**ONTARIO SOCIAL ASSISTANCE REVIEW COMMISSION**

**HIGHLIGHTS FINAL REPORT OCT 2012**

* Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) would be replaced with one program that provides integrated services and supports to all social assistance recipients, including people with disabilities. Currently Ontario Works is delivered by municipalities and First Nations; ODSP is a provincially‐delivered program.
* The approximately 30 special benefits in the current system would be streamlined and the more than 240 existing rates and combination of rates would be replaced with a new rate structure, based on simple building blocks.
* Currently, recipients are required to pursue child support from the non‐custodial parent. Social assistance benefits are reduced dollar for dollar by any child support payments received. The report recommends that the rules regarding child support be changed to provide an incentive to pursue child support without enforcing it as a mandatory requirement. Child support payments would be treated in the same way as earned income and would reduce social assistance benefits by 50 cents per dollar of child support received.
* An increase of $100 a month would be made to the lowest rate category, single adults receiving OW, as a down payment on adequacy while the system undergoes transformation. The current rate for single adult renters receiving OW is $599 a month.
* All recipients would be allowed to earn up to $200 a month before their benefits start to be withdrawn. This earnings exemption would also help social assistance recipients get a toehold in the labour market without losing their benefits.
* Asset rules would be simplified and harmonized to the current allowable amounts for ODSP recipients, to help people become more financially resilient. All social assistance recipients would be allowed to keep up to $5000 for a single individual and $7,500 for a couple when entering the system.