

**Supported Employment  
Technical Questions and Answers  
For Service Provider**

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## Service Delivery

### **1. Why is the Ministry taking a phased approach to implementing Supported Employment?**

Taking a phased approach to implementing Supported Employment allows the Ministry to make decisions of what the next phase of integration will look like based on the lessons learned and best practices from the first phase. Getting involved at this early stage in implementation provides a unique opportunity to shape how employment services will be delivered to people with disabilities in the future.

### **2. How will service providers and participants transition from current programming to Supported Employment?**

Starting in April 2018, service providers will transition from existing programs to Supported Employment. To ensure service continuity for participants, there will be a transition period to allow service providers to make decisions on the best referrals for individuals accessing services from the three existing employment programs. Service providers will be expected to work with individuals to determine the best pathway that suits their individual needs.

### **3. May a service provider contract out services, such as job coaching from other service providers? How would service providers pay for such services?**

The service provider may only contract out parts of Supported Employment program components in circumstances where they may lack the expertise to provide these services to a specific disability group. For example, participant and employer-based training on the use of computer software and equipment to assist participants who are visually impaired; or, specialized job coaching, including design of job specific supports for a participant with severe Autism Spectrum Disorder.

A service provider should pay for contracting service through operating funding.

### **4. What are the customer service requirements for service providers regarding site accessibility?**

Supported Employment service providers should ensure that delivery sites and facilities reflect customer need, including:

- a) accessible facilities or service provision at an accessible site;
- b) itinerant and/or mobile services where local need is identified; and
- c) days/hours of operation that reflect customer need.

**5. What are the catchment areas for phase one communities? What are the Ministry's plans for communities outside these areas?**

The first phase of Supported Employment will only be offered in three communities: Timmins, Cornwall, and Belleville.

- The catchment area for Belleville is composed of Prince Edward County; with the southern portion of Hastings County, below the village of Tweed.
- The catchment area for Cornwall includes the Counties of Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry and Akwesasne.
- The catchment area for Timmins includes the southern part of Cochrane and northern part of Sudbury counties. The southern section is extended to cover the communities in the area.

Please refer to [Appendix A](#) for more details on the defined areas.

Service providers currently delivering ODSP-ES, MHVE, and OEAS outside the catchment areas will continue as status quo.

The Ministry has not made any decisions on what the next phase of Supported Employment implementation will be, as these decisions will be informed by the lessons learned and best practices from the first phase. The Ministry will continue to engage with service providers as planning for future phases progresses.

## Consortium Delivery Model

**6. What is the definition of a consortium for Supported Employment program delivery?**

A consortium delivery model includes two or more service providers that have pooled their resources and are working together to deliver Supported Employment services. In a consortium there is one lead service provider who enters into a Transfer Payment Agreement with the Ministry and is therefore accountable to the Ministry for the delivery of the full Supported Employment program on behalf of all partners in the consortium.

**7. What are the benefits to a consortium delivery model?**

**Improve individual service access through more collaborative and coordinated community service planning.**

- Service providers in a consortium will have greater flexibility and input into how resources are allocated to meet the needs of the community (e.g., ensuring the Supported Employment program meets the full spectrum of disability needs). Service providers would work together to ensure that smaller, disability-specific organizations would preserve their specialized services.

- Ministry funding for community-wide delivery of the program would be transferred to the consortium, whose members would jointly identify service needs and potential gaps and work together to allocate resources appropriately.

### **Shared accountability for performance.**

- Where sole delivery can in some cases result in “competition” amongst service providers to meet performance targets, consortium delivery offers the opportunity for groups of service providers to partner together to meet joint performance goals.

### **Improve administrative efficiency:**

- Provides an opportunity for service providers to pool resources and realize administrative efficiencies, resulting in more resources that could be directed towards frontline service delivery.
- For example: consortium partners could explore ways to streamline data entry or consolidate other business functions.

### **Support staff development and ongoing professional growth to continuously improve services:**

- A consortium model would facilitate more free flow of information and resources, specifically greater sharing of skills and best practices across organizations.
- Greater understanding of success stories and diverse experiences can lead to improvements to service delivery.

### **Improve service coordination between partners:**

- Formalized referral pathways between partners which ensures that individuals are being referred to the appropriate service provider, based on need.
- Individuals accessing the program will receive a consistent level of service from each provider within a consortium.
- Partners could also streamline outreach to employers, to reduce duplication of efforts.

## **8. What is the lead service provider responsible for in a consortium model?**

As per the roles and responsibilities outlined in section 3.1.2 of the guidelines, the lead service provider will develop and/or manage clear and transparent business arrangements and practices with each partner organization within the

consortium, including developing formal agreements with all partners outlining the following\*:

- Clear delivery performance expectations with the partner organizations that align with expectations in the guidelines and the agreement between the lead service provider and the Ministry effective April 1, 2018;
- Consistent and transparent methods for distributing operating and employer/individual financial supports to other partner organizations within the consortium;
- Practices for the sharing of participant personal information/data between partner organizations and the lead service provider in order to accurately complete reporting requirements as required. Participant data sharing practices must comply with applicable privacy legislation;
- Clear client pathways to minimize the number of partner organization sites an individual must visit to access services;
- Policies regarding service delivery and coordination, such as intake and assessment processes and procedures, referral processes; and,
- Written policies on the reimbursement payment process to all partner organizations.

\* This is not an exhaustive list. Service providers may wish to include additional provisions in a consortium agreement.

## **9. What is included in a consortium agreement?**

The lead service provider will enter into and maintain contractual arrangements with each partner organization. Agreements must be in place by March 31, 2018, in order to begin intake by April 2, 2018.

The agreement between the lead service provider and the partner organizations should include the provisions provided below, but this is not an exhaustive list. The Lead Service Provider may include additional provisions as required:

- performance expectations of all partners;
- policies regarding the coordination of service delivery, including any intake, assessment and referral processes;
- roles and responsibilities for all consortium members;
- funding allocation parameters and processes, including details on when and how payments will be provided to the partner organizations;

- reporting requirements that include description of reports and due dates;
- the protection and transmission of individual and program participant data; and,
- exit and entry mechanisms for partners within the consortium.

#### **10. What do intake and referrals look like in a consortium?**

Partners within a consortium will need to establish clear service delivery roles and responsibilities, including referral and intake pathways, as appropriate. The Ministry strongly suggests that the consortium include these processes and practices in a formal agreement between partners.

#### **11. Do all partners share program targets? How will a consortium's outcomes be evaluated by the Ministry?**

The Ministry will allocate resources to a consortium as whole. The Ministry expects resource allocation to be negotiated and mutually agreed upon by all members within the consortium. In the agreement between the lead provider and partners, clear processes for funding allocation should be established.

The lead service provider will be responsible for rolling up reports to the Ministry, and the Ministry will evaluate the outcomes of the consortium as whole.

#### **12. How does performance management work within a consortium? What happens if a partner in a consortium is not meeting program expectations and/or targets?**

The agreement between the lead service provider and partners in a consortium should include clear delivery performance expectations of partner organizations that align with expectations in the program guidelines. As the holder of the Transfer Payment Agreement, the lead service provider is accountable to the Ministry for the performance of the consortium. The lead provider should work with their partners to establish agreed upon monitoring processes.

The Ministry suggests including a process for allocating funds and monitoring performance of all members in a consortium in the consortium agreement.

#### **13. Do all members in a consortium need to deliver all of the Supported Employment program components?**

A lead service provider must have the capacity to deliver all components of Supported Employment. In order to maintain fidelity to the Supported Employment program model, the Ministry recommends all partners should also have the capacity to deliver all components:

- Client Service Planning and Coordination

- Employability Skills
- Job Search
- Job Matching
- Job Coaching
- Job Retention

The Ministry could consider a delivery model that includes specialized delivery of individual or groups of service components within a consortium. If a consortium chooses to propose this model, the lead service provider would need to submit a business case that demonstrates the following:

- How the delivery will positively impact and improve services for individuals and employers accessing the program
- A plan for delivery of service, including which partners will be delivering each component and where (i.e., service site locations)
- A plan for case management (e.g. who will be responsible for case managing shared participants)
- The impact on performance management (i.e., how service delivery partners will be held accountable for the delivery of individual or smaller groups of service components)
- How individual and employer information will be shared between service providers and still adhere to relevant privacy legislation

Please note that the Ministry will not adjust the program's funding formula which is based on full program delivery, so the consortium would need to determine how to fund partners in this delivery structure.

**14. Will all members of a consortium have access to the Ministry's case management system or can a separate system be used by partners?**

All participant data must be entered into the Ministry's Employment Ontario Information System – Case Management System (EOIS-CaMS). The lead service provider will be responsible for ensuring this is done; however, a consortium can choose how data is collected amongst the partners. A consortium may choose to have partners enter data into a separate system and then feed the information to the lead who would input the data into CaMS to meet the Ministry's reporting requirements. At this time, the Ministry is looking into opportunities to provide partners with direct access to CaMS.

If a separate data system is used, the consortium must establish a secure



method for transferring participant and program data from partners to the lead. The lead service provider will need to ensure partners have mandatory privacy safeguards in place to ensure that participant personal information is protected, including:

- designating an experienced privacy officer to train employees on privacy protection;
- developing a privacy policy that is posted and visible to the public; and,
- requiring partner organizations to adhere to the privacy requirements applicable to the lead service provider under its agreement with the province.

### **15. What happens if there are changes within the consortium structure?**

The Ministry must be made aware if there are any changes to a consortium structure, i.e. adding or removing an organization from the consortium, so that the Transfer Payment Agreement with the lead provider can be adjusted accordingly. This could include a renegotiation of the consortium's targets.

The agreement between the lead service providers and partners should include exit and entry mechanisms that are mutually agreed upon by all partners, including processes for members to voluntarily leave the consortium, as well as options for removing a partner that is not meeting the expectations laid out in the agreement.

### **16. Can a consortium use a third party to conduct performance monitoring of partners?**

A consortium must inform the Ministry that they will use an outside third party firm to conduct performance monitoring of partners. A privacy impact assessment will be undertaken and any processes must comply with applicable privacy legislation. Additional funding will not be provided to cover the cost of third party monitoring, nor will reporting deadlines be altered.

### **17. Under a consortium, are there prescriptions for the arrangement of wages and benefits of staff delivering the program, and will non-unionized partners be impacted by unionized partners?**

The consortium members are expected to come to agreement on how the consortium will work in their community, including details on how it will impact the business/operations of each member. The ministry will not prescribe how consortium partners arrange wage and benefits for their staff. Partners within the consortium will need to assess the impact on their own staff and come to an arrangement within the consortium, if needed.

## Eligibility and Suitability

**18. Will individuals need to provide documentation that they have a disability to be eligible for the program?**

Eligibility will be based on simple “Yes/No” self-identified response by the individual candidate to the presence of a disability. This information will be captured on the participant registration form. The program does not require and will not be recording documentation about the individual’s health condition.

**19. Will individuals who are actively involved with a third party funded vocational program (e.g. WSIB; CPPD; auto insurance or long-term disability claims) be eligible for the program?**

Individuals actively involved with a third party funded vocational program are eligible if the funded program does not result in a duplication of services.

**20. Why are developmental service providers not part of phase one of the Supported Employment program launch?**

Developmental Services employment and vocational supports have traditionally focused more on life-skills training and pre-employment activities. While we are gradually seeing a shift towards competitive employment in the sector, a number of agencies are in a state of transition (i.e. shifting from models such as sheltered workshops and day programs towards community-based employment), and it would not be feasible to integrate them into the Supported Employment program at this time.

The Supported Employment program encourages the development of partnerships and the Ministry would encourage developmental services agencies to engage and collaborate with other employment supports providers in their regions.

**21. How will the program address the needs of individuals with episodic disabilities who may go through phases of wellness and illness and may need to ‘pause’ their supported employment action plan?**

The Supported Employment program permits service providers to identify a participant as ‘inactive’ rather than close their file. For performance management purposes, this feature allows service providers the ability to delay capture of employment outcomes until the individual returns to service and completes their plan. Individuals may also be participants of the program while concurrently engaged in health, human, social and other community services.

**22. Given the scope of service co-ordination will the supported employment action plan incorporate non-vocational milestones to fully reflect all**

**activities? For instance, this may include referral and participation in an anger management program.**

Service providers have the option of referencing non-vocational milestones in their service plan where relevant and being respectful of the privacy considerations of the participant.

**23. There are some individuals who will never be ready to work or aren't ready to work right now? Where should they be referred?**

Individuals not yet ready to work may be referred to other services in their community to address a broad range of life stabilization issues including health, human, social and other community services either concurrently while participants are engaged in services or following program exit.

If an individual is eligible but not suitable for the Supported Employment program or does not want to participate, the service provider may refer them to other Employment Ontario resources or programs such as: Literacy and Basic Skills, Youth Job Connection, Pre-apprenticeship or Employment Service.

## Employability Skills

**24. The program guidelines recommend that participants should generally not spend more than three consecutive months in employability skills training before commencing a job search or other employment activities. Why is the Ministry making this recommendation?**

The supported employment model is a 'place then train' rather than the traditional 'train then place' employment service approach. A key principle of the Supported Employment model is 'rapid' job placement. Research suggests seeking work immediately takes advantage of the individual's current motivation. For instance, a study of high-performing employment services for people with disabilities found they completed initial assessments quickly so as to capitalize on the early enthusiasm to seek employment; whereas low-performing service providers focused more on pre-vocational training, with individuals often finding the process 'burdensome' and therefore making the decision to disengage from, or leave, the program.

While there are no limits in the duration of employability skills training, it is recommended that participants should generally not spend more than three consecutive months in this component before commencing employment activities, to allow them to quickly move forward in their job search. In addition, service components are not required to be delivered in a linear sequence. They may overlap with each other, based on individual need and/or circumstance. For instance, employability skills training may overlap or occur following commencing of job search activities or commencement of employment.

## Job Matching

### **25. How should service providers use suitability indicators (individual and employer) when making decisions with respect to the program?**

Individual suitability indicators are intended to support service providers in prioritizing services to individuals most in need. Indicators take into consideration the need for intensive supports and a mix of labour market barriers (e.g., some combination of poor or lack of labour market experience, low levels of education or literacy or challenging family/household circumstances such as poverty).

There is flexibility with respect to the number of indicators an individual must possess to access the program, not all individuals are required to meet the 45% service standard. Rather, the standard is an aggregate, based on the suitability for all individuals served by the service provider.

The employer suitability indicators are intended to help service providers in selecting appropriate employers to hire participants from the program. Not every employer is expected to have all of these suitability indicators and some factors may be more important than others in certain communities. Service providers should give preference to employers who demonstrate that they have one or more of the suitability criteria. However, employers do not need to meet one or more of the suitability criteria as a condition for a job match.

### **26. While contract or seasonal-based employment is allowed, short-term contracts and seasonal work are often less than 13 weeks, and therefore might significantly impact performance management results in relation to the Effectiveness and Service Impact Results.**

Evaluation of a service provider's performance is based on three dimensions of service success: customer service, effectiveness and efficiency. Performance measurement also considers the long-term impact of the program for a participant and employer, rather than only short-term employment results.

### **27. Are Supported Employment service providers able to place participants on the service provider's payroll for a job trial?**

Yes, participants may be placed on the service provider's payroll for a job trial. Participant flow-through funding may be used to cover the participant's wages and expenditures for a job trial.

## Performance Management Framework

### **28. When is a target counted for Supported Employment**

For the Supported Employment Performance Management Framework, a target is based on program intake. Intake is defined as the point when a client is registered in the program. This will be reflected by the completion of a supported employment service plan, signed-off by both the service provider and the individual, and captured in MAESD's Employment Ontario Information System - Case Management System (EOIS-CAMS).

**29. What tools will be provided to service providers to support follow-up on participant satisfaction?**

MAESD is assessing participant satisfaction as a component of routine service success monitoring. Service providers will be required to record responses in EOIS-CAMS to a set of four satisfaction questions relating to the appropriateness of services and whether the participant would recommend and use the services again. Only the question related to recommending services will be measured against the provincial standard.

**30. After 24 months, are service providers expected to continue conducting participant follow-ups every six months? Does this mean the follow-ups continue indefinitely? Do service providers need to continue follow-ups with the participant even if a positive outcome is achieved?**

Follow-up includes two separate components:

- gathering information on service satisfaction and on outcomes to support better understanding of how service providers and the broader program are performing; and,
- to continue gauging the service needs of both participants and employers.

The intervals for follow-up differ for information on satisfaction versus outcomes, and depend on point of participation.

For participants remaining in job retention for over 24 months, service providers are required to provide follow-up contact every six months to determine their employment status.

This approach to follow-up aligns with the recommendations from the Auditor General's 2016 Audit Report of Employment Ontario, in particular that the Ministry should:

- incorporate longer-term outcomes of clients' employment or training status into the measure of service provider effectiveness to provide a better indicator of whether programming is resulting in sustainable employment; and,
- set meaningful performance management targets for the efficiency

indicators.

### **31. How will program data reporting be done?**

Supported Employment service providers with an agreement with the Ministry (i.e. lead or sole service provider) will be responsible for entering data into EOIS-CaMS. The Ministry will provide Supported Employment service providers with training on system access and use.

## **Resource Allocation, Operating Funds and Financial Supports**

### **32. How is funding allocated for Supported Employment?**

Supported Employment funding is separated into two main categories:

- operating funds; and,
- employer and participant financial supports.

For operating funds service providers will be allocated \$5,600 per participant, multiplied by their total intake target.

For employer and participant financial supports, service providers will be allocated \$3,000 per participant/employer multiplied by their total intake.

For example, a service provider with an intake target of 50 would receive the following allocation:

Operating funds: \$280,000

Employer and participant financial supports: \$150,000

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Total: \$430,000

The funding allocation for financial supports does not represent the maximum a service provider can spend on individual employer/participant financial supports. Up to \$7,000 is available in financial supports per participant service plan for each individual/employer participating in the Supported Employment program. This maximum amount can be used for a combination of supports for the employer and the participant.

### **33. Is there any consideration in the funding formula for working with someone with multiple disabilities? The costs would potentially be higher.**

Operating funding and employer and participant financial supports are designed to provide service providers with the necessary financial resources to serve clients with complex barriers. A service provider may, in exceptional circumstances, exceed the maximum \$7,000 for financial supports to support a participant (*see Section 3.1.6 of the program guidelines*). During phase one of the program implementation, the Ministry will review the use of employer and

participant financial supports expenditures to help inform future design improvements.

**34. Are the costs for communication training for clients, such as training on how to use communication access services and supports, eligible for workplace assistance funding?**

Costs for communication training for participants for using video remote interpreter would be eligible for individual financial incentives, if that funding is not available through other sources.

**35. Are there any requirements related to the extent of financial need for participants to be eligible for financial supports? (e.g., do individuals need to meet income thresholds like Low Income Cut-offs (LICO) and Market Basket Measure (MBM)?**

No, participants do not need to meet financial need thresholds to receive Supported Employment financial supports. Service providers are responsible, however, for working with participants to determine the amount of financial support that would best address their employment barriers and support them in securing employment.

**36. LSQ (Quebec Sign Language) services is a unique cost, can a service provider request additional funding above and beyond the allocation for this?**

The costs of providing Quebec Sign Language services would need to be covered through a service provider's allocated Operating Budget.

**37. Will the allocation for transition clients be included in monthly instalments or in one lump sum?**

The allocation for transition clients from the existing programs will be included in the total allocation. As such, it will be included in the equal monthly payments stipulated in the payment schedule of the agreement with the ministry.

**38. Will the partner's operational allocation need to be audited and if so, would the partner conduct the audit and submit the results to the lead for them to submit to the ministry?**

The lead service provider must submit an Auditor's Report to the ministry if their agreement maximum funds are \$100,000 or more. The lead service provider is responsible for ensuring that all funds provided to the consortium, including the partner organizations, are audited and accounted for in the Auditor's Report.

The consortium can determine the best process for completing this requirement.

**39. Can service provider funding be adjusted in-year?**

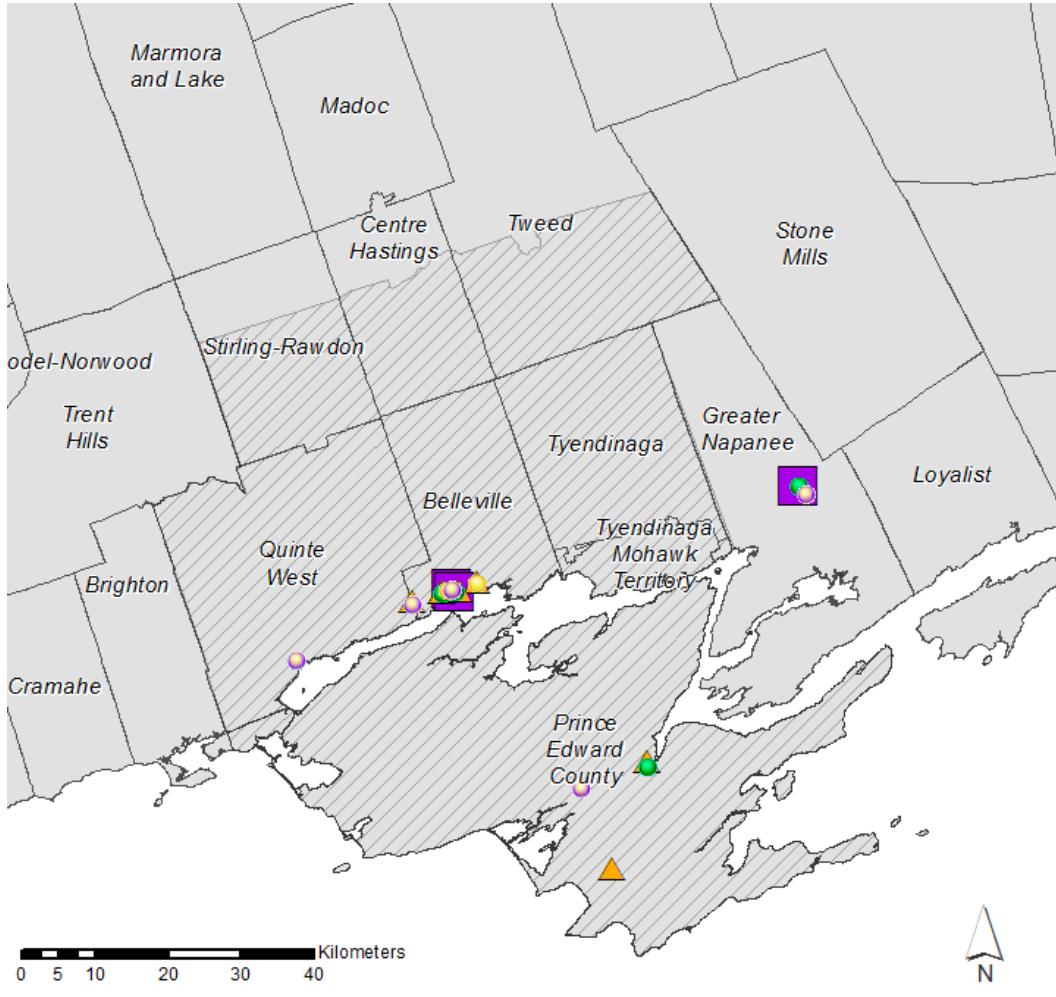
In-year adjustments are not guaranteed, but can be considered based on a holistic assessment of performance and available funds.








The Ministry is committed to assessing the funding model and resource allocation approach for phase one to inform improvements in subsequent delivery years and for subsequent phases of implementation.



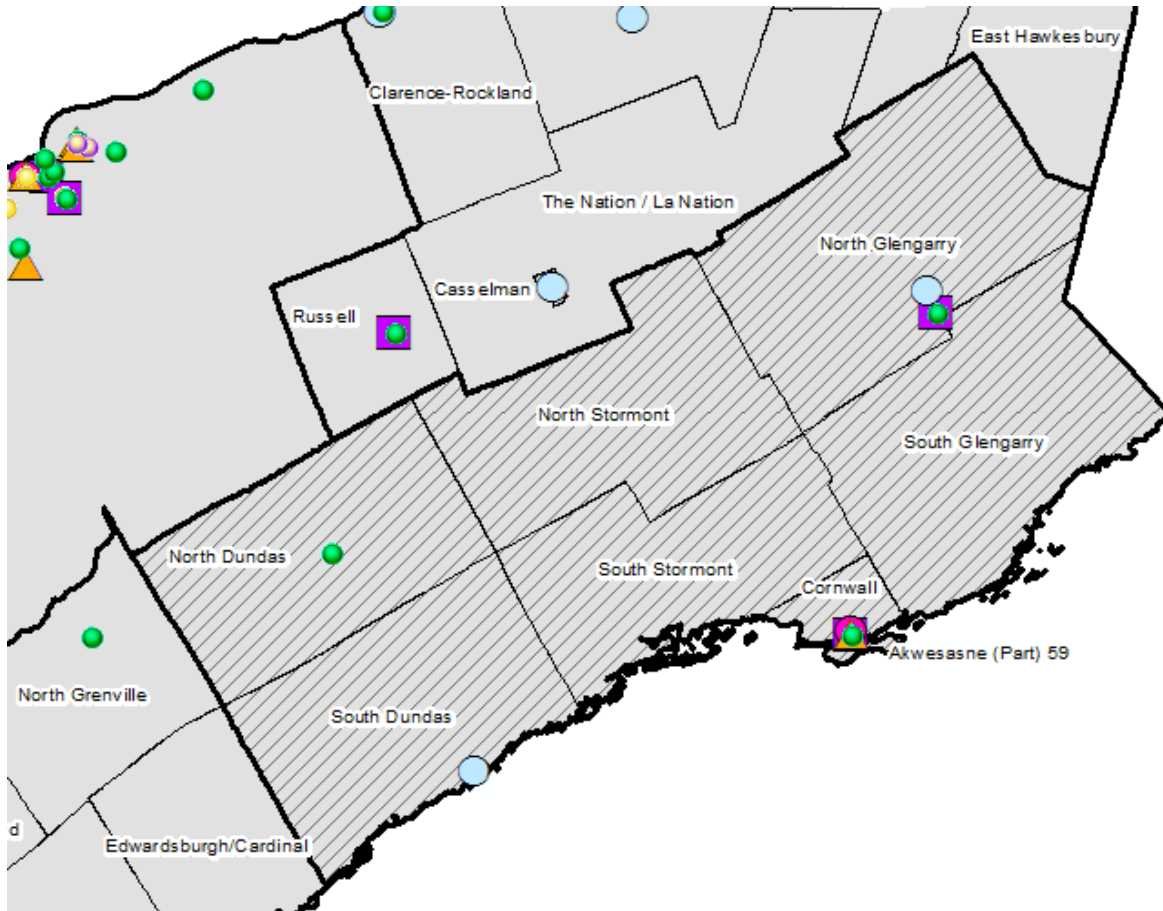
**Appendix A: Catchment Areas**








Belleville - Catchment area composed of Prince Edward County; with southern portion of Hastings County, below the village of Tweed.



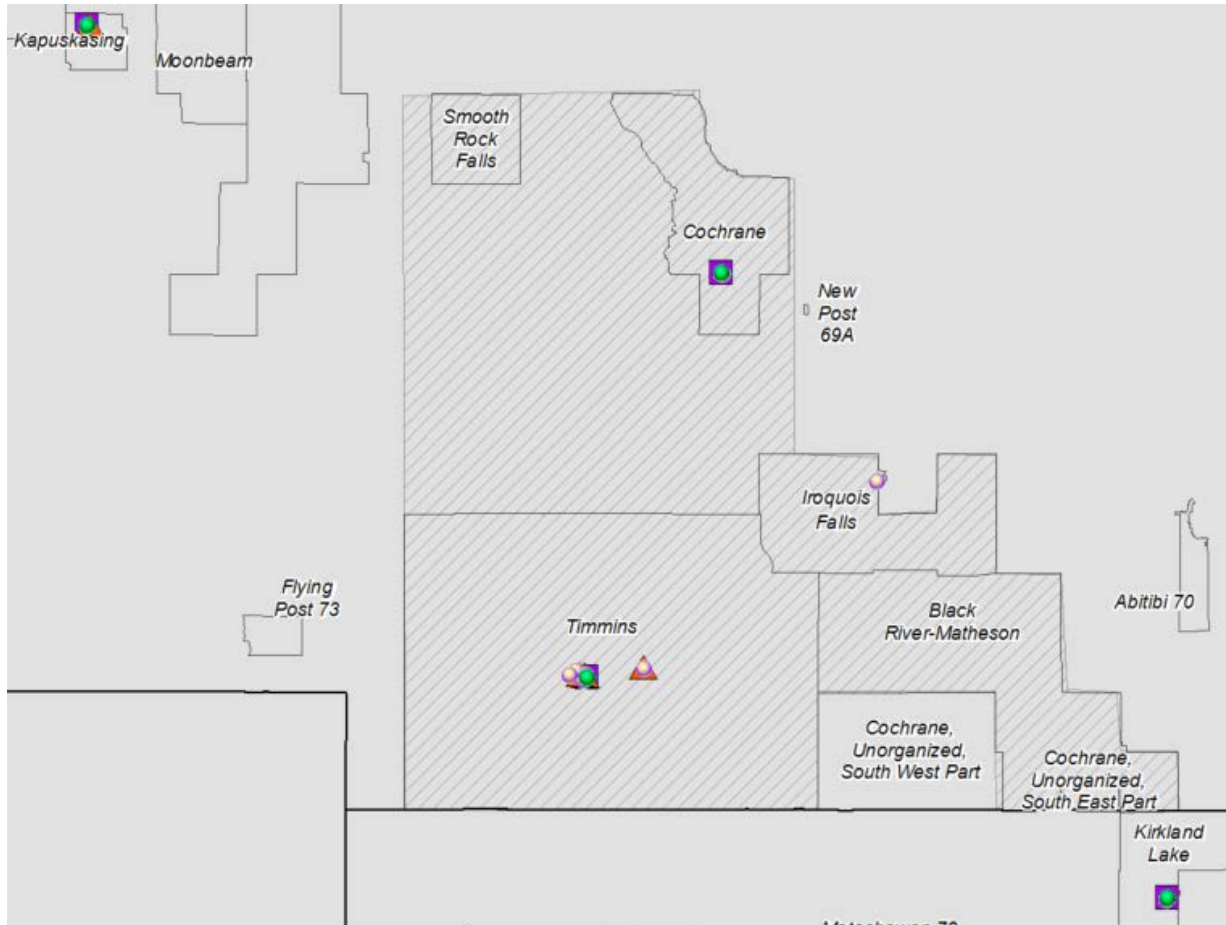
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|---|---|
|  <b>MAESD - Literacy and Basic Skills Sites</b>              |  <b>MCSS - ODSP ES Sites</b>               |
|  <b>MAESD - Ontario Employment Assistance Services Sites</b> |  <b>MAESD - Youth Job Connection Sites</b> |
|  <b>MAESD - Employment Service Sites</b>                     |  <b>Belleville Catchment Area</b>          |
|   |  <b>Census SubDivision</b>                 |

Cornwall – Includes the Counties of Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry and Akwesasne



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|---|---|
|  <b>MAESD - Literacy and Basic Skills Sites</b>              |  <b>MCSS - ODSP ES Sites</b>               |
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|   |  <b>Census SubDivision</b>                 |

Timmins – Catchment area includes southern part of Cochrane and northern part of Sudbury counties. The southern section is extended to cover the communities in the area.



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|---|--------------------------------------|
| ● MAESD - Literacy and Basic Skills Sites             | ▲ MCSS - ODSP ES Sites               |
| ● MAESD- Ontario Employment Assistance Services Sites | ■ MAESD - Youth Job Connection Sites |
| ● MAESD - Employment Service Sites                    | ▨ Belleville Catchment Area          |
|   | ■ Census SubDivision                 |