



## Media Release

March 17, 2020

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **Timiskaming Social Services Responds to the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Please be advised that due to the serious nature of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the District of Timiskaming Social Services Administration Board (DTSSAB) is taking the following measures. We are looking at all reasonable options to continue to provide essential services to the individuals and employees we support.

**Effective immediately ONLY essential core services will continue.** These include:

- Issuing social assistance payments. Payments will not be disrupted but recipients are encouraged to set up direct bank deposit if they haven't already done so and to please call the DTSSAB office if assistance is required. Mail service will continue to be available at the moment.
- All inquiries and applications are encouraged to be made by phone.
- Social Housing properties will continue to be maintained and health and safety issues will be addressed.
- All individuals attending the offices in person, if there is no alternative, need to pass the screening to be able to enter offices. In person meetings will only be conducted when deemed necessary by staff.

Services that **will NOT be available** for the time being:

- Child care centres have been temporarily closed and all EarlyOn programs are temporarily closed.
- Face to face meetings will not be held.
- All resource centres have been closed.
- All in-person workshops and training will be postponed.

Paramedic Services are operating however the system is under extreme pressure so we are asking that people **only call 911 where it is an emergency.**

"We are very aware of the seriousness of this pandemic and are, first and foremost, working to ensure the safety of our clients, staff and the community at large, while maintaining essential services," says DTSSAB Chair Doug Jelly.

Anyone requiring social assistance or for general inquiries can call our offices at 705-647-7447 or toll free at 1-800-627-2944 and 705-567-9366 or toll free at 1-888-544-5555. In-person visits are discouraged except for emergency situations. As the situation evolves, further updates will be posted regularly on the DTSSAB website at [www.dtssab.com](http://www.dtssab.com) and circulated on the DTSSAB Twitter and FaceBook page.

For further information please contact Kelly Black, Chief Administrative Officer, at 705-567-9366 ext 3253.

Thank you for your cooperation and patience.