

Will you introduce an Employment equity law for Ontario – with intentional implementation that delivers racial, gendered and other equity?

Andrea Horwath and the NDP are committed to employment equity. New Democrats have long fought for gender, racial, LGBTQIA2S and other equity laws, both inside and outside the Legislature. We support full access to the labour market for every Ontarian regardless of race, gender, sexuality, religion, ability, employment or immigration status, or geographic location. It is also important to mention that an NDP government will update and enforce the *Pay Equity Act*.

Will you support the \$15/hour minimum wage by Jan 1, 2019 and other changes that resulted from Bill 148?

Andrea Horwath was the first of the provincial party leaders to call for an increase to the minimum wage, and the first to call for a \$15 minimum wage – in April 2016. The Liberals resisted until recently, and Doug Ford's plan to stop the increase in the minimum wage will make minimum wage workers worse off – a lot worse off. These workers will lose over \$1,000 a year under a Conservative government.

Andrea Horwath and the NDP will raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour for everyone, including liquor servers and students, and index future increases to inflation.

We supported many of the reforms in Bill 148 – in fact, we put forward several other reforms to increase protections for workers, but unfortunately the Liberals and Conservatives voted against these amendments.

An NDP government will do better to protect and strengthen workers' rights. We will:

- Protect the right to join a union by making sure any workplace can unionize when 55% of workers sign a union card. We will also introduce first contract arbitration.
- Require employers to provide at least three weeks paid vacation to every full-time employee, and we will ensure that every worker has 5 paid sick days.
- Require regular updates of workplace safety rules and Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) rates and coverage. We will also expand coverage and definitions of occupational illnesses.
- Introduce Ontario Benefits, so that every worker will have workplace benefits for themselves, and their family. This includes people in part-time or casual jobs, as well as independent workers.

Will you support self-employment and entrepreneurship for newcomers, racialized peoples and other under-represented communities, including by funding initiatives such as technology oriented hubs? Will you increase base funding for immigrant settlement programs?

Andrea Horwath and the NDP believe the province thrives when we all do – and this means when immigrant and newcomer communities can set down roots, contribute, and enjoy the same stability and access that other Ontarians do.

Our Ontario Benefits program will benefit independent contractors and entrepreneurs – people who need an innovative new model for health benefits that works in the changing economy — where health benefits follow the person, not the job.

We will also expand Community Benefits programs, making them integral to all infrastructure projects. These agreements give experience to Ontario apprentices, while we will ensure that racialized, women and other underrepresented populations receive allocations of our skilled trades placements created under the Jobs and Prosperity Fund.

Andrea Horwath and the NDP will overhaul the province’s supports for small and medium-sized businesses, coordinating them with our economic cluster strategy. The tech sector will be an important part of this strategy.

Will you increase funding for English and French language training programs, especially for training delivered by community organizations in small, remote, rural and Northern Ontario communities?

We recognize the importance of increasing access to English and French language training programs, especially for training delivered by community organizations in small, remote, rural and Northern Ontario communities, and are committed to ensuring that it is properly funded.

Will you fund programs that support employment, including: Bridge Training, which allows internationally-trained immigrants to put their skills to use; accelerated medical equivalency for internationally trained physicians as well as additional residency seats; and more apprenticeship opportunities for immigrants who are significantly underrepresented in such programs?

New Democrats have been strong proponents of bridge programming, and we have repeatedly raised the issue of, and need for, recognizing international credentials/qualifications in the Legislature. In fact, our Immigration Critic, Teresa Armstrong (MPP London-Fanshawe) has specifically taken up the issue of recognizing credentials for internationally trained physicians and other healthcare professionals.

As mentioned, we are also committed to ensuring that Community Benefits Agreements provide experience to Ontario apprentices and that racialized, women, and other underrepresented populations receive allocations of our skilled trades placements under the Jobs and Prosperity Fund.

Will you invest in targeted employment education and training programs for immigrant and refugee women?

Andrea Horwath and the NDP will establish a fund within the Jobs and Prosperity Fund to create opportunities for mid-career education, offering training for people who are working and those who are between employment. We will also review provincial employment programs to ensure that they are inclusive and work in a modern economy. Ensuring that immigrant and refugee women receive these opportunities is important to New Democrats.

Will you support and fulfill Ontario's existing commitment of 5 per cent Francophone immigration?

An Ontario NDP government will mandate the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration to work closely with the Minister of Francophone Affairs to ensure we build our economy by meeting the target of 5% francophone immigration.

How will you foster the building of strong Francophone immigrant communities in Ontario?

As discussed above, we believe it is important that talented, skilled Francophones see Ontario as an attractive place to live. This will be achieved in close collaboration with the Federal government. We will not only set a target, but a plan to get there -- with deliverables and measurable targets. We expect to achieve a 5% target in our first mandate.

How will you support French language newcomer services?

The first priority of the Minister of Francophone affairs will be to start a broad consultation to update the *French Languages Services Act* and ensure that Franco-Ontarians can access government services, including newcomer services, in French no matter where they live.

Will you support free postsecondary education for low and middle income students?

For many young people, the high cost of tuition has put post-secondary education out of reach. Students are also graduating with huge amounts of debt. Under an NDP government, every student who qualifies for the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) will get a non-repayable grant instead of a loan, and graduate free of debt to the province. New Democrats will retroactively forgive all interest for everyone carrying provincial loan debts or currently holding a student loan.

Will you establish an Equity in Education Grant as part of a thorough overhaul of the Education Funding Formula?

The NDP's commitment to overhauling the funding formula begins with a comprehensive review that is based on two key principles: equity and quality. We will work with parents, front-line educators, students, and educational experts to determine how best to change the funding formula, including allocating monies to promote equity in education, to allow us to curb class sizes and support our most vulnerable students and their teachers.

Will you implement an Access Without Fear policy so that people with precarious immigration status can access police and other provincial supports without fear of immigration reprisals?

Andrea Horwath and the NDP will declare Ontario to be a sanctuary province. Cities across Ontario have declared themselves to be sanctuary cities, where people can access basic services without fear, regardless of their immigration status. This is the decent, humane thing to do. We will implement Access Without Fear policies for police, health, and social services to ensure that all Ontarians get the support they need regardless of immigration status. For instance, we will never withhold basic life-saving services from undocumented people. We will ensure that anyone can visit an Emergency Room without penalty.

Will you invest in violence against women programs targeted for refugee, immigrant women and women with precarious immigration status?

Providing greater access to programs and services to combat violence against women is a priority for New Democrats. We recognize that refugee, immigrant women and women with precarious immigration status are disproportionately affected, experiencing heightened barriers to access these much-needed services. The Domestic Violence Death Review Committee (DVDRC) reviews have identified inconsistencies in resources, services and responses that are community-focused, and we have committed to implement the recommendations of the DVDRC. An NDP government will provide 10 days paid leave for women escaping violence.

Will you invest in women-focused programs in community organizations for women refugees, immigrants, migrant workers and women with precarious immigration status?

We believe that community organizations, particularly those that apply an intersectional lens, play a vital role in building and supporting our communities and our families. It is important that they are properly funded so they can continue their important work.

Will you introduce a racial equity lens in the Ontario poverty reduction strategy – which would make it consistent with Ontario’s Poverty Reduction Act?

An NDP government will apply an intersectional equity lens on how issues like gender and race can interact to dramatically change the way people’s lives are impacted to government budgeting, policy and programming – including poverty reduction.

The last twenty years have seen poverty in the province become more entrenched. Both Conservative and Liberal governments froze or cut social assistance programs, child care, affordable housing, and the services that help people get out of poverty and get into the middle class.

Andrea Horwath and the NDP supported the provincial Income Security Roadmap for Change report, and we’ll demonstrate that support by establishing a new, flat rate structure that is simple and fair. Based on the advice of the working group, people receiving Ontario Works will receive increases of 10%, 7% and 5%, while people receiving support from the Ontario Disability Support Program will see annual increases of 5%. Future increases will be set in consultation with an independent panel.

Will you support Community Benefits Agreements?

Yes, we support and will expand Community Benefits programs and we will make them a requirement of any future infrastructure project. As discussed, these agreements give experience to Ontario apprentices, while we will ensure that racialized, women and other underrepresented populations receive allocations of our skilled trades placements created under the Jobs and Prosperity Fund.

Will you support affordable housing subsidies for all newcomers, including those with precarious immigration status?

The Ontario NDP recognizes housing as a human right. We will sign onto the federal National Housing Strategy and restore the government's necessary role in funding affordable housing. We will make the necessary investments in affordable housing to build 65,000 new affordable housing units over 10 years, working with partners such as the federal government and the not-for-profit and co-op housing sectors. An Ontario NDP government will also build 30,000 new supportive housing units over the next 10 years, starting by spending \$1.4 billion to build 12,000 supportive housing units within its first mandate.

As mentioned, New Democrats are committed to an Access Without Fear policy and committed to implement this across government services.

What is your position on the current Guaranteed Basic Income pilots?

We will continue the Basic Income pilot and evaluate its outcomes. New Democrats endorse the call to develop a minimum income standard over the next decade.

What will you do to address the escalation of racial and hate attacks in Ontario?

New Democrats continue to actively stand against fascism, racism, bigotry, misogyny, and xenophobia in all its forms. As government, we will act with urgency to develop collaborative approaches that address hate and neutralize the impacts white supremacists and racists have on our communities.

How will you address systemic racism – for example in employment, housing, education and access to services?

We will work collaboratively to identify and remove systemic and structural bias, and work to promote equity and inclusion, particularly in the areas of health, education, children services, and policing. We will work through our education and justice systems to recognize and stop anti-Black racism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, anti-Indigenous racism and all other forms of systemic racism.

How will you support and continue to strengthen the Anti-Racism Directorate, the Black Youth Action Plan and the Anti-Racism Strategic Plan, including the collection of disaggregated data to measure investment and outcomes for racialized Ontarians?

New Democrats called on the Liberals to create an Anti-Racism Secretariat, modelled after an agency begun by the provincial NDP government, later dismantled by the Conservatives. We are committed to the Ontario Anti-Racism Directorate and will make sure it has staff it needs to do its job. In addition, we will mandate the Directorate to administer a new four-year \$20 million Ontario Anti-Racism Fund that community groups combatting racism and intolerance will be able to access.

We will also ensure that police service personnel receive up-to-date anti-racism, anti-bias training.

New Democrats recognize that incarceration rates, lesser school outcomes, and access to jobs, for instance, disproportionately impact Black, First Nations, and other racialized populations. We are also committed to ensuring that all government policies, programs and services are viewed through an intersectional equity lens.

Will you abolish all arbitrary street checks, require the issuing of receipts (that allow for ethno-racial and other relevant self-identification) for all police contact and engagement with members of civil society, and purge historical databases of information collected through “carding”?

Carding is harmful to racialized Ontarians, particularly in the Black and Indigenous communities. Kathleen Wynne’s excuses are unacceptable. Andrea Horwath and the NDP will immediately ban the discriminatory practice of carding. We also believe that information obtained through damaging or possibly unconstitutional street checks (i.e., carding) should not be used and should therefore be deleted.

Will you implement the Independent Police Oversight Review (2017) recommendations to strengthen police oversight, while addressing the limitations of Justice Tulloch’s recommendations?

New Democrats favour strong and transparent police oversight. We believe that people deserve to feel safe in their communities – free from fear, with a justice system that gives us confidence.

We supported the work of the Tulloch review into police oversight, while we acknowledge the limits of the recommendations – limitations that have made their way into the Liberals policies.

Andrea Horwath and the NDP will work collaboratively to identify and remove systemic and structural bias, and work to promote equity and inclusion, including in the area of policing. We will continue our support for police training on human rights and systemic racism, and ensure police receive regular, up-to-the minute training on changes to the law (and how our courts interpret it) in those areas.

Will you develop a comprehensive policy that will ensure access to OHIP for all residents, regardless of immigration status, including ending the three-month wait for OHIP?

Health care is a human right. But many people who live in Ontario face barriers to care, including a lack of access to provincial health insurance due to their immigration status. The cost of accessing uninsured health services means that people in pain cannot get the urgent care they need. They also face fear and discrimination that makes it even harder to seek the services that they need. As people delay care, their conditions can worsen, putting their lives at risk.

Community Health Centres and volunteer-based clinics for the uninsured do the very best they can to navigate a system that excludes too many people from accessing urgent health care. New Democrats strongly support the efforts of these volunteers and health care professionals to save lives — and to fill the gaps in a system that leaves too many people without the health care they need. In a province that welcomes people from every corner of the world, we need to make sure that no one is denied access to urgent health care — no matter who they are or where they're from.

An NDP government will ensure that everyone who lives in Ontario can visit an emergency room for health care needs — without having to pay for it. Following the example of the European Union, we will ensure every resident has emergency room access and care regardless of their immigration or insurance status. We will also work with advocates to look at additional steps to improve access to care, no matter who you are.

Will you invest in equitable access to healthcare for refugees and newcomers including culturally appropriate trauma care, mental health and addiction services and interpretation services?

As discussed, Andrea Horwath and the NDP will declare Ontario to be a sanctuary province. This means that individuals, regardless of immigration status, will be able to access health services without fear. In reaction to our commitment, *OHIP for All* stated that our policy “would address a major gap in healthcare access for an estimated 500,000 individuals across Ontario and bring the province closer to true universal healthcare.”

What is your plan to provide comprehensive oral health care for all residents?

Andrea Horwath and the NDP will introduce dental care for everyone. With the NDP's Dental Care for Everyone plan, every Ontarian will be able to access dental benefits – either through work or with their health card.

An NDP Government will ensure all working people have health benefits, starting with dental coverage. In addition to ensuring every worker has access to Ontario Benefits, every senior without retiree benefits and every Ontarian receiving social assistance will have access to high-quality, sustainable public dental care. By the end of Andrea Horwath's first term, every Ontarian will be able to see a dentist regardless of age, income or where they live.

To expand access to services at Community Health Centres, Aboriginal Health Access Centres, and local public health units we will make targeted capital investments of at least \$25 million to build and expand dental suites and purchase and operate mobile dental buses, especially in rural, remote, and Northern communities.