

Social Assistance Network

Terms of Reference

September 2024

Purpose

The purpose of the Social Assistance Network (SAN) is to provide a forum with a strategic focus on building capacity, sharing information and best practises, and recommending program delivery and policy ideas.

Committee Composition and Membership Terms

- The Chair shall be appointed and approved by the Board of Directors.
- The Chair assumes the following responsibilities for the SAN:
 - Provides leadership in the operation and function of the Network.
 - Ensures the observation and adherence to the Terms of Reference that direct the affairs of the Network.
 - Chairs all meetings of the Network, calling special meetings as required.
 - Prepares the agenda, with the support of OMSSA staff.
 - Prepares reports to the Board of Directors, and Sector Leads Table as supported by OMSSA staff.
 - Liaises with the Sector Leads Group, other committees, task force and network chairs as required.
 - Performs other duties as required by the Network.
- Membership is targeted to mid-management and front-line staff but is open to all CMSM and DSSAB members. (As such members must seek appropriate approval to join the Network from their place of employment).
- Membership is also open to OMSSA approved non-member partners/agencies.
- The Executive Director is an Ex-Officio member.

OMSSA staff resources will be provided to support the administration and work of the SAN.

The Chair shall serve a term decided by the OMSSA Board of Directors but for a first of not less than 1 year and may be re-appointed at the discretion of the Board for a maximum of one additional term. Members may belong to the Network indefinitely.

Responsibilities/Deliverables

- The SAN provides a forum to share information and strengthen the capacity of Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) in delivering services, and could also include identifying emerging issues, trends and considerations and implications of these on Members.

- The SAN will work collaboratively with the Social Assistance Sector Leads and other committees to share program delivery and policy ideas and make recommendations for consideration.
- The SAN helps to identify professional development and training needs to help develop OMSSA education supports for the sector.
- Information, advice and recommendations will be shared with relevant OMSSA policy tables, networks and the Board of Directors as appropriate to ensure that initiatives are addressed from the perspective of integration among program areas; and to ensure that implementation strategies address both professional development needs as well as advocacy activities.
- Members have an opportunity to provide information to OMSSA staff on local considerations of the directions of the Board of Directors and Standing Committees with respect to local realities, capacities, and initiatives.

Network Member Roles and Responsibilities

- Meeting agendas are informed by OMSSA members' identification of issues for discussion.
- Members are expected to lend their expertise in carrying out the Network's activities, including identifying emerging issues and areas of interest to Network members, the Chair and OMSSA staff.
- Members are expected to identify emerging training needs to help develop OMSSA education supports. Members will also be asked to support the development of OMSSA education events such as conferences and forums.
- The Board reserves the right to request the network to provide / take on specific activities.

Operating Procedures

- Meetings may be convened at the request of the Chair, any member of the Board, the Executive Director, or a group of at least 5-members.
- At minimum, the Network will meet 3 times per year, or as needed.
- The SAN is not a decision-making body, but rather provides advice and recommendations for consideration by the Sector Leads and Board of Directors.
- Standing Agenda items include:
 - Welcome and Introductions
 - Terms of Reference
 - Best Practice Presentation
 - OMSSA/Sector Leads Update
 - Member Identified Sector discussion topics