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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP HELPS HAMILTON'S NEWCOMERS AND DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Settlement And Integration Services Organization To Provide Multilingual Help

HAMILTON — Newcomers and those in diverse communities in Hamilton have a new resource so they can better understand their workplace rights and responsibilities in multiple languages, Labour Minister Steve Peters announced today.

“We are on the side of newcomers and diverse communities that want the opportunity to succeed,” said Peters. “People who are new to Ontario or are not fluent in French or English may not be as familiar with our laws and regulations. They need to know their rights and have them protected.”

Counsellors and staff of Hamilton’s SISO (Settlement and Immigration Services Organization) were recently trained by the Ministry of Labour to explain workers’ rights in more than 40 languages. Training included a better understanding of the Employment Standards Act, 2000 (ESA).

SISO provides a wide range of information, training and support services to members of immigrant communities in over 40 languages. Services range from settlement, language assessments and cultural interpretation, to job search preparation and outreach to employers, together with community support to create conditions for meaningful integration of newcomers.

“SISO is committed to continuously enhancing the quality of programs and services that facilitate meaningful integration of immigrants. Our relationship with the Ministry of Labour is an important step toward our goal,” said SISO Executive Director, Morteza Jafarpour. “The training provided by the Ministry allows SISO staff to provide quality assistance to immigrants, employers and to our community.”

“The McGuinty Government is on the side of workers and newcomers,” said Judy Marsales MPP for Hamilton West. “We’re proud to be working with SISO and the great work it does with Hamilton’s diverse communities.”

The training initiative is part of a larger, ongoing government campaign to provide information for workers and employers that also includes:

1. Workplace Gateway – a website that provides easy to access information for both employers and workers

2. Seeking partnerships with more groups who can help spread employment standards information
3. Four easy-to-understand brochures about workplace rights in 23 languages.

"The government is creating fair workplaces and strong communities through outreach and enforcement," said Peters. "We want every Ontarian to be able to reach their full potential."

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