

Ontario Ensuring that Vulnerable Families Keep Child Support Payments

Province Ends Child Support Clawback

NEWS

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As part of Ontario's ongoing work to reform income security and combat child poverty, the province is ending the clawback of child support payments from social assistance.

Starting in early 2017, child support payments will be fully exempt from social assistance benefit calculations to help increase incomes for families who receive both social assistance and child support. Currently, child support payments are treated as income and deducted dollar-for-dollar from benefits.

The full exemption will help increase the monthly income of almost 19,000 families, most of whom are single-parent households. This exemption will mean that eligible families receiving social assistance benefits will receive an average of \$282 more per month — or \$3,380 annually — from child support payments. This will benefit some of the province's most vulnerable children.

The exemption will be effective January 1, 2017 in the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and February 1, 2017 in Ontario Works. Clients will also no longer be required to pursue child support as a condition of eligibility for social assistance — a requirement that clients and advocates have reported as a cause of distress.

Combatting child poverty is part of the government's economic plan to build Ontario up and deliver on its number-one priority to grow the economy and create jobs. The four-part plan includes helping more people get and create the jobs of the future by expanding access to high-quality college and university education. The plan is making the largest infrastructure investment in hospitals, schools, roads, bridges and transit in Ontario's history and is investing in a low-carbon economy driven by innovative, high-growth, export-oriented businesses. The plan is also helping working Ontarians achieve a more secure retirement.

QUOTES

"Our government is committed to fighting child poverty, and these new rules will help to benefit some of the most vulnerable children in our province. We know that this is the right thing to do for the close to 19,000 families who receive child support and social assistance."

— Dr. Helena Jaczek, Minister of Community and Social Services

"We are very pleased that Minister Jaczek is ending the clawback of child support from parents receiving social assistance. This is an important change that will reduce child poverty and allow single parents to make their own decisions about how to reach financial settlements for child support. It signals a new approach to social assistance that will make a big difference in the lives of the most vulnerable families in Ontario."

—Mary Marrone, Director of Advocacy and Legal Services, Income Security Advocacy Centre