

Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development

Employment Services Transformation:

Fall 2022 Update

General Questions & Answers

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Transition In Kingston-Pembroke Catchment Area

I'm a service provider in the Kingston-Pembroke catchment area. How will the Service System Manager (SSM) model impact me?

Like the prototypes and Phase 1 catchment areas, the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD) has established a sequenced approach to transformation that will ensure service continuity, network stability, and client access as roles and responsibilities shift during the transition from ministry oversight of service providers to SSM oversight.

Planning Period (September to December 31, 2022)

This period starts on the date of contract signing and is intended to allow SSMs to establish themselves within their catchment area and familiarize themselves with the existing Employment Ontario (EO) service provider network. During this period, service providers will continue to hold contracts with the ministry and the ministry will not make changes to service provider funding or targets.

Transition Period (January 1, 2023 to September 30, 2023)

During this period, the responsibility for managing in-scope EO programs and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) employment services service providers will be transferred to SSMs. However, SSMs will not be able to make changes to the funding and targets of the service provider network during this period.

In-scope EO programs for Employment Services Transformation are:

- Employment Service
- Youth Job Connection
- Youth Job Connection-Summer
- Ontario Employment Assistance Service
- Supported Employment

In-scope Social Assistance programs are:

- ODSP Employment Supports

Integrated Employment Services (IES) Delivery Period (October 1, 2023 and onwards)

At this time, transition is complete and referral to IES for Ontario Works and ODSP recipients will be transferred to SSMs. The SSMs will be permitted to make changes to

the service provider network and will be fully responsible for the design, planning and delivery of employment services within their catchment area.

Service System Managers will be required to monitor and manage the overall health and capacity of their service delivery footprint.

Will the ministry provide an opportunity for service providers and the SSMs in the Kingston-Pembroke catchment area to meet and introduce their organizations?

As part of the ministry's onboarding plan for the Kingston-Pembroke catchment area, MLITSD will be facilitating introductions between the SSM, service providers, and social assistance partners in their respective catchment areas. This is intended to ensure that the SSM and service providers are aligned and prepared to undertake their respective responsibilities and roles within the new IES model.

In addition, the SSM will be developing an integrated engagement plan with EO service providers, municipalities and other organizations serving inclusion groups to support effective service planning and delivery of employment services for clients.

Will service providers in the Kingston-Pembroke catchment area still offer government training programs like Literacy and Basic Skills, Canada-Ontario Job Grant or Youth Job Connection?

Out-of-scope EO programs will continue to be delivered by the existing service provider network across the province. MLITSD will continue to provide oversight for these programs.

SSMs will refer jobseekers to appropriate employment and training supports, including referrals to ministry retained programs (e.g., Canada-Ontario Job Grant, Literacy and Basic Skills, Apprentices).

How will this affect current Transfer Payment Agreements for service providers in the Kingston-Pembroke catchment area?

Service providers located in the Kingston-Pembroke catchment area have received a four-month extension to the project period of their 2022-23 ministry transfer payment agreement for the following programs:

- Employment Service;
- Supported Employment; and
- Youth Job Connection/Youth Job Connection Summer.
- ODSP-ES

Amended agreements have an updated project period end date of October 31, 2022.

To align with the Planning Period, service providers in the Kingston-Pembroke catchment area will receive an additional extension to their agreements with the ministry. The ministry will ensure that service providers receive their committed allocations for the current fiscal year. Service providers are encouraged to continue with service delivery as status quo.

With the introduction of the new SSM for Kingston-Pembroke, service providers will be provided with a period of stability, including three (3) months of Planning Period, and nine (9) months of Transition Period whereby service provider funding will remain unchanged.

What happens to EO service providers who have service delivery sites both inside and outside the Kingston-Pembroke catchment areas? Who will hold those contracts?

The new SSM will establish their own agreements with service providers during the Transition Period within their catchment area, which begins on January 1, 2023. The SSM is expected to develop their own agreement with the service providers for the Transition Period that aligns with the ministry standards and expectations, including commitment to maintaining funding levels. Contracts will remain unchanged for service providers with delivery sites outside of the catchment area.

Why has the ministry announced the successful candidate for Kingston-Pembroke subsequent to the other three Phase 1 SSMs?

The ministry took extra time to complete the assessment and negotiation process for the remaining catchment area of Kingston-Pembroke.

How do SSMs prepare to implement their new delivery models during Transition Period and IES Delivery?

The Kingston-Pembroke SSM will develop a Transition Phase Outcomes submission in consultation with stakeholders in their communities, including service providers, representatives of specialized client groups, municipalities, and others. These plans build upon the submissions provided by SSM through the Call for Proposal.

Transition Phase Outcomes from SSM submissions are based upon a detailed and evidence-based assessment of network capacity, local demand and service quality. As part of this process, SSMs are required to take into consideration local labour market data, as well as ministry data on client outcomes and service provider performance.

Through this process, SSMs need to further consult, develop, and outline their approach to service delivery including any innovative programs and service planning with specialized providers to meet local community needs. SSMs will also be able to consider any changes to the composition of their service delivery network.

Will there be a mechanism for resolving any potential disputes between service providers and their SSM?

Service System Managers are required to have in place client and service provider dispute resolution mechanisms including response time, escalation protocol and reporting requirements in their contract with the ministry. SSMs are required to make their dispute resolution process publicly available and report client and service provider disputes and resolutions to the ministry every quarter.

How will the ministry ensure that the perspective of a smaller employment agency is factored into the new model when they no longer have a direct relationship with ministry regional offices?

The ministry recognizes the importance of local delivery partners in providing high quality employment services to Ontarians. The ministry will be a system steward in the new employment service delivery model. As part of this stewardship role, the ministry will set standards, establish performance outcomes, and set the policies and priorities for the IES system. The ministry is interested in proactive engagement and collaboration with SSMs with input from providers focused on solving issues collaboratively and ensuring a healthy service delivery system and market.

What is changing for the Social Assistance offices in the Kingston-Pembroke catchment area?

The Ontario Works Employment Assistance Program and ODSP Employment Supports Program will be integrated into EO in the Kingston-Pembroke catchment area. The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, MLITSD and the SSM for the catchment will work together during the planning and transition periods to integrate these programs to support the implementation of IES that will begin on October 1, 2023.

Phase 2 & Phase 3 Catchment Information

What is the timeline for implementation of the remaining catchment areas?

Phase 2 catchment areas:

The competitive process for Phase 2 catchment areas (London, Durham, Windsor-Sarnia, Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie, and Ottawa) began in April 2022. The process is ongoing. Further details will be available in the near future.

Phase 3 catchment areas:

The competitive process for the remaining higher complexity catchment areas (Toronto, Northeast, and Northwest) will occur in 2023. Further details will be available in the near future.

Why is the government proceeding with rolling out this approach provincially when the prototype sites are still in relatively early stages of implementation?

As we proceed in a phased approach to the province-wide roll-out, we are closely monitoring prototype results to determine how the new service delivery model is meeting EST objectives, including outcomes for clients.

Data is collected through a suite of digital platforms, including case management and contract management systems. Additionally, a comprehensive third-party evaluation is underway to gather information on the delivery, implementation and outcomes of the prototype catchment areas. The evaluation findings will serve as one line of evidence to inform the continuous improvement of the model throughout the provincial roll-out.

Will the ministry be consulting with stakeholders prior to implementing the model in Toronto and the North?

The ministry is initiating a Market Sounding Exercise with the vendor community, which includes a Market Sounding Document and Vendor Engagement sessions. The market sounding and vendor engagement process is open to community partners, Indigenous organizations, service provider network, municipalities and other stakeholders who are interested in providing feedback to the ministry about how best to improve service delivery and outcomes for clients in the complex catchment areas of Toronto and the North.

The market sounding document offers an opportunity for organizations to provide written feedback to the ministry about how to improve service delivery and client outcomes in Phase 3 catchment areas. The vendor engagement sessions are intended to provide opportunity for direct discussions between the ministry and organizations, as well as encourage vendors to form partnerships and consortiums.

What is in the market sounding document?

The market sounding document is a written method of engagement which will be used in tandem with the vendor engagement sessions. The market sounding document contains comprehensive information about the Employment Services Transformation and the integration of employment services, service delivery challenges in Toronto and the Northeast and Northwest Catchment Areas, the scope of the engagement, employment services tools and supports, questions for organizations to respond to, and the registration process to attend a vendor engagement session.

Will the ministry be making changes to the model to address the unique service delivery considerations for Toronto and the North? (e.g., more than one SSM per catchment?)

The ministry will leverage what we have heard from partners and stakeholder and what we will hear during market sounding and vendor engagement to inform considerations

to changes to the model. Any potential changes will be considered in keeping with the spirit and intent of the transformation, as well as implications, feasibility, and timing.

Is the ministry planning to engage with stakeholders beyond the market sounding and vendor engagement?

Vendor engagement sessions will be open to both interested vendors and non-vendors, including private, non-profit, municipalities, Indigenous, colleges etc. These sessions will be organized by sector and ministry presentations will be based on the details outlined in the market sounding document.