

**Ministry of
Municipal Affairs
and Housing**

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September 18, 2023

Andy Lennox
Warden, County of Wellington
74 Woolwich Street
Guelph, Ontario, N1H 3T9

Dear Andy Lennox:

Re: 2023-24 Additional Planning Allocations Under the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) Program

The Government of Ontario acknowledges the pressures faced by municipalities due to the significant increase in asylum claimants.

In response to this situation, I am pleased to announce that Ontario is investing an additional **\$42.0 million** in 2023-24 through the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) program to support impacted municipalities across the province in providing immediate housing support.

This additional COHB funding will help move more people into long-term housing, while freeing up existing shelter spaces in communities most impacted.

At the same time, we will continue to advocate strongly to the federal government for our province's fair share of federal funding and for additional support – including a federal cost-match of this significant investment – to address the rapid and ongoing rise in asylum claimants.

Your updated 2023-24 COHB planning allocation is as follows:

Original Base Funding (2023-24)	Additional Funding (2023-24)	Total Funding (2023-24)
\$497,900	\$335,500	\$833,400

The planning allocation reflect the estimated share of asylum claimants in each Service Manager area and their relative impact on local services, based on provincial social assistance data.

As this additional funding has been provided to address the increases in asylum claimants, you are asked to prioritize this group with this funding. A new target group **“Newcomers”** has been added to the COHB application form to facilitate reporting for asylum claimants. However, the ministry recognizes that anyone supported through COHB frees up much-needed capacity in the shelter system and other housing options being utilized by families on the COHB waiting lists. As such, this additional funding may be used to support any COHB target group, including newcomers.

The COHB planning allocation amount is used for planning purposes and reflects funding available to support new participants in the program up to June 30, 2024, including Service Manager’s administration payments and rent deposit (“first and last”) payments where applicable. Planning allocations exclude the funding required to support existing participants. Please note that February 29, 2024, is the last day to process applications using the 2023-24 planning allocation.

All conditions of funding outlined in the program guidelines and Transfer Payment Agreements for COHB apply to this additional funding.

We sincerely appreciate your efforts in assisting vulnerable people including the asylum claimants in your communities and hope this additional funding will help alleviate some of the pressure in your shelter system.

Sincerely,



The Honourable Paul Calandra
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

c. Scott Wilson, Chief Administrative Officer
Mark Poste, Director of Housing, Housing Services
Cynthia Cabral, Team Lead, Municipal Services Office