

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT COMMUNITY LIVING ONTARIO**

The purpose of this document is to help us all speak in the same way about Community Living Ontario and to answer questions that people may have about Community Living Ontario.

### **Who is Community Living Ontario?**

Started in 1953, Community Living Ontario is a nonprofit leader providing a provincial voice for people who have an intellectual disability, their families, friends, and support providers across Ontario. We proudly advocate on behalf of more than 80,000 people while championing the inclusion efforts of over 100 organizations.

### **What does Community Living Ontario do?**

Community Living Ontario provides leadership through advocacy, brings people together, removes barriers and creates a more inclusive Ontario. Some current initiatives include Family Engagement, Youth outreach, Student Links mentorship, Ready, Willing and Able National Employment program. Information about our initiatives can be found on our [website](#).

We advocate with government to bring issues and promote policies that enhance the lives of people who have an intellectual disability, families and local associations.

### **What is the difference between Community Living Ontario and local support providers?**

Community Living Ontario, as a provincial leader, coordinates the voices of people who have an intellectual disability, their families, friends, and support organizations to drive change towards an inclusive Ontario. Support providers directly assist people who have an intellectual disability and their families to live a good life in their chosen community.

### **What is Community Living Ontario's mission?**

Community Living Ontario, together with people who have an intellectual disability, families, friends, and support providers, bring about change to create a fully inclusive Ontario.

### **How is Community Living Ontario connected Nationally and beyond?**

Community Living Ontario is an active and important voice for Ontario at Inclusion Canada and Inclusion International, helping to bring about worldwide inclusion.

### **How does Community Living Ontario include people who have an intellectual disability and their families?**

Community Living Ontario highly values and needs the voices of people with lived experience and their families on our board and in committee work, at our forums and educational events and more. Individual [stories of success](#) and challenge help to form our priorities and keep us relevant.

## **Who are Community Living Ontario's members?**

Community Living Ontario members are local support providers across Ontario, who include people who have an intellectual disability, families, and allies.

## **What are the benefits for member organizations?**

As a member of Community Living Ontario, you gain access to a wide network of like-minded people and organizations. Participate in addressing the most challenging issues with one voice, and contribute to positive change when advocating to government, policymakers, and the public at large. Membership gives access to multiple resources, webinars with content experts, stakeholder engagement opportunities and a link to a larger network outside of Ontario, through [Inclusion Canada](#) and [Inclusion International](#).

## **How do I get involved with Community Living Ontario?**

There are many ways to get involved with Community Living Ontario, for example:

Connect and join with your local support provider who is a [member](#) of Community Living Ontario

- [Become a mentor](#) for our Student Links initiative
- Attend or apply to be a speaker at a workshop, webinar, or conference.
- [Register](#) for Update Friday and stay connected through our social media platforms.
- Apply to join a working group, committee, or the board.
- [Donate](#) to our Foundation.
- Become a ["Friend"](#) of Community Living Ontario

## **What are some successful advocacy examples?**

Community Living Ontario leads individual and collective advocacy to face challenges raised by advocates, families, and support providers.

Recent success has been achieved in ensuring access to Special Services at Home (SSAH) and Passport funding, COVID one-time funds, and temporary wage increases during COVID for support workers. There are many other examples of advocacy efforts found in the weekly Update Friday.

## **What work has Community Living Ontario helped to successfully lead and what work still has to be done?**

Community Living Ontario over almost 70 years has worked with others to successfully lead many life changing accomplishments for people with an intellectual disability and their families. We are especially proud of the ongoing efforts to:

- Continue to deinstitutionalize services and supports.
- Secure income supports to help reduce poverty.
- Ensure all children and youth are included in the school of their choice.
- Advocate for real work for real pay as an equal opportunity for all.

These efforts and many others remain on the agenda in opportunities like the Annual Community Living Ontario Day at the Legislature. We are motivated to keep going by the very real reminder that there is still so very much yet to do!

### **What is the role of the Community Living Ontario Board?**

The role of the Community Living Ontario Board is to make sure that the core values and mission are followed, protected, and moved forward on behalf of all members and supporters. The Board oversees the work of the Chief Executive Officer. As well, the Board is responsible for the Strategic Plan and overall governance. The Board must include people with a lived experience as well as those with a full range of diversity and skills to provide leadership towards a fully inclusive Ontario.

### **What is the role of the Council of Community Living Ontario?**

[The Council](#) is a very important part of Community Living Ontario and consists of 12 elected advocates from across the province. Council connects with other advocates to ensure all voices are heard. Council advises both the government and the Board on how to address important issues, find solutions, and share information with our members and the community. Council offers suggestions, opinions, knowledge, experience, and ideas on topics that will better the lives of people who have an intellectual disability. Council appoints one voting member to the Board of Community Living Ontario.

### **What is the role of the Community Living Ontario Provincial Executive Directors Committee?**

The Provincial Executive Directors Coordinating Committee (PEDCC) is the core working group of the Executive Directors of over 100 local service providers. Its role is to support the goal and vision of Community Living Ontario and act as a forum for sharing information and creating solutions to problems at the provincial level. A member of the PEDCC is appointed to the Community Living Ontario Board of Directors as a non-voting member.

### **What is the role of the Community Living Ontario Youth Advisory Committee?**

The role of the [Youth Advisory Committee](#) is to provide space for youth to inform the work of Community Living Ontario. The committee provides an opportunity to take a leadership role in decision-making and give direction to Community Living Ontario's youth engagement initiatives, including [Reaction4Inclusion](#). The committee makes sure Community Living Ontario remains relevant and up to date on issues that impact the lives of youth in Ontario who have an intellectual disability.

### **What is the role of the Community Living Ontario Family Engagement Steering Committee?**

The role of Community Living Ontario's [Family Engagement Steering Committee](#) is to give a voice to the unique experiences and contributions of families. This committee helps to inform the work of Community Living Ontario in our efforts to change laws and practices that impact directly on the family experience. This committee can appoint a voting member to the Community Living Ontario Board each year.