

**Ministry of Children,
Community and Social
Services**

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Mr. Omar Ha-Redeye
Executive Director
Durham Community Legal Clinic
Midtown Centre
B1-200 John Street West
Oshawa, Ontario
L1J 2B4

Dear Mr. Ha-Redeye:

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Durham Community Legal Clinic regarding social assistance reform and changes to the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). I appreciate the suggestions you have made to better support ODSP recipients and the people that provide services to them.

As you know, our government is moving forward with social assistance reforms that will restore dignity, encourage employment, and empower Ontario's most vulnerable to break free from the poverty cycle. Ontarians deserve a social assistance system where people with disabilities are treated with dignity, and where a recipient's hard work and commitment is met by empowerment and trust from their government. We believe that social assistance must be about lifting people up, offering people a way out and helping people get their lives back on track. We will help people stabilize and connect to simpler, more effective supports so that those who are able to work can move back into the workforce and everyone is better able to participate in their community.

Front-line staff will work with recipients to help connect them to other supports. We will also eliminate barriers for those receiving social assistance, including reducing administration, cutting unnecessary rules and restoring service accountability through a simplified system.

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I appreciate your concerns about changes to the ODSP definition of a disability. We are listening and exploring the best ways to bring about positive outcomes for Ontarians in need, so we are taking the time to get this right. Details are still to be determined and we will provide more information as decisions are made.

Your letter has been shared with appropriate staff in my ministry, and will be taken into consideration as our work continues.

Again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,



Todd Smith
Minister