

March 23, 2020

AMO COVID-19 Update

Provinces Announces \$200 Million of Social Services Funding

As part of the ongoing COVID-19 response, the provincial government announced today \$200 million of funding for relief and to protect the health and safety of vulnerable people. The funding will flow through the 47 municipal government service managers and District Social Service Administration Boards (DSSABs) that administer social services in two streams.

First, service managers will make local decisions about community funding to support COVID-19 responses. The funding will help municipal governments, DSSABs and social service providers to provide critical services such as homeless shelters, food banks, emergency services, and other community services. This could include hiring additional staff and implementing ways to promote social distancing and self-isolation to keep clients safe and healthy.

Secondly, funding will assist also individuals who do not qualify for supports under federal programs. An expanded Emergency Assistance program will be administered under Ontario Works. This includes assistance such as food, rent, informal child care and other services. In addition, increases discretionary benefits may be provided to persons in need who receive social assistance. Individuals can apply for assistance at [Ontario.ca/community](https://ontario.ca/community).

This funding announcement is welcome and needed. AMO will continue to work together with the government to assess and advise on community needs during this time.

Further details about implementation are being communicated to the 47 municipal service managers. More information is found in the [Ontario Newsroom](#).

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Clarifying work continues on Ontario Regulation 73/20

AMO is also working with the province and municipal solicitors to get clarification on the intent and interpretation of [Ontario Regulation 73/20](#) under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* that was released on March 20th.

The municipal sector has asked Ontario for a pause on all provincial statutes, regulations, rules, etc. that municipal governments must follow currently during this COVID-19 emergency. On the face of it, this regulation may provide the relief sought as broadly read. However, this is a complex legal area and caution in interpretation needs to be exercised at this time.

Once we have information to share on how to apply this regulation appropriately, we will share through an AMO update and on AMO's COVID-19 resources page.

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