

**Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
MERC Minutes**

Date and Time:	July 21, 2022 9:30 am to 4:30 pm
Location:	Teleconference: 416-212-8010/1-866-602-5423, Conference ID# 2331854 Microsoft Teams
For OPSEU/SEFPO:	Susan Fournier, Cindy Kraakman, Philip Shearer, Brandon Yohnicki, Roxanne Barnes, Mike Greene
For the Employer:	Saba Ferdinands**, Johanna Goodman, Sam Collins, Josee Boulianne, Adrian Formella, <i>Ann Marie Connell</i> , Anita Panousis, Michael Kuk
Guests:	
Regrets:	Susan Romas, Maria DeLara *Attendance via teleconference **Chair

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
PROGRAM AREA UPDATES		
CHILDREN, YOUTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES I&IT CLUSTER (CYSSC)		
	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that an EDM technical problem was resolved with the February release, which removed the default search functionality. A fix is anticipated for June, however clicking 'search' is an interim workaround.</p> <p>Management advised that the issue will not require an individual to reboot however this may need to occur if the user has a slow computer and/or is experiencing issues with internet explorer.</p> <p>Management encouraged users to continue to report issues via tickets so that trends of similar issues can be identified and fixed.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO advised that EDM continues to be significantly delayed in the uploading of images, impacting clients and increasing workload.</p>	

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>Management to follow-up.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO advised that computers recently updated with more RAM are crashing. Management to follow-up.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that there is ongoing difficulty with process for refreshing Electronic Document Management; tickets are being logged/resolved but issues remain. Management advised that employees should continue to log tickets so that issues can be monitored; anticipate resolution in June 2022. In the meantime, SAMS needs to be shut down and rebooted several times to ensure the inbox/action items are updated. Alternatively, click on the “search” button to populate the search results.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO advised that tickets are being logged; staff are indicating that EDM refresh remains challenging. Management advised that they are aware a refresh is required, resolution anticipated for June 2022.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO indicated staff are logging out of SAMs to avoid an error message to see messages in MyBenefits. Management to follow-up.</p> <p>Management advised that the ministry/OPS sent a communication to ensure the one-time email validation exercise to support Go Secure system upgrade goes smoothly.</p> <p>Management advised that the Cluster has started to roll-out Chrome browser support for SAMS users in a phased manner, completed by the end of May 2022.</p>	<p>Management to follow-up</p> <p>Management to follow-up</p>
FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY OFFICE (FRO)		
<p>LERC Referral – Client Liaison Agent</p> <p>Date Tabled: April 22, 2021</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that the Appendix 7 review was completed, and the amended job description was submitted to JEIB for review, and JEIB has indicated there is no change in classification.</p> <p>Management has scheduled a meeting with OPSEU for mid-August to discuss the results.</p>	

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that the job description is now under review by the Job Evaluations Initiatives Branch.</p>	
Social Assistance Program Division (SAPD)		
<p>Social Assistance Renewal</p> <p>Date Tabled: April 16, 2013</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that an Engagement Forum took place on July 12, 2022.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised there are no updates at this time.</p>	
<p>MOS for workload and SAMS grievances</p> <p>Date Tabled: April 12, 2017</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO advised that there are no outstanding items. Parties agreed to remove this from the agenda.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised there are no updates at this time.</p>	<p>Remove from Agenda</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO to follow-up</p>
<p>ODSP - Caseload Sizes</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that any overpayments created are subject to current overpayment recovery rules. If the prescribed rate of overpayment recovery will result in undue hardship, staff may use their discretion to set a lower recovery rate.</p> <p>Management advised overpayment of federal support would require the client address this with the federal government. OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if overpayment would be removed in this case pending guidance from the federal government. Management to follow-up.</p> <p>Guest Speaker, Director – Social Assistance Service Delivery Branch</p>	<p>Management to follow-up</p>

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>Management advised that ODSP caseload did decline during the pandemic; beginning to see some increase in intake however caseload remains lower than pre-pandemic levels and this will continue to be monitored.</p> <p>Management advised that grants specifically have not returned to pre-pandemic levels.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if a surge is anticipated following the termination of various recovery benefits in response to the pandemic, for example Canada Recovery Benefit and Canada Emergency Recovery Benefit. Management advised that a surge was expected but it has been moderate to date.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO indicated that workload concerns are creating challenges in the workplace across the provinces; expect this is directly correlated with staffing shortages.</p> <p>Management advised that workload continues to be addressed and recognizes that recruitment has been more challenging as of late which compounds the impacts.</p> <p>Management clarified that staffing levels are considerably high right now, reducing multiple caseloads, however turnover is ongoing (varying by office) and will continue to focus on recruitment and onboarding.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if there is a backlog at the DAU. Management advised there is no backlog currently as it is not seeing pre-pandemic levels of applications.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired about equalization of caseloads. Management advised that this is certainly considered, but managed differently at each office.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised the Service Continuity Working Group continues to evaluate caseload numbers and the various teams that they have put in place to support staff (intake, floaters etc.).</p> <p>Management indicated that equalization of caseload amongst caseworkers is taking place to avoid the collapse of caseloads.</p> <p>Management advised that ODSP caseload sizes are likely to increase following the termination of federal benefits.</p>	

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>OPSEU/SEFPO agreed, there is a rapid increase for assistance through ODSP as eligibility criteria is being met for those no longer eligible for federal aid.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired how ODSP will respond to those requiring repayment to the federal government money (CERB, Canadian Worker Recovery Benefit, and Lockdown Benefit) due to an overpayment.</p> <p>Management to follow-up.</p>	<p>Management to follow-up</p>
<p>Intake and Benefits Unit (IBAU)</p> <p>Date Tabled: August 19, 2021</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that the IBAU is currently reviewing staffing needs beyond September 2022.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if the IBAU will be continuing into the foreseeable future.</p> <p>Management to follow-up.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO advised that local offices continue to be doing intake work but expected that this would be managed by IBAU.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO indicated that this is increasing workload for local offices which is impacting delivery of services to clients.</p> <p>Management advised that IBAU is working on Ontario Works intake; inclusion of ODSP is unknown at this time.</p> <p>Management to follow-up.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that IBAU positions remain temporary in nature, therefore cannot post them permanently.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO reiterated concern regarding temporary status given positions are being converted as per the collective agreement if eligible.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO requested the employer reconsider permanent postings in this area.</p>	<p>Management to follow-up</p> <p>Management to follow-up</p>
<p>Recruitment and Retention</p> <p>Date Tabled: August 23, 2018</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised there are no updates at this time.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised OPSEU receives the following weekly reports:</p>	

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>1) Vacancy/Voluntary Exist Option Report, which includes all postings (perm/temp) and VEO positions, dating from last fiscal to current date</p> <p>2) OPSEU Employee Report , which includes all OSPEU represented employees declared surplus and have elected to job trade and those who have displaced by another employee exercising rights to displacement.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired who the reports are shared with. Management advised that the reports are given to corporate OPSEU.</p>	
<p>Health and Safety Grievance</p> <p>Date Tabled: April 22, 2021</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that a GSB date has not been scheduled as of yet.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised there are no updates at this time.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if there is a GSB date scheduled. Management to follow-up.</p>	
<p>Social Assistance Modernization</p> <p>Date Tabled: April 26, 2016</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that the MyBenefits messaging system is still under review but is considered a superior method of communication which will ultimately impact the existing methods through email correspondence.</p> <p>Management confirmed that the messaging system does provide programmatic metrics and can be used to provide feedback to staff as required to meet service delivery standards.</p> <p>Management advised that MyBenefits will be included in the customer service delivery standards in the future, date to be determined.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired about timing for uploading messages in MyBenefits as this is impacting the service delivery standard. Management to follow-up.</p>	<p>Management to follow-up</p>

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>Guest Speaker – Senior Program Analyst, Social Assistance Programs (MyBenefits)</p> <p>Overview provided of MyBenefits Messaging Dashboard.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired which region is showing the greatest use of Messaging. Management advised that higher uptake of MyBenefits in each region, results in the greater use of messaging.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired about expanding access to MyBenefits. Management advised that the current focus is onboarding Ontario Works and ODSP clients, and then will consider expanding the scope to ACSD.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if functionality will be expanded to trustees. Management advised that this is under review and will be communicated broadly when its able to be shared.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO indicated that documents/images uploaded by clients in My Benefits, creates additional work as it needs to be marked in EDM too by the respective caseworker. Management acknowledges that consolidating this feature into one function would be optimal and is under consideration for a future advancement.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that the Service System manager competition was posted as open to the public, not-for-profit and private sector organizations. Successful candidates are selected though a fair and competitive process.</p> <p>Management advised that MyBenefits Messaging has developed a dashboard that provides program leads and management with usage data of this feature including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Message volumes • Document attachment volumes and metrics • Unique user metrics • Performance metrics <p>Management advised that a guest speaker will attend the July 2022 MERC to discuss MyBenefits.</p>	

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if the employer intends to remove email access with the implementation of the messaging system. Management to follow-up</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if the tracking mechanisms will be used to monitor staff performance. Management indicated that this is not included in KPIs currently, with the main goal being to improve customer service however will follow-up.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if this is included in the customer service standards. Management advised that this is not currently included in the standards, however will follow-up to determine if this will be updated in the future.</p>	<p>Management to follow-up</p> <p>Management to follow-up</p> <p>Management to follow-up</p>
<p>Social Assistance Management System (SAMS)</p> <p>Date Tabled: February 21, 2013</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Refer to I&IT for updates on SAMS issues.</p> <p>Management advised of a SAMS release that took place on June 18, 2022. Most enhancements in this release were for select Ontario Works pilot sites. Updates have been made to the online EA (emergency assistance) to support Canadian-Ukraine authorization for emergency travel applicants.</p> <p>Management provided the following update on EDM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New functionality will allow staff to easily retrieve new documents • A few minor enhancements to MyBenefits and Messaging <p>Management provided an update on EST (Employment Services Transformation), in ODSP pilot sites only:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The employment goals field will have a drop-down menu • Basic needs will now appear as Crisis and Safety • Life Stabilization will now appear as Stability support <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Refer to I&IT for updates on SAMS issues.</p> <p>A new SAMS release occurred on April 4, 2022.</p> <p>Management advised that select Ontario Works pilot sites have received the following enhancements:</p>	

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of Social Assistance Digital Application (SADA) • Automation of Risk-Based Eligibility Determination (RBED); and • Evidence Match Scoring to support the SAMS Match and Merge process. <p>Management advised that further Electronic Document Management (EDM) enhancements have been introduced in SAMS to improve usability and to support multiple initiatives.</p> <p>Management advised that Employment Services Transformation (EST) enhancements have also been introduced to support integration between SAMS and Common Assessment.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if the 2023 limit for extended health care benefit will be extended. Management to follow-up.</p>	Management to follow-up
<p>ODSP - Office Accommodation Planning</p> <p>Date Tabled: September 24, 2014</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that hepa filters are run overnight.</p> <p>Management provided the following site location updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarnia – reception and elevator are still under construction, with an estimated completion timeframe between June and September 2022. • Newmarket office opened June 22, 2022. • Kirkland Lake – Infrastructure Ontario continues to explore this project. <p>Management advised that 17 of the 47 ODSP offices have requested additional sneeze guards for the interview rooms and work is underway to explore costs. In the mean, established health and safety protocols will continue to be followed.</p> <p>Management advised that WAN Uplifts completed in offices that were identified by ITS; this allows traffic to flow faster between circuit and asset.</p> <p>Management advised that RAM has been deployed to 80% of offices, which will help the page from spinning and timing out.</p> <p>Management advised that the timing for Video Chat relaunch is still to be determined.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p>	

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>Management advised that all office should have received a consistent amount of filters based on one filter per 1000 square feet however there have been supply issues impacting shipments. Management indicated that spares filters are being shared between offices to mitigate this issue.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if hepa filters are being run overnight. Management to follow-up.</p> <p>Management provided the following construction updates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarnia – reception and elevator construction expected to be completed June 2022 • Newmarket – construction delays due to supply chain issues; anticipated move in date June 2022 • Kirkland Lake – Infrastructure Ontario continues to explore the scope of this project. <p>Management advised that an assessment of sneeze guards required in ODSP offices is underway; of the 47 ODSP offices, 17 have requested additional supply. In the meantime, usage will continue to follow health and safety guidelines.</p> <p>Management advised that WAN uplifts are underway to allow faster flow between circuit and asset and relieving some of the bottle neck occurring with data flowing back and forth. Ultimately the processing speed (RAM) that will hopefully stop the page from spinning, and the issues associated with timing out.</p> <p>Management advised there are no further updates on Video Chat.</p>	<p>Management to follow-up</p>
<p>ODSP - Provincial SWAT Team</p> <p>Date Tabled: August 19, 2021</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Guest Speaker, Director – Social Assistance Service Delivery Branch</p> <p>Management advised that SWAT was implemented to support workload concerns in offices; supporting offices with varying needs and records management that was previously managed by local offices.</p> <p>Management advised that allocation of SWAT resources to support regional offices is under review to ensure strategic alignment to the greatest workload in offices.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if management will consider realigning SWAT to local offices.</p>	

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>OPSEU/SEFPO indicated that it would like to see SWAT dismantled.</p> <p>Management indicated that there is no intention to dismantle SWAT as it provides more flexibility to address workload pressures across the regions without reducing resourcing.</p> <p>Management does acknowledge that direction regarding notes should be consistent and will follow-up.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that competitions for ASC and Caseworker positions have been finalized and they are in the final stages of onboarding new team members.</p> <p>Management advised that the SWAT Team continues to provide support to both case management activities and provincial adhoc reports.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired how SWAT is assigned for assistance. Management advised that SWAT is not able to address full demand but with more staff, this is improving. Management will follow-up on how support will be assigned on a go forward.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if the SWAT team will be made permanent Management advised not at this time. OPSEU/SEFPO requested that positions be posted as permanent on a go forward.</p>	<p>Management to follow-up</p> <p>Management to follow-up</p>
<p>ODSP - Kingston LERC</p> <p>Date Tabled: December 18, 2019</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that the LERC was established, and met on June 21, 2022 and the next meeting is scheduled for September 20, 2022.</p> <p>Both parties agreed to remove from the agenda.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that a meeting took place on April 20, 2022, expressing a desire to resume LERC. OPSEU/SEFPO responded on May 10, 2022, in agreement.</p> <p>Both OPSEU/SEFPO and Management agreed that a third party, mediator should attend the first meeting.</p>	<p>Remove from agenda.</p>

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>Management advised that a working group was established to respond to the Third Party Review. OPSEU/SEFPO indicated that the open dialogue is positive.</p>	
<p>ODSP - Program Oversight Management (Team 6) Date Tabled: December 13, 2016</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO advised that a branch level ERC was established following an election with an interest to get ongoing issues resolved.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO advised that ODSP financial services clerks within POM will be engaged via an alternative ERC.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Guest Speaker @ 2:30pm - Manager of Program Integrity, Social Assistance Programs Division</p> <p>Presentation will be posted on intranet with minutes.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if verbal consent being accepted over the course of the pandemic will be considered on a go forward. Management advised that this will be taken into account.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO indicated an Employee Relations Committee will be established at the branch level. Management indicated that they are supportive.</p>	
<p>ODSP - ASC Roles and Responsibilities</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that the ASC working group met on June 23, 2022.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All offices have transferred to digital filing. • New IR processes will be part of the pilot project. • Timelines associated with retaining paper files are under review. <p>OPSEU/SEFPO indicated that many offices are not represented in the ASC working group; indicated that this may be due to workload concerns. Management understood that there was a representative from each region, however will follow-up.</p>	

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that the TOR will be reviewed by the working group on May 26, 2022 and then will be shared with MERC for consideration.</p> <p>Management provided the following updates from the May 9, 2022 working group discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning and Development – ASC Academy - The eight-week pilot builds on the Local Office Onboarding Framework for Staff and is expected to run from May 16, 2022 through July 8, 2022. • The use of Peer Coaches and mentors in the local office will remain a critical component for onboarding and all new staff should be assigned a local support to assist them with their transition to their new role. • Screenings tab in SAMS is not being used. • File Transfer note template has been uploaded and the Critical Incident check box has been added. • Only one ASC per office should be adding third parties. 	
<p>MCCSS Youth Pilot</p> <p>Date tabled: October 19, 2017</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired about recruitment posting from May 6, 2022 and future recruitment plans given the status of the pilot. Management will follow-up.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that the three-month transition period commenced April 1, 2022 and will run until June 30, 2022 to support a person-centered approach to winding down activities.</p> <p>Management advised that the Youth Project team is committed to working with Youth Project Caseworkers to support the transition. Until December 31,2022 Youth Project caseworkers' primary focus should continue to be on intensive case management with their current and new youth clients.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if positions will be posted permanently. Management advised not at this present time. OPSEU/SEFPO indicated that they would like to see these positions posted permanently.</p>	<p>Management to follow-up</p>

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired about the current posting (closing May 6, 2022) and future recruitment plans. Management advised that Case Workers already in Youth Project will be extended until June 2022; future recruitment will follow the provisions as outlined in the collective agreement.</p>	
<p>Bell Total Connect</p> <p>Date Tabled: May 19, 2022</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Guest Speaker - Project Manager, Social Assistance Programs</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO requested that info shared by guest speaker be shared with members by managers. Management confirmed that the info was shared to each office.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired whether cell phones will be eliminated due to Centrix 2.0? Management confirmed that there will be no need for cell phones in the future as calls can be answered by cell phone application on laptop.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired about the Bell Total Connect soft launch in London, Sarnia and Windsor; OPSEU/SEFPO was not aware of this transition and inquired if this will be used to monitor employee's performance. Management to follow-up</p>	<p>Management to follow-up</p>
<p>Nimble – Electronic Management System</p> <p>Date Tabled: July 21, 2022</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Guest Speaker, Director – Social Assistance Service Delivery Branch</p> <p>Management acknowledges there are delays with Electronic Document Management (EDM), which impacts ability to meet service delivery metrics and is working with vendor (Nimble) to resolve the issues.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if Nimble has a lifetime contract with the ministry. Management indicated that there is a timeframe associated with the contract that will be regularly reviewed, following proper procurement protocols.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO notes that turn around timelines are reaching 7 to 10 days, which exceeds standard service delivery timelines of 2 days. This is impacting members as it is a performance measure in performance plans.</p>	

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>Management recognizes that turnaround timeline from vendor are currently above best practice and management commits to ongoing follow-up with vendor and to address this impact on measures in performance plans.</p> <p>Management to invite guest speaker to speak to EDM system challenges.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired about the notification to clients regarding provisions of personal information to third party vendor. Management to follow-up.</p>	
<p>Academy – ASC New Hire Orientation</p> <p>Date Tabled: July 21, 2022</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Guest Speaker, Director – Social Assistance Service Delivery Branch</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO has indicated reviews are extremely positive. OPSEU/SEFPO inquired about timelines/waitlist for the programs and if it is being paused for the summer.</p> <p>Management advised that the programs have been paused for the summer due to staffing levels resulting from vacation, however will remain a regular part of program orientation.</p>	
CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS DIVISION		
<p>Child and Parent Resource Institute (CPRI)</p> <p>Date Tabled: December 19, 2018</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that the discussion regarding external contract hires will be deferred as there is an active grievance, filed with GSB following an attempt of mediation.</p> <p>Both management and OPSEU/SEFPO acknowledged a desire to find a resolution.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO advised that compensation for those that fall under the Personal Support Workers and Direct Support Workers Permanent Compensation Enhancement Program is inconsistent and there is a wage disparity between Youth Justice and CPRI was escalated.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired about hiring psychologists on a fixed term contract, earning more than existing staff. Management to follow-up.</p>	<p>Management to follow-up</p>

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired about CPRI's intent to raise residential capacity given lifting of pandemic restrictions. Management advised that CPRI is still restricted by onsite capacity, which is currently 5 clients per unit.</p>	
<p>Appendix 7 – Classification System Date Tabled: October 25, 2018</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u> Management advised that Appendix 7 results were shared with staff via Management leads. OPSEU/SEFPO noting that impacted employees would like to engage in further discussion with management. Management to follow-up.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u> Management advised that the Appendix 7 process has been concluded. OPSEU/SEFPO requesting that messaging be sent to staff to advise of the results. Management to follow-up</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired why it took since November 2022 to advise of the results. Management acknowledged there was a delay due to a mass backlog in the Job Evaluations Initiative Branch</p>	<p>Management to follow-up</p>
<p>Smartstart Hubs Date Tabled: May 19, 2022</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u> Management advised no updates at this time.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u> Management advised that Smartstart Hubs were announced in April 2022, this is not a mandatory point of contact. This initiative is being led by Children's Treatment Centres, creating linkages with local providers to help streamline the entry point for parents that have a concern about their child's development can visit a Centre for an exploratory discussion and next steps.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired about the impact that this will have on CPRI.</p>	

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>Management advised that CPRI has a local program for infant/child development and expect that this will liaise with the Smartstart Hubs.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO indicated that Smartstart Hubs should reach out to CPRI for subject matter expertise.</p> <p>Management advised that Smartstart Hubs is linking in with CPRI regarding trauma informed training.</p>	
CHILD WELFARE AND PROTECTION DIVISION (CWPD)		
<p>Licensing and Compliance – Program Advisor</p> <p>Date Tabled: October 21, 2021</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that an Appendix 7 discussion took place on July 19, 2022, and both parties were grateful for the opportunity to participate in the discussion.</p> <p>Management committed to reviewing/considering employee feedback.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management referred to an earlier disclosure discussing transformational work, that is continuing with a focus on identifying opportunities to build integrated human services systems, creating easier pathways to services and reduce barriers and system gaps.</p> <p>Management advised that regional offices have been engaged regarding staff desire to discuss the current licensing function and that a meeting will be scheduled shortly with staff representatives.</p>	<p>Management to follow-up</p>
COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION (CSD)		
<p>ACSD and Special Services at Home (SSAH)</p> <p>Date Tabled: February 22, 2012</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised no updates at this time.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that regional offices were communicating the changes to eligibility criteria at the local level, no corporate communication was developed.</p> <p>Guests to the MERC table provided an update on behalf of the Employer.</p>	

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired about the permanency of the PSW wage enhancement, specifically how it relates to our ACSD families as well as the implications to workload for staff.</p> <p>Management advised that regional offices have been communicating the changes to eligibility criteria at the local level, no corporate communication was developed. We anticipate IT solutions will automate letters, support workload and notifications to families in the Spring, before the July 1st effective date.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO felt reassured with the updates.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired as to whether ServiceOntario is involved in the new live forms for SSAH and ACSD and how the process will work to support the increase.</p> <p>Management agreed to follow-up before the next MERC meeting.</p>	
BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES		
<p>Appendix 15</p> <p>Date Tabled: June 19, 2019</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if there was an opportunity for mediation. Management advised that OPSEU/SEFPOs offer is under review.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised additional updates will be provided following the next GSB, which is scheduled for October 4, 2022.</p>	
<p>Gradual Return to the Workplace</p> <p>Date Tabled: June 18, 2020</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO advised that there is still confusion regarding COVID-credits in WIN attendance. Management to follow-up.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p><u>CSND – CPRI</u></p>	<p>Management to follow-up</p>

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>Management advised that CPRI continues to review guidance from the ministry, province and engage with Local Public Health, IPAC and Joint Health and Safety to determine it's plans for client care, and onsite services.</p> <p>Management advised that outpatient staff continue to reintegrate back to the office working a mix of onsite and remote based on space capacity.</p> <p>Management advised that as a congregate care setting, masks are still mandatory for families and staff while onsite.</p> <p>Management advised that all units are currently open with services onsite and remotely to clients through an inpatient or an intensive community support model. We currently have 19 clients onsite and serving 9 inpatient clients in the community via intensive community support model. Also have 3 clients being served by the intense day treatment.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if RAT are still required. Management advised that this is still required in congregate care settings. OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if testing is done at the start of the shift or in advance? Management to follow-up.</p> <p>—</p> <p>Management advised as per SoC direction, the gradual return to the workplace will be completed as of May 16th. Further direction on the future of the workplace is expected in the fall. OPSEU/SEFPO raised concern that this is not being applied consistently across the ministry.</p> <p>Management recommended to remove this from the agenda. OPSEU/SEFPO requested to keep this item until the next MERC.</p>	<p>Management to follow-up</p>
<p>OPS COVID-19 Safe Workplace Directive</p> <p>Date Tabled: October 21, 2021</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised there are no updates at this time.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p>	

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>Management advised that OPS COVID-19 Safe Workplace Directive is only applicable to congregate care settings and is considered is now considered business as usual.</p>	
<p>Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee</p> <p>Date Tabled: October 25, 2016</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that there have been seven (7) cases heard by the Committee; five (5) Social Assistance Program Division and two (2) from CPRI, Children with Special Needs Division.</p> <p>Management and OPSEU have agreed to remove the pilot status for ADRC and will follow the necessary protocol to do so.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO indicated the committee has been very successful, reaching resolutions with having the ability to work collaboratively with the employer.</p> <p>Parties agreed to remove from agenda.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that the committee continues to meet as required.</p> <p>Both parties expressed that the process is working well.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO requested a summary of cases that have been reviewed by ADRC, and what was forwarded to GSB. Management agreed to follow-up</p>	<p>Remove from Agenda.</p> <p>Management to follow-up</p>
<p>Rogers Internet Outage</p> <p>Date Tabled: July 21, 2021</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO expressed frustration with how attendance management was addressed at the time of the Rogers Internet Outage.</p> <p>Management acknowledges that this needs to be addressed in the Emergency Management Continuity of Operations Plan on a go forward.</p> <p>Parties agreed to remove from the agenda.</p>	<p>Remove from agenda.</p>
<p>Workplace Discrimination and Harassment</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p>	

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
Date Tabled: July 21, 2021	<p>OPSEU/SEFPO shared concerns about increased levels of harassment between members as a result of Return to the Workplace. Issues related to workload and perceived inequity in the application of the Secretary’s Return to Workplace direction appear to be contributing factors. Flexibility being offered to some teams/offices but not all.</p> <p>Management acknowledges that the interim strategy for return to work has been challenging pending formal direction.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO shared that the ministry engaged a consultant to co-develop/deliver Anti-Bullying in the workplace training which was effective in the past. OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if the ministry would consider revisiting this training.</p>	
Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion (ARDI)		
Date Tabled: February 2021	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that Advancing Equity Focus Groups were held June, focusing on three (3) themes: 1) Accountability, 2) Transparency and 3) Awareness and how they relate to Radiates. Radiates is an acronym for Respect, Anti-Racism, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility, Trust, Equity, Safety to encourage promoting meaningful change in a manner that ties these concepts together.</p> <p>Management advised the following themes were identified through these discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants acknowledged MCCSS efforts to advance equity but stated there is more work to be done • Participants were willing to share personal data, as long as they know why it is collected and how it is used • Participants were interested in learning more about ARDI work but didn’t know where to find the relevant information. <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management provided an update on the Deputy Minister Town Halls, which were used to communicate Deputy Minister expectations as it relates to ‘Advancing Equity in MCCSS’. The six (6) sessions were held in March 2022 and resulted in high engagement from over 1,700 attendees.</p>	

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>Management advised that the Sponsorship and Career Mobility Program, which was established to provide employees from underrepresented groups with equitable supports for career advancement, will be launched in late Spring 2022.</p> <p>Management advised that an exit survey was developed to help the ministry gain insights on why employees are leaving their roles and analyze trends in feedback from underrepresented groups. The survey's soft launch is underway and is expected to be formally launched in late Spring 2022.</p>	
<p>Diversity Career Champion Program (DCCP)</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised there are no updates at this time.</p> <p>Parties agreed to remove from the agenda.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that the Mid-Point Event will be a Reverse Speed Mentoring where there will be 4-5 mentees with 1-2 mentors in a breakout room. The objective of this event is to provide participants with exposure to a variety of diverse perspectives related to anti-racism, diversity, and inclusion and an opportunity to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build cultural capacity and humility, and active listening skills • Enhance communication and presentation skills • Create new connections with employees across the ministry and OPS <p>The mentors will be the ones asking the mentees questions from a list of questions that was provided to mentee and mentors in advance of the event. As of May 11th, 63 mentees and 28 mentors registered for the event.</p>	<p>Remove from agenda.</p>
<p>Black Internship Alliance Program</p> <p>Date Tabled: July 21, 2022</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Guest Speaker, HR Strategic Business Unit</p> <p>Presentation to be shared with minutes. Additional information can be access via the internet homepage.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired about the number of applications. Management confirmed that there are approximately 3,500 applications of which 3,000 were deemed eligible, exceeding the Ontario Internship Program.</p>	

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>Management advised that the original allocation was 2 placements for MCCSS but increased to 3 given the number of applications.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired about how many applicants will be interviewed. Management advised that this is being coordinated centrally.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired about the salary range and classification for these positions. Management advised that OPS placements fall under a range of classification cadres (AMAPCEO, OPSEU, MCP, etc).</p> <p>Management advised that there is a bilingual placement that will be with Women's Social and Economic Opportunity. Management advised that MCCSS' current placements will be located in Toronto, but can inquire about how regional placements are being identified to optimize bilingual placements.</p> <p>Parties agreed to remove from the agenda.</p>	Remove from agenda.
<p>MCCSS Sponsorship Program</p> <p>Date Tabled: July 21, 2022</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management provided an update on the MCCSS Sponsorship Program, which was launched on July 12, 2022. The program was established to provide participants with an 18-month guided sponsor relationship with a senior leader in MCCSS.</p> <p>Management advised that participants (protégés) will be paired with volunteer executives (Sponsor) who will provide career advancement opportunities, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Expansion of professional network and exposure to other senior leaders •Experience in cross-functional projects, and •Enhancement of OPS leadership skills <p>OPSEU/SEFPO indicated that announcement memo was not clear, referencing classification acronyms not reflected in the collective agreement. Management acknowledges this should have been more specific regarding eligibility classifications.</p>	

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
<p>OPS Regional Hubs</p> <p>Date Tabled: May 19, 2022</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised there are no updates at this time.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that there are no updates at this time.</p>	
<p>Community Jobs Initiative Announcement</p> <p>Date Tabled: May 19, 2022</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised there are no updates at this time.</p>	
<p>Summer Vacation</p> <p>Date Tabled: May 19, 2022</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Parties agreed to remove item from the agenda.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised that vacation requests will be considered as per usual business.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired what % of vacation requests will be approved. Management advised that this will depend on the program areas operational needs.</p> <p>Management advised that Social Assistance vacation approval will ensure 60% staff are working (either onsite or remotely).</p>	<p>Remove from agenda.</p>
STANDING ITEMS		
<p>Surplus Issues</p> <p>Date Tabled: August 18, 2011</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>No updates at this time.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>No updates at this time</p>	
<p>Reskilling</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p>	

Issue	Discussion	Action Required
Date Tabled: February 18, 2021	<p>No updates at this time.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>No updates at this time.</p>	
Multi-Year Planning (MYP)	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>No updates at this time.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>No updates at this time.</p>	
MERC Dates and Calendar Setting	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised there are no updates at this time.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired when MERC would like to reconvene in person meetings.</p> <p>Management advised existing meeting space will need to be considered from a size and technology perspective.</p> <p>Both parties agreed having a hybrid model on a go forward would be beneficial.</p> <p>Both parties agreed to consider pre-established dates for meetings that would take place in person well in advance.</p> <p>Both parties agreed to revisit this conversation once the hybrid work model is established in the Fall 2022.</p>	
Training and Development (MERC Sub-Committee)	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management provided an overview of the Training and Development Survey results. Both parties were disappointed in survey participation.</p>	

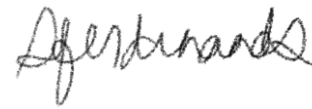
Issue	Discussion	Action Required
	<p>Management advised that quarterly emails will be shared with learning and development opportunities that reflect learning needs. Management encourages members to contact sub-committee members if there is specific training they are interested in.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management advised the sub-committee sent a memo to all Directors to share with staff on May 11th to reintroduce the MCCSS Ministry Employee Relations Committee (MERC) Training & Development Sub-Committee and share an online survey for OPSEU employees to share feedback on learning needs.</p> <p>Management advised that 39 responses to the needs assessment survey were received as of May 18th, 2022.</p>	
REPORTS		
<p>Fixed Term Report</p> <p>Frequency: Bi-Monthly</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management provided the report July 13, 2022.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO noted concern regarding increase in fixed term contracts. Management agreed to review trends and engage union as per Appendix 15.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO to share specific concerns via email.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>Management provided report in advance of MERC.</p> <p>OPSEU/SEFPO inquired if casual staff are reflected on this report. Management to follow-up.</p>	<p>Management to follow-up</p>
<p>Health and Safety Statistics Report</p> <p>Frequency: Semi-Annual</p>	<p><u>July 21, 2022</u></p> <p>Management provided the report in June 2022.</p> <p><u>May 19, 2022</u></p> <p>No updates at this time.</p>	

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services MERC Minutes of July 21, 2022:



Susan Fournier
Co-Chair, OPSEU/SEFPO

September 8th, 2022
Date



Saba Ferdinands
Co-Chair, Management

September 8, 2022
Date