



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

Committee Report

To: Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee
From: Mark Poste, Director of Housing Services
Date: Wednesday, October 11, 2023 **HS-23-12**
Subject: Increase to the 2023-24 Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit Funding Allocation

Background:

In March 2023, Housing Services shared information about planned funding allocations for the 2023-24 Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) programme in Committee Report HS-23-03 "[2023-25 Planned Funding Allocations for Provincially Delivered Housing and Homelessness Prevention Programmes](#)". The report indicated a funding allocation of \$497,900 which was confirmed by the province in August 2023 to support up to 45 households in our community to bridge the gap between their income and rental costs in the private market.

The COHB programme is a portable housing benefit that supports the rental affordability of low-income households living in the private rental market. The benefit comes in the form of a monthly rent subsidy that is provided directly to landlord on behalf of the tenant. The allowance is calculated based on a formula that includes the household income, the number of people in the house and the local housing market rents. The basic principle is that a household receiving the COHB subsidy should not pay more than 30% of their before tax income on monthly rent.

Update:

On September 18, 2023, the County of Wellington received a letter from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing confirming an increase of \$335,500 to the 2023-24 COHB allocation. This additional funding is expected to support an additional 30 households. This funding increase brings the total 2023-24 COHB allocation to \$833,400.

The letter states that the increase reflects the estimated share of asylum claimants in each Service System Manager area and their relative impact on local services, based on provincial social assistance data. The letter highlights that the Ministry recognizes that supporting people through COHB frees up much-needed capacity in the shelter system and other housing options being utilized by households in need. As such, this additional funding is to prioritize asylum claimants and, it may be used to support any COHB target group including newcomers. At this time, the Housing Services division is aware of approximately 20 individuals in our service delivery area that may meet the eligibility criteria as asylum claimants. Staff will continue to work with community agency partners to identify and support more that may be eligible.

Financial Implications:

The additional funding provided by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing of \$355,500 is 100% federal-provincial funding and will not have an impact on the 2023 municipal tax levy.

Attached:

Letter dated September 18, 2023, from the Honourable Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing "2023-24 Additional Planning Allocations Under the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) Programme".

Recommendation:

That the report, Increase to the 2023-24 Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit Funding Allocation, be received for information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mark Poste".

Mark Poste
Director of Housing Services