



Planning for All Ontarians

Party Commitments on issues affecting vulnerable people living in Ontario

This detailed grid is based on Campaign 2000's 2010 Report Card recommendations and the 25 in 5 Network on Poverty Reduction's Call to Action. The grid summarizes the four major political parties' responses to a questionnaire from Ontario Campaign 2000 and includes platform announcements made during the election campaign.

The grid evaluates each political party's commitment to and leadership on:

- A. Income security programs that ensure basic needs are met and give people real opportunities to get ahead, with a firm commitment to ensuring the Social Assistance Review process proceeds;
- B. Paid work at a fair wage that accommodates disability, is equitably accessible, and provides a real pathway out of poverty;
- C. Social infrastructure that establishes a foundation for inclusive communities, including decent, affordable housing options, high quality affordable early learning and child care, a strong and equitable public education system, as well as vibrant community programs and affordable public transit;
- D. Targeted strategies that recognize the heightened risk in specific regions and neighbourhoods, and among such groups as people who have disabilities, racialized groups - both Aboriginal people and people of colour, women, lone-parent families, and newcomers.

A) A call for income security programs that ensure basic needs are met and give people real opportunities to get ahead, with a firm commitment to ensuring the Social Assistance Review process proceeds

Social Assistance			
Ontario Liberal Party	Ontario NDP	Ontario PC Party	Green Party of Ontario
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Established the Commission for the Review of Social Assistance in Ontario. ➤ Will lobby for federal reforms that compliment the changes made to Ontario's Social Assistance once the Commission for the Review of Social Assistance in Ontario submits its recommendations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will act on the recommendations of the Commission for the Review of Social Assistance in Ontario. ➤ Will immediately ensure that social assistance rates keep up with inflation. ➤ Will eliminate the claw back on earnings of up to \$300/month for the first 12 months of employment. ➤ Will increase the work-related benefit for ODSP recipients to \$150/month. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will allow OW and ODSP recipients who work part time to keep more of their benefits. ➤ Will 'streamline' the welfare system and its rules. ➤ Only people who reside in Ontario for a year or more will be eligible to receive social assistance. People committing welfare fraud may be banned for life from social assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will commit to completing the social assistance review. ➤ Will end the claw-back of social assistance for the working poor. ➤ Will end the practice of forcing people to liquidate their assets before becoming eligible to receive social assistance.
Ontario Child Benefit			
Ontario Liberal Party	Ontario NDP	Ontario PC Party	Green Party of Ontario
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will increase the Ontario Child Benefit to \$1,310 in 2013. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will increase Ontario Child Benefit to \$1,310 in 2013. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No announcements/commitments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No announcements/commitments.
Other Assistance			
Ontario Liberal Party	Ontario NDP	Ontario PC Party	Green Party of Ontario
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have asked the federal government to reform Employment Insurance & make it fairer for businesses and workers. ➤ Will ask the Commission for the Review of Social Assistance to develop options for a Housing Benefit in Ontario. ➤ Will double the children's activity tax credit to \$100. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will provide emergency dental care to 50,000 low-income adults each year. ➤ Will introduce a Housing Benefit in Ontario. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No announcements / commitments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will continue with the uploading of social service costs. ➤ Will work with federal and municipal governments to improve social safety networks. ➤ Will maintain current oral health programs for low income families. Once the budget is balanced, will support prioritizing dental health as a basic health service.

B) A call for paid work at a fair wage that accommodates disability, is equitably accessible, and provides a real pathway out of poverty

Employment			
Ontario Liberal Party	Ontario NDP	Ontario PC Party	Green Party of Ontario
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In the process of reviewing the wage gap in the non-unionized private sector. ➤ Will create a Southwestern Ontario Economic Development Fund to attract jobs. ➤ Will make permanent the Northern Ontario Heritage fund and the Eastern Ontario Development fund. ➤ Will continue to build a strong apprenticeship program. ➤ Will appoint a minimum wage advisory committee to make recommendations on determining future minimum wage increases. ➤ Will continue to ensure that employment standards protections reflect Ontario's ever-changing workforce. ➤ Will increase workplace employment standards visits and proactive outreach. ➤ Graduates who work in the not-for-profit sector would not collect interest on their outstanding student loans for up to a year. ➤ Will introduce a \$10,000 tax credit for businesses that provide highly skilled new immigrants with Canadian work experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will ensure Ontario's money is spent to create jobs in Ontario. ➤ Will increase employment standards enforcement and will make changes to the Employment Standards Act for the benefit of vulnerable workers. ➤ Will increase the minimum wage to \$11 this year and index it to the cost of living. ➤ Will bring workplaces in compliance with the Pay Equity Act. ➤ Will introduce a Job Creation tax credit which reimburses employers 20% of wages earned by new hires in their first year - up to \$5,000 per worker. Only new positions would qualify for this tax credit. ➤ Will create a training tax credit for companies that help staff upgrade their skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will encourage job growth in the private sector. ➤ Will modernize the apprenticeship system. ➤ Will create 200,000 apprenticeships in 4 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will uphold pay equity in the workforce by maintaining and strengthening legislation on equity in the workplace. ➤ Will invest in mentorship, training and youth employment programs. ➤ Will increase personal income tax exemptions by \$2,000. ➤ Will explore the best system for providing livable take home wages.

C) A call for social infrastructure that establishes a foundation for inclusive communities, including decent, affordable housing options, high quality affordable early learning and child care, a strong and equitable public education system, as well as vibrant community programs and affordable public transit

Affordable Housing			
Ontario Liberal Party	Ontario NDP	Ontario PC Party	Green Party of Ontario
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recently signed a four year, \$480.6 million deal with the Federal Government for affordable housing stock in Ontario (half of the money will come from the province). ➤ Will continue to lobby the Federal Government for a long-term deal and a national housing strategy. ➤ Will ask the Commission for the Review of Social Assistance to develop options for a Housing Benefit in Ontario. ➤ Will work with different sectors to identify opportunities to build affordable housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will introduce a Housing Benefit in Ontario providing \$96/month to eligible individuals on low income and \$120/month to eligible low income families – will invest \$545 million into the Housing Benefit for the next four years. ➤ Will pursue a 10-year affordable housing plan to build 50,000 new affordable housing units – with 14,000 units built in the next 4 years. Will achieve this plan by expanding and reforming the Infrastructure Ontario Affordable Housing Loan Fund; by introducing legislation enabling Ontario municipalities to implement inclusionary housing policies that require a minimum percentage of affordable units in new housing developments; and with funding from the Federal Government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No announcements / commitments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will support private builders in creating affordable housing units in their new buildings. ➤ Will provide government loan guarantees and grants to non-profit groups to assist in the development of housing co-ops, co-housing and shared accommodation facilities. ➤ Will consolidate housing programs to allow for local decision making. ➤ Will provide adequate funding to municipalities to build temporary shelters. ➤ Will tax all forms of residential buildings at an equal rate.

Early Learning and Child Care			
Ontario Liberal Party	Ontario NDP	Ontario PC Party	Green Party of Ontario
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will complete the implementation of Full-Day Kindergarten for 4 & 5 year olds by 2014. ➤ Will develop an after school program for 6 – 12 year olds (after 2014). ➤ Will work with partners to modernize the child care system. Further transition funding will be provided to child care centres once the after school program for 6-12 year olds is introduced. ➤ Currently providing one time capital funding and ongoing operational funding to child care operators transitioning to serve younger children as a result of the implementation of full day kindergarten for 4 & 5 year olds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will complete the implementation of Full-Day Kindergarten for 4 & 5 year olds. ➤ Will provide \$250 million in transition funding to licensed child care centres over the next two years (\$125m each year) to keep centres open and to freeze fees. ➤ Will develop an action plan to make good quality, affordable childcare available to all families in Ontario. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will complete the implementation of Full-Day Kindergarten for 4 & 5 year olds by 2014. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will support the implementation of Full-Day Kindergarten for 4 & 5 year olds. ➤ Will maintain existing child care programs. ➤ Upon balancing the budget, will support options to extend child care. ➤ Will support parents who choose to raise their children at home during the early years.
Education (Kindergarten to Post Secondary)			
Ontario Liberal Party	Ontario NDP	Ontario PC Party	Green Party of Ontario
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will introduce summer learning camps to every school board. ➤ Will increase teachers college to a 2 year program with professional development opportunities up to 3 years after graduation. ➤ Will create 60,000 more spaces in post secondary institutions. ➤ Will build three new undergraduate campuses. ➤ Will provide a 30% grant on fees to undergraduate students, targeted towards middle income students / families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will establish a Rural School Stabilization Strategy. ➤ Will ban course fees in Ontario Secondary Schools – Secondary Schools will receive an extra \$20 million in funding. ➤ Will launch a pilot project that allows parent councils at schools with a strong track record of fundraising to partner with schools that raise less money. ➤ Will freeze tuition fees for college, undergraduate, and graduate students over the next four years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will re-introduce report cards for elementary schools. ➤ Will increase spending on K-12 education by \$2 billion. ➤ Will put more money into classrooms. ➤ Will introduce more digital learning tools in schools. ➤ Will end the foreign scholarship program. ➤ Will increase post secondary financial support for middle class families. ➤ Will create 60,000 post-secondary spaces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will freeze post secondary tuition fees for 2012-13. ➤ Will index tuition fees increases to inflation from 2013-15. ➤ Will expand training and certification programs in job growth areas such as green energy & sustainable infrastructure. ➤ Will work with the federal government to revise the tax credit system for post secondary tuition – increasing relief for students.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Graduates who work in the not-for-profit sector would not collect interest on their outstanding student loans for up to a year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will forgive tuition fee debt for medical students who work in rural areas. ➤ Will eliminate interest on the provincial portion of student loans. 		
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D) A call for targeted strategies that recognize the heightened risk in specific regions and neighbourhoods, and among such groups as people who have disabilities, racialized groups - both Aboriginal people and people of colour, women, lone-parent families, and newcomers

Poverty Reduction			
Ontario Liberal Party	Ontario NDP	Ontario PC Party	Green Party of Ontario
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will develop a new poverty reduction strategy in 2013 in consultation with stakeholders, other levels of Government and individuals living in poverty. ➤ Will set a new target for poverty reduction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will develop a new poverty reduction plan in 2013 in consultation with Stakeholders. ➤ Will try to get an independent group to review and evaluate progress on poverty reduction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No poverty reduction platform. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will work with community organizations on a plan to reduce poverty. ➤ Dedicated to eliminating child poverty in Ontario. ➤ Will introduce an Ontario Food and Farming Strategy ensuring all Ontarians have access to healthy food. ➤ Will expand food sharing programs like the Good Food Box to target priority populations and neighbourhoods, with a particular focus on First Nations and children, and will build partnerships with local food retailers to sell subsidized boxes. ➤ Will increase personal income tax exemption by \$2,000.