

December 17, 2020

**AMO Policy Update – Long-Term Care Staffing Plan, Conservation Authorities Working Group, Poverty Reduction Strategy, and Mental Health and Addiction Services Funding**

**Long-Term Care Staffing Plan Released**

The Province announced the release of its anticipated [long-term care staffing plan](#) that sets out actions to hire more staff, improve working conditions for existing staff, drive effective and accountable leadership, and implement retention strategies.

The plan is called, “[A Better Place to Live, A Better Place to Work: Ontario’s Long-Term Care Staffing Plan](#)”. Included in the plan are six key areas of action to be delivered over four years, not least of which is an investment of up to \$1.9 billion annually by 2024-2025 to create more than 27,000 new positions for personal support workers (PSWs), registered nurses (RNs), and registered practical nurses (RPNs) in long-term care to meet the government’s [2020 Ontario budget commitment](#) to increase hours of daily direct care to an average of four hours per day for each long-term care resident.

Other actions include accelerating and expanding education and training pathways to train the new staff, supporting continued professional development and growth of long-term care staff, and finding ways to improve working conditions, increasing effective and accountable leadership, and measuring progress on these actions.

AMO staff will be reviewing the staffing plan in its entirety to inform its future work under our Health Task Force to the Long-Term Care Commission as well as consultation on future regulations.

**Ontario’s Working Group on Conservation Authorities**

The Province has announced a [Conservation Authorities Working Group](#). Hassaan Basit, President and CEO of Conservation Halton, will chair this group to provide input on proposed regulations development under the *Conservation Authorities Act*, and on how conservation authorities are governed.

The working group will be formed early in the new year and will provide input to help the Province develop regulations that will focus on:

- the mandatory core programs and services conservation authorities would be required to provide,
- the agreements between municipalities and conservation authorities and the transition period associated with non-mandatory programs and services, and
- how local members of the community can participate in their conservation authorities through community advisory boards.

AMO has been calling for such a group to undertake this work and welcomes this process. AMO has also requested representation on this working group.

### **Ontario's New Poverty Reduction Strategy**

The government [released](#) a new [Poverty Reduction Strategy](#) to guide cross ministry actions over the next five years. The objective is to help more people get back into employment and participate in the Province's economic recovery.

Key government initiatives are to help connect people experiencing poverty with education, skills training, health, and other supports. In many cases this involves joint efforts with municipalities and District Social Service Administration Boards delivering critical human services in communities such as social assistance, housing, and homelessness prevention programs.

### **New Mental Health and Addiction Services**

As part of the ongoing response to COVID-19, the government is providing [\\$147 million of funding](#) to increase access to supports. This allocation builds on the provincial [Roadmap to Wellness Plan](#).

This welcome funding will add more staff, accommodations, virtual supports, housing and short-term accommodation, and other supports to continue providing safe in-person services where appropriate. It will also include supports specifically for Ontario's frontline workers.

AMO's [COVID-19 Resources](#) page is being updated continually so you can find critical information in one place. Please send any of your municipally related pandemic questions to [covid19@amo.on.ca](mailto:covid19@amo.on.ca).