

Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP)

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What is Working Well - Agencies

- For agency staff familiar with the Assisted Automatic Income Verification (AAIV) application is easy to use and instructions are clear.
- Agency staff are promoting Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP) to their clients when they come for other services.

What is Working Well - Agencies

- Posters placed in OESP intake agencies and other locations (i.e. social service organizations, senior centres, etc.) is a great way to promote the program.
- Direct line for agency staff to the call centre.
- When the AAIV application is done correctly the process is quick and easy.

What is Working Well - Customers

- Inserts in the electricity bill promoting the program to customers.
- Customers without a computer or a printer can receive assistance from agencies.
- Customers who do not speak English can receive assistance from agencies.

What is Working Well - Customers

- For customers hesitant to have their personal information entered on a computer the Manual Income Verification (MIV) application is used.
- When income has dropped, customers can still qualify by completing a MIV application.
- Promotion of OESP on buses and subways.

What is Working Well - Customers

- For clients unable to come to an agency, sending the paperwork out in the mail.
- OESP is a stepping stone for customers to access other programs.
- Customers who have started receiving the OESP credit have indicated that it has made a difference in their life.

Suggestions for Improvements

- More promotion of OESP.

Recommendation: more publicity in various languages on radio and tv.

Advertising in shelters for those moving out.

Advertising in apartment buildings.

Suggestions for Improvements

- Customers who receive their hydro bill online and expressed that they did not know about OESP

Recommendation: better promotion of OESP to online customers.

Suggestions for Improvements

- With the Automatic Income Verification (AIV) on the first page “Do I qualify?” Customers are putting a comma in the total annual household income and then receive a message that they may not be eligible.

Recommendation: put a note to leave the comma out when entering the income.

Suggestions for Improvements

- With the Automatic Income Verification (AIV) customers do not realize that the applicant's name needs to be the same as shown on their most recent tax filing.

Recommendation: put the note about this above the box where the person fills in their name.

Suggestions for Improvements

- People do not realize that applicant's name and service address needs to be exactly as it appears on their billing statement.

Recommendation: on the instruction note instruct applicants to include capital letters, punctuation, etc.

Suggestions for Improvements

- Applicants do not understand the difference between the service address and their mailing address .

Recommendation: more clarity and direction required.

Suggestions for Improvements

- Once the AAIV, AIV or MIV is completed, customers receive a form letter instructing them if they have not already done so please submit your consent form. This causes confusion for customers.

Recommendation: reword the letter that is sent out.

Suggestions for Improvements

- When a child in the household turns 18 without filing a return. AIV application cannot be completed.

Recommendation: make the age range 18 – 74 more prominent.

Suggestions for Improvements

- Applicants are finding it difficult to get through to a service representative.
- When customers are leaving messages, calls are not being returned.
- Long waiting time on the phone when a customer has gotten through. Some customers lose patience and hang up.

Suggestions for Improvements

- Depending on who an applicant speaks to, some service representatives are very helpful others will refer the client to an agency.
- When English is not their first language, some customers cannot understand the service representative.

Suggestions for Improvements

- Applicants are receiving different messages from different service representatives on how to deal with issues.

Other Issues

- Applicants arriving at the agency without making an appointment. Agencies will try to accommodate if staffing is available.
- Applicants coming to the agency to make corrections after receiving a letter. However the letter does not indicate what the problem is and staff have to go through the whole application to find the errors.

Other Issues

- Customer confusion with OESP and LEAP and how the system works.