

NEW

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Directions

Call Centre employees to transfer to ServiceOntario

Employees and services in the ministry's Communications and Information Branch (CIB) Call Centre will be transferred to ServiceOntario, which is part of the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services.

58 Call Centre positions will move to ServiceOntario.
There is no loss of jobs associated with this announcement.

Effective July 7, 2008, Call Centre services will now be carried out by ServiceOntario.

The transfer supports the Ontario government's commitment to modernize the delivery of public services to citizens. ServiceOntario's mandate is to be the retail face of government for many of these services, making it easier for Ontarians to conduct routine government transactions.

"The transfer of Call Centre employees and services aligns with both the ministry's stewardship role as health system manager and supports the objective of ServiceOntario to provide the public with convenient, one-window access to a wide range of government products, services and information," said Florence Roach, manager of information services, Communications and Information Branch (CIB).

"I am very proud of the people who work in the Call Centre. They have done excellent work for the ministry and the OPS over the years. They've also done a superb job of rising to the challenge of some pretty demanding situations," Roach added.

"I am privileged to have worked with Call Centre staff and proud that they served in the Communications and Information Branch. Their hard work, professionalism and adherence to the highest quality standards of customer service have impressed me and many others across the OPS many times."

Kevin Finnerty
Executive Director

Communications and Information Branch

The ministry's Call Centre was created in 1989 (as the public information unit) with a staff of three people.

Today the centre has a staff of 62 people who have since answered more than 11 million calls in more than 20 languages for MOHLTC program areas and for other provincial ministries, agencies and programs.

Transferring staff will maintain existing reporting relationships, roles and responsibilities, and will remain in their current location. The two transferring managers will have a change in their reporting relationships. In the coming weeks, the ministry will continue to work closely with ServiceOntario to prepare for the transfer and to ensure a smooth transition for staff and service continuity for clients.

Kevin Finnerty, executive director of CIB, said that throughout its existence the Call Centre has provided superb

standards of customer service.

"I want to single out 2003 when centre staff provided 24/7 services to answer calls related to the provincial SARS emergency and then later that year when they did the same

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ServiceOntario to provide services to MOHLTC clients

Effective July 7, 2008, employees and services in the ministry's Communications and Information Branch Call Centre will be transferred to ServiceOntario.

The following MOHLTC client divisions, branches and programs will continue to receive the same high-quality service from ServiceOntario as the Call Centre previously provided:

- Assistive Devices Program
- Colorectal Cancer Screening Program
- Health Care Provider Access to Drug History (e-Health)
- Ontario Laboratory Information System (OLIS)
- Influenza Immunization Program
- LTC/CCAC Action Line
- MedsCheck
- MOHLTC — general inquiry
- OHIP general inquiry and appointment booking
- Primary Health Care Teams
- Private Water Testing Audio text
- Public Health — Medical Surveillance
- Wait Times in Ontario
- Webmail Accounts:
 - infoline.moh@ontario.ca
 - Transforminghealth.moh@ontario.ca
- West Nile virus.



WD Lighthall photo

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for the August blackout,” Finnerty said.

He cited the more recent Lebanese evacuation as another example of exceptional performance. In support of the provincial government's emergency response to the evacuation of Canadians from Lebanon, once again on short notice the Call Centre was asked to go to 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week staffing.

“They moved so quickly that they were ready the day before the first plane arrived,” Finnerty said. “I am privileged to have worked with Call Centre staff and proud that they served in the Communications and Information Branch. Their hard work, professionalism and adherence to the highest quality standards of customer service have impressed me and many others across the OPS many times. I have received many accolades over the years about the excellent service they provided.”

The transfer announcement does not affect the following services, which will continue to be provided by CIB:

- Case management functions (visitors or callers to ministers) for MOHLTC, Community and Social Services, Children and Youth Services and the Premier's office
- A New Direction transition feedback email account. ■



Andre Van Vugt photo

With the announcement this week that the CIB Call Centre will be transferred to ServiceOntario, customer service agent Laurence Perilmann-Segal, shown above, is one of 58 MOHLTC employees who will soon be working for ServiceOntario, which is operated by the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services. Photo inset above: Debbie Farr, ServiceOntario's director of business and service development, holds an orientation session with a group of CIB Call Centre employees that will move to ServiceOntario. Farr welcomed the new employees and provided more details about ServiceOntario's mandate and operations and answered questions about the upcoming transfer.

Do you have questions about the organizational change?

- Ask your manager
- E-mail your questions or comments to the feedback account at anewdirection.moh@ontario.ca
- Call the feedback line at 1-888-862-0528 or TTY: 1-800-387-5559

Launch of The Learning Connection



The Learning Connection in action: Shown in the above photos are members of The Learning Connection at the group's inaugural meeting, held June 5 at Queen's Park. The Learning Connection is a new advisory group formed to help develop content for learning opportunities for administrative support staff.

Learning opportunities offered to administrative support staff will now benefit from the input of The Learning Connection, a newly created advisory group which held its inaugural meeting June 5.

The Learning Connection establishes a forum for employees at various administrative support levels, and from all divisions, to meet and contribute to the development of content for workshops, courses, or other learning opportunities that will be offered to administrative support staff. The 38-member advisory also provides members with a forum in which to network and collaborate as part of a cross-functional team. The group will meet on an as-needed basis throughout the year.

The Learning Connection is one component of a part of the comprehensive learning and development program for administrative support staff that was announced by Deputy Minister Ron Sapsford in December 2007. The program, which is currently being developed, recognizes the need to offer learning opportunities tailored to the unique needs of administrative support staff.

"Administrative support staff play a vital role in the smooth and efficient operation of the ministry's business," said Linda Hudson, an organizational development consultant with the ministry's Human Resources Branch. "With the transition to stewardship, it's critical that administrative support staff and their managers understand the administrative support role in that context. For example, administrative staff will increasingly find themselves supporting cross-functional project teams so they need

to have the skills and competencies that will enable them to fulfill that role."

Lynn Richardson, business administrative assistant, Resource Management Unit, Corporate and Direct Services, said The Learning Connection gives administrative employees a voice in the development of their own learning program. She said content tailored to meet the specific needs of administrative staff will be more meaningful and accepted.

"Through The Learning Connection, the ministry recognizes the value of tapping into the knowledge of admin staff to identify our highest-priority needs for learning and development. Having a chance, on behalf of our peer group, to express where our needs are allows us to play a role in

Roles and responsibilities of The Learning Connection include:

- Offer input on topics proposed as priorities for workshops
- Provide feedback on proposed course material and case studies to ensure relevance and depth and breadth of content
- Provide examples for the development of case studies so that they are relevant to the day-to-day work of administrative support staff
- Act as a sounding board on new initiatives when requested
- Help plan and coordinate the annual administrative support staff conference.



Session-facilitator Glennie Mercer, pictured above, leads members of The Learning Connection through a class to identify learning priorities for administrative support staff.

building administrative excellence across the ministry. I think that's very meaningful," said Richardson, following the group's first meeting.

Priorities that members identified at their first meeting included the need for opportunities to learn about managing through change, building communications and networking skills, and obtaining training on software used for a range of administrative support responsibilities.

"With the transition to stewardship, the need for developing our skills to navigate change emerged as quite a strong need. The group also identified a need for improving on ministry-wide standards of consistency for administrative skills, qualifications and best practices," Richardson said.

The Learning Connection plans to hold its second meeting in July. At this meeting, the group will continue to address priority learning and training needs. ■

For more information about
The Learning Connection, email
viewpoint@moh.gov.on.ca.

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