

## Proud Vote Questionnaire

### Policy Questions

1. *What do you believe are the main concerns of gender and sexually diverse people in Ontario? What specific actions will take to improve the lives and wellbeing of gender and sexually diverse communities?*

Throughout our province, the members of the Green Party of Ontario are both strong and vocal allies of the LGBTQ2 community, and/or members of the LGBTQ2 community themselves. The **GPO advocates for and works to advance the rights of LGBTQ2 individuals and groups**. Sadly, we are acutely aware that much work still needs to be done in both Ontario and nationally to **address ongoing, systemic prejudice and to prevent injustice**.

As outlined in the detailed answers to the questions below, we will work tirelessly to **ensure equality in all aspects of life, to dignified and timely access to healthcare services and safe housing, and for freedom from violence and all forms of discrimination**. Furthermore, the Green Party of Ontario will implement a **Basic Income Guarantee** for all Ontarians, which is an effective way to **eliminate poverty** and ensure we may all share the means to **live in dignity and with economic security**.

2. *Many gender and sexually diverse youth haven't seen themselves reflected in the curriculum. Where do you stand on the current elementary and secondary health and physical curriculum, and how will you ensure that youth get the information they need?*

#### The Green Party of Ontario will:

- **Ensure equitable educational access**, experiences, and opportunities for all students, and **equity in staff** employment, transfer, and promotion.
- Provide **greater access to mental health services for students** within the education system by increasing the availability of school counselors, psychologists, behavioral scientists and social workers.
- **Improve the level of integration of social services within education**, including embedding mental health services into education and greater collaboration across ministries.
- Fund community developed educational programs to **address achievement gaps in school boards** across Ontario. Included in these programs would be the requirement for programs with an **intersectional lens addressing racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and other oppressions**.
- Support and enable students, families, teachers and communities to **play a role in building a culture of equity** at school.
- Enshrine **the right of students to create a well-being club** or committee in their school.
- **Help deliver front-line children's services** by increasing funding for specifically trained school counsellors, specialist teachers, psychologists, behavioural counsellors, social workers, librarians, and educational assistants so that **students have access to respectful and barrier free education and inclusive curriculum programming**.
- Provide **supports for racialized groups, LGBTQ2 and those with disabilities** in colleges and universities.

3. *Trans and gender diverse people lack quality, accessible healthcare in Ontario. In what ways do you think the Government can better support access to medical services and specialists for trans patients in the province? In what ways will you bolster access to trans-inclusive healthcare?*

**The Green Party of Ontario will:**

- Mandate training for primary **health care practitioners on the health care needs of trans and gender-diverse people.**
- Increase access to **gender and culturally-sensitive mental health services and supports** that are timely, effective and flexible, and provided in a safe and comfortable environment.
- Hold the **government accountable to deliver** Universal Pharmacare to all Ontarians, which must include transitional medications and HIV/AIDS preventative therapies, such as PrEP.
- **Increase funding for mental health and addictions support for children and youth** to reduce wait times and scale up specialized mental health and addictions services.
- Ensure **timely and reliable** access to transition medications, fully covered by Pharmacare.
- **Reduce overcrowding in hospitals** with a system wide strategy to better use existing resources in home care, long-term care, nurse-led clinics, primary care and community care.
- **Develop a health care capacity plan** to reopen hospital beds, operating rooms and services based on the population's need for care.
- **Create an integrated funding structure** for health care, based on quality outcomes that will ensure that the best care is provided by the most appropriate and cost effective provider.
- **Expand the number of and access to Nurse Practitioner led clinics** in all parts of the province.
- **Increase the number of Nurse Practitioners** in long-term care, mental health care and acute care facilities to improve patient care and outcomes.

4. *The gender and sexually diverse community are disproportionately affected by mental health and addictions due to various social and economic factors. What steps will you take to improve the overall mental health and wellness of our community?*

**The Green Party of Ontario will:**

- Provide **greater access to mental health services for students** within the education system by increasing the availability of school counselors, psychologists, behavioral scientists and social workers.
- Deliver **OHIP+ for mental health support**, which ensures full access to publicly funded medical and professional therapists such as psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers to all Ontarians.
- **Increase investments in mental health and addictions services** so that patients can obtain the right kind of treatment to support recovery.
- **Increase funding for mental health and addictions support for children and youth** to reduce wait times and scale up specialized mental health and addictions services.

- **Increase funding for applied mental health and addictions research** and evaluation of treatment outcomes.
  - **Remove HST charges** from accredited private mental health service providers.
  - Provide dedicated funding for education and training for health professionals, including physicians and psychotherapists, **to expand their scope of practice to include the identification, diagnosis and treatment of a wider variety of mental health and addictions issues.**
  - **Create an umbrella organization - Mental Health and Addictions Ontario** – to consolidate all mental-health and addictions programs in Ontario and drive a future provincial mental health and addictions strategy.
  - Create more **24/7 mobile crisis intervention teams.**
  - Expand and do more to **publicize Telehealth Ontario’s ability to respond to callers with mental health and addictions issues.**
  - Reform privacy laws to **balance a person’s right to privacy with their right to be well.**
  - **Improve the legislation on involuntary treatment** to include criteria besides physical harm, and ensure that involuntary admission includes treatment.
  - Develop more clinical standards and health impact assessments to **cover a wider array of mental health and addictions issues**, working with Health Quality Ontario (HQP), including the Ontario Health Technology Advisory Committee (OHTAC).
  - **Empower Nurse Practitioners as primary health care providers especially** in areas that lack primary care options.
  - Increase funding for **telemedicine, including telepsychiatry**, and full-scale Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams in rural areas.
  - Establish a **full list of core services**, including specialized health services, that ensure their availability within every Local Health Integration Network (LHIN).
  - Support **special public transit services** for rural residents to access health care.
5. *Gender and sexually diverse people are less likely to be hired or secure stable employment, and experience wage disparity in comparison to their cisgender (non-trans) and heterosexual peers. What initiatives do you believe the Government can develop or support in order to reduce the rate of unemployment and underemployment in the gender and sexually diverse community?*

**In addition** to implementing all of the Green Party of Ontario’s employment initiatives, such as **fostering education for life, addressing economic inequity, unleashing the power of local businesses to create jobs, and/or building and supporting a strong green workforce**, which will benefit all Ontarians, including all members of the LGBTQ2 community, **the Green Party of Ontario will:**

- **Empower the Ontario Human Rights Commission** to conduct compliance reviews of public institutions and organizations to ensure policies and procedures are in place that comply with

OHRC requirements and to ensure supportive workplace environments that achieve OHRC objectives.

- Support people in transition through the **implementation of the Basic Income Guarantee**, to help people adjust to a fast changing work environment by upgrading their knowledge, and supporting skills development and lifelong learning.
- **Immediately increase Ontario Disability Support Payment and Ontario Works payments** toward rates that match the low income measure to address the inadequacy of current social programs.
- **Extend health benefits** (e.g. Assistive Devices Program, Medical Transportation) to cover low income Ontarians outside of the social assistance system. We also support moving towards universal dental care and pharmacare.
- **Increase asset limits for Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Payment recipients**, with the amount to be indexed to inflation.
- **Modernize the eligibility requirements for Ontario Works** to further empower recipients to find and maintain meaningful work. End the claw back of employment earnings that create a disincentive to work.
- **Ensure that social assistance programs are responsive to the needs of people with mental health and addictions-related disabilities** through ensuring eligibility criteria recognizes their illness and that payments are not interrupted during times of transition (e.g. hospitalization, incarceration).
- **Support the Ontario Indigenous Children and Youth Strategy**, whose aim is to enable First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities to have a holistic, culturally-based and community-driven approach to children and youth services. Ensure that Indigenous control is embedded as a core principle.
- **Increase the personal income tax exemption** for low income individuals.
- **Increase the existing Ontario Child Benefit** to help families who live in poverty.

6. *What will you do to help end the one-year MSM (“men who have sex with men”) blood ban?*

While this is a **federal** jurisdictional issue, the **Green Party of Ontario will nonetheless continue to advocate for, and actively support our federal counterparts and members of any other parties who will act to end the blood ban**, a homophobic policy which ignores the science regarding the blood ban practice. On that note, it is **notable** that among many other election promises broken by the **Trudeau Liberals**, and despite being elected with a **majority government**, their **promise to end the blood ban remains unfulfilled**.

7. *What will you do to help end the criminalization of people living with HIV/AIDS in Ontario?*

The Green Party of Ontario understands that **persons living with HIV do not transmit the virus sexually if they maintain an undetectable viral load**. As with the previous **federal** jurisdictional issue, the **Green Party of Ontario will advocate for, and actively support our federal counterparts and**

**members of any other parties who will act to end the criminalization** of persons living with HIV/AIDS in Ontario and the rest of Canada.

8. *The principles of Truth and Reconciliation are important to addressing the impact of colonialism on Two-Spirit/gender and sexually diverse Indigenous peoples. What does your plan for Truth and Reconciliation look like? Will you fully implement the 94 Calls to Action, and how will you address the impacts of colonialism?*

**The Green Party of Ontario will:**

- **Support the rights of First Nations, Métis, Inuit and urban Indigenous communities** to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources.
- Commit to finding solutions for **sharing resource revenue, including secondary and tertiary resource revenue**, with First Nations.
- **Provide funding to First Nations to build capacity** and support meaningful engagement with government decision making processes.
- **Monitor and provide reports on any current data requested by the National Council for Reconciliation** (e.g. data related to gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities in key health and economic indicators), so that it can report on the progress towards reconciliation.
- Collaborate with First Nations and the federal government to **renew and reinvigorate the treaty process**.
- Work collaboratively with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to **identify and collect copies of all records relevant to the history and legacy of the Residential School system**, and to provide these to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.
- **Support First Nations repatriation efforts and protection of sacred sites** and practices, so that when archaeologically significant items are discovered, interested parties such as First Nations and archeologists can stop development until consent is granted.
- Make immediate investments in **affordable urban Indigenous housing**, at the same time as the development of an Indigenous Housing Strategy that is outcomes-based and as a result, responsive to communities' needs.
- Increase the number of **Indigenous health care and education professionals**, and support their retention within Indigenous communities.
- **Support increases to Indigenous Student Bursary funding** to keep pace with rising Indigenous population and enrolment, and **remove citizenship and eligibility requirements** that create barriers based on arbitrary geographical boundaries.
- **Support the Ontario Indigenous Children and Youth Strategy**, whose aim is to enable First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities to have a holistic, culturally-based and community-driven approach to children and youth services. Ensure that Indigenous control is embedded as a core principle.

- Include specific engagement and implementation plans that address **the unique needs of Indigenous people in child and family services**, such as Ontario's Early Years and Child Care Framework.
- **Establish cultural competency training requirements on Indigenous issues** for public-facing professionals (including doctors, dentists, teachers, nurses, corrections officers, and child and social welfare workers). This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism; and a course in the history and legacy of Residential Schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, and Indigenous teachings and practices.
- Work with Political Territorial Organizations, Tribal Councils, and individual communities to flow funds to reserves and to Local Health Integration Networks to **increase availability of health services, including mental health and addictions, for on-reserve and urban Indigenous populations**.
- **Provide professional learning on equity, anti-racism, and Indigenous issues**, including the history of Residential Schools, Treaties, and Indigenous peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada.
- **Require school boards to collect race-based data**, which will enhance the incorporation of race equity elements during the development of all education programs.
- **Recognize First Nations as equals in land management** and establish a co-management stewardship model with Indigenous People for the development of provincial resources. This could include a review of regional resource management structures in cooperation with the First Nations Leadership Council to incorporate First Nations effectively into decision making; and funding to train First Nations people in resource management trades and professions.
- Address issues in southwestern Ontario's chemical valley by investing in **stronger monitoring and enforcement of air quality**. Work with the people of Aamjiwnaang to identify ways of improving transparency and trust between the government and the community, including ensuring the community has access to real-time air monitoring information.
- Provide technical expertise and training to **local operators of water treatment facilities** to ensure safe drinking water in Indigenous communities.
- Work with Indigenous communities and the federal government to create water treatment systems that will **end long-term boil water advisories**.
- Respect the rights of Grassy Narrows and White Dog First Nations on the English Wabigoon River system to **practice traditional food harvesting in their traditional territories**, in a clean ecosystem free from mercury contamination.
- Pursue the commitments made by the Province of Ontario to those First Nations to **clean up the industrial site and the river system** that was contaminated by mercury, and ensure that Ontario addresses its liability for causing this contamination. This includes immediately building a mercury health centre.

- **Oppose the reverse flow of Line 9** which runs under populated urban areas, as well as across Indigenous territories, every major river in Southern Ontario, and under prime farmland and sensitive ecosystems.
  - **Increase funding for daycares** on First Nations which too often fall into disrepair.
  - Work with First Nations and the federal government to ensure proper resources are available and allocated to **long-term care beds for First Nations**.
  - Continue efforts to ensure all First Nations have **access to the same health care services offered to all Ontarians**.
  - Ensure that all areas of the criminal justice system **offer First Nation police the support they need** to be able to carry out their responsibilities.
  - Restore the **municipal tax exemption** for First Nation purchases of reserve land.
  - Extend the **hydro delivery charge credit** to all band buildings.
  - Require **cultural competency training for all levels of the criminal justice system** specific to working with First Nations.
  - **Reform jury selection procedures** in Ontario so that juries are drawn from databases more reflective of the population, moving away from using property assessment data (which systematically excludes people such as those living on First Nations reserves) to instead use OHIP data for the purposes of compiling the jury roll.
  - Invest in **mental health workers and services in the justice system specific to First Nations**, and ensure FASD services are included as part of the justice system.
  - Provide stable funding to implement and evaluate community sanctions that will **provide realistic alternatives to imprisonment** for Indigenous offenders and respond to the underlying causes of offences.
9. *Organizations working with or for the gender and sexually diverse community struggle to gain or maintain long-term, sustainable funding. How will you support organizations, specifically ones that provide important health and social services and ones that work in arts, culture, and heritage?*

In addition to the initiatives in health and social services already mentioned in previous answers, **the Green Party of Ontario will:**

- **Support community based arts and culture** programming, and education in our schools.
- **Renew Ontario's culture strategy** every 5 years, and make the strategy **more inclusive of arts and cultural from marginalized groups**.
- **Increase support for the Ontario Arts Council, the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund, and Ontario Arts Foundation**.
- **End the 20 year budget freeze** on funding for **local libraries**.

- **Expand access to multiservice and integrated primary care models** such as family health teams, nurse-led clinics, community care centres, and Indigenous health access centres.

10. *How do you intend on increasing support to HIV/AIDS organizations in Ontario?*

The **Green Party of Ontario supports** the important **work of HIV/AIDS organizations** in Ontario, and will **ensure access to medications which prevent and/or treat HIV/AIDS (including PrEP)**. In addition, we believe that all members of the **LGBTQ2 community must be decision making partners** with political parties and government, by acting as **consultants in decisions and policies affecting the LGBTQ2 community**. We will also:

- **Create an integrated funding structure** for health care, based on quality outcomes that will ensure that the best care is provided by the most appropriate and cost effective provider.
- **Increase funding for Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs)** that are struggling to fulfill their downloaded mandate from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and provide dedicated funds that ensure enhanced collaboration with various partners, including District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs), to enhance the integration and delivery of public services.

11. *What steps will you take to end invasive, medically unnecessary operations on Intersex children?*

Except in the circumstances of a medically verifiable imperative for life saving emergency treatment, or to urgently restore anatomical function, **the Green Party of Ontario will prohibit operations on Intersex children**, and **legally protect children's rights** to develop without surgical intervention and/or without their **informed consent**. We would also ensure the **establishment of dedicated clinics**, employing **integrated teams of medical and mental health specialists** in all relevant fields, to support Intersex children and youth as they navigate their unique health care needs.

12. *The rights of sex workers are important to the gender and sexually diverse community, with our community being well represented within the workforce. What will you do to help end the criminalization of sex work in Ontario, ensuring full labour rights and protections?*

**The Green Party of Ontario** believes that sex work in Ontario should be **decriminalized** and that our labour laws must be improved and strengthened to ensure that sex workers receive the same robust **labour rights and legal protections as workers in any other field**.

13. *Gender and sexually diverse youth are overrepresented in the homeless youth population. What specific steps would you take to address the gender and sexually diverse youth homelessness crisis in Ontario?*

As mentioned previously, **the Green Party of Ontario will immediately implement the Basic Income Guarantee** so that everyone may have a safety net of income to afford a place to call home. We will address homelessness and ensure accessibility to safe and affordable housing by:

- Using a **“housing first”** approach to **develop dedicated supportive housing** for people with special health needs and/or for marginalized individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- **Mandating that 20% of units in new housing builds be affordable**, and are subsidized by the developers, and not by municipalities.
- **Put a tax on vacant property** to make it harder for speculators, whether foreign or domestic, to use real estate as a lucrative place to park cash.

- **Add a surtax on quick turnaround sales** to reduce speculation.
- **Expand the Non-Resident Speculation Tax (NRST)** in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH).
- **Update zoning laws** to allow alternatives to single-family detached homes, such as tiny homes, secondary suites, and laneway housing.
- Incentivize municipalities to **zone for the missing middle**: a combination of mixed-use buildings and medium density housing types and rental units that increase residential densities while largely maintaining the look and feel of a neighbourhood.
- **Improve Ontario's inclusionary zoning legislation** to ensure the permanent creation of rental and deeply affordable units, mandating that developers include at least 1 new unit of affordable housing for every 5 new houses or condos (20% affordability minimum for new development), including purpose-built rentals.
- **Remove requirements that municipal governments pay a percentage of the cost of affordable housing** under inclusionary zoning laws in line with international best practices.
- **Create more affordable, safe rental housing options** by working with municipalities to modernize by-laws that currently prohibit or establish unreasonable barriers to creating additional housing, such as licensed basement apartments.
- **Expand the tools available for municipalities**, including density bonuses, to provide incentives for the development of affordable housing beyond the minimum requirement and remove requirements for municipalities to compensate developers.
- **Support the development of Canada's National Housing Strategy: A Place to Call Home.**
- **Re-introduce the brownfield remediation fund** to redevelop existing land into commercial or residential properties.
- **Create a provincial coordinated access point for all affordable housing options** available to create a streamlined application for waitlist and placement.
- **End the Tarion monopoly** that is failing to provide adequate warranty protection for new home buyers and to regulate builders, and introduce a competitive multi-provider model for warranty protection.
- Provide funding for municipalities to **renovate deteriorating social housing stock and introduce new social housing units** in their communities to address unmet local need.
- **Work with the Government of Canada to increase** support for proposed and existing social non-profit and co-operative housing.
- Evaluate the Indigenous Supportive Housing Program (ISHP) and work closely with the Government of Canada and Indigenous housing providers to **ensure that Indigenous people have access to adequate affordable housing**.

- **Increase the number of secondary women's shelters** in Ontario, particularly in the north. The total number of beds in Ontario decreased from 2014 to 2016.
- **Work with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to expedite the announced portable housing benefit** that will assist women fleeing violence to move to another province, and to find affordable housing in another province if needed.
- Using best practices from the current basic income pilot to **support a quick transition to a fully developed basic income program** after the completion of the pilot.
- Improving on the current pilot **setting the benefit rate at the Low Income Cut off** and by **lowering the tax back rate to reduce penalties** for increases in employment income.

Furthermore, since poverty is a primary force behind homelessness, **the GPO will immediately** take steps to **reduce poverty** and will:

- **Immediately increase Ontario Disability Support Payment and Ontario Works payments** toward rates that match the low income measure to address the inadequacy of current social programs.
- **Extend health benefits** (e.g. Assistive Devices Program, Medical Transportation) to cover low income Ontarians outside of the social assistance system. We also support moving towards universal dental care and pharmacare.
- **Increase asset limits for Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Payment recipients**, with the amount to be indexed to inflation.
- **Modernize the eligibility requirements for Ontario Works** to further empower recipients to find and maintain meaningful work. End the claw back of employment earnings that create a disincentive to work.
- **Ensure that social assistance programs are responsive to the needs of people with mental health and addictions-related disabilities** through ensuring eligibility criteria recognizes their illness and that payments are not interrupted during times of transition (e.g. hospitalization, incarceration).
- **Increase the personal income tax exemption** for low income individuals.
- **Increase the existing Ontario Child Benefit** to help families who live in poverty.

14. *Many gender and sexually diverse people are concerned about moving into retirement communities, care facilities, or having at home care out of fear of having to “go back into the closet” or because they fear they won’t receive sensitive, informed care. How will you ensure long-term care will competently accommodate and work with the gender and sexually diverse community? What steps will you take to improve long term care for our community?*

**The Green Party of Ontario will:**

- **Monitor and improve the quality of care for sexually and/or gender diverse people** in long-term care homes.

- Ensure staff of long-term care facilities have proper training and resources to **appropriately address the needs of residents that require complex care and/or care which honours their gender and sexual diversity.**
- **Increase funding for home and community care** to provide support for people to live at home longer.
- Invest additional resources to **improve the availability of assisted living and transitional living for seniors.**
- Develop and fund **research into smart home technology** to enable us to age in place and stay in our communities.

### **Party Questions**

1. *Does your party have any openly gender diverse and/or sexually diverse candidates? If comfortable answering: How many, and in what ridings? Also, what concrete steps will your party take to increase representation of gender and sexually diverse people among candidates?*

**There are several gender and/or sexually diverse candidates in the GPO's slate, but we do not feel comfortable identifying them unless they have already identified themselves. While the following candidates have included their names on the website ProudPolitics.org, or have otherwise agreed to be identified. The rest are entitled to their privacy:**

- Cherie Wong, Ottawa Centre
- Adam Sommerfeld, Toronto Centre
- Zdravko Gunjevic, Waterloo
- Keenan Aylwin, Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte
- Mark Daye, Bay of Quinte

**The Green Party of Ontario always encourages potential candidates who represent the incredible diversity amongst our membership to run as candidates, and we will continue to do so.**

2. *Does your party have policies and practices that are affirming of gender and sexually diverse people? If so, what are they? If no, will you commit to adding them?*

**Yes, the GPO has always been an inclusive and open organization and affirms gender and sexually diverse people. Our party is in the process of reviewing and updating our equity policies to reflect current realities.**

3. *Have your staff and volunteers been through training on gender and sexually diverse topics and issues? If yes, please explain. If no, will you commit to participating in training on an ongoing basis?*

**The GPO staff have gone through equity training, and will continue to do so as changing circumstances require. Candidates and constituency association members support the policies listed above and are expected to recruit volunteers with similar views. Where diversity training is available we will be pleased to participate.**