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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Social Assistance Reform Announcement, Details Lacking

The Niagara Poverty Reduction Network is looking forward to learning more details regarding the changes to social assistance announced today.

Ontario's social assistance programs needed improvement, but it is unclear what informed the changes announced today. Earlier this year, the Niagara Poverty Reduction Network shared [recommendations for poverty reduction](#). A key recommendation was the need for social assistance reform based on core principles informed by more than twenty years of reviews and reports that include the perspectives of experts, community members and advocates.

"To reach people who have faced difficult times, effective supports and services are needed to provide stability and allow them to move forward in the lives. While wrap-around supports were mentioned, the proposed changes to social assistance can't continue to trap people in poverty through inadequate social assistance rates and low wage work," says Glen Walker, Chair of the Niagara Poverty Reduction Network.

While the Niagara Poverty Reduction Network supports the government's intention to create opportunities and empower people to find jobs, this announcement comes on the heels of significant reversals in workplace legislation, including the freezing of minimum wage, loss of two paid sick days and the cancellation of equal pay for equal work. These sweeping changes contribute to employment precarity and jobs that lack needed supports such as dental and drug benefits.

"More details are needed to understand the implications of some of these new changes," says Walker.

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