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August 2, 2017

MEMORANDUM TO: Developmental Services Partnership Table

FROM: Gloria Lee
Director, Ontario Disability Support Program

SUBJECT: Upcoming Improvements to ODSP

Dear Partnership Table Member:

I am pleased to inform you about upcoming improvements to social assistance announced in the 2017 Budget and a number of other improvements which will be implemented by September 1, 2017.

Increase to the Exemption Limit for Compensation Awards for ODSP

Effective August 1, 2017, compensation awards for pain and suffering and incurred expenses will be fully exempt as income and assets for individuals receiving ODSP (from the current \$100,000 limit).

Awards to compensate a person for lost income, such as Income Replacement Benefits and Non-Earner Benefits, will continue to be non-exempt and will be considered income and/or assets for ODSP purposes.

ODSP Rate Increases

Effective September 1, 2017, the following rates and benefits will increase by 2%:

- The basic needs and shelter maximums for singles and families;
- The board and lodge rate for singles and families;
- The double disabled maximum;
- ODSP institutional rates;
- The maximum monthly financial assistance for individuals receiving Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (ACSD). The minimum monthly payment remains unchanged;
- Personal Needs Allowance;

Exemption of Donations from Charitable Organizations

Effective September 1, 2017 all donations received from a religious, charitable or benevolent organization for any purpose will be fully exempt as income. This change eliminates the previous \$100,000 cap that was applied to these payments for individuals in ODSP.

Increase to Earnings Deductions – Disability-Related Employment Expenses

Effective September 1, 2017, the monthly maximum deduction for disability-related employment expenses under ODSP will increase from \$300 to \$1,000.

ODSP Transitional Health Benefit – Batteries and Repairs for Mobility Devices

Effective September 1, 2017 batteries and repairs for mobility devices are included in the health benefits available under the Transitional Health Benefit.

Streamlining Changes to Assist People Coming Back onto ODSP

Improvements to Rapid Reinstatement Rules

Effective September 1, 2017, former recipients who were grandparented from the Family Benefits Act (FBA) who have exited ODSP are eligible for rapid reinstatement regardless of the reason they exited ODSP, e.g. left the province or income in excess. Prior to this, only those individuals grandparented from FBA who left the program for employment related reasons were eligible.

Introduction of Streamlined Re-Application Process

Effective September 1, 2017, applicants who were adjudicated and found to be a person with a disability, but did not meet all of the financial and eligibility rules and, as a result, were never granted ODSP income support, do not need to be re-adjudicated if they reapply for ODSP.

Communication and Implementation

The Ministry will work with local offices to ensure that these policy changes are implemented consistently and on time. Individuals receiving ODSP will be advised of these improvements via cheque insert in September 2017.

I hope you find this information useful and please feel free to share it with members of your organization.

Sincerely,



Gloria Lee
Director