

**Position Title:** Ontario Works Caseworker

**Department:** Social Services

**Reports To:** Ontario Works Manager

## Purpose

Provide client-centred, high-quality customer service in an empathetic manner. Assess applicants for social assistance eligibility, and provide financial, life stabilization, and employment supports in an empathic client centred manner. Monitor the ongoing eligibility of clients on the caseload, make referrals, recommendations and changes as appropriate and ensure compliance with Ontario Works legislation.

## Responsibilities

- Complete verification interviews, eligibility determinations, and file reviews
- Complete and monitor appropriate assignment of benefits
- Use a variety of case management tools and techniques, including offsite visits
- Review and verify client information on a routine basis to ensure proper entitlement is being issued
- Responsible for dealing with compliance and eligibility issues. Communicate relevant information to all involved parties
- Calculate overpayments and initiate recovery by advising clients and entering the amount into the computer and obtain managerial approval for adjustments and write-offs
- Prepare submissions for the Social Benefits Tribunal as requested and represent the agency at SBT hearings as required
- Complete monthly enhanced verification audits on client files
- Engage through consultation, conversation, interviews, assessment, service planning activities, and referrals to appropriate community-based resources and follow ups
- Support clients through crisis issues, including homelessness, food insecurity, physical, mental or emotional health, including coordination of support services

- Assist and/or mediates on behalf of the client; works creatively to find solutions/conflict resolution or mutually satisfactory arrangements to life skills, health, employment and other situations
- Empathetically responds to enquiries
- Schedule own appointments to foster relationship with clients
- Direct clients to a broad range of assistance activities and participation supports that build employment, life and soft skills based on individual circumstances and needs
- Encourage, assist and motivate clients to become self-supporting
- Work with clients to identify strategies and implement solutions to recurring issues or problems-adding value to client's lives by building self-sufficiency and capacity.
- Maintain regular communication with clients during their time on social assistance
- Work closely with community-based organizations in the public, non-profit, and private sectors to refer participants
- Review and address third party consumer credit and Eligibility Verification Process (EVP) output information
- Fulfill the full range of benefit requirements as established by the Ministry in accordance with the OW Act and regulations, and set out in the policy directives to help to ensure accountability, fairness and consistency in the delivery of Ontario Works
- Perform other duties as assigned

### *Other Duties*

- Occasional custodial duties as required at satellite locations
- Administrative duties as required at satellite locations
- Support the process of receiving cash and cheques for reimbursements and Ontario Works benefits at satellite locations
- Maintain skills and knowledge by taking training and development through courses, seminars and selected reading
- Responsible, as an employee, for occupational health and safety and emergency management

## Working Conditions

Hours of work are based on a 35 hour work week. Work is subject to regular deadlines and constant interruptions and is carried out in approved locations throughout the county. Overtime may be required on occasion. Hours of work may be flexible to accommodate meetings and forums with external stakeholders. Travel within the area may be required. Outside of office work conditions can involve exposure to unfavourable road, traffic and extreme weather conditions.

## Contacts

### *Internal Working Relationships*

Work closely with staff within Social Services and other Grey County departments.

### *External Working Relationships*

Collaborate with community agencies and partners, developing positive working relationships. Collaboration with counterparts in other municipal and provincial social services offices as required. Participate in various meetings that support social assistance programs.

## Knowledge and Skill

- Minimum two year Social Services Worker Diploma, or a two year diploma in a related field with an employment focus from a recognized College of Applied Arts and Technology, or a graduate of a recognized university in the Humanities, Social Work or Social Sciences
- Knowledge of the Ontario Works Act and the Ontario Disability Support Plan is an asset
- Effective communication, organizational and time management skills
- Counselling, negotiating and coaching skills, initiative, creativity, a collaborative attitude, and conflict resolution skills.
- Able to work independently and as part of a team
- Objective, empathetic, approachable, and possess strong interpersonal skills
- Proficient with current computer technologies
- Valid drivers' license or access to reliable vehicle required

## Impact of Error

Incorrect determination or calculation of eligibility of clients' results in either assistance being issued when it is not justified or issuing less than the client is eligible for.

Errors can result in overpayments which must be collected, causing additional workload issues, as well as burdens on clients.

Inadequate case management and community liaison can result in reduced provincial subsidy, a failure to promptly refer clients to services.

If information in databases is not accurately maintained with integrity, benchmarks for funding may not be met.

Inadequate case planning and failure to effectively partner with other community agencies and organizations will diminish opportunities for Ontario Works clients to reach their employment goals.

Errors or omissions could negatively impact the effectiveness of the organization's overall service delivery.