

**2020 Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy Consultation
Online Survey for Service Providers**

Section 1: encouraging job creation and connecting people to employment

1. What can employers do to help people living in poverty find a job and get hired? Choose all that apply.

- Offer networking or mentoring opportunities
- Share job postings to reach a wider, more diverse audience
- Clearly list all necessary skills in job advertisements
- Offer tips for applying for jobs
- Make it easier for people to apply and interview for jobs (for example, by offering a flexible interview schedule)
- Create specialized recruitment tracks for people who often face barriers during hiring (for example, people with disabilities, immigrants, youth who have been involved with the criminal justice system)
- Build partnerships between private and non-profit organizations to offer skill-building and training programs
- Offer co-op placements, internships or apprenticeships to help people gain skills and experience
- Reduce barriers to recognizing work experience from outside of Canada
- Other (please specify)

2. What do you think are the best ways to create jobs for people who are living in poverty? You can only choose up to three.

- Create local or regional plans to help companies grow and help people build successful careers
- Develop strategies to hire locally for infrastructure projects
- Create or support social enterprises (organizations that use business strategies to achieve a social or environmental impact) that hire people who have challenges finding employment
- Offer incentives that encourage employers to hire people facing challenges getting jobs (for example, tax credits for employers)
- Create incentives for employers to offer paid on-the-job training or internships
- Provide resources and reduce red tape for entrepreneurs, including those with low-income
- I'm not sure
- Other (please specify)

3. What challenges have you observed employers face when they are searching for employees? Choose all that apply.

- Not enough people apply
- Applicants do not have the right skills or qualifications
- Competition from other employers for the same employees
- Employers are uncertain about where to advertise job openings to attract adequately skilled individuals
- Employers have difficulty recruiting applicants because of the location of the job
- Employers do not have the resources or ability to assess non-Canadian experience
- Employers do not have enough knowledge, resources, or networks to attract people with disabilities to apply
- I'm not sure
- Other (please specify)

4. What are the best ways to help people who are experiencing poverty stay employed? You can only choose up to three.

- Wages
- Accommodation for disabilities
- Flexible work arrangements (for example, being able to work from home and get time-off for appointments)
- A workplace that is inclusive and welcoming to diverse people
- Skills training or upgrading
- Building Canadian work experience
- Career counselling
- Physical health benefits and supports (for example, drug, dental, vision care)
- Mental health and addictions supports and services
- Access to affordable child care
- Access to care for dependents who are not children (for example, senior care or family member with a disability)
- Providing or covering the costs of transportation
- Coaching and mentoring
- A workplace that is supportive of cultural and faith-based activities
- Support for people experiencing abuse, violence, or harm including gender-based violence
- Other (please specify)

Section 2: providing people with the right supports and services

5. What services does your organization offer? Choose all that apply.

- A safe place to stay during the day
- A safe place to stay at night
- Help finding housing
- Help connecting with community programming or civil society, including not-for-profit and non-governmental organizations
- Emotional support and social connections
- Help getting clothing and personal care items and services (for example, a shower)
- Help getting healthy food
- Health care
- Mental health and addictions supports and services
- Help with accessibility needs (for example, independent living support and assistive devices)
- Help with tasks like opening a bank account or getting a health card
- Help taking care of family members (for example, child care, senior care)
- Help with raising children (for example, parenting, child development, navigating the school system and making sure children are succeeding in school)
- Help getting culturally appropriate supports and services
- Employment services (for example, career counselling, help searching for a job and job matching)
- Support to pursue educational opportunities
- Access to transportation that is accessible, affordable, timely and safe
- Legal supports
- Help to settle in Ontario after immigrating
- Help keeping safe from abuse, violence or harm
- I'm not sure
- Other (please specify)

6. What are the most effective ways your organization provides information about your programs, services and resources to low-income people? You can only choose up to three.

- Word of mouth (through family, friends, mentor or coach)
- People working in community organizations or government offices (for example, front line staff, case manager)
- Online
- Posters and pamphlets in the community (for example, in a library, community centre, coffee shop, grocery store)
- Media (newspaper, radio, television)
- Social media
- I'm not sure
- Other (please specify)

7. What strategies would most help local service providers work together to offer services to people experiencing poverty? You can only choose up to three.

- Formal agreements between service providers and community partners on how they will work together
- Shared training and learning opportunities
- Shared or similar intake and assessment processes
- Joint case management or planning processes
- Procedures for sharing information beyond formal protocols (for example, sharing of case-specific information with relevant service providers with consent)
- Offering supports in the same physical location (co-locating)
- Resource sharing (for example, office space, technology, staff)
- Dispute resolution processes for cases across different service providers
- Cross-sector committees to support local planning to coordinate and deliver services
- Collaboration on programs and projects for joint funding
- Co-developing solutions so organizations are working towards the same outcome
- I'm not sure
- Other (please specify)

Section 3: lowering the cost of living and making life more affordable

8. Does your organization help clients or the people you represent learn about government benefits and tax credits?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

Section 4: poverty reduction in your community

9. What are the most significant barriers to improving economic mobility in your community? You can only choose up to three.

- Housing
- Homelessness
- Cost of household items
- Income
- Employment
- Education
- Health
- Mental health and/or addictions
- Availability and access to transportation
- Availability and access to care for dependents and children
- Social belonging, ability to fully participate in the community
- Community and personal safety
- Vulnerability to crime, violence, abuse and trafficking
- Inequality
- Changing economy and job market
- Other (please specify)

10. Do you have an innovative idea to help reduce poverty in Ontario or an example of a local poverty reduction initiative that is working well? Please explain in 400 words or less. Do not include any confidential information.

The Nurse-Family Partnership® (NFP) is an intensive home visiting program for young, low-income, first-time mothers. The NFP has been evaluated in three randomized controlled trials (RCTs) in the United States, which have demonstrated positive effects on the outcomes of pregnancy, children's subsequent health and development, and parents' economic self-sufficiency (including the achievement of education and employment). The NFP's strong evidentiary foundation has led to international implementation and evaluation.

Steps are currently underway to adapt and evaluate the NFP to the Canadian context, including an RCT in British Columbia. In Ontario, The Middlesex-London Health Unit holds the NFP license and has Memorandums of Understanding with the other NFP implementing public health units in Ontario, including: City of Toronto (Public Health Division), Regional Municipality of York (Public Health Branch), Regional Municipality of Niagara (Public Health Branch), and City of Hamilton (Public Health Services). Capacity to add additional health units in Ontario under MLHU's license will be dependant upon results of the RCT.

11. Do you have any additional comments about developing the new strategy, measuring poverty or the 2014-19 Poverty Reduction Strategy? Please explain in 400 words or less.

The Middlesex-London Board of Health recommends addressing the root causes of poverty and expanding the scope of the Strategy to take a broader, population health approach. A population-based approach that addresses adequate incomes may be more effective than an approach targeting a subset of the population. While employment is an ideal poverty alleviator for many, income security provides a fundamental safety net regardless of employment status and impacts health care costs for everyone.

We strongly urge the Government of Ontario include continued social assistance reform in the Strategy. Specifically, the Middlesex-London Board of Health recommends that the Government of Ontario: 1) Continue to include episodic and short-term disabilities within the disability definition for the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). Using a more restrictive definition of disability would limit access for people who may be unable to periodically support themselves due to the episodic nature of their health condition, disproportionately affecting individuals living with addictions or mental illness. 2). Proceed Bill 60, “An Act to amend the Ministry of Community and Social Services Act to establish the Social Assistance Research Commission”, to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly to set evidence-based social assistance rates premised on local living costs. The gap between income and the cost of basic needs has increased over time and varies across Ontario. Increasing incomes for people on social assistance would substantially improve health and reduce health care costs.

The Middlesex-London Board of Health also recommends aligning the Strategy indicators with indicators in “*Opportunity for All – Canada’s First Poverty Reduction Strategy*” to allow for meaningful comparison and ensure ongoing collection and dissemination of data. In addition to the Low-Income Measure (LIM), included in the first and second Strategies, the Middlesex-London Board of Health recommends reporting on Canada’s Official Poverty Line, formerly the Market Basket Measure (MBM), the Low-Income Cut-Off (LICO), and household food insecurity (HFI). LIM, MBM, and LICO are well-established measures of both relative and absolute poverty that should also be stratified by key socio-demographic factors relevant to poverty (e.g., single parents, recent immigrants, racialized populations, Indigenous people, and people with disabilities). HFI is a key measure of deprivation that is strongly associated with health outcomes and health care utilization. Indicators should be tracked at the provincial, regional, and local levels to enable organizations, such as local public health agencies, to identify and prioritize programming based on social determinants of health data.

Section 5: organizational profile

We want to learn about your organization to better understand the different perspectives of service providers across Ontario.

12. Does your community or organization provide services or represent people who are living in poverty?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

13. What age groups are your services targeted towards? Choose all that apply.

- Prenatal (pregnancy)
- 0-4 years old
- 5-6 years old
- 7-11 years old
- 12-18 years old
- 19-29 years old
- 30-64 years old
- 65-74 years old
- 75+ years old
- Prefer not to answer

14. What gender identities are your services targeted towards? Choose all that apply.

- Women or girls
- Men or boys
- Our services are not targeted by gender identity
- Prefer not to answer
- Another gender identity (please specify):

15. Are your services targeted toward people who are First Nations (status or non-status), Métis, or Inuit? Choose all that apply.

- First Nations (status or non-status)
- Métis
- Inuk/Inuit
- No, we do not have services targeted towards people who are Indigenous
- Prefer not to answer

Other (please specify): Programs and services provided by our organization are open to and available for Indigenous populations. We are currently in the process of implementing an organizational reconciliation plan that will enable us to more effectively support Indigenous populations.

16. Are your services targeted towards people who identify as Francophone?

- Yes
 No
 Prefer not to answer

17. Which race category best describes the groups that you provide services to? Choose all that apply.

- Black (African, Afro-Caribbean, African-Canadian descent)
 East/Southeast Asian (Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Taiwanese, Filipino, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Thai, Indonesian descent, other Southeast Asian descent)
 Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuk/Inuit descent)
 Latino (Latin American, Hispanic descent)
 Middle Eastern (Arab, Persian, West Asian descent, for example, Afghan, Egyptian, Iranian, Lebanese, Turkish, Kurdish)
 South Asian (South Asian descent, for example, East Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, Indo-Caribbean)
 White (European descent)
 Prefer not to answer
 Another race category (please specify)

18. Are your services targeted towards people who identify as immigrants, refugee claimants or non-status persons?

- Yes
 No
 Prefer not to answer

18a. What groups do you provide services to? Choose all that apply.

- Naturalized Canadian citizens (people who have immigrated to Canada and applied to become a Canadian citizen)
 Permanent residents, 0-5 years
 Permanent residents, 5-10 years
 Permanent residents, more than 10 years
 Refugee claimants (in the process of making a refugee claim)

- International students
- Temporary foreign workers
- Persons who do not have immigration status in Canada
- Prefer not to answer
- Other (please specify)

19. Are your services targeted towards people who identify as living with a disability or disabilities?

- Yes
- No

20. Are your services targeted towards people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or two-spirited (LGBTQ2S+)?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

21. Are your services targeted towards parents?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

21a. Are your services targeted to people who identify as lone parents? Choose all that apply.

- Female lone parents
- Male lone parents
- All lone parents
- Our services are not targeted toward lone parents
- Prefer not to answer

22. What is the size of your organization?

- 0-4 employees
- 5-19 employees
- 20-49 employees
- 50-99 employees
- 100-299 employees
- 300-499 employees

- 500 or more employees
- Prefer not to answer

23. Approximately how many people does your community or organization serve annually?

- 0-50 people
- 51-100 people
- 101-500 people
- Over 500 people
- I'm not sure
- Prefer not to answer

24. What best describes your organization? Choose all that apply.

- Indigenous community or organization
- Indigenous government
- Municipality or municipal organization
- Provincial government or provincial agency
- Federal government or federal agency
- Non-profit organization that provides services and supports
- Advocacy organization
- Cultural organization
- Faith-based organization
- School or school board
- Research or think tank
- Foundation
- Prefer not to answer
- Other (please specify): Public Health Unit

25. What are the primary areas of work for your organization? Choose all that apply.

- Anti-racism
- Child care
- Child welfare
- Community centre
- Community living
- Community safety
- Convening/collaboration
- Disabilities
- Education

- Employment
- Entrepreneurship
- Family services
- Financial literacy
- Food
- Granting
- Health
- Homelessness
- Housing
- Income support
- Legal support
- Literacy and basic skills
- Mental health and addictions
- Microfinance
- Public health
- Recreation
- Research and advocacy
- Settlement and language training services
- Skills training
- Violence against women
- Youth services
- Other (please specify)

26. What are the first three characters of your organization's postal code?

N6A

27. Please provide the name of your organization. You may leave this blank.

Middlesex-London Health Unit

28. If you would like to receive more information about the Poverty Reduction Strategy, please provide a contact email address. Leave this blank if you don't want to receive more information.

health@mlhu.on.ca

Your privacy matters

Your information is being collected to help us create the next Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy. Your responses will be reviewed by the Government of Ontario and may be used for

the purposes of planning, administering, monitoring and evaluating the Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Some of the information shared may be used by the Government of Ontario and their service providers to measure website analytics, performance and to improve our services.

If you have provided us with your organization's email address, it may be used to provide you with further information about the Poverty Reduction Strategy. It will not otherwise be placed on mailing lists.