

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

VALUE STATEMENT

I expect that in my time of financial need, I will be treated fairly, with respect, and I will receive the benefits and additional supports I am eligible for in a timely manner.

Social Assistance

What is this Service?

Municipalities provide mandated employment and financial assistance to eligible residents under the provincial Ontario Works (OW) program.

Basic financial assistance helps with the cost of food and shelter, drugs and other exceptional needs. Employment assistance helps participants in obtaining skills that support progress toward sustainable employment and includes assisted job search, volunteering, job-specific skills training, self-employment activity and employment placement. The province assists with the cost of client benefits and program administration.

Objectives May Include:

- Basic needs for food and shelter
- Employment and training-related supports
- Health-related supports (e.g., basic dental, prescription medication, vision care)

Influencing Factors:

1. **Client Profile:** The nature of a caseload includes transient clients, those clients moving on and off the caseload from precarious work situations, as well as clients who are receiving assistance for extended periods of time. Caseload turnover significantly impacts administrative support provided to meet program demand.
2. **Demographics:** Populations with limited or no English language skills, and the case mix and size of families vs. individuals, all impact service needs and cost.
3. **Economic Conditions:** Economic conditions impact all measures. The cost of living, between municipalities, will affect a number of measures.
4. **Employability:** Clients with one or more barriers to employment including mental health issues/challenges, substance abuse issues, victims of violence, lack of education and skills, little or no work experience and/or no Canadian work experience. Systemic barriers also impact some individual's ability to find and sustain employment (e.g., pardons, affordable transportation).
5. **Organizational Form:** Staff caseloads and the degree of support provided that differ between municipalities. Functions of direct client services may be contracted out in some municipalities.
6. **Urban Form:** Office location, the availability of public transit, and the method of accessibility i.e. the availability of an intake screening unit (ISU) or a telephone application centre.

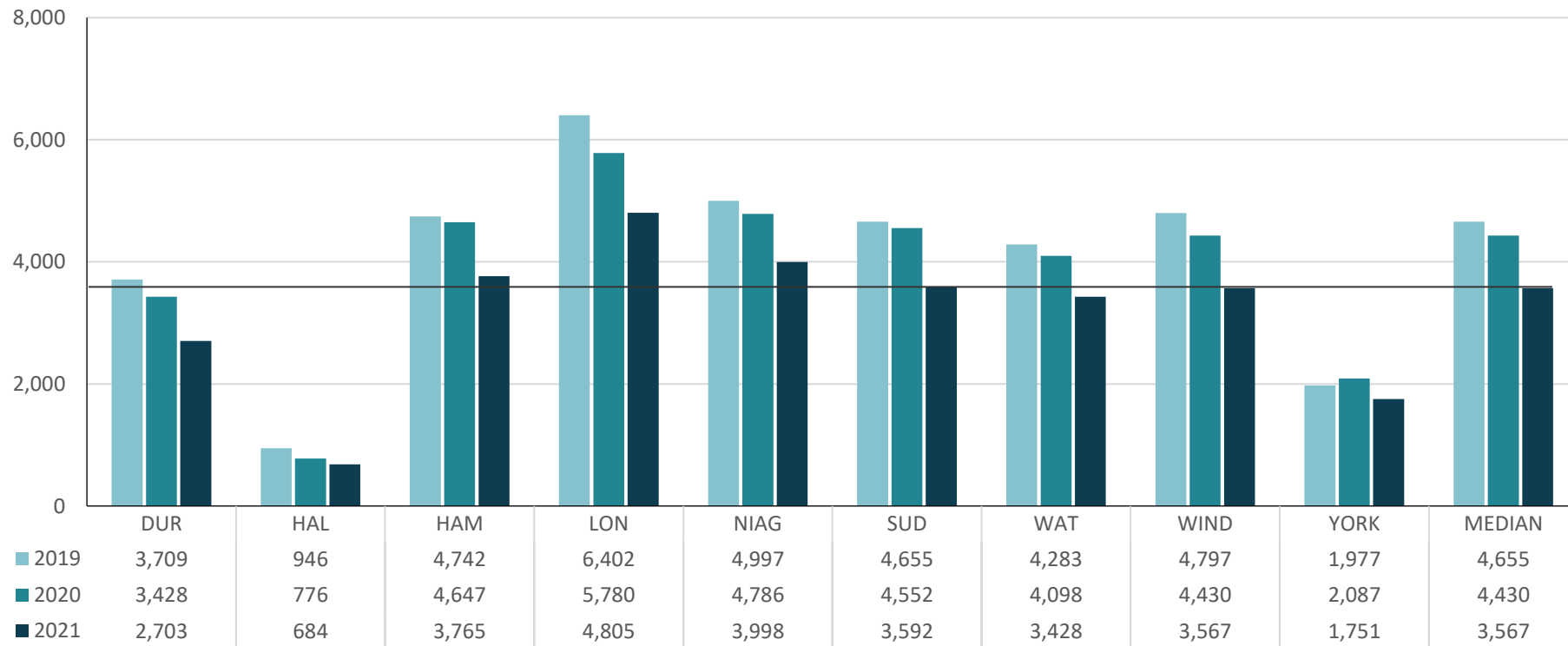
Extenuating Circumstances:

- **COVID-19 Pandemic:** Due to continued pandemic restrictions, services continued to be delivered virtually in 2021 and federal benefits impacted caseloads.

Social Assistance

SSIM206 - Monthly Social Assistance Case Load per 100,000 Households

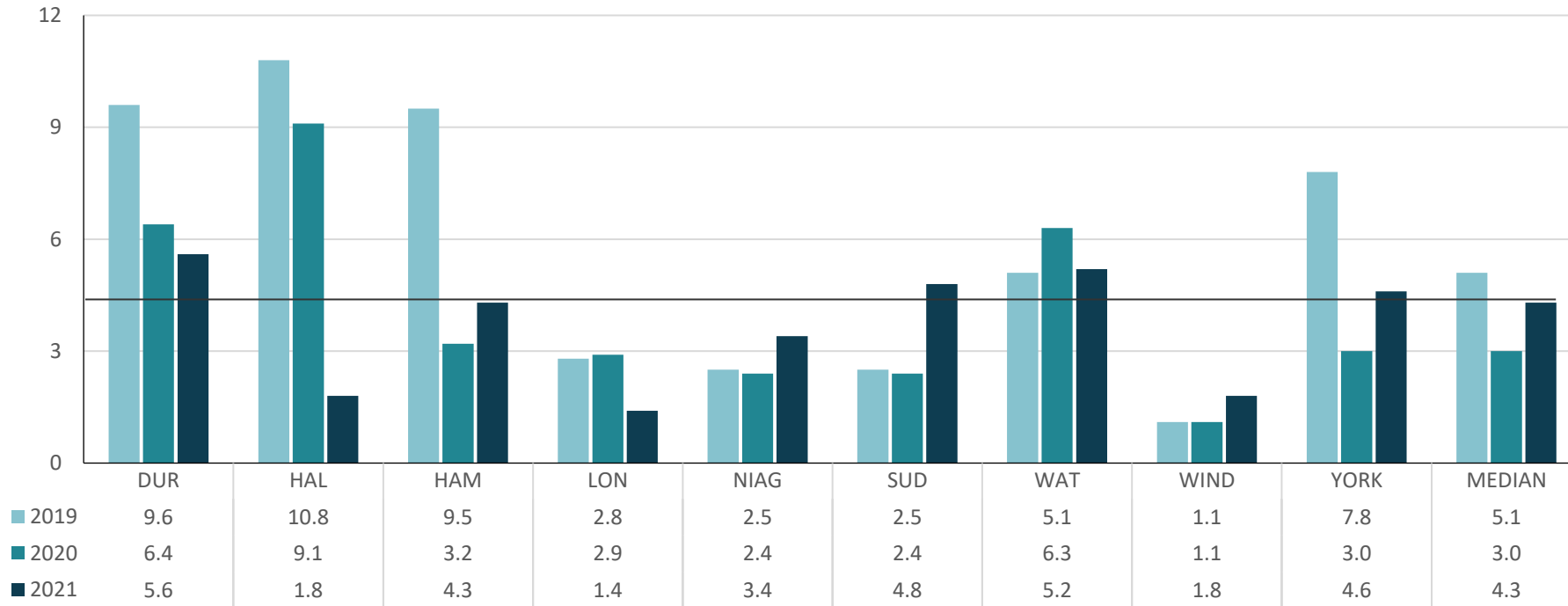
This measure provides a metric that allows for accurate comparison of the number of Ontario Works cases in each community, as well as indicating whether Ontario Works usage is increasing or decreasing in a community. NOTE: Member municipalities saw a decrease in 2021 caseloads attributed to available federal pandemic relief benefits.



Social Assistance

SSIM405 - Social Assistance Response Time to Client Eligibility (Days)

This measure provides an indicator of service and accessibility for Ontario Works programs by providing the average number of business days from the day that the application was submitted to the day the application was processed (i.e. approved or denied). NOTE: Provincial Centralized Intake Prototype caused fluctuations in the results of this measure across member municipalities depending on when they were onboarded. City of London and Waterloo Region have not been onboarded as of August 2022.



Hamilton: Increase in numbers for September and October 2019 due to the outdated pending application clean up activity. The decrease in response time in 2020 is a result of the implementation of a risk-based application process in response to the pandemic to support a remote working model as well as participation in the provincial centralized intake prototype in the latter part of 2020.