

REGION OF OTTAWA-CARLETON
RÉGION D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT
RAPPORT

Our File/N/Réf. 03-07-98-0127
Your File/V/Réf.

DATE 8 January 1999

TO/DEST. Community Services Committee

FROM/EXP. Committee Co-ordinator

SUBJECT/OBJET **PROFILE OF NEW APPLICANTS FOR SOCIAL ASSISTANCE**

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

For Committee discussion.

BACKGROUND

The above-captioned report was presented to the Community Services Committee as Information Previously Distributed on 17 December 1998. At that time, Councillor D. Holmes requested that the Item be submitted for Committee discussion at the next regular meeting.

This document is respectfully submitted.

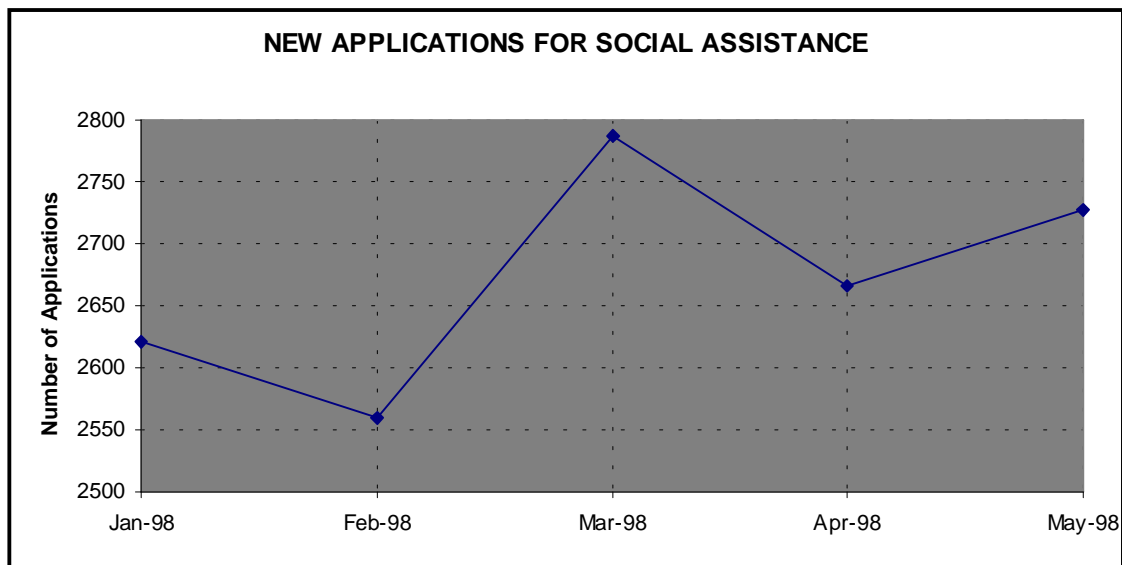
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Social Services

A PROFILE OF NEW APPLICANTS FOR SOCIAL ASSISTANCE (January to May 1998)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Prepared by:

Strategic and Operational Support Directorate

October, 1998

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each year, Social Services profiles new applicants for social assistance to monitor the demographic make-up of the social assistance caseload. The 1998 profile examines 1,224 cases (or 13%) of the 9,453 new social assistance applications granted between January and May. The major findings are highlighted below.

1.1 New Applications

Relatively fewer applications for social assistance are being granted under the Ontario Works Act (OWA). Prior to June 1998 when OWA was implemented, an average of 71% of all new applications were granted. However, only 67% of applications received in June, July and August 1998 were granted.

1.2 First-Time Vs Repeat Applicants

The proportion of new applicants who had previously been on social assistance is increasing. Close to 65% of 1998 new applicants are repeat applicants. This represents a 9.5% increase over last year.

1.3 Number of Repeats

Close to 54% of the 1998 repeat applicants had previously been on assistance once or twice; while 46% had been on assistance three or more times before.

1.4 Gender of New Applicants

About 64% of the 1998 new applicants are males. This is 10 percentage points higher than the percentage of males in the December 1997 caseload.

1.5 Age of New Applicants

New applicants are getting older. About 74% of the 1998 new applicants are aged 25 years or more, compared with 69% in 1997.

1.6 New Applicants' Age by Gender

The age distribution of male and female new applicants is very similar. The 25 to 35 year age-group dominates in both genders at 27% for males and 13% for females.

1.7 Family Status of New Applicants

The percentage of singles (or non-family) new applicants has declined from about 74% in 1997 to 59% in 1998.

1.8 Number of Dependent Children

Approximately 24% of new applicants had at least one dependent child. About 26% had three or more dependent children.

1.9 Dependent Children 6 Years and Above

Sixty-six percent of new applicants with children, or 15.6 % of all new applicants, had dependent children who are 6 years or older.

1.10 Dependent Children 5 Years and Below

New applicant families with dependent children below 6 years of age account for about 13% of all new applicants.

1.11 Educational Level of New Applicants

About 73% of new applicants compared with about 76% of the OWA caseload had grade 13 education or less. Therefore the distribution of the highest educational level attained by new applicants is not significantly different from that of the existing OWA caseload.

1.12 Reason for Assistance

Prior to January 1998, 65% of the OWA caseload cited employment related reasons for applying for social assistance. The proportion of the 1998 new applicants who cited employment related reasons is higher by 7 percentage points.

1.13 Reason for Assistance by Gender

Male new applicants are more likely to cite employment related reasons for applying for social assistance. Female new applicants, on the other hand, are more likely to cite single parenthood as reason for assistance.

1.14 Reason for Assistance by Family Status

New applicants who are single are more likely to cite employment related reasons for applying for social assistance.

1.15 Reason for Assistance by Case Status

Generally, reason for assistance does not appear to be related to the duration of time new applicants stay on assistance. However, between January and August 1998 the proportion of single parent new applicant cases terminated was about 20 percentage points lower than the average termination rate for all reasons for assistance. This suggests that single parents are more likely to stay on assistance longer than other participants.

1.16 Reason for Assistance by Level of Education

Unemployment is the dominant reason for social assistance for new applicants of all educational levels.

1.17 Repeat Applicants by Level of Education

There is no significant relationship between the level of education of new applicants and the number of times they will return to seek social assistance. New

applicants with grade 9 or less and the applicants with post-secondary education are almost equally likely to repeat social assistance.

1.18 Reason for Assistance by Age

Unemployment is the dominant reason for assistance for new applicants of all age groups. However, the incidence of employment related reasons decreases with age while disability related reasons tend to increase with age. New applicants who are 31 to 35 years old are most likely to cite single parenthood as reason for assistance.