


# MAKING PROGRESS ON WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

We envision a province where all women and girls are empowered with every opportunity to succeed.

Ontario has made important progress toward equality, however many women continue to face barriers. The government has taken action in key areas to make sure that more women and girls find opportunity in whatever path they choose. For example we have:

- ✓ Created Ontario's first-ever standalone Ministry of the Status of Women, to promote gender equity and address gender-based violence across the province.
- ✓ Helped over 2,600 low-income women learn new skills, change careers and secure better paying jobs through our Women in Skilled Trades and Information Technology Training program.
- ✓ Helped over 1,700 low-income women gain entrepreneurship and financial literacy training to start and grow their own businesses through our micro-lending program.
- ✓ Supported education activities that introduce girls to non-traditional skilled trades like welding, carpentry, machining and automotive service.
- ✓ Increased the monthly income of almost 19,000 families, most of which are single-parent households, by fully exempting child support payments from social assistance benefit calculations.
- ✓ Set targets to ensure women make up at least 40 per cent of all appointments to every provincial board and agency by 2019.
- ✓ Helped social enterprises access financing to grow and meet the needs of diverse communities, such as women, youth, Indigenous peoples and those living in poverty.
- ✓ Launched a pilot project to assess whether a basic income can better support vulnerable workers and improve health and education outcomes for people on low incomes.

[Ontario.ca/EmpowerWomen](https://Ontario.ca/EmpowerWomen)

- 
- ✓ Provided wage enhancements for early childhood educators and other child care workers — roles which are primarily filled by women.
  - ✓ Created an action plan to stop sexual violence and harassment, which included our award-winning #WhoWillYouHelp and #ItsNeverOkay campaigns.
  - ✓ Transformed the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) so that free tuition is available to more than 210,000 low and middle-income college and university students for 2017–18 – one-third of all postsecondary students in Ontario.

We have also committed to:

- Helping 100,000 more children aged 0-4 access high-quality child care over the next five years.
- Using gender-based analysis to inform the development of policies and programs. This gender lens will help assess and correct unintended negative impacts on women and girls.
- Encouraging businesses to adopt the target of having at least 30 per cent of their boards of directors appointees be women within three to five years.
- Developing a comprehensive strategy to close the gap in wages between men and women and strengthen the economy by eliminating barriers that prevent women's full participation in Ontario's workforce.
- Raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour and introducing new scheduling rules on January 1st, 2019; ensuring part-time workers are paid the same hourly wage as full-time workers; expanding personal emergency leave to include an across-the-board minimum of at least two paid days per year for all workers; and stepping up enforcement of employment laws, all pending passage of legislation.

**These steps, together with the important support of businesses, community organizations and individuals, are helping to empower women and girls in Ontario.**