) |
| 13.3 | Increase the income exemption for Canada Pension Plan-Disability, Employment Insurance, and Workplace Safety and Insurance Board to the same level as the existing earnings exemption by 2022-23 |

Appendix B - Full List of Roadmap Recommendations (cont'd)

14. Ensure ongoing access to targeted allowances and benefits until such time as adequacy is achieved. Determine which extraordinary costs remain beyond the means of individuals even when adequacy is achieved and maintain those benefits

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| 14.1 | Retain the following special purpose allowances / benefits and review as progress towards adequacy is made and people's outcomes are better understood: : <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Special Diet Allowance• Mandatory Special Necessities / Medical Transportation• Pregnancy Breast-Feeding Nutritional Allowance• ODSP Work-Related Benefit |
| 14.2 | Revise medical transportation rules to include and support improved access to traditional healers |
| 14.3 | Review and introduce expanded eligibility criteria for the Remote Communities Allowance to better address the needs of northern and remote communities |
| 14.4 | Redesign Ontario Works discretionary benefits as other recommendations are implemented (e.g., making core health benefits and help with funeral and burial costs mandatory) and consider making them available to the broader low income population |

15. Help those in deepest poverty by immediately increasing the income support available through social assistance as a readily available means for early and absolutely critical progress towards adequacy

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| 15.1 | Implement changes that make meaningful progress in improving the incomes of those furthest from the Minimum Income Standard (see Defining Income Adequacy) through social assistance as the most readily available and easily adjusted means by (in Fall 2018): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Setting the Standard Flat Rate at \$794/month (a 10% increase over Fall 2017 Ontario Works maximum basic needs and shelter rates), and• Setting the Standard Flat Rate – Disability at \$1,209/month (a 5% increase over Fall 2017 ODSP maximum basic needs and shelter rates) (cont'd) |
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Appendix B - Full List of Roadmap Recommendations (cont'd)

15. Help those in deepest poverty by immediately increasing the income support available through social assistance as a readily available means for early and absolutely critical progress towards adequacy (cont'd)

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| 15.2 | Implement increases to the Standard Flat Rate and Standard Flat Rate - Disability in Fall 2019: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase the Standard Flat Rate to \$850/month (7% increase over Year 1)• Increase the Standard Flat Rate-Disability to \$1,270/month (5% increase over Year 1) |
| 15.3 | Implement further increases to the Standard Flat Rate and Standard Flat Rate – Disability in Fall 2020: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase the Standard Flat Rate to \$893/month (5% increase over Year 2)• Increase the Standard Flat Rate- Disability to \$1,334/month (5% increase over Year 2) |
| 15.4 | Continue to raise the level of income support available through (a re-branded) Ontario Works program until the Minimum Income Standard is achieved in combination with other income security components by 2027-28 (see also An Assured Income for People with Disabilities) |

16. Take steps to ensure that social services are ultimately controlled by, determined by, and specific to First Nations

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| 16.1 | Based on First Nations inherent right, First Nations should have the opportunity to develop and control their own social service programs |
| 16.2 | Recognize First Nations authority to create and implement their own model of Income Assistance (cont'd) |
| 16.3 | Engage with federal government and First Nations in a tripartite arrangement to ensure ongoing financial support for the new flexible, responsive approaches |
| 16.4 | Respect First Nations autonomy and work with First Nations to develop an opt-out clause that explicitly recognizes their right to opt out of provisions in the Ontario Works legislative framework in favour of their own models. Establish communication processes for informing First Nations of the opt-out provisions and opportunities for piloting direct program delivery (cont'd) |

Appendix B - Full List of Roadmap Recommendations (cont'd)

16. Take steps to ensure that social services are ultimately controlled by, determined by, and specific to First Nations (cont'd)

16.5	<p>Identify more flexible, responsive service approaches or models that First Nations could adapt, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living with Parent rule • Qualifying period for earnings exemptions • Non-compliance rules • Rental Income for Ontario Works recipients • Spousal definition to be defined under the Family Law Act • Participation requirements (voluntary) • Shelter cost maximums, to be based on actuals
16.6	Establish and communicate clear guidelines for provincial staff in accessing First Nations owned data reflecting the principles of the Ownership, Control, Access and Possession protocol endorsed by the Assembly of First Nations
16.7	Commit to working with First Nations to design and launch pilots for the direct delivery of programs including the Ontario Disability Support Program, Employment Ontario, Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities and Special Services at Home within their communities, with the long term goal of First Nations delivery as they choose
16.8	Support the development of administrative forms and processes and training of First Nation social services staff to support the new flexible, responsive approach
16.9	Commit to working with First Nations (through PTOs, Tribal Councils or individual First Nations) to establish an implementation plan for First Nations to accept the responsibility for the design and delivery of the following programs to First Nation communities, such as: Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program, Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities, Special Services at Home, and Temporary Care Assistance [Note: this is coupled with 16.8 at front]
16.10	Take steps to ensure that First Nations will still be eligible for any new program dollars for any new programs that the Ontario government might develop after a First Nation has taken on self-governance in social assistance

Appendix B - Full List of Roadmap Recommendations (cont'd)

17. Broaden program outcomes to encompass social inclusion. Simplify processes and provide tools for a more holistic, individualized approach that offers wrap-around services

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| 17.1 | The diverse goals, needs and paths of individuals should be recognized to encourage and promote personal success; this includes broadening program outcomes to include community engagement, social inclusion as well as supporting individuals in increasing their employability |
| 17.2 | <p>First Nations social service programs should have recognition and support for their ability to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income assistance to singles, couples, and families • Pre-employment activities that include but are not limited to literacy, upgrading, employment experience, job-specific skills training, youth-specific initiatives, social enterprise and self-employment resources • Mental health and addictions referrals and early interventions • Community-based initiatives specific to language, culture, tradition and the community's economic and educational context <p>All of these services will be delivered in a First Nations holistic approach</p> |
| 17.3 | Community and social development training for First Nations staff |
| 17.4 | Healing and wellness, life stabilization, social inclusion, pre-employment activities and developing essential skills should be recognized as significant achievements along the path to success |
| 17.5 | Ontario Works self-employment rules should be aligned with ODSP to include those working part-time and seasonally. Self-employment rules, guidelines and eligibility assessments should be simplified and revised |
| 17.6 | Encourage self-employment and social enterprises as viable options for First Nations peoples and communities |
| 17.7 | Work with First Nations to promote information and create opportunities related to micro-loan availability and small business start-up as well as federal and provincial programming |
| 17.8 | First Nation social service administrators should continue to deliver employment related services to promote a holistic approach towards supporting community members (cont'd) |

Appendix B - Full List of Roadmap Recommendations (cont'd)

17. Broaden program outcomes to encompass social inclusion. Simplify processes and provide tools for a more holistic, individualized approach that offers wrap-around services (cont'd)

17.9	First Nation social service administrators should deliver and oversee Employment Ontario Employment Services and supports in their communities
17.10	<p>First Nations youth represent the future of First Nations communities and require access to services and supports earlier in life to achieve success in employment, education and transitioning to adulthood.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people aged 14+ should have access to Ontario Works and ODSP employment supports. • Provision of funding to support programming, social inclusion, cultural learning and knowledge sharing between Elders and youth
17.11	<p>In recognition that ODSP should be delivered by First Nations, reduce barriers to ODSP by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing funding for support staff to provide intensive case management and secure assessments to help individuals navigate ODSP • supporting better access to health practitioners in First Nation communities to assist with the completion of the Disability Determination Package (DDP) through use of video or tele-health services • increasing and expediting help with medical transportation costs • ongoing supports for ODSP recipients and benefit units • provide a supplementary benefit that is dedicated to individuals with disabilities receiving ODSP • providing longer time lines to complete steps in the adjudication process as required
17.12	To support ongoing professional development for First Nations, tools, resources, funding and training should be in place
17.13	Promote/support healing and wellness among social services staff
17.14	The capabilities, skills and professional development of First Nation social service administrators should be better recognized and celebrated as critical to affecting the lives and outcomes of First Nation individuals receiving social assistance

Appendix B - Full List of Roadmap Recommendations (cont'd)

18. The income security system needs to better respond to the local economic and geographic circumstances of First Nation communities to help ensure people get the help they need to maintain an adequate standard of living and are lifted out of poverty

18.1	Programs, services and supports provided through social assistance should better reflect the realities of living within First Nation communities
18.2	Discretionary funding should be based on reimbursement of actual expenditures
18.3	Rates should reflect the additional costs of living in First Nations communities, including remote and isolated communities (e.g. purchasing nutritious food, transportation costs)
18.4	Address price setting practices for food, goods and services in northern communities (e.g. Northern Store)
18.5	Expand eligibility criteria for the Remote Communities Allowance to include a wider area
18.6	Recognize and apply the concept of using a First Nation-developed Remoteness Quotient that reflects the increased cost of living in remote First Nations
18.7	Develop a Transitional Support Fund (TSF) funding formula that is based on actual expenditures
18.8	Provide additional funding to support the Cost of Administration, especially for communities with smaller caseloads
18.9	Develop a supplementary case load tool and technology that accurately captures the actual case load data and is reflected in the Cost of Administration and discretionary benefits
18.10	Fund First Nations technology solutions

19. Income security reform must be accompanied by a robust change management and implementation plan

Appendix B - Full List of Roadmap Recommendations (cont'd)

20. Implementation of this roadmap should be accompanied by a transparent report on associated outcomes and indicators, to be updated annually and made publicly available by the Province

20.1	Establish an annual, publicly available report that will outline progress on the roadmap recommendations, including progress against outcomes
20.2	Establish a third party body who will review and comment on the annual progress report and provide their comments to the Cabinet
20.3	Require that both the annual report and the third party comments be tabled in the legislature