



**Report To:** Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board  
**From:** Lori Clark, Director of Integrated Social Services (A)  
**Date:** April 22, 2021  
**Re:** Social Services Relief Fund Phase 3 – Issue Report

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### **Purpose**

To provide the Board with an update on the Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF) Phase 3 Business Case that was [announced](#) by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on March 10, 2021.

### **Background**

In 2020, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing announced \$362 million in new funding under a second phase of the SSRF to help protect vulnerable people from COVID-19, bringing the government's total SSRF investment to \$510 million. This funding has helped Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators respond quickly, adapt services, and help address housing and economic impacts from COVID-19 in their communities.

[SSRF Phase 1](#) which was announced on April 1, 2020, was intended to support a range of vulnerable populations, including people living in community housing, supportive housing, people with low incomes, social assistance recipients, and others who require social services support as well as those experiencing homelessness.

[SSRF Phase 2](#) which announced on August 10, 2020, was built on this support, and expanded the eligible uses of funding, with a focus on resiliency to future waves of COVID-19. It had the following objectives:

1. Mitigate ongoing risk for vulnerable people, especially in congregate care settings.
2. Encourage longer-term housing-based solutions to homelessness post-COVID-19; and
3. Enhance rent assistance provided to households in rent arrears due to COVID-19.

Building on these investments, the SSRF Phase 3 will provide \$255 million in additional one-time operating funding. This investment will enable Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators to continue to fund the vital supports and services

that were established to address the impacts of COVID-19 on vulnerable Ontarians from March 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021. The intention of SSRF Phase 3 is to continue to help a diverse range of vulnerable people to meet their short-term critical needs, including people living in community housing, supportive housing, people with low incomes, social assistance recipients, or others who require social services support as well as those that are experiencing homelessness.

### **SSRF Phase 3**

On March 10, 2021 the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB board chair received important [details](#) regarding additional provincial funding being offered to us through the third phase of Ontario's Social Services Relief Fund.

To receive this funding, the Ministry required a completed [Investment Plan](#) and our sign back to the terms and conditions of the funding by March 22, 2021.

The province recognizes the need for this funding will continue beyond March 31, 2021. The province has heard from municipal partners that additional funding is urgently needed to continue to protect the health and safety of vulnerable people as the province begins to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

For that reason, the government announced an additional investment of \$255 million in one-time operating funding to enable a third phase of the SSRF. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB will receive an additional **\$1,006,274** in provincial funding through a third phase of Ontario's SSRF.

This funding supports operating expenses only. Capital projects are not eligible for funding under the SSRF Phase 3.

An investment plan has been created in a short turnaround time and [approved](#) by the Ministry one week later.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB staff identified the following priorities in the SSRF Phase 3 investment plan:

1. Food Banks in the district have continued to see a rise in the need for food security. The need has increased by 15%. Amongst the already existing 7 food banks, 2 new ones were created in 2020 in French River and St. Charles. We have also ensured that the food banks across the district are getting wholesale prices through a partnership with the Sudbury Food Bank who delivers to most of them on a monthly basis. The total for this initiative is **\$251,405**.
2. The Manitoulin Family Resources current food bank building is being converted to hub/counselling space and it requires renovation in order to offer community kitchen programming. The total for this initiative is **\$50,000**.

3. A partnership has been formed with the Manitoulin Family Resources agency to ensure that anyone who is homeless or is faced with COVID-19 has access to an Isolation Centre (motel/hotel room) with wrap around supports in order to adhere to Public Health Guidelines (i.e. Supporting social distancing). The total for this initiative is **\$100,000**.
4. The DSB is already supporting the Canadian Mental Health Association Sudbury/Manitoulin in the provision of a Housing Case Manager designated to ensure that vulnerable persons remain housed with wrap around services so that they are not faced with homelessness or evictions. We will be expanding this model to the Sudbury East and Sudbury North regions as we are seeing an increase in opioid crisis, paramedic calls and police calls. The total for this initiative is **\$225,000**.
5. The DSB have also partnered with Manitoulin Family Resources to provide transitional housing support to vulnerable persons with Mental Health & Addictions who wish to relocate into the community. They will be provided with wrap around services to ensure that they don't 'fall through the cracks', especially during the pandemic. The total for this initiative is **\$181,405**.
6. The DSB has also identified that more community paramedicine check-ins and transportation for medical appointments for vulnerable people, especially during the pandemic for persons who are homeless, who may not have a doctor or who live in areas where there are no clinics or doctors available. There is no public transportation in the district, hence the need to reach out to the most vulnerable. Referrals would come from local citizens, police, social workers, physicians, hospitals etc. The DSB would use some of this funding to ensure that this service is available to do community outreach to support vulnerable populations, especially those in self-isolation. The total for this initiative is **\$98,463**.
7. Lastly, the DSB will reach out to local libraries in each part of the quadrant (Manitoulin, LaCloche, Sudbury East and Sudbury North) to work with them in creating a location for a soundproof pod to allow the vulnerable population to have access to video conferencing for medical appointment or appointments with social services agencies (i.e. for access to food, housing, employment supports etc.). The pods and video equipment will be operated by the Library themselves. The total for this initiative is **\$100,000**.

Food Banks	\$ 251,405
Housing Case Managers / CMHA S/M & CMHA C/T	\$ 225,000
Transitional Housing Supports / MFR	\$ 181,405
Retrofit / MFR	\$ 50,000
Isolation Centres / MFR	\$ 100,000
Community Paramedicine Check-ins / Transportation	\$ 98,463
Libraries - Soundproof Pods for Vulnerable people	\$ 100,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,006,274</b>

The plan put forward may not be the final plan as we start talking to our community partners some plans may not work as described and may need to be changed.

Although we have chatted with Manitoulin Family Resources (MFR) and Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), it is important to note that some of these ideas are still in conditional as some agencies have not yet been approached.

Furthermore, in order to sustain some of the initiatives identified in this Investment Plan, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB will continue to explore ongoing partnerships and other funding through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) to keep these initiatives going for future years.

## **Conclusion**

Staff are recommending the Board approve the SSRF Phase 3 Investment Plan totaling \$1,006,274 as submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.