

**Ministry of Children,
Community and Social
Services**

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Sané Dube
Policy and Government Relations Lead
Alliance for Healthier Communities
sane.dube@allianceon.org

Dear Sané Dube:

Thank you for your letter on behalf of Defend Disability regarding social assistance reform and changes to the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).

As you know, our government is moving forward with social assistance reforms that will restore dignity, encourage employment, and empower Ontario's most vulnerable to break free from the poverty cycle. Ontarians deserve a social assistance system where people with disabilities are treated with dignity, and where a recipient's hard work and commitment is met by empowerment and trust from their government. We believe that social assistance must be about lifting people up, offering people a way out and helping people get their lives back on track. We will help people stabilize and connect to simpler, more effective supports so that those who are able to work can move back into the workforce and everyone is better able to participate in their community.

Front-line staff will work with recipients to help connect them to other supports. We will also eliminate barriers for those receiving social assistance, including reducing administration, cutting unnecessary rules and restoring service accountability through a simplified system.

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I appreciate your concerns about changes to the ODSP definition of a disability. We are listening and exploring the best ways to bring about positive outcomes for Ontarians in need, so we are taking the time to get this right. Details are still to be determined and we will provide more information as decisions are made.

Your letter has been shared with appropriate staff in my ministry, and will be taken into consideration as our work continues.

As my staff review and coordinate my schedule, I will take your invitation to meet into consideration. Again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd", followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right.

Todd Smith
Minister