



Family Alliance Ontario

June 20, 2022

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton
Minister of Children, Community and Social Services
Room 281
Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A1
MinisterMCCSS@ontario.ca

Dear Honourable Minister Fullerton:

RE: Wage Enhancement for Passport Program

I am writing to you to bring your attention to an urgent time sensitive matter that will have a direct and detrimental impact on people with developmental disabilities and their families.

Family Alliance Ontario (FAO) is an autonomous, provincial family network that has represented people with disabilities, their families, and their friends in Ontario, for the past 25 years. FAO has 21 affiliated family networks across Ontario. The People for Personalized Funding (PFPF), the Ontario Independent Facilitation Network (OIFN), and the Individualized Funding Coalition for Ontario (IFCO) are organizations that have been in existence for many years and focus on advocating for direct, individualized funding. Today, we are reaching out to you, on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families to express our frustration and anger at the increasing inequity and the lack of fairness which has been historic between people who receive Passport/Individualized funding and those who receive service from Agencies.

FAO, PFPF, OIFN and the IFCO want to bring to your attention the shortfall people with developmental disabilities will be facing beginning July 1, 2022. We very much appreciate the announcement that the Temporary Wage Enhancement has been made permanent recognizing the important role support workers have in helping family members participate in the community, and while we appreciate the sentiment of a much-needed increase to the Passport Program Funding Allocation, the two of these announcements do not work together to meet the objective under the Journey to Belonging; that of increased inclusion for the individual.

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Most families use the Passport Funding Allocation to pay for support their loved one requires to assist them with activities of daily living or community participation. The recently announced increase of 10% when applied to the increased wages will create a shortfall of anywhere from ½ hours per week of support up to almost 4 hours per week, based on the level of their allocation. How does reducing the amount of support lead to increased inclusion for the person in community life or address the inequity that has been created historically?

Minister Fullerton, we have done the math and it is just not adding up to the recent two announcements.

Passport Allocation Increase--Let's Do the Math!

	Minimum	Average	Maximum
Passport Allocation Amount \$\$\$	\$5,000.00	\$11,500.00	\$40,250.00
10% Increase \$\$\$	\$500.00	\$1,150.00	\$4,025.00
Increased Allocation 2022-2023	\$5,500.00	\$12,650.00	\$44,275.00
Current Minimum Wage per hour	\$15.50	\$15.50	\$15.50
With Wage Enhancement	\$18.50	\$18.50	\$18.50
# of Hours at Minimum Wage	322.58	741.94	2596.77
2022-2023 # of Hours at Wage Enhancement Level	297.30	683.78	2393.24
Shortfall of hours	25.28	58.15	203.53
Funding required to maintain current support hours at Wage Enhancement Level	\$5,967.74	\$13,725.81	\$48,040.32
Increased Funding Allocation	\$5,500.00	\$12,650.00	\$44,275.00
Funding Shortfall	\$467.74	\$1,075.81	\$3,765.32

If your Passport funding is flowed through an agency, the resulting shortfall is much higher as a result of the amounts charged for MERCS and administration.

The result of this shortfall means that people with disabilities and their families are faced with two unacceptable options:

1. To not pass on the full wage enhancement as outlines in the announcement by the Ministry. This would continue to exasperate the inequity that has been created by your Ministry. It would also make it much more difficult to keep the present workers or recruit new workers given the much lower wage paid under the Passport program.
2. To reduce the number of hours of support in order to continue to meet the rate of pay that has been promised by your Ministry. This has the potential put people with disabilities and their families into crisis.

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We have been informed that Transfer Payment Agencies are receiving “2022-2023 *Permanent Compensation Enhancement Notional Allocation*” which has been calculated based on the actual 2021-2022 Temporary Wage Enhancement with the percentages for statutory deductions and entitlements for eligible employees—updated for the 2022-2023 fiscal year. This funding enhancement was made to ensure their workers continue to receive the wages they have received, valuing their contribution to the lives of people with developmental disabilities.

Families are becoming frustrated and angry at the continual systematic inequity faced by 85% of people with disabilities who rely on Passport funding. MCCSS clearly does not value the work that supporters who work under the Passport program or the families who are trying very hard to keep their workers and pay them a fair wage.

However, this is not surprising since Family Alliance Ontario, IFCO, OIFN nor PFPF have not been included in the Reform Reference Group and as such, the voices of families across Ontario are not being heard. The frustration felt by families has reached the point that they can no longer sit back and feel grateful for the meager supports that they receive.

We expect this inequity to be acknowledged and to be rectified. In order to do this we request you meet with representatives of the four organizations as soon as possible so that we can collaborate to bring some positive change to begin to address this inequity and the assault that is happening on families.

Minister, the July 1st deadline is looming, and we need your response. You can contact us through email at familyallianceont@gmail.com.

Respectfully



Betty Daley,
President,
Family Alliance Ontario



Alison Ouellette & Susann Palmiere
Co-chairs

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Individualized Funding Coalition for Ontario
Yona Frishman & Kory Earle
Co-chairs



The Ontario Independent Facilitation Network
Steward's Committee

cc: Laura Summers, Senior Policy Analyst, MCCSS
Rupert Gordon, Assistant Deputy Minister
Premier Doug Ford

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