TREASURY BOARD / MANAGEMENT BOARD OF CABINET REQUEST ASSESSMENT NOTE

Ministry:	Community and Social Services (MCSS) & Energy (ENERGY)
Meeting Date:	July 25, 2017
Agenda Class:	Discussion
Last reviewed by: N/A	**Tracking to:** Cabinet July 26, 2017

SUBMISSION TITLE:	Increasing Social Assistance (SA) clients' Enrolment in the Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP)

I. DECISION BEFORE THE BOARD

- MCSS and ENERGY are seeking approval for additional resources including 20 temporary FTEs to support increasing the enrolment of SA clients in the OESP.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS:

• Approve an increase of $2,175,800, including $741,900 in Salaries and Wages in 2017-18 to support the enrolment of Social Assistance clients in the OESP; fully offset by a decrease of $2,175,800 in ENERGY's allocation for OESP.	*Approve*
• Approve 20 temporary FTEs in MCSS in 2017-18 only to support regional and centralized activities to enrol of SA clients in the OESP.	*Approve*
• Note that MCSS will request, as part of 2018-19 PRRT, approval for temporary FTEs and an increase of $1,557,700, including $655,000 in Salaries and Wages in 2018-19 to support the enrolment of Social Assistance clients in the OESP; fully offset by a decrease of $1,557,700 in ENERGY's allocation for OESP.	*Note*
• Note that MCSS and ENERGY will work together to confirm the number of SA clients not enrolled in OESP and other information related to the barriers to registering for OESP.	*Note*
• Note depending on outcomes in Phase One of the enrollment plan, MCSS may report back in Fall 2017 with updated information on outcomes of the first phase of enrolment activities, proposal for Phase Two that would include resource requirements including FTEs to support the enrolment of Social Assistance clients in the OESP.	*Note*
• Note that MCSS will report back to TB/MBC for approvals, if an increase to the governments' existing realty footprint is required to accommodate staff beyond the current approval of 20 FTEs and for any additional capital accommodation costs.	*Note*
• Direct the Ministry to seek appropriate I&IT project and related procurement approvals to support the electronic enrollment into the OESP.	*Direct*
• Direct the Ministry to report back through the quarterly reporting process with updated information on the status of the implementation plan, number of SA clients that have been enrolled in the OESP, barriers to registering in the OESP, spending to date, and resource requirements.	*Direct*

III. Financial Summary

$ Millions	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Initiative cost requested	3.5000	2.8000	-
Initiative cost recommended	2.1758	1.5577	-
Recommended program base	12,418.9	12,734.6	-
Offset Recommended	(2.1758)	(1.5577)	-
Total Fiscal Impact[1]	0.0	0.0	-

1) Fiscally neutral transfer of funding from ENERGY to MCSS.

IV. Key Comments and Considerations

Purpose

- Effective May 1, 2017, OESP credits were increased by 50% and eligibility criteria was expanded as part of Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan, with the goal of increasing program participation and providing support to more Ontarians.
- This submission proposes key actions to increase the timely enrolment of SA clients in the OESP.

Background

- OESP is an Ontario Energy Board (OEB) program that was implemented on January 1, 2016.
  - The objective of the program is to reduce electricity bills for lower-income households by providing a monthly credit to eligible customers based on after-tax household income and household size.
  - See Appendix C for OESP support levels and eligibility criteria.
- SA clients, like all applicants, currently may apply for OESP using one of three methods:
  - Online Self-Serve Application,
  - Assisted Online Application or Manual Application (both one of over 170 social agency partners contracted across the province), or
  - Self-Serve Paper Application.
- Currently, OESP applications are processed through ICF Consulting Canada Inc., the third-party technology service provider.
- When OESP was launched in January 2016, SA clients received cheque inserts about OESP.
  - SA offices were also provided with a memo, Qs and As, webinar training for OW/ODSP staff and an OEB digital toolkit (including brochures, backgrounders, office posters, etc.) to explain and help promote OESP to clients.
- As of May 31, 2017, almost 200,000 Ontarians have been accepted into the OESP, representing 35% of the total potentially eligible population.
- Based on Social Assistance Management System (SAMS) data, there are an estimated 43,000 Ontario Works clients and 65,000 Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) clients who receive hydro bills directly and thus are eligible for the OESP.
  - At this time, the ministry is not able to estimate the number of SA clients who have been enrolled in the OESP.
  - Based on initial feedback from OW and ODSP offices, the number of SA clients enrolled is believed to be relatively low. A limited survey at one local ODSP office indicated that only 1 out of 10 clients were enrolled in the OESP.
  - A data match between SAMS and OEB ICF System will provide information on existing SA clients enrolled in the OESP. This information will be available in August 2017.
- The ministry has also identified the following main barriers that may explain the low enrolment numbers of SA clients in the OESP. These barriers include:
  - SA clients have to apply separately, and go through a separate eligibility determination, for OESP;
  - OESP application process considers the household and not the individual/family unit (e.g., a SA client who shares accommodation would be required to provide the personal information

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of their roommate); and
   - The channels to apply for OESP were perceived as a barrier (e.g., focus on online applications, intake sites that were unfamiliar to SA clients, negative client experience with having to identify themselves on social assistance to someone outside of ODSP or OW office, client barriers in navigating through the portals independently without the assistance of their caseworkers).
- In addition, the ministry has identified two key principles that guided the development of the interim process:
   - Expedited timelines to develop/implement an interim (manual) process by early Fall to enrol existing clients/new grants until the interface is ready (June 2018), and
   - Seamless enrolment process to address issues with current OESP enrolment process, while minimizing administrative workload on local OW and ODSP offices.

Initial Implementation Plan
- MCSS and ENERGY submitted a proposal for a three part approach to support increasing the enrolment of SA clients in the OESP.
   - Modifying eligibility criteria for SA clients and entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to support data exchange between MCSS and OEB ICF System.
      - This will enable SA clients' electronic/automatic enrolment into the OESP through SAMS and provide a more 'seamless' client experience.
      - This phase is expected to begin in August 2017 and would involve completing the design, coding and testing and roll-out of interface between SAMS and OEB ICF System for implementation by Q1 2018-19.
   - Raising awareness of OESP for SA clients, as well as SA delivery staff so they can effectively support potential applicants in completing their applications for OESP.
   - Establishing a dedicated team of 50 staff to support existing and newly-granted ODSP and Ontario Works clients' enroll in the OESP.
      - This phase will also involve implementing 1-800 # to initiate MCSS contact centre; integrating OESP enrolment into the SA intake process; and documenting information to help streamline the automation and OESP enrolment process.
      - This phase is expected to begin in August 2017 and take 4-6 months to complete.
- MCSS submitted an initial request for 50 temporary FTEs in both 2017-18 and 2018-19 to support increasing the enrolment of SA clients in the OESP. Recruitment plan was to place in a phased approach.
   - See Appendix D for more details on the ministry's costing assumptions for FTE request.
- See Appendix E for other options the ministry considered.

Revised Phased Implementation Plan
- A multi-part approach continues to be the implementation design but with some refinements to allow for additional data to further inform the targeted outreach response.
- MCSS will initiate work on the IT solution between SAMS and OEB ICF System.
- MCSS will work with ENERGY to collect all data/information available to confirm the scope (number of SA clients who have not enrolled) and assess the barriers to SA client program update including investigation of the existing enrolment infrastructure.
- MCSS will design a phased outreach responses based on information gathered to date and additional information that is collected through activity #2. In **Phase One**, 20 FTEs will be hired and would be assigned to either an MCSS regional office or a temporary centralized enrolment team. Key activities that will be piloted will include:
   - Marketing materials and communications will be provided to local SA offices equipping offices with information to promote and explain the new streamlined SA OESP enrolment process.
   - Planned targeted marketing through cheque inserts and direct mailings will continue to

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eligible SA clients providing information on the OESP and invite them to contact their caseworker or one of the existing OESP intake channels (e.g., intake agency).
    - Staged direct mailings to existing SA clients that currently have hydro costs advising them of the new streamlined enrolment process for SA clients and inviting them to contact the provincial SA OESP Team to enrol. This strategy will target a specific region(s) that has the lowest enrolment rates based on August 2017 enrolment data from the Ontario Energy Board.
    - The ministry will assess the effectiveness of targeted outreach efforts in a specific area(s) against the results of marketing and the current OESP intake approach in other areas.
- The 20 temporary staff will be responsible for:
    - Supporting regional and centralized outreach efforts,
    - Support back office enrolment activities, and
    - Updating an interim database that will be imported into the automatic enrolment system once it is developed.
- Based on results of the targeted outreach along with the volumes of incoming calls/referrals, the ministry may choose to develop a **<u>Phase Two</u>** request.

Considerations
- MCSS and ENERGY are asked to consider further review of business process efficiencies:
    - Further review of IT business requirements to confirm if an interim database is required to enable a transition to the automatic enrolment system.
    - Current OESP enrolment service providers that may be able to offer expedited application protocols similar to what MCSS will test out with SA clients in Phase One.
    - Current OESP enrolment service providers who are also SA program offices could develop improved seamlessness of services.

- MCSS and ENERGY are asked to consider leveraging existing OPS funded supports:
    - Engagement with Behavioural Insights Team
    - Engagement with Digital Media Team
    - Engagement with MCSS/MOF Benefits Transformation Office

- As part of long-term planning, MCSS and ENERGY may investigate better alignment of direct payments to hydro companies that are currently being made through SA.

<u>Lease and Accommodation</u>
- The Ministry plans to utilize existing government realty by accommodating the interim team of 20 FTEs at a local Ontario Disability Support Program office. Cost associated with office set-up of $65,000 would be offset out of the transfer from the Ministry of Energy's allocation.
    - One-time set up costs are treated as operating expenses since they do not meet the threshold of capitalization as per OPCD's Tangible Capital Asset guidelines.
- With the interim rollout plan of 20 staff the ministry has identified an accommodations risk that with the smaller interim number of staff, the ministry will not commit to a larger site in North Bay. Infrastructure Ontario has conveyed that there is another ministry that is in the queue behind MCSS to lease this larger space. Therefore, if a larger team is needed in the future, the ministry may need to obtain third party space.

<u>I&IT Request</u>
- In the interim, the ministry is proposing to use a database to document client records to support OESP enrolment for migration into SAMS at a later project phase.
    - Some of the information that will be recorded includes client information, application status, log calls, record outcomes, etc.
- The ministry has noted that any long-term needs for the database will have to be re-assessed once

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the SAMS enhancements are implemented.

- The ministry has also indicated that it is leveraging the Enterprise Contact Centre Solution Modernization Branch for the call centre.
- The ministry will need to seek appropriate project and related procurement approval for the SAMS enhancements.
- The table below provides costing details related to the I&IT requirements in 2017-18 and 2018-19.

$M	2017-18	2018-19
IT Costs - one-time user seat	0.0190	0.0080
IT Costs - ongoing user seat	0.0720	0.0720
System Enhancement - Data Sharing	0.3000	0.3000
Interim Database	0.2500	0.2500
Call Centre - telephone system	0.2780	0.1380
Total	**0.9190**	**0.7680**

Note: Costs are preliminary estimates and are subject to change based on detailed assessment of the specific requirements.

Ministry Financial Request/Analysis

- To support the implementation of this initiative, MCSS has identified a resource requirement of $3.5 million in 2017-18 that will be fully offset from the Ministry of Energy's allocation for the OESP. In 2017-18, the OESP transfer payment line has an allocation of $140 million.
- ENERGY has confirmed that none of this allocation has been spent on administration to date – OEB is still delivering the program via the IESO-managed variance account, which is the difference between the amount collected and the amount spent on payments and administration by OEB.
    - The request by MCSS is the first draw down of funding allocated for this initiative.
- Based on the revised phased implementation plan, TBS is recommending TB/MBC to approve 20 FTEs in 2017-18 only to support increasing the enrolment of SA clients in the OESP.
- The table below provides costing details for FTEs and other operating expenditures.

$M	2017-18	2018-19
Salaries & Wages[1]	$0.7419	$0.6550
ODOE[2]	$1.4339	$0.9027
Total	**$2.1758**	**$1.5577**

1) Salaries & Wages include 6% in lieu of insured benefits. Costing is based on the assumption of 20 FTEs including 11 FTEs for dedicated team (08OAD), 8 caseworkers for ODSP Offices, and 1 Manager with annual salaries of $52,947, $73,793 and $99,025, respectively.

2) In 2017-18, includes one-time Leasehold Improvement costs of $0.0650M, $0.3535M for marketing costs, $0.0964 for FTE-related ODOE costs, and I&IT expenditures of $0.9190M. In 2018-19, includes $0.0500M for marketing costs, $0.0847M for FTE-related ODOE costs, and I&IT expenditures of $0.7680.

- MCSS will report back in the 2018-19 PRRT to request multi-year resource requirements which are expected to be offset from the Ministry of Energy's OESP transfer payment line.

Ministry Request - Communications Plan

- MCSS is developing a detailed communications plan to:
    - Increase awareness of the OESP among Social Assistance clients and how it can help them save money on their monthly electricity bill; and
    - Provide Social Assistance delivery staff with the communications tools and supports they need to help Social Assistance clients enroll in the OESP.
- The communications approach is under development and is likely to include:
    - Broad communications to all Social Assistance clients (e.g., through Social Assistance cheque inserts);
    - Targeted letters to Social Assistance clients who pay hydro costs;
    - Communications to Social Assistance delivery staff on the overall implementation strategy and to provide them with appropriate support tools; and

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  - Positioning these changes as part of ongoing efforts to reduce electricity bills as outlined in the Fair Hydro Act.
- The ministry has also actively engaged with its municipal partners including Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) across the province to promote client awareness, as well as to support staff in providing program information and enrollment processes.
  - As part of its communications plan, the ministry would provide posters/brochures for local offices, cheque inserts and client letter templates for distribution to clients, Qs and As, key messages, business processes and other job aids for staff.

Performance Measures

- This initiative is designed to support the Fair Hydro Plan objective of substantially increasing uptake of OESP. As noted in the submission, the performance measures and metrics related to this outcome will be included in a separate Fair Hydro Plan report back.
- In addition to the objective of the Fair Hydro Plan, the ministries are encouraged to measure outcomes that clearly align to the three steps of the Proposed Course of Action, outlined in this submission. Specifically:
  - Raising awareness of OESP for Social Assistance clients,
  - Increasing uptake of OESP amongst Social Assistance clients, and
  - Providing a more ‘seamless’ client experience.
- Once outcomes are identified, relevant performance measures, metrics and data sources will be required for tracking progress and driving continuous improvement. The database that will be developed for this initiative will capture data elements such as call volumes, enrolment statistics, client information, etc. and may serve as a data source for measuring performance.
- The ministries may consider engaging with TBS’ Behavioural Insights Unit, who can provide expert advice and offer support conducting trials related to opportunities for increasing enrolment in government programs (e.g. scripting of calls, developing mail outs, etc.).
- MCSS has committed to conducting issues management to ensure implementation challenges are addressed and do not impact the desired outcomes.

Risk Assessment/Considerations

- With the revised implementation proposal, if the data/information gathering phase does confirm that a province-wide outreach strategy is required, the time to implement will be longer than the original ministry proposal. This delay may result in concerns from SA clients and SA stakeholders about the delay in targeted outreach.
  - <u>Mitigation strategy:</u> the current enrolment infrastructure is in place and available to support SA clients and SA staff (OW and ODSP) have access to existing information about OESP.
  - <u>Mitigation strategy:</u> MCSS will move forward with functions/activities that will be required regardless of the additional data/information gathering.
- Without additional data/information gathering MCSS and ENERGY may be criticized for not fully leveraging the existing OESP infrastructure.
  - <u>Mitigation strategy:</u> MCSS and ENERGY will work together to collect key information to inform next phase of rollout design.
  - <u>Mitigation strategy:</u> MCSS will move forward with functions/activities that will be required regardless of the additional data/information gathering.
- If a larger team is required in the longer term, there could be accommodation requirements for an increase in government’s realty footprint, as well as additional costs associated with the lease of a third party space.
  - <u>Mitigation strategy:</u> MCSS will return to seek TB/MBC approval if an increase to government’s existing realty footprint is required, as well as any capital accommodations funding.
- See Appendix F for more details on ministry assessment of original proposal.

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- Some of the other considerations with respect to future approvals and resource requirements to note are that:
    - The ministry may identify on-going staffing requirements for future years through PRRT (i.e., to address First Nations communities, new clients that are expected to enroll every month);
    - Procurement approvals; and
    - Further consultations and stakeholder engagement may be required with municipal partners to address concerns about staffing the temporary team with government staff.

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Date:	July 24, 2017	**Log number:**	
Branch / Division:	Health, Social and Coordination Branch / PEMD		

APPENDIX A: PROPOSED MINUTE

Approve the ministries request for resources to support increasing the enrolment of Social Assistance clients' onto the Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP).

In this regard, the Board:

- Approve an increase of $2,175,800, including $741,900 Salaries and Wages in 2017-18 in Direct Operating Expenses – Financial and Employment Supports (Vote/Item 702-03), fully offset by a decrease of $2,175,800 in Ontario Electricity Support Program transfer payment (Vote/Item 2905-01) to support the enrolment of Social Assistance clients in the OESP.

- Approve 20 temporary FTEs in MCSS in 2017-18 only to support the regional and centralized activities to enroll Social Assistance clients into the OESP.

- Note that the Ministry of Community and Social Services will request, as part of 2018-19 PRRT, approval for an increase of $1,557,700, including $655,000 in Salaries and Wages in 2018-19 in Direct Operating Expenses – Financial and Employment Supports (Vote/Item 702-03) fully offset by a decrease of $1,557,700 in the Ontario Electricity Support Program transfer payment (Vote/Item 2905-01) to support the enrolment of Social Assistance clients into the OESP.

- Note that MCSS and ENERGY will work together to confirm the number of SA clients not enrolled in OESP and other information related to the barriers to registering for OESP.

- Note that depending on outcomes in Phase One of the enrollment plan MCSS may report back in Fall 2017 with updated information on outcomes of the first phase of enrollment activities, proposal for Phase Two that would include resource requirements including FTEs to support the enrolment of Social Assistance clients in the OESP.

- Note that MCSS will report back to TB/MBC for approvals if an increase to the government's existing realty footprint is required to accommodate additional staff beyond the current approval of 20 FTEs, and for any capital accommodations costs.

- Direct the Ministry to seek appropriate I&IT project and related procurement approvals to support the electronic enrollment in the OESP.

- Direct the Ministry to report back through the quarterly reporting process with updated information on the status of the implementation plan, number of SA clients that have been enrolled in the OESP, barriers to registering in the OESP, spending to date, and resource requirements.

APPENDIX B: FINANCIAL TABLE

FINANCIAL IMPACTS: CHANGES TO EXPENSE AND REVENUE				TABLE B1
	Fiscal Plan Basis			*Voted Appropriations Basis*
$ Millions	**2017-18**	**2018-19**	**2019-20**	**2017-18**
Initiative cost recommended	2.1758	1.5577	0.0000	2.1758
Expense changes:				
Financial and Employment Supports (Vote/Item 702-03)	2.1758	1.5577	0.0000	2.1758
Ontario Electricity Support Program (Vote/Item 2905-01)	(2.1758)	(1.5577)	0.0000	(2.1758)
Total Fiscal Impact	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**

APPENDIX C: OESP AMOUNTS AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

OESP Monthly Credit Amounts by Household Income Level[1] (Effective May 1, 2017)

Household Income (After Tax)	**Household Size (Number of people living in household)**						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7+
$28,000 or less	$45	$45	$51	$57	$63	$75	$75
$28,001 – $39,000		$40	$45	$51	$57	$63	$75
$39,001 – $48,000			$35	$40	$45	$51	$57
$48,001 – $52,000					$35	$40	$45

1) The OESP on-bill credit amount will depend on how many people live in the house and the combined household income after tax.

OESP Monthly Credit Amounts by Household Income Level – Energy Intensive[1] (Effective May 1, 2017)

Household Income (After Tax)	**Household Size (Number of people living in household)**						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7+
$28,000 or less	$68	$68	$75	$83	$90	$113	$113
$28,001-$39,000		$60	$68	$75	$83	$90	$113
$39,001-$48,000			$52	$60	$68	$75	$83
$48,001-$52,000					$52	$60	$68

1) The OESP offers a higher level of assistance for customers who need to use more power because their home is electrically heated, or they rely on an approved medical device requiring a lot of electricity.

OESP Eligibility Criteria

Who can apply?	The OESP is available to all lower-income customers who have accounts with electricity distributors or unit sub-meter providers. The Ontario Native Welfare Administrators Association (ONWAA) is available to assist Indigenous households with their applications. Eligibility for applicants is based on household income and household size.
Which medical devices qualify for a higher level of assistance?	The following medical devices will qualify an applicant for higher level of assistance: • Kidney Dialysis Machine • Mechanical Ventilators (invasive and non-invasive) • Oxygen Concentrator
How long is the OESP eligibility period?	Eligible consumers need to re-qualify every 2 years (or whenever their personal circumstances change), while CPP permanent disability pension recipients have an eligibility period of 5 years.
Other considerations	To be counted in customer's household total, residents must reside in the home for 6 months or more per year. The OESP is for the primary residence only, the one that customer lives in for more than 6 months of the year.

APPENDIX D: ORIGINAL - COST ASSUMPTIONS OF MINISTRY'S STAFFING REQUEST

1.Dedicated Team serving both OW and OSDP Clients

		Avg # of Individuals Per Month [1]	Time per client (hr) [3]	Required # of hours per month	Staff hrs per month [4]	Adjustment Factor [5]	# of Staff required
Existing Clients							
OW	43,000	3,583	0.33	1,194.33	145	1.23	10
ODSP	65,000	5,417	0.33	1,805.67	145	1.23	15
New Clients [2]							
OW	-	3,780	0.33	1,260.00	145	1.23	11
ODSP	-	1,281	0.33	427.00	145	1.23	4
						Total Staff	**40**
						Manager	**2**
						Total FTE	**42**

Notes

1 Assuming 12 months to complete enrolment by dedicated Team

2 Current intake for OW and ODSP is 18,000 and 6,100 respectively. About 21% assumed to be eligible for OESP

3 Estimated 20 minutes per client

4 Assumed 7.25 per day for an average 20 days

5 Vacation, holidays and sick days

2. Local Office for ODSP Clients

		Avg # of Individuals Per Month [1]	Time per client (hr) [2]	Required # of hours per month	Staff hrs per month	Adjustment Factor	# of Staff required
Existing Clients	65,000	5,417	0.12	631.98	145	1.23	5
New Clients	-	1,281	0.25	320.25	145	1.23	3
			Total				**8**

Notes

1 Assuming 12 months to complete enrolment by dedicated Team

2 Estimated 15 per new client and approx half the time for existing clients

3. FTE Staffing and Compensation Details

	#	Classifications	Mid point Salary	ODOE	Benefits in lieu: Stat. Holiday	Benefits in lieu: Vacation	Benefits in lieu: Ins. Benefits
Dedicated Team							
Staff	40	08OAD	$46,201	13%	4.6%	4.0%	6.0%
Manager	2		$86,409	13%	4.0%	6.0%	6.0%
Local Office							
Staff	8	WW2	$64,392	13%	4.0%	6.0%	6.0%

APPENDIX E: OTHER IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS CONSIDERED BY THE MINISTRY

The ministry confirmed that they have reviewed other service delivery options and they were determined to not be viable.

- The ministry also noted that it initially considered having local OW and ODSP offices collect client information and process the OESP enrollment directly with the OEB. This option was rejected by the OEB as well as OW/ODSP managers because:
  - OEB does not have the capacity to support an expanded network of “intake agencies”.
  - OW/ODSP were concerned with:
    - Additional workload required to collect client data; and
    - Labour relation issues with having SA caseworkers undertaking applications for the OESP.

- In addition, the ministry noted that the Ontario Shared Services Contact Centre was also approached but advised the ministry that they would not be able to meet the timelines for ramp-up and the resource requirements.
  - The option of having OW/ODSP staff refer clients to the existing 172 OESP intake agencies was considered but is not recommended because of the barriers noted above. More importantly, existing intake agencies do not have the information needed to automatically enroll SA clients and they do not have the authority to collect information on a SA client and his/her benefit unit members. As such, this would not support the government’s efforts to move to automatic enrolment of SA clients into the OESP.

APPENDIX F: RISK ASSESSMENT (MINISTRY SUBMITTED)

Risk	Mitigation
Dedicated Team needs consent from Social Assistance clients to enrol on their behalf.	In the circumstances oral consent where documented would be sufficient. This will be built into business processes and training. Strategy has been reviewed and endorsed by the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario.
Management of labour relations issues (e.g. the appearance that some aspects of Social Assistance staff duties are being granted to temporary staff).	Letter to relevant bargaining agent and communication to MERC that the Dedicated Team is temporary and do not perform functions outside those already expected (e.g., to refer clients to existing non-MCSS programs). The function of the Dedicated Team will be narrowly focused to conduct outreach to existing Social Assistance clients and complete OESP applications on their behalf, if required. Dedicated Team efforts will not duplicate or compete with current Social Assistance staff, as team will not be determining ODSP or OW eligibility; case-managing; or assessing a client's employability, job readiness and other needs.
Accelerated timelines for establishing the Dedicated Team's contact centre.	Site visits will determine if any modifications to existing physical space are needed. Steps needed to order/build office equipment, toll-free# and business processes are underway. Business requirements of some technology and toll free # will reflect project limitations but maximize outcomes.
Unknown call volumes for the Dedicated Team as the number of existing Social Assistance clients currently enrolled in OESP is unknown. May also be impacted by the clients who are currently enrolled in OESP, but who are close to their OESP renewal period, or clients who are calling in due to a change in circumstance.	Calls volumes for the Dedicated Team are estimated based on current SAMS data and estimated new Social Assistance intakes. The initial data match will enable MCSS to determine how many ODSP and OW clients are enrolled in OESP. MCSS will report back on any changes in project requirements, as well as any ongoing supports required.