



# Ontario Disability Support Plan Recipient's Advocacy Group

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## General Design

### Main Concept:

#### General Beliefs:

- More positive, long term progress is achieved when powerful, well designed, positive actions are patiently used to build public awareness of bad government policies, legislation and execution
- The Legislature of Ontario is only an entity and therefor cannot really care about Ontario's unfortunate, we must gain the support of MPPs before we can attain any real level of success
- Change will only happen when Ontarians get on board with challenging the validity of ODSP
- Municipalities must be brought on board with our actions as they have a large financial stake in the support payed to ODSP Recipients
- ODSP treats Recipients with disregard for their Human Rights and the Law
- The assistance given by ODSP is punitive
- Much more money is wasted by ODSP agents forcing frivolous internal reviews and SBT appeals due to the intentional design of their computer system, inept CSR's, vague legislation and misguided policy procedures than by Recipient fraud attempts
- Legislative 'Bad Faith Acts' by ODSP and the agents of ODSP is ignored by the province while government and the press are ready to pounce on Recipients if there is only a perceived misuse of the ODSP Legislation
- ODSP Agents frequently abuse their legislative power
- There would be a great reduction in attempted or contemplated recipient fraud if:
  - the existing legislation was replaced with a fair legislation that addresses the real needs of ODSP Recipient's as dictated by current and ongoing Living Standards experienced by the mean level of the average Ontarian
  - recipients are treated in a manner consistent with the Human Rights Act and their relating preambles
  - the issue of fear that ravages most recipients when they must have contact and dealings with an ODSP office is removed
  - consideration and accommodation for the psychological challenges faced by ODSP Recipients when dealing with ODSP personnel was included in everyday practice

#### Goals:

- Reformation of existing ODSP legislation into a program that will actually provide protection, care, support, dignity and worth to disabled Ontarians who are unable to provide for themselves

- To provide an avenue for spreading awareness of problems and solutions faced by recipients in dealing with ODSP on an office level and a provincial level
- To build awareness by the general population of Ontario of the Human Rights violations that are imposed on ODSP recipients
- To build awareness by the general population of Ontario of the Legislative violations that are imposed on ODSP recipients by ODSP Agents
- To provide a means of distributing information to ODSP recipients and applicants of their benefit entitlements and assist them in receiving all of the benefit and assistance allowed and owing by Ontario Law
- To make direct contact with at least 50% of ODSP Recipients and ensure that at least 70% are aware of our existence and services offered
- To gather support of Ontarians in providing adequate assistance to ODSP recipients that will enable them to live with dignity and receive the guarantees offered them under the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Human Rights Act of Canada
- Create a log of '**Acts of Bad Faith**' by ODSP agents when dealing with ODSP recipients and release the initial list to the Ministry of Social Services, ODSP Directors and the Ontario Media and continued with monthly update releases:
  - Information that should be available to Recipients being withheld
  - Benefits owed under the current legislation or regulations denied or otherwise withheld - may be proved by decisions by SBT against ODSP
  - Instances of belligerence by ODSP Agents
  - Failure to provide accurate information to Recipients
  - Withholding of services unjustly - may be proved by decisions by SBT against ODSP
  - Violations of Recipient's Human Rights

### **Mandate:**

The ODSP Recipients Advocacy Group will be a province wide group (entity) whose sole purpose will be to complete their goals as set out above. The working name will be ODSP RAG's and be represented by either 'ODSP RAG's' or 'RAG's'. This mandate will be for a term of six (6) years at which time it is our aim that the above-mentioned goals will be attained or on track for completion. If the goals are not achieved within this time frame a new mandate may be created to carry on the work initiated by this Advocacy.

The general operations of the ODSP Recipients Advocacy Group will be governed by a Board comprised of members of ODSP RAG's. General Operational decisions will be made by a 2/3 majority vote of the members of ODSP RAG's Board. Changes that affect the structure, mandate or function of the ODSP Recipients Advocacy Group will require approval by receiving a 2/3 majority vote of the full ODSP Recipients Advocacy Group Membership.

The ODSP Recipients Advocacy Group will be deemed an official entity at the call to order of the first designated official meeting of ODSP RAG's Board. No changes may be made to the structure, mandate or function of the ODSP Recipients Advocacy Group within 6 months of ODSP RAG's's existence.

# Base Operational Design:

## Structure:

ODSP RAG's will be operated by a Board that will oversee the general operations of ODSP RAG's. All members of the Board must be active members of ODSP RAG's. The Board will have the power to set rules of operation, create committees and appoint chairpersons to oversee them.

- ODSP RAG's Board will comprise at least the following members:
  - Founder
  - One (1) President
  - One (1) Chairperson
  - One (1) Secretary
  - One (1) ODSP Recipient from each ODSP district
  - One (1) Chairperson for each Committee created by the board
  - One (1) Financial Officer - non-recipient recommended
  - One (1) Media Officer
  - One (1) Membership Officer
- The Committee Chairpersons will be appointed by ODSP RAG's Board as needed for a term designated by ODSP RAG's Board
- The initial ODSP RAG's Board will be appointed by the Founder from applications received from ODSP RAG's Members requesting participation on ODSP RAG's Board
- The President and Chairperson may serve a term of not more than three (3) years and the vacancies will be filled by a general membership vote
- The Secretary, Financial Officer, Media Officer and Membership Officer may serve a term of not more than two (2) years and the vacancies will be filled by a general membership vote
- Operational procedures, structure, voting procedures, etc. will be defined by ODSP RAG's Board

## Duties:

- Create and maintain an internet presence
- Post all verifiable Human Rights violations by ODSP to the web site
- Post all verifiable Legislative violations by ODSP to the web site
- Create and maintain alliances with Provincial levels of government and other ODSP activism and support groups
- Work with media from a provincial standpoint. Circulate Media Releases and Letters to the Editor in areas not covered by a Local Member
- Submit the Media Releases to the heads of local regions and municipalities in Ontario by email, fax or in person where possible (via Local Members)
- Build provincial awareness of the ODSP Recipient's Advocacy Group
- Perform a Financial Audit of ODSP and release findings as a Media Release to all members, all levels of government and the media

The Financial Audit will include the following procedures:

- Procure the actual expense reports for the ODSP program for the year 2004.
- Determine the dollar amount spent on average for each internal review request
- Determine the dollar amount spent on average to process each SBT review
- Find a count of the total number of internal review request's submitted in 2004

- Find a dollar value of the total monies in review in 2004
- Find a count of the number of IR requests that were judged in the recipient's benefit
- Find a dollar value of the monies released to recipients after a review
- Find a count of the total number of SBT appeals launched in 2004
- Find a dollar value of the total monies under appeal in 2004
- Find a count of the number of SBT appeals that were judged in the recipient's benefit
- Find a dollar value of the monies released to recipients after an SBT appeal
- Calculate the amount of money saved or lost by forcing ODSP recipient's through the review / appeal process: Total monies in question - ((# of reviews \* cost per review) + (# of SBT appeals \* cost per SBT appeal)) - (monies awarded from reviews + monies awarded from SBT appeals) = Money saved or wasted!
- Prepare press release and distribute to media, municipalities, ODSP minister and all MPPs.
- Be a 'Watch Dog' on the actions of the ODSP and the Ontario Government in regards to the legislative modifications to either the ODSP Act or Regulations

### **Funding:**

ODSP Recipient's Advocacy Group will actively pursue financial and physical support from members of the Ontario Business Community who may be in support of ending poverty and injustice in Ontario. ODSP RAG's will also actively pursue endorsements from Ontario public figures who support the ending of poverty and injustice in Ontario. ODSP RAG's will also seek start-up funds from service and community groups located in the province.

ODSP RAG's members will be invited to make donations of time, energy and / or financially as they are able to. At no time will any form of membership dues or fees be made mandatory part of membership requirements for ODSP Recipients!

### **Membership:**

Membership requirements will include being an active ODSP Recipient, member of an ODSP Benefit Unit or direct involvement with a Recipient or member of a Benefit Unit. All member's contact data will be privately archived for future contact purposes by ODSP RAG's. ODSP RAG's Board will retain the right to modify membership requirements if the need for such arises. The decision for determining such a need will be made by ODSP RAG's Board.

At no time will ODSP RAG's Board be authorized to attach a monetary value as a condition of membership for ODSP Recipients. All members will be invited to contribute their support, time, talents and / or financially (within their means) to assist in furthering the work of ODSP RAG's. No ODSP RAG's member shall at any time expect, request or demand any other member to contribute more than they are physically or mentally ready, willing and able to offer in safety. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action by ODSP RAG's Board.