

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Ontario Government Recognizes Developmental Services Frontline Heroes with Enhanced Pandemic Pay**  
***“Critical recognition at a critical time.”***

(TORONTO – April 27, 2020)

On Saturday April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Premier Doug Ford announced that his government will be providing frontline staff across the province with a temporary pandemic payment to recognize their outstanding dedication, long hours and increased risk of working to contain the COVID-19 outbreak. This announcement includes developmental services workers who continue to work around the clock to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families during the crisis.

“This recognition and support from the Government of Ontario in the fight against COVID-19 comes at a critical time.” says Brad Saunders, CEO of Community Living Toronto. “The dedication and commitment exemplified by developmental services workers to keeping each other and the people we support safe in this extraordinary time has been an inspiration to me and our communities. This announcement is a signal from Premier Ford, Minister Todd Smith, and the entire government to us and to all frontline developmental services workers across the province that the work we do is vital and that our government has our back during this crisis.”

The announcement includes an increase of \$4 per hour worked on top of base hourly wages for nearly 350,000 frontline workers in Ontario, as well as lump sum payments of \$250 per month for each of the next four months to employees who work over 100 hours per month. Personnel working in our group homes as well as those providing home and community care are specifically included in the list of workers who are eligible for the new pandemic pay.

The enhanced pandemic pay is temporary and is in effect for sixteen weeks from April 24, 2020 to August 13, 2020. These measures build on steps the government has already taken to support frontline workers, including providing free emergency childcare and securing necessary medical supplies.

“Our dedicated staff are tirelessly working around the clock, leaving their families each morning and risking their safety to support vulnerable people who rely on them.” says Saunders. “This wage enhancement plan will help hundreds of developmental services agencies like CLTO to further support our frontline workers as we continue to do our part to keep people safe and stop the spread of COVID-19 over the coming weeks and months.”

**About Community Living Toronto**

Community Living Toronto has been a source of support for people with an intellectual disability and their families since 1948. We offer a wide range of services including respite, person-directed planning, employment supports, residential programs, and community-based activities. We are proud to support over 4,000 individuals and their families in 80+ locations across Toronto.

The "community living movement" began with families who wanted their children to live in the community, rather than institutions. Today, we continue to advocate for inclusive communities and support the rights and choices of people with an intellectual disability.  
[www.communitylivingtoronto.ca](http://www.communitylivingtoronto.ca).

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