

MEDIA BRIEFING

Protecting Ontario's Workers and Economic Resilience Act, 2026



**PROTECT
ONTARIO**

Ministry of Red Tape Reduction

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Ontario 

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1. Overview

As part of its plan to protect Ontario and build the most competitive economy in the G7, the government is introducing the ***Protecting Ontario's Workers and Economic Resilience Act, 2026 (POWER Act)***. The *POWER Act* would, if passed, take the next step in the government's plan to cut red tape and streamline permits and approvals so projects can move forward faster and with greater certainty, while supporting businesses and helping workers transition more quickly into high-demand jobs.

Last summer, the Ministry of Red Tape Reduction completed an inventory of over 350 provincial permits and approvals. In last fall's *Building a More Competitive Economy Act, 2025*, Ontario committed to eliminating or transforming at least 35 per cent of them by the end of 2028. Today, over 150 permits have been reviewed or are currently under review.

Streamline Permits and Approvals

Ontario is making it easier and faster for companies to navigate permits and approvals, **creating a stable and predictable business climate** that attracts investment and drives job creation.

By streamlining approvals **while maintaining strong standards**, Ontario is sending a clear signal to global investors that **the province is ready to advance major projects**.

Ontario is reinforcing its reputation as **one of the most competitive and reliable places in the G7** to invest, innovate and create good paying jobs.

Support for Workers and Businesses

Ontario is taking decisive action to support businesses and protect jobs by ensuring companies have the skilled workforce they need and the certainty to invest with confidence.

As part of our plan to protect Ontario, we are:

- **strengthening workplace protections** while cutting red tape so businesses can grow, hire and compete globally
- **supporting workers** by improving health and safety measures, enhancing safeguards for vulnerable and injured workers, and removing barriers to jobs in high-demand sectors.

2. Progress on Streamlining Permits and Approvals

Since fall 2025, Ontario has made strong progress in addressing three key permitting issues including reducing and streamlining permissions, simplifying system navigation and improving accountability.

This work helps businesses access the approvals they need more efficiently and supports a more agile and responsive economy that can respond quickly to global challenges and emerging opportunities.

With over **150 permits completed or currently under review**, the province is already delivering tangible improvements for businesses.



2. Progress on Streamlining Permits and Approvals

Reduce and streamline permissions

Ontario is on track to meeting its target to review **all business-facing permits by the end of 2028, with a goal of eliminating or transforming 35 per cent.**

Since the launch of the "**One Project, One Process**" (1P1P) framework in October 2025, 12 potential projects have been identified, and three projects are designated. The framework is intended to reduce government review timelines by 50 per cent.

Ontario has made significant amendments to the **Environmental Assessment Act** and associated regulations so that only large waste projects, significant energy generation projects and large waterfront projects require a comprehensive environmental assessments. All other projects, including highways, railways and energy transmission lines can now follow streamlined processes.

Simplify system navigation

Common Compliance Management Platform: User research was completed **across 15 ministries** to enable a modern user-focused, OPS-wide digital service aimed at **streamlining regulatory interactions for businesses** across the regulatory lifecycle, connecting permissions to inspections and compliance through **transparent service.**

Centralized Digital Permitting Service (CDPS): To support the implementation of 1P1P, the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement conducted 15 service design sessions with ministries and mining proponents and has completed the service design sprints. These findings and recommendations will guide the next steps in implementation and inform the development of a user-centric service blueprint for the mining sector, which includes the CDPS.

Improve accountability

Service Standards and Compliance: Reporting on compliance rates for meeting business service standards has shown consistent improvement in ministries' performance across the first three reporting periods, even as permit and licence application volumes increased.

All ministries are **above 80 per cent compliance** with currently established service standards. **9 out of 15** ministries have a compliance rate of **100 per cent.**

Note service standards apply to what is within the government's control and exclude factors such as an inability to process an application due to incomplete or inaccurate information.

Next Steps for Streamlining Permits and Approvals

Initiative	Current State	Future State
<p>Clarifying service standards under the <i>At Your Service Act, 2022</i></p>	<p>The Act requires ministries to set service standards for the permits and licences that they issue to businesses. The regulation implies requirements that service standards be set in areas that may be beyond ministry control.</p> <hr/> <p>Ministries publish their compliance with meeting service standards online once every three months.</p> <hr/> <p>Terminology in the Act includes “normal” or “not normal” conditions where they are processing applications.</p>	<p>Regulation changes would clarify that service standards for business permit applications apply only to processes within a ministry’s control. External steps outside the ministry’s control, such as municipal or federal reviews or duty-to-consult processes, are not included in provincial service-standard timelines. A municipal example would be a city’s zoning or building-permit review that must happen before a provincial permit can move forward.</p> <hr/> <p>Streamlining compliance reporting to biannually will simplify government processes and make operations more efficient, while maintaining public transparency.</p> <hr/> <p>Updating terminology to “typical” or “atypical” would improve clarity and be more inclusive, plain-language.</p>
<p>Supporting 1P1P mining proponents through responsible use of AI</p>	<p>Developing the project plans manually to support One Project, One Process (1P1P) designed projects requires coordinated review of detailed project information across multiple ministries.</p> <hr/> <p>This coordination work is detailed and time-sensitive. Improving efficiency could support the overall process and compliance outcomes.</p>	<p>The province will leverage AI to inform project plans and support with identifying relevant permits required for specific 1P1P projects as well as any regulatory barriers to effective project planning.</p> <hr/> <p>As a result, the province will provide designated proponents with a draft project plan within 10 days of designation.</p>

Next Steps for Streamlining Permits and Approvals

Initiative	Current State	Future State
<p>Further Modernize Environmental Assessments</p>	<p>Currently, the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) prepares, publishes and consults on a ministry review for every environmental assessment (EA) application, and each Minister's decision requires Cabinet approval. These steps add months to timelines but rarely change EA outcomes.</p> <hr/> <p>For waste disposal sites, change to a service areas or fill rates triggers an environmental assessment, even when impacts are limited or considered during the review of an environmental compliance approval application. This can add unnecessary time and cost to the process.</p>	<p>The government is accelerating the comprehensive EA approval process—specifically, removing the requirement for MECP to publish and consult on a ministry review and the requirement for Cabinet approval of the Minister's decision.</p> <p>The government is also removing the mechanism to request that an EA be referred to the Ontario Land Tribunal for a hearing and decision but is maintaining the Minister's authority and discretion to do so.</p> <p>The EA process will continue to include opportunities for public input and consultation throughout and the Minister will retain discretion to seek additional consultation or Cabinet approval where appropriate.</p> <hr/> <p>The government is proposing to make changes to no longer require an environmental assessment when increasing a waste disposal site's service area or fill rate or to consult on these changes through the Environmental Registry of Ontario.</p> <p>Environmental oversight will continue through the environmental compliance approvals (ECA) process. The ECA contains terms and conditions designed to be protective of the environment as well as the health and safety of the public.</p>

Next Steps for Streamlining Permits and Approvals

Initiative	Current State	Future State
Sewage Systems Changes	Large, complex sewage systems that exceed a certain design capacity generally require an environmental compliance approval (ECA) from MECP. Obtaining an ECA can take up to a year, which creates challenges for farmers who need to build housing to accommodate their workers.	<p>The government is proposing changes to allow small-sized sewage systems servicing on-farm worker housing to be regulated under Ontario's Building Code and medium-sized systems to self-register on the Environmental Activity and Sector Registry (EASR) rather than wait up to a year for an approval.</p> <p>These changes would support faster construction of on-farm worker housing, which will help create more jobs and protect the province's food-supply chain, all while continuing to safeguard human health and maintain environmental protections.</p> <p>Changes under Ontario's Building Code would include important safeguards such as minimum required distances away from wells and property lines to protect human health, the environment and neighbouring properties from contamination.</p> <p>Changes to allow self-registration would include environmentally protective regulatory requirements, including spills procedures and the requirement to retain qualified professionals to complete technical assessments.</p>

Next Steps for Streamlining Permits and Approvals

Initiative	Current State	Future State
Consolidated Permit to Take Water and Environmental Compliance Approvals	<p>Some businesses are required to get both Environmental Compliance Approvals (ECAs) and Permits to Take Water (PTTWs) for facilities and operations that both take and discharge water (e.g., automotive manufacturing plants and aggregate sites).</p> <p>Obtaining two separate permissions can result in duplicative consultation requirements and two separate sets of compliance requirements.</p>	<p>The government wants to streamline the approvals process by enabling a consolidated permissions approach for ECAs and PTTWs which will reduce administrative burden and simplify compliance requirements.</p> <p>Along with simplifying compliance objectives by offering a single, consolidated approval, these changes would enable more coordinated consultation efforts with the public and Indigenous communities.</p> <p>Proponents would continue to be subject to rigorous regulatory requirements, including the ministry's technical review of applications, which would remain in place under a consolidated approach.</p>

Next Steps for Streamlining Permits and Approvals

Initiative	Current State	Future State
Heritage Framework Transformation	<p>Ontario's heritage regulatory framework requires modernization to help keep pace with growing demands, support timely economic and infrastructure development and conserve cultural heritage resources.</p> <p>This includes modernizing the Ontario Heritage Act (governing the policies, priorities and programs for the conservation of the heritage of Ontario), the existing archaeology assessment and report review process and IT systems, which together guide how archaeological resources are conserved across Ontario.</p> <p>Changes to the heritage framework are required to deliver faster, more predictable approvals for infrastructure and economic development projects across Ontario.</p> <p>While the government has implemented some measures to address systemic report review backlogs, additional reforms are needed to tackle low compliance rates and unclear processes that create inefficiencies and contribute to project delays.</p>	<p>Through the Heritage Framework Transformation, Ontario is proposing comprehensive policy, statutory, regulatory and operational changes and launching a new IT system to strengthen accountability and compliance while improving customer service and expediting project delivery.</p> <p>Service delivery improvements aim to improve timeliness and predictability through streamlined standards, risk-based processes and IT/digital solutions. This includes measures to eliminate legacy review backlogs, automate processing for low-risk archaeological assessments, introduce service standards for report review and improve digital intake through geographic information systems capabilities and automation.</p> <p>The government is also consulting on additional proposed policy reforms, program improvements and data solutions with Indigenous communities, developers, municipalities, archaeologists and sector stakeholders. Consultations are informing proposed policy and standards updates, including potential changes to regulatory approaches, strengthened compliance and enforcement.</p> <p>This transformed framework aims to strengthen the province's ability to support responsible growth, deliver housing and infrastructure more efficiently and support investment amid global pressures while continuing to support the conservation of cultural heritage for future generations.</p>

4. Support for Workers and Businesses

The government is proposing changes to protect Ontario workers' wallets and pay cheques, strengthen worker safety and support for injured workers, and safeguard the economy by getting workers into high-demand jobs faster.

This is part of the government's plan to ensure that Ontario continues to be the best place to live, work and do business.



Support for Workers and Businesses

Initiative	Current State	Future State
Support Labour Mobility for Licensed Retirement Homes (As of Right)	Currently, gaps exist in the <i>Retirement Homes Act, 2010 (RHA)</i> , which mean that “As of Right” health professionals are not afforded legal protections (i.e., against any action/proceeding which could include civil claims, disciplinary actions by regulators or employers, etc.) when they comply with mandatory requirements to report resident harm/risk to the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority (RHRA) Registrar. In addition, due to the recent amendments to the <i>Medicine Act, 1991</i> , the scope of practice for physician assistants (PAs) working in licensed retirement homes (RHs) is unclear and they, too, have no legal protection when making mandatory reports.	RHA legal protections that exist for other Ontario-registered professionals working in licensed retirement homes would be extended to “As of Right” health professionals and Ontario-registered PAs when reporting resident harm/risk to the RHRA Registrar by adding a regulation-making authority. This would promote greater uptake of “As of Right” health professionals to grow Ontario and Canada’s economy within our own borders. It would also promote compliance and mitigate potential legal exposures with mandatory reporting, protect resident safety, and strengthen staffing capacity.
Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority (RHRA) Board Appointments	Currently, government appointments to the RHRA board are made by the Lieutenant Governor in Council (LGIC), limiting the flexibility to make timely appointments. Further, among Administrative Authorities (AA) with government appointment to their Boards, the RHRA is the only one whose Board members are appointed by the LGIC rather than the Minister.	RHRA board appointment authority would be transferred from the LGIC to the Minister, to align with the appointments model used across other AAs. This would support oversight of licensed RH businesses and workers through improved flexibility and timeliness in government appointments to the RHRA Board. Resident/seniors advocates would be assured of continued transparency in board appointments to mitigate any concerns with the amendment.

Support for Workers and Businesses

Initiative	Current State	Future State
Harmonizing of Health and Safety Training	<p>Health and safety training requirements are not consistent across provinces and territories. This sometimes creates duplicative training requirements for workers and businesses who work across jurisdictions, and barriers to interprovincial training portability.</p> <p>Example:</p> <p>Currently, there is no common Mobile Elevating Work Platform (MEWP) Operator training across jurisdictions. Out of province workers coming into Ontario may have to repeat their training in Ontario. This cost is a burden to their new employer in Ontario and impacts their ability to start their work upon hire. Harmonization would eliminate these barriers through standardized training requirements across Canada.</p>	<p>To reduce red tape, cut costs and save time, the province is proposing to standardize high-quality training in the province, recognizing the CSA Group national standard for MEWP training that would include requirements for training to operate MEWPs on construction projects. The CSA Group (formerly Canadian Standards Association) is an organization that develops national safety and performance standards.</p> <p>A new Minister's Authority would also be established to streamline inter-jurisdictional recognition of health and safety standards for seamless labour mobility. This will improve worker training portability, strengthen safety culture and reduce duplicative training costs for businesses working across Canadian jurisdictions.</p> <p>Example:</p> <p>Through training standard harmonization efforts, all jurisdictions have agreed to require training according to the CSA Group standard, effective January 1, 2027. This would allow workers from anywhere in Canada that have completed the MEWP training, to operate this equipment in any province or territory without delay or extra training.</p>

Support for Workers and Businesses

Initiative	Current State	Future State
Consulting on mandating WSIB insurance coverage for all residential care facility and group home operators	Privately-operated residential care facilities and group homes are not subject to mandatory WSIB insurance coverage. Operators of these facilities can purchase WSIB coverage, obtain private insurance, or in some cases, operate without any insurance coverage. Meanwhile, publicly-run facilities must have WSIB coverage. This means workers who do similar jobs and who are exposed to similar risks may not have equal coverage, creating unfairness for some workers who would not be protected if they became ill or injured despite doing the same job in similar workplaces.	Subject to a period of consultation with all impacted stakeholders, <i>Workplace Safety and Insurance Act</i> amended to ensure all residential care facilities and group homes — regardless of whether they are publicly or privately operated — are subject to mandatory WSIB coverage. Examples of the types of facilities and workers affected: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facility: Licensed Retirement Homes• Workers: Personal Support Workers (PSWs), Registered Practical Nurses (RPNs), Registered Nurses (RNs)
Allow collection of personal information from the Occupational Exposure Registry (OER)	The Occupational Exposure Registry (OER) allows workers to voluntarily record and track their exposures to hazardous substances in the workplace. The Chief Prevention Officer can use this information for prevention planning purposes.	The Chief Prevention Officer would have authority to collect the personal information workers voluntarily provide about their workplace exposures, and to share workers' own information back to individual workers through the OER. This would make it easier for workers to manage their exposure records when engaging their healthcare providers, to support faster diagnosis of occupational illnesses.

Support for Workers and Businesses

Initiative	Current State	Future State
Strengthening Talent Agency Regulation	<p>Talent agencies, like those who represent performers (e.g. actors) and other entertainment workers in film, television and stage, are unregulated in Ontario. There are no clear rules on how payments must be handled by talent agencies or when it must be paid. This can leave performers vulnerable to delayed payments, unclear fees or a lack of financial transparency.</p>	<p>Talent agencies would operate under clear and consistent standards with government oversight to ensure entertainment workers are treated fairly. For talent agencies, this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• maximum commission rates• no fees other than commissions and fees allowed by regulation• payments to entertainment workers within 10 business days unless the regulations provide otherwise)• separate accounts for money belonging to entertainment workers• providing written statements to entertainment workers and keeping statement records for a minimum of three years <p>Announced April 14: Ontario Protecting Workers' Paycheques by Banning Uniform Charges at Large Companies</p>
Providing two alternate models to shorten "Open Periods" in the construction industry	<p>The <i>Labour Relations Act, 1995 (LRA)</i> provides for "open periods" in the construction industry, when unions can displace other unions to represent their members or union members can apply to terminate their union's bargaining rights. These open periods generally commence the last two months of a collective agreement's operation, among other times. Lengthy open periods can delay projects, increase costs and create uncertainty and in the construction sector.</p>	<p>The construction industry "open periods" would be shortened from two-month timelines to one-month timelines, for both displacement and termination applications. The ministry will consult with stakeholders to determine the best approach between two models:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The one-month timeline is generally during the last month of a collective agreement's operation2) The one-month timeline is generally during the second-last month of a collective agreement's operation. <p>Proposing to shorten "open periods" in the construction industry responds to concerns that some unions and employers have raised and aims to contribute to stability in the sector.</p>

Support for Workers and Businesses

Initiative	Current State	Future State
<p>Allow WSIB to pay loss of earnings (LOE) benefits after age 65 for injured workers</p>	<p>WSIB pays loss of earnings (LOE) benefits to injured workers who miss time from work and are unable to earn full wages due to the work-related injury. LOE benefits are meant to help replace a worker's lost income resulting from the work-related injury.</p> <p>Currently, for workers who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • younger than 63 at the time of injury: workers can receive LOE benefits until age 65 at the latest • 63 or older at the time of injury: LOE benefits can be paid for a maximum of two years following the injury <p>Beyond these age thresholds, injured workers cannot keep receiving LOE benefits, even if the worker keeps working or intended to keep working. In all cases, if someone goes back to work and earns full wages before the age thresholds above, LOE benefits would end on the earlier of the day that the loss of earnings ceases and these age/time thresholds.</p>	<p>Between the ages of 63 and 65 or within two years of the injury (depending on the age of the worker at the time of injury), the worker could make a request to WSIB to have their LOE benefits extended past age 65. WSIB would assess the worker's request to determine if the worker is likely to continue working past age 65 in suitable and available employment.</p> <p>This would align WSIB LOE benefit entitlements with the labour market trend of people remaining in the workforce past age 65. More older workers could be compensated for longer for their ongoing loss of earnings due to work-related injury/illness.</p> <p>Announced April 13: Ontario Increasing WSIB Benefits to Protect Injured Workers</p>
<p>Increase the WSIB LOE benefit rate from 85 per cent to 90 per cent</p>	<p>Before 1998, WSIB workers' benefits were based on 90 per cent of their take-home pay. In 1998, responding to financial pressures in the system, that rate was reduced to 85 per cent. In 2018, the WSIB eliminated its unfunded liability and now is in a healthy financial position. The current average premium rate is \$1.23 per \$100 of insurable earnings, the lowest in over 50 years.</p>	<p>WSIB Loss of Earnings benefits are once again based on 90 per cent of a worker's net average earnings.</p> <p>Announced April 13: Ontario Increasing WSIB Benefits to Protect Injured Workers</p>

Support for Workers and Businesses

Initiative	Current State	Future State
<p>Set a maximum threshold for the income injured workers may receive from collateral benefits and WSIB LOE benefits, and remove the 72-month lock in of LOE benefits for specified cohorts of workers</p>	<p>From the time of a worker's injury to 72-months post injury, the WSIB can reduce the worker's loss of earnings (LOE) benefits by the amount of Canada Pension Plan Disability (CPP-D) benefits the worker may receive for the work-related injury. In addition, up until the 72-month mark, the WSIB can adjust a worker's LOE benefits if the worker obtains post-injury employment income.</p> <p>After the 72-month mark, the worker's claim is locked in, and the WSIB can neither reduce the LOE benefits by the amount of CPP-D benefits applied for and received after this time, nor can the WSIB adjust LOE benefits for any changes to post-injury employment income. This creates the possibility of the worker earning more income than they were earning before injury.</p>	<p>Ontario is proposing to require the WSIB to reduce a worker's LOE benefit if the total amount of income the worker receives from the WSIB and other sources (e.g., collateral benefits) exceeds 100 per cent of the worker's pre-injury net average earnings.</p> <p>Further, the 72-month lock-in on LOE benefits for specified cohorts would be removed, allowing the WSIB to review a worker's LOE benefits at any time during the life of the claim. This means that if a worker begins earning new employment income at any time in the life of their claim and the combination of the LOE benefit and the other types of income (that are set out in regulation) exceed the above threshold, their LOE benefits would be adjusted accordingly — ensuring the system accurately compensates workers for lost income.</p>
<p>Explicitly authorize inspections in place of investigating certain non-monetary complaints and refuse complaints that are vexatious or where there is insufficient information</p>	<p>The ministry must investigate all employment standards complaints, regardless of the situation.. This makes it difficult for the ministry to respond in a proportional way, contributing to a backlog of complaints and administrative burden on the program.</p> <p>For example, the ministry must conduct a new investigation if an employee resubmits a complaint for an issue that has already been investigated and where it was determined that there was no merit to the complaint</p>	<p>The ministry would have clear authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • handle specific types of complaints with an inspection rather than an investigation (which is quicker and more efficient) • refuse complaints from people who are purposefully misusing the complaints process, and <p>This would allow for a more effective use of resources and better service to workers.</p>

Support for Workers and Businesses

Initiative	Current State	Future State
Ensure employees get priority in payment/collections process	<p>When an employer owes an employee money, the ministry issues an Order to Pay. When this order goes to collections, a collection fee is added to the amount owing. If the money collected is less than the total owed, funds are distributed between the employee and the government, and the employee receives approximately 75 per cent of a partial payment.</p>	<p>During the collections process, money would go to employees first, before collection and administrative fees to the government. In instances where the money collected is less than the full amount owing, more money would go to employees. This means approximately \$100,000 to \$200,000 a year of owed wages would go back to employees instead of to the government.</p>
Prohibit charging for uniforms	<p>Employers can require an employee to pay for their uniform, which can take money out of the pockets of employees when they are starting a new job.</p> <p>Although the cost range of uniforms can differ, some uniforms can potentially cost upwards of \$50.</p>	<p>The government will consult with a view to balance the interests of businesses and workers. This will inform the approach to prohibiting employers from charging employees, or deducting from employee wages, except in limited situations for uniforms that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• employer-mandated• unique to or identified with the employer (e.g. have a specific design or branding) <p>The ministry would consult on certain exemptions, such as small businesses. For example, businesses with 25 employees or fewer, not including franchises could be exempted from covering the cost of uniforms by regulation.</p> <p>Announced April 14: Ontario Protecting Workers' Paycheques by Banning Uniform Charges at Large Companies</p>

Support for Workers and Businesses

Initiative	Current State	Future State
Recognize CSA Group (CSA) approved respirators in regulation	Respirators used for workplace safety must be National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety (NIOSH) approved. CSA-approved respirators may only be used if they pass an equivalency assessment by a qualified health and safety professional.	CSA-approved respirators would be recognized as compliant under the <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act</i>, eliminating the need for an equivalency assessment. This would make it easier for workers and employers to use more Canadian-made respirators and cut unnecessary red tape by removing the time and cost of repetitive and unnecessary assessments for CSA-approved respirators.
Update hard hats requirements	On construction projects in Ontario, workers are required to wear protective headwear to guard against impacts and falling or flying objects. The current requirements is typically enforced based on a minimum standard of a Type 1 hard hat, which is designed to protect the top of the head only. However, Type 1 hard hats do not provide protection from side impacts, leaving workers potentially exposed to serious head injuries in certain job site conditions.	Proposed changes would mandate the use of Type 2 hard hats on construction projects where workers may be exposed to side impact hazards. Type 2 hard hats provide protection to the sides of the head, offering more comprehensive coverage. The proposal would also require the use of chin straps or other retention systems in situations where there is a risk of the hard hat becoming dislodged. To support implementation, the ministry would introduce a reimbursement program to help offset initial costs for employers, ensuring a smooth transition while improving worker safety.

Support for Workers and Businesses

Initiative	Current State	Future State
<p>Increasing Access to Medical Education for Ontarians: Canadian Residency Matching Service (CaRMS) Revisions</p>	<p>Medical graduates apply for residency through CaRMS: a two-round process for Canadian citizens and permanent residents.</p> <p>All International Medical Graduates (IMGs) compete alongside Canadian Medical Graduates (CMGs) in both rounds, with a smaller dedicated stream of seats made exclusively available to IMGs.</p> <p>Ontarians who completed their medical education abroad are considered as IMGs and so compete for the smaller set of seats in the first round (even though they are from Ontario) making it harder to match to a seat</p> <p>In 2025, IMGs filled about one-third of residency positions (492 of 1,464), with nearly 20 per cent of positions dedicated to IMGs in round one.</p> <p>After graduation, IMGs must complete a 5-year return of service (ROS) in an underserved community.</p>	<p>Medical graduates with strong ties to the province are more likely to stay and practice within Ontario. Prioritizing access to medical residency seats for Ontario IMGs is intended to increase the likelihood that those trained in Ontario remain in the province to practice medicine beyond the 5-year ROS period.</p> <p>Legislative amendments to the <i>Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care Act</i> will establish a regulatory framework to prioritize seats for IMGs with a proven connection to Ontario (Ontario IMGs).</p> <p>The framework will include a definition for "Ontario IMGs" which will align with other Canadian jurisdictions (e.g., Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, PEI). An Ontario IMG will be defined* as someone who:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attended a secondary school in Ontario for two or more years, at least two semesters per academic year; OR 2. Attended full time and in-person at an Ontario university for two or more years; totaling a minimum of 8 months per academic year; OR 3. Physically resided and lived continuously in Ontario for at least 24 weeks during a period beginning the year prior to the application (for the 2027 match, the period would begin January 1, 2025). <p>Through this framework, Ontario IMGs who meet the definition will have greater opportunity to match to a seat through the first round of the CaRMS match and will still be able to apply for any remaining seats in the second round if they do not match in the first round.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-Ontario IMGs would still be able to apply for unfilled positions in the second round of the CaRMS match (along with Ontario IMGs that did not match in the first round). • The number of postgraduate residence spots will continue to increase with over 270 more seats being added between now and 2028/29. <p>No changes are being made to the 5-year ROS obligations for IMGs (both Ontario IMGs and others).</p> <p>Announced April 17: Province Prioritizing Medical Residency for Ontario Students</p>

Support for Workers and Businesses

Initiative	Current State	Future State
French Language Competencies as a Requirement for the Ontario Ombudsman	<p>Ontario law currently does not have legislated language requirements for the Ombudsman. Neither the <i>French Language Services Act</i> (FLSA) nor the <i>Ombudsman Act</i> prescribes any linguistic qualifications for the Ombudsman.</p> <p>Under the FLSA, only the French Language Services Commissioner is required to be proficient in French, and this role reports to the Ombudsman.</p> <p>The Ombudsman provides leadership and accountability for Ontario's primary oversight mechanism for French-language services. The Ombudsman is responsible for, among other things, investigations, reporting, and promoting compliance with the FLSA.</p>	<p>This change would amend the Ombudsman Act to require the Ombudsman to be proficient in English and French. The change would reinforce the delivery of high-quality French language services by making proficiency in both languages a mandatory qualification for the Ombudsman. The change would be limited in scope and would not alter the governance structure of the Ombudsman.</p> <p>Announced April 16: Ontario Strengthening Access to French Language Services</p>

5. Looking Ahead

The ***POWER Act*** is an important part of the **plan to protect Ontario** by building a stronger, more competitive and more resilient economy, and it is an important next step in the government's response to challenging economic conditions. The initiatives in the act would modernize and streamline government approvals processes, deliver cost savings for businesses and support a stronger, more flexible workforce by harmonizing requirements to improve labour mobility across Canada, and by expanding worker protections and benefits.

Ontario's legacy of cutting red tape since 2018 is sending a clear signal to the world that the province is ready to compete for and advance major projects. Together, these initiatives are protecting Ontario by creating a more predictable, efficient environment for investment, job creation and economic growth and helping to build **the most competitive, resilient and self-reliant economy in the G7.**