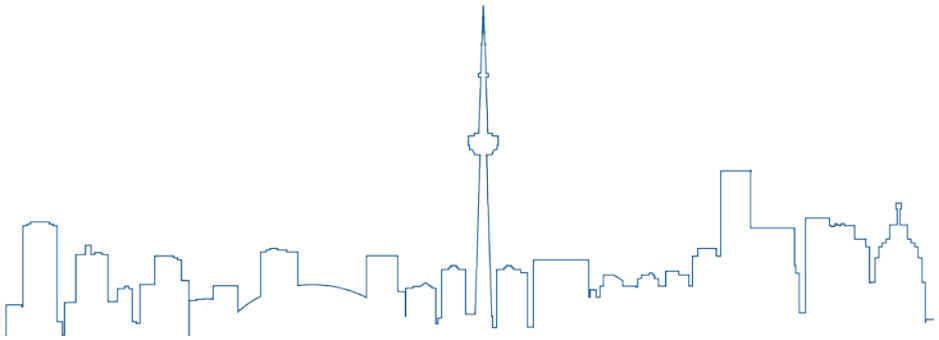
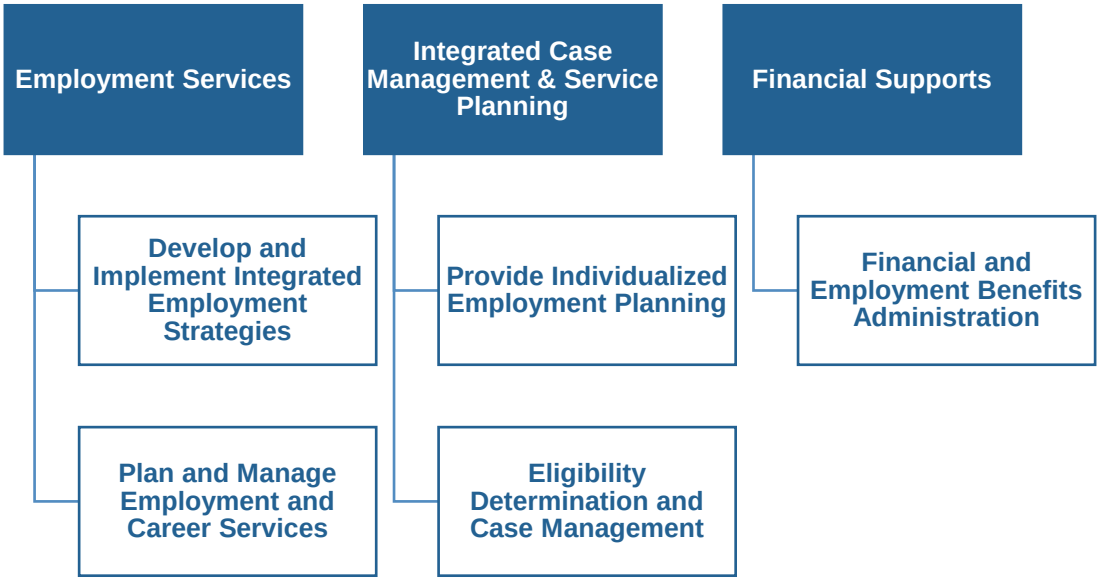
TORONTO



SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

PROGRAM MAP

Toronto Employment and Social Services



Through a network of 19 offices, Toronto Employment and Social Services (TESS) manages the third largest social assistance delivery system in Canada. Under the authority of the Ontario Works (OW) Act and Regulations, TESS provides employment services, financial supports and social supports to Toronto residents to strengthen their social and economic well-being in their communities.

Employment services helps clients find, prepare for and keep a job. This includes one on one service planning with all clients, case management, skills and job-specific training, workshops on resume writing and interviewing, and access to basic education.

Financial supports provides basic needs, like shelter, food, clothing and health related items, such as dental services for adults, eyeglasses, and medical transportation, for clients and their families.

Social supports include access or referral to other services like child care, mental health services and housing supports, as well as community and neighbourhood services like recreation programs and libraries.

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT RESULTS

Question	Indicator/Measure	Internal Comparison of Toronto's 2017 vs. 2016 Results	External Comparison to Other Municipalities (MBNC) By Quartile for 2017	Chart & Page Ref.
How many social assistance cases are there?	Monthly Social Assistance Case Load per 100,000 Households - (service/ activity level)	Stable Rate of Social Assistance case load was stable in 2017 (service/activity level indicator)	4 Higher rate of Social Assistance case load compared to others (service/activity level indicator)	29.1 29.2 pg. 4/ 5
How many social assistance clients are visiting Toronto's Employment Centres?	Number of Client Visits to Employment Centres - (Community Impact)	Increase Client visits increased in 2017 (Community Impact)	N/A	29.3 pg. 6
How long does it take to inform a client that they are eligible for social assistance?	Social Assistance Response Time (Days) to Client Eligibility - (Customer Service)	Decrease Response time decreased (Customer Service)	1 Lower response time compared to other MBNC municipalities (Customer Service)	29.4 29.5 pg. 7/8

SUMMARY OF OVERALL RESULTS

Internal Comparison of Toronto's 2017 vs. 2016 Results	Internal Comparison of Toronto's 2017 vs. 2016 Results	External Comparison to Other Municipalities (MBNC) By Quartile for 2017	External Comparison to Other Municipalities (MBNC) By Quartile for 2017
Service /Activity Level Indicators (Resources)	Performance Measures (Results)	Service/ Activity Level Indicators (Resources)	Performance Measures (Results)
0- Increase 0 - Stable 0 - Decrease	2 - Increase 0 - Stable 0 - Decrease	0 - 1st quartile 0 - 2nd quartile 0 - 3rd quartile 0 - 4th quartile	1 - 1st quartile 0 - 2nd quartile 0 - 3rd quartile 0 - 4th quartile
N/A	100% favourable or stable	N/A	100% in 1st and 2nd quartiles

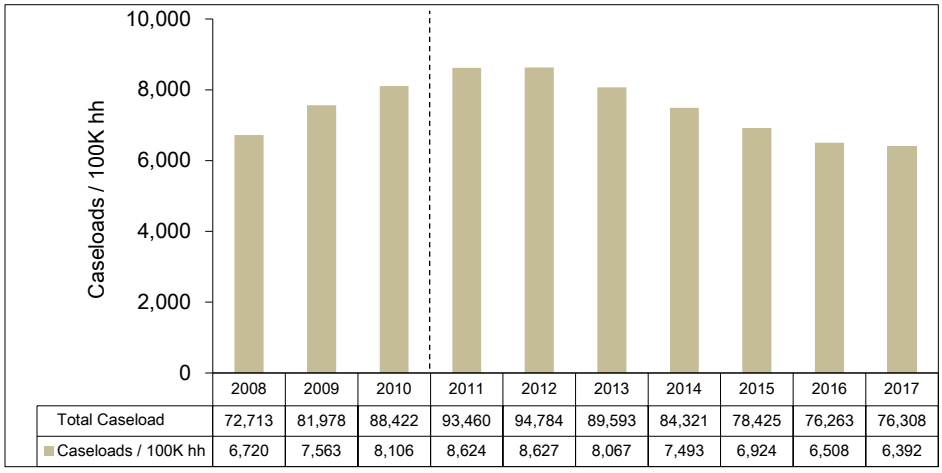
For an explanation of how to interpret this summary and the supporting charts, please see the Guide to Toronto's Performance Results. These quartile results are based on a maximum sample size of 10 municipalities.

Note: In November 2014, the Province replaced the Service Delivery Model Technology (SDMT) case management system with the Social Assistance Management System (SAMS). Due to issues with the integrity of SAMS data, there was no reporting in 2015. Reporting resumed in 2016, but given continuing data issues, reporting was limited to two measures. Full reporting will resume when the data integrity improves and allows for comparisons across the province.

SERVICE/ACTIVITY LEVEL

Municipalities are responsible for delivering Ontario Works (OW) in accordance with provincial regulations and rules. Toronto Employment and Social Services manages the third largest social assistance delivery system in Canada. One of the primary responsibilities of TESS is to provide employment services, financial supports and social supports to Toronto residents to strengthen their social and economic well-being in their communities.

29.1 – HOW MANY SOCIAL ASSISTANCE CASES ARE THERE IN TORONTO?



	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total Caseload	72,713	81,978	88,422	93,460	94,784	89,593	84,321	78,425	76,263	76,308
Caseloads / 100K hh	6,720	7,563	8,106	8,624	8,627	8,067	7,493	6,924	6,508	6,392

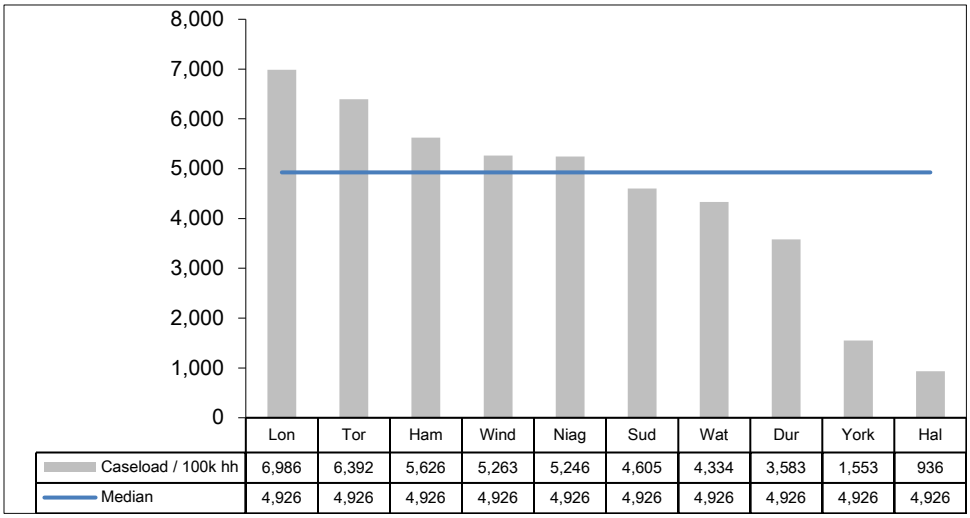
Chart 29.1 provides Toronto's total number and rate of social assistance cases per 100,000 households. The results for 2010 and prior years are not based on the revised population estimates.

Chart 29.1 (City of Toronto) Monthly Social Assistance Case Load per 100,000 Households

A case can involve either an individual or a family. Caseloads increased in 2009 due to the impact of the recession and continued to rise through 2012. From 2012 onward, caseloads have decreased as many Ontario Works (OW) recipients transitioned to employment in the aftermath of the recession. However, many of the remaining people on OW are more distant from the labour market, are staying on social assistance longer and require more intensive supports to transition to employment.

In 2017, the Social Assistance Case Load per 100,000 households dropped marginally compared to the previous year and is now lower than it was prior to the beginning of the 2008/2009 recession.

29.2 –HOW DOES TORONTO'S SOCIAL ASSISTANCE CASELOAD COMPARE TO OTHER MUNICIPALITIES?



	Lon	Tor	Ham	Wind	Niag	Sud	Wat	Dur	York	Hal
Caseload / 100k hh	6,986	6,392	5,626	5,263	5,246	4,605	4,334	3,583	1,553	936
Median	4,926	4,926	4,926	4,926	4,926	4,926	4,926	4,926	4,926	4,926

Chart 29.2 compares Toronto's 2017 rate of social assistance cases to other municipalities.

Chart 29.2 (MBNC 2017) Monthly Social Assistance Case Load per 100,000 Households

Poverty rates remain high in Toronto. In 2015, there were 543,390 persons or 20.2% of the population in Toronto with an income below Statistics Canada's Low Income Measure After Tax (LIM-AT), significantly more than the rates for Canada (14 per cent) and Ontario (14 per cent). LIM-AT is a relative measure of low income, meaning that it does not reflect differences in the cost of living.

Although the overall caseload has declined, the length of time on assistance has increased, and more clients are considered to be “distant” from the labour market, meaning that they face barriers to employment. For example, in 2016, 44 per cent of clients had been on assistance for over two years, and the average length of stay for all cases was nearly three years. In addition, clients reported a wide range of barriers to employment, most notably poor physical and mental health, limited education and/or skills, a lack of Canadian work experience, and challenges with transportation.

More information about Toronto's Economy, Labour Force and Demographics is available from the City of Toronto website.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

29.3 - HOW MANY SOCIAL ASSISTANCE CLIENTS ARE VISITING TORONTO'S EMPLOYMENT CENTRES?

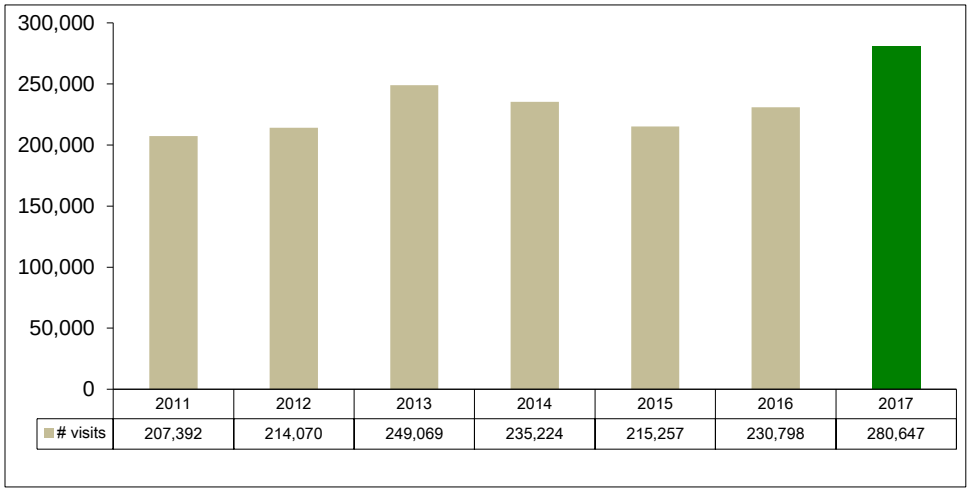


Chart 29.3 shows the number of client visits to Employment Centres. In 2017, there were 280,647 visits.

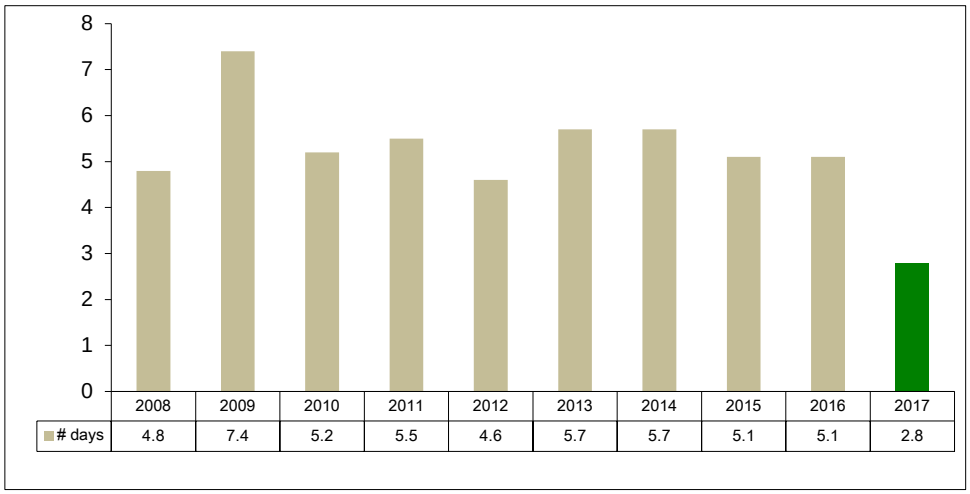
Chart 29.3 (City of Toronto) Number of Client Visits to Employment Centres

In 2017, there was an increase of 21.6% in number of employment centre service visits, this increase is due to employment services returning to normal levels post SAMS implementation

CUSTOMER SERVICE

At any of the City's 15 community-based Ontario Works Offices, on-line or over the phone with the division's Application Centre, individuals can apply for social assistance. Clients are assessed to determine whether they are in financial need and eligible to receive social assistance and are then subsequently informed of their eligibility. In 2017, Employment and Social Services on average received 3,900 applications for assistance per month.

29.4 - HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE IN TORONTO TO INFORM A CLIENT IF THEY ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SOCIAL ASSISTANCE?



	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
# days	4.8	7.4	5.2	5.5	4.6	5.7	5.7	5.1	5.1	2.8

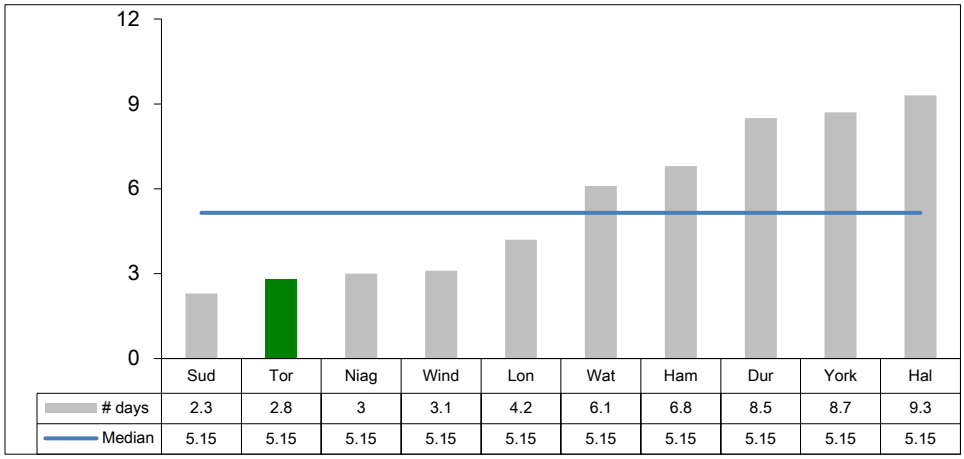
Chart 29.4 provides Toronto's average response time in days, to client eligibility requests, which is the period from the point that clients request assistance, to the time that a decision is rendered.

Chart 29.4 (City of Toronto) Social Assistance Response Time (Days) to Client Eligibility

Response times spiked in 2009 with a large increase in applications and processing delays due to a labour disruption which created extreme data anomalies (see Chart 29.1).

In 2017, the social assistance response time to client eligibility decreased to 2.8 days. This (favourable) decrease is due an improvement in the application process, which enables eligibility to be established at the applicant's first point of contact through the centralized Application Centre.

29.5 –HOW DOES THE LENGTH OF TIME TO INFORM A CLIENT OF THEIR ELIGIBILITY FOR SOCIAL ASSISTANCE COMPARE TO OTHER MUNICIPALITIES?



	Sud	Tor	Niag	Wind	Lon	Wat	Ham	Dur	York	Hal
# days	2.3	2.8	3	3.1	4.2	6.1	6.8	8.5	8.7	9.3
Median	5.15	5.15	5.15	5.15	5.15	5.15	5.15	5.15	5.15	5.15

Chart 29.5 (MBNC 2017) Social Assistance Response Time (Days) to Client Eligibility

Chart 29.5 compares Toronto's 2017 social assistance response time for client eligibility to other municipalities. Toronto ranks second of ten (first quartile) in terms of having the shortest response time.

2017 ACHIEVEMENTS AND 2018 PLANNED INITIATIVES

The following achievements and initiatives have improved or will help to further improve the effectiveness of Toronto's Employment and Social Services operations:

2017 Achievements

- Supported 28,975 clients to either exit OW for employment or start a job placement.
- Managed an average monthly caseload of 84,015 and assessed 46,746 applications for Ontario Works (OW).
- Issued $848.1 million in financial, employment and medical benefits.
- Developed / updated 195,441 individual service plans.
- Implemented key recommendations of the City's Poverty Reduction Plan:
    - Introducing new intensive case management programs aimed at reducing the proportion of long-term cases on social assistance.
    - Developed an information sharing agreement with Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) to reduce/prevent evictions.
    - Refocussing of the Family Support Program towards financial empowerment to better support single parent families.
- Leveraging opportunities to more effectively and efficiently deliver social assistance to City residents:
    - TESS and ODSP will be co-locating at multiple sites to improve and streamline services to mutual clients.
    - Introduced innovative business solutions including expansion of e-services for OW clients, automated registration services and paperless office strategies.
- Expanded co-located sites with Children's Services (from 2 to 3).
- In conjunction with Toronto Children's Services (TCS), and Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA) continue to advance the City's Human Services Integration initiative with active planning towards a single access number for the phone channel.
- Continue to advance the objectives of the City's Workforce Development Strategy:
    - Launched an integrated service delivery site with the Province to connect unemployed residents to new training opportunities and jobs arising from Crosstown Eglinton Construction.
    - Met our Partnership to Advance Youth Employment (PAYE) targets of serving over 2000 youth and working with more than 210 employers to connect 1000 youth to jobs.
    - Over 150 City staff participated in the NetWORKS youth mentoring program.
    - Completed the City's first youth internship program with Corporate HR.
    - Leading the City's Workforce Development Month activities including 30+ events held across the City, held in partnership with a range of City Divisions and Community partners.
- Recipient of Toronto Ombudsman Award for the new Decision Review Model that features conflict resolution principles, transparency, and effective communication.
- Recipient of the City Manager's Award – Employee Experience, engaging front line staff to design, test, and refine the initial client interfaces with the Program.

2018 Planned Initiatives

- Manage an average caseload of 84,000 and assist 28,000 unemployed City residents find and/or sustain employment.
- Continue to modernize the delivery of Ontario Works in Toronto to improve effectiveness and efficiency, for example:
    - Implementation of the first phase of the new Service Delivery Model
    - Implementation of Two-Way Secure E-mail which will add secure e-mail as a new
    - communication channel with clients
    - Pilot and implement a common service planning model in order to improve client experience and outcomes.
- Increase the profile and success of the City's Workforce Development Initiatives:
    - Through the Partnership to Advance Youth Employment (PAYE) program to increase the number of employers offering employment opportunities to youth.
    - Increase work-based learning opportunities for Toronto youth (18-29) through the implementation of the City's Youth Employment Action Plan.
    - Work with employers to develop new sector based approaches to expand job opportunities for unemployed low income Toronto residents, specifically OW clients.
- Enhancing customer service and operational efficiencies through cluster-wide integration by implementing the Human Services Integration (HSI) project.
- Implement key recommendations in the 2018 City of Toronto Poverty Reduction Work plan, including the Transit Fare Equity Program, as well as support the implementation of broader Poverty Reduction Strategy objectives.

Factors Influencing the Results of Municipalities

The results of each municipality included here can be influenced to varying degrees by factors such as:

- Employability: significant numbers of clients with one or more barriers to employment, including health barriers, lack of education and language skills, literacy levels, and lack of Canadian work experience
- Urban form: client access to programs can vary due to geographical, technological, cultural or other limitations
- Economic conditions: differing local labour market conditions (unemployment and employment rates) and the types of employment available
- Demographics: family size and caseload mix, the availability of interpreters when English is not the first language
- Service delivery: different service delivery models and the services provided, the availability of community supports and where social services offices are located in municipalities in relation to clients
- Caseload: includes transient clients, those clients moving on and off the caseload from precarious work situations, as well as clients who are receiving assistance for extended periods of time. Caseload turnover significantly impacts administrative support provided to meet program demand.