

OIFWP Q&A

Questions and Answers

How much funding is being invested?

The Ontario government is investing \$3.18M over three years to launch the Ontario Immediate Family Wellness Program (the “Family Wellness Program”), which will provide crucial mental health services to the families of Ontario public safety personnel (PSP) who are killed in the line of duty or have died by suicide.

Which family members of public safety personnel can access this program?

You are eligible to access the Family Wellness Program if you are an immediate family member (partner, parent, child, or sibling) to someone who was employed in fire (inclusive of The Office of the Fire Marshal, First Nations, composite, and municipal fire departments); a police service that is being operated by the province, a municipal police services board, or First Nations in Ontario; emergency health services (paramedics and ambulance communications officers (ACOs), including municipal paramedic services, First Nations paramedic services, and Ornge); or provincial adult correctional services.

How do eligible family members access the Ontario Immediate Family Wellness Program?

To access the wellness program, eligible family members can call the dedicated toll-free telephone line, visit the website, or contact the program coordinators by email.

- Phone: 1 866 643 9247
- URL: www.ONfamilywellness.ca
- Email: info@ONfamilywellness.ca

What services and supports will be available to family members?

The program will be a three-step care model:

- Wellness navigators to provide 24/7 crisis and care planning.
- Comprehensive services to provide families with a seamless experience, connecting them with the necessary supports whenever they are needed, and rapid access to counselling.
- Proactive individualized care that supports families no matter their mental health situation.

Eligible family members will be able to access services through the program at no charge beginning April 5th. The program will include a 24/7 telephone line to provide timely access to mental health services and care. Services include access to crisis support, counselling, and therapy services to help families cope with grief and bereavement.

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Can someone access their existing benefits and the Ontario Immediate Family Wellness Program at the same time?

Yes, family members of PSP can access both existing benefits and the Family Wellness Program.

Does someone need to exhaust their existing benefits under their loved one's employer before they can access the Ontario Immediate Family Wellness Program?

Family members of PSP do not need to exhaust their existing benefits before accessing this wellness program.

How does the Ontario Immediate Family Wellness Program differ from their existing benefits?

The Family Wellness Program aims to complement short-term victim services and immediate crisis supports by extending mental health services to identified family members of public safety personnel.

The wellness program will provide trauma-informed and culturally appropriate grief and bereavement counselling to ensure family members are being treated by services that understand the unique needs of PSP. Family members who are grieving a permanent loss require specific support from those that are trained in grief and have the skills, ability and knowledge required.

What are the eligibility timeframes for the Ontario Immediate Family Wellness Program?

Family members who have lost a loved one because of a death in the line of duty on or after January 1, 2020, or because of a death by suicide on or after January 1, 2023, may access the wellness program.

Is there a limit to the number of sessions that family members can access as part of the the Ontario Immediate Family Wellness Program?

The wellness program extends mental health services and supports to identified family members for up to two years.