

Elected Silence

A Three Part Investigative Documentation Series:
Examining accountability gaps within Ontario's
publicly funded developmental care programs &
services system

When Ontario's Leaders Read the File

**Funding Without Service:
Who Reconciles the Public Record?**

When Compliance Replaces Care

Lori Ann Comeau
Founder, Advocates for Access & Accountability
Legal Guardian and Public Accountability Advocate
www.advocates4access.ca

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Introduction

This report presents a three-part documentation series examining accountability gaps within Ontario's publicly funded developmental-services system.

Regulatory escalation efforts between 2022 and 2026 were documented in relation to provincially funded programs responsible for ensuring appropriate care and support delivery through contracted service providers and program partners. These efforts included extensive communication, formal documentation and repeated requests for program review and resolution involving elected officials, ministry leadership and regulatory oversight bodies. To date, no formal written determination or resolution decision has been issued.

This series examines three core questions:

- What happens when elected officials are notified and no determination follows
- How public funding is reconciled when services are not delivered
- What enforcement mechanisms exist when oversight bodies are aware of risks

This report forms part of the Advocates for Access & Accountability (AAA), Evidence and Patterns initiative, which documents systemic issues affecting vulnerable individuals and families navigating publicly funded care systems.

Supporting documentation referenced throughout this report is available to accredited media.



Elected Silence: When Ontario’s Leaders Read the File

On April 8, 2022, I was appointed the legal guardian of my brother, Harlan — a vulnerable adult with developmental disabilities. Six days later, our father died.

I tried to do what families are told to do: act responsibly, use the system, follow process, escalate appropriately. I asked for help so my brother could be supported to be with family at the end — and at the funeral.

Instead, I documented something that should chill every Ontarian:

Silence.

Not from one office.

Silence across political lanes.

In one of my earliest escalations, I wrote words no guardian should ever have to write:

“My father has died without seeing his developmentally challenged son...” (April 19, 2022).

That wasn’t rhetoric.

It was the lived consequence of a publicly funded system that had already begun treating *“family”* as interference even after a court appointment.

Notified — Across Party Lines — and Still Ignored

On April 28, 2022, I made the first formal call-out to elected MPPs for help. It would not be the last.

Further outreach occurred on August 28, 2024 and again on February 3, 2026. I contacted:

- Elected MPPs across party lines
- The Minister of Children, Community & Social Services (MCCSS)
- The Deputy Minister, MCCSS
- The Premier’s Office
- Standing Committees responsible for Public Accounts and Social Policy

The response? Nothing. No formal determination.

No investigation triggered by elected oversight.

No written reconciliation of what was raised.

This Was Not One Email. It Was Years of Escalation.

People ask, “*Did you report it?*”

Yes — relentlessly.

Between September 16, 2022 and August 15, 2023 alone, I sent:

- 140+ written communications to the Deputy Minister of MCCSS and the Deputy Attorney General
- 95 written communications to the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee

From September 2023 through February 3, 2026, additional documented communications include:

- 32 emails directly to the Minister MCCSS
- 46 emails to the Deputy Minister MCCSS
- 39 communications copying oversight bodies, including the Ombudsman and Auditor General
- Three formal written notifications to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Social Policy.

The Premier’s office was contacted- again.

Oversight bodies were looped in repeatedly.

And still:

No written determination.

What Government Was Being Notified About

This record was not vague. It consistently raised five core failures.

1 Funding Continued After Service Stopped

Residential services ceased June 11, 2023 by the Ministry's business partners' own admission in legal documentation.

Funding did not.

Over the next 30 months ending February 2026, approximately \$600,000 in public funds flowed in connection with residential programming later acknowledged as not provided -- all the while Harlan, a program recipient of 4 decades received no help.

The questions were administrative:

- Was service delivered?
- If not, why did funding continue?
- Who reconciles the public record?
- Who resolves care, support and service issues?

No written determination was issued.

2 Guardian Access Was Denied

On March 10, 2023, a trespass was issued against the court-appointed guardian in a publicly funded residence.

The Government was notified.

Repeatedly.

Access to care records, planning documents, and oversight clarification was requested. No written determination followed.

3 “Operational” Deflection Was Used as a Shield

In response to escalating concerns, the recurring message was:

This is operational.

Follow up with the provider.

Follow up with DSO.

As I wrote on November 10, 2025 directly to the Minister of MCCSS:

“The Ministry cannot continue to deflect oversight to third-party agencies while maintaining control of contracts, funding and public accountability.”

When public funds and vulnerable lives intersect, this is not operational. It is an oversight.

4 Compliance Letters Without Correction

Following documented escalation:

- A compliance letter by the Ministry to the group home was issued in October 2023
- Another compliance action followed in October 2025

Compliance letters acknowledge procedural review.

They do not reconcile funding.

They do not restore access.

They do not issue findings.

The pattern became clear:

Escalate → Inspection → “In compliance” → Silence.

It disregards human life or the value of it, as much as it does dignity and respect.

5 Oversight Redirected — Then Closed

In correspondence from the December 3, 2022 Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee, the matter was redirected back to MCCSS for program service resolution. Again, the re-directed on April 29, 2024 and January 30, 2025.

Oversight pointed to the Ministry.

The Ministry pointed to operations.

Operations pointed back to oversight.

Families were left in a closed loop.

A Record of Fear — Not Politics

In July 2023, after months of escalating care and safety concerns, I wrote:

“My brother is visiting me because I fear for his life.”

That sentence was not political.

It was protective.

When systems fail, families become the last line of safety.

What Elected Silence Allows

When elected officials do not respond, the system learns something.

It learns that:

- Delay is survivable.
- Accountability can be deferred.
- Families can be exhausted.

Elected silence does not stay in the political lane.

It becomes administrative permission.

The Question Ontario Must Answer

If a vulnerable adult can be left in a cycle of:

- denied guardian access,
- delayed assessments,
- exclusion from legislated planning,
- service cessation,
- funding continuation,
- and four years of documented escalation without determination —

Then the issue is not one family.

It is what Ontario is willing to tolerate behind closed doors.



Funding Without Service: Who Reconciles the Public Record?

Residential services ceased June 11, 2023 according to legal documentation. Funding did not.

Between June 2023 and early 2026, approximately \$600,000 in public funding continued to flow in connection with residential programming later acknowledged as not being delivered.

When families raise concerns about care in publicly funded systems, they are often told the same thing:

“Follow the process.”

Escalate through the appropriate channels. Document concerns. Contact the ministry. Notify oversight bodies.

For four years, I did exactly that.

But the issue at the center of this story is not simply care failures. It is something far more uncomfortable for government to address:

public funding that continued to flow after residential services had ceased.

And despite years of documented escalation, no written determination has been issued reconciling that public record.

The Administrative Question

According to documentation later confirmed through communication with Developmental Services Ontario (DSO Toronto), residential services connected to my brother ended June 11, 2023 as stated by the group home, the service provider, the contracted business that delivers Ministry programs and services in Ontario - or in Toronto.

Yet public funding associated with that placement continued.

Over the following 30 months, the estimated funding allocation connected to the residential placement exceeded \$600,000.

The question that follows is not philosophical. It is administrative:

If services stopped, why did funding continue?

And more importantly:

Who is responsible for reconciling the public record when those two facts diverge?

The Government Response Pattern

Throughout the escalation record, a consistent response pattern appeared. When questions about funding or accountability were raised, families were told the matter was “*operational*.”

The language varied slightly, but the message remained the same:

- “*The ministry does not intervene in operations.*”
- “*This matter is between you and the provider.*”
- “*You must follow up with DSO.*”
- “*You must follow up with the agency.*”

But public funding does not move through “*operations*” alone.

Funding flows through government programs, contracts and oversight structures.

When those funds continue after services stop, someone within that system must reconcile the record. To date, no written determination has been issued explaining whether:

- funding aligned with service delivery
- the placement contract was reviewed
- funding was redirected
- any reconciliation occurred

The Escalation Record

Between 2022 and 2026, written escalation regarding care, funding, and oversight was directed across multiple levels of government.

The documented record includes:

- 186+ written communications to senior ministry leadership
- 32 communications to the Minister’s office
- 144 communications involving the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee and other oversight bodies
- Outreach to elected MPPs across party lines
- Formal written notifications to Standing Committees responsible for public accountability

Despite this escalation record spanning four years, no written determination has been issued addressing funding reconciliation.

“When public funds and vulnerable lives intersect, silence is not neutrality — it is an administrative position.”

Why This Matters Beyond One Family

This is not a story about one placement or one agency.

It is a question about how public systems respond when the record shows two things at once:

- services stopped
- funding continued

If no office is responsible for reconciling that record, then accountability becomes optional.

And when accountability becomes optional, the people most affected are those with the least power to demand answers.

Adults with developmental disabilities depend entirely on the integrity of the systems designed to support them.

Families can escalate.

Families can document.

Families can report concerns.

But if the system never issues a written determination, the question remains unresolved.

The Question Ontario Must Answer

Ontario's developmental-services system relies on public trust.

Families must trust that funding follows care.

Taxpayers must trust that oversight exists.

And vulnerable adults must trust that the systems meant to protect them will act when problems are documented.

So the question is simple:

When services stop but funding continues, who reconciles the public record?



Administrative Silence: When Compliance Replaces Care

When Public Money Continues but Accountability Stops. The question no one in government has answered.

If public funding continues after services stop, who is responsible for reconciling the public record?

This is not a political question.

It is not a policy debate.

It is a basic administrative question.

And after four years of documented escalation, it remains unanswered.

Between June 2023 and early 2026, approximately \$600,000 in public funding continued to flow through Ontario's developmental-services system connected to residential programming later acknowledged as not being delivered.

The question I repeatedly asked elected officials, ministry leadership, and oversight bodies was simple:

If services stopped, why did funding continue?

No written determination has been issued.

Not to explain it.

Not to reconcile it.

Not to correct it.

This is not about disagreement. It is about enforcement.

Ontario's developmental-services system operates on contracts funded by taxpayers.

Those contracts require:

- Service delivery
- Compliance monitoring
- Financial accountability
- Enforcement when standards are not met

Oversight is not proven when systems work.

Oversight is proven when they don't.

My documentation shows repeated notification of:

- Residential service cessation beginning June 11, 2023
- Continued funding allocations after that date
- Guardian exclusion from care planning processes
- Delayed reassessment processes restricting service access
- Requests for funding reconciliation and written findings

The issue is not whether problems can occur.

The issue is what happens after the government is informed.

Because funding is not passive.

Funding is an active administrative decision.

And continuing funding after documented concerns is also a decision.

When “operations” becomes a shield

One of the most consistent responses families hear and I heard it on January 23, 2023:

"The Ministry does not intervene in operations."

This is their program and legislative mandate - they inspect the operations of the facility, but they do not inspect nor monitor care and support. It is an over 3.5 billion dollar public investment annually.

This case raises a serious public question:

If the government funds a system but will not intervene when risks are documented, who is actually accountable?

Because once public funds are involved, this is no longer just operational. It becomes public accountability.

As I wrote in one escalation:

"The Ministry cannot continue to deflect oversight to third-party agencies while maintaining control of contracts, funding and public accountability." (Statement derived from escalation correspondence to MCCSS, 2023–2025)

Oversight cannot mean funding without responsibility.

Because when oversight stops at the contract signature, it stops being oversight. It becomes a subsidy.

Delay is not neutral

Another pattern documented throughout this case was delay.

Delayed responses.

Delayed assessments.

Delayed determinations.

An 18-month reassessment delay meant additional supports could not be accessed during that period.

But funding structures did not pause.

This is what families learn quickly:

Delay protects systems. It does not protect vulnerable people.

Because while decisions are delayed:

Funding continues

Contracts remain intact

Providers remain protected

Families remain waiting

Delay is not an administrative backlog.

Delay is an administrative choice.

Oversight bodies were notified — repeatedly

This case did not lack escalation.

It documented it.

Between 2022 and 2026, written communications included:

- 186 communications to senior MCCSS leadership

- 32 communications to the Minister's office
- 144 communications involving the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee and oversight bodies
- Formal written notices to Standing Committees
- Written outreach to elected MPPs across party lines
- Communication to the Premier's office

The issue was never access to channels.

The issue was what happened after notification.

To date: No written determination has addressed funding alignment.

The real risk Ontario must confront

This is not simply one family's experience.

It raises a structural question:

What happens when funding continues but enforcement stops?

Systems do not fail only when harm occurs.

Systems fail when warning signs are documented and no correction follows.

And the most dangerous lesson any system can learn is this:

Nothing happens when families escalate.

Because when nothing happens:

Problems repeat

Risk increases

Trust disappears

And families learn they are alone.

What enforcement is supposed to produce

Public accountability does not require perfection.

It requires a response.

Real oversight produces four things:

Review

Determination

Correction

Documentation

At minimum, escalation should produce one basic outcome:

A written determination.

That is the most basic product of responsible governance.

After four years of escalation, none has been issued.

The question Ontario must answer

This series has asked three simple questions.

Blog I asked:

What happens when elected officials are notified and say nothing?

Blog II asked:

Who reconciles funding when services are not delivered?

This final piece asks:

Who enforces accountability when the system already knows?

Because this is the real issue.

Not whether problems exist.

But whether the government acts once they are documented.

The silence that matters most

This series is not about blame.

It is about something more serious:

Administrative silence. Because silence at the highest levels becomes permission at every level below.

And when silence follows documentation, it stops being absent. It becomes a position.

As I wrote after years of escalation:

“After four years of documented escalation to executive and elected leadership, I remain without a written determination regarding funding alignment and service accountability. Silence is not neutrality — it is an administrative position.”
(February 3, 2026)

Ontario families deserve better than silence.

They deserve answers. They deserve enforcement.

Why this series exists

This trilogy was never written as an ending.

It was written as a record. Because documentation matters.

Transparency matters. And silence should never be the final response when vulnerable lives and public funds intersect.

This three-part *Elected Silence* series reflects not isolated concerns, but documented patterns where process, funding, and oversight have too often operated without meaningful enforcement. The supporting report materials and documentation referenced throughout this series are available within the **Evidence and Patterns** section of AAA website as part of an evolving public accountability record.

These observations raise broader questions about how accountability functions when publicly funded care is delivered through complex administrative structures, and what mechanisms ensure that oversight responsibilities translate into measurable protection for vulnerable individuals.

This work represents part of an ongoing effort to document patterns, strengthen awareness of oversight gaps, and contribute to informed public discussion about accountability within publicly funded care systems.

Documentation References

This publication draws on publicly available government information and documented communications maintained by the author between 2022 and 2026 to support discussion of accountability practices within publicly funded care systems.

Public Funding Context

In the 2024 Ontario Budget, the provincial government allocated approximately \$3.5 billion to Developmental Services within the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) 2024–25 spending plan.

Source: Government of Ontario, 2024 Ontario Budget and MCCSS Expenditure Estimates.

Program Accountability Framework

Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) operates as the provincial access point responsible for determining eligibility and coordinating access to MCCSS-funded developmental services and supports.

Source: Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services / Developmental Services Ontario program framework.

Regulatory Oversight Context

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services holds responsibility for funding, policy direction, and oversight of developmental services programs delivered through transfer payment agencies and contracted service providers.

Source: Government of Ontario, MCCSS program and service delivery framework documentation.

Oversight and Complaint Mechanisms

Ontario's Ombudsman provides independent oversight of provincial government administration, including the authority to review complaints related to publicly funded services and administrative fairness.

Source: Office of the Ontario Ombudsman mandate and oversight authority documentation.

Documented Escalation Record

Regulatory escalation efforts between 2022 and 2026 were documented in relation to provincially funded programs responsible for ensuring appropriate care and support delivery through contracted service providers and program partners. These efforts included communication, formal documentation, and requests for program review involving elected officials, ministry leadership, and regulatory bodies.

Source: Author documentation records (2022–2026).

Contributing to Accountability Awareness

Advocates for Access & Accountability continues to document experiences related to access, oversight, and accountability within publicly funded care systems to better understand recurring barriers and systemic patterns.

Families, caregivers, professionals and community members who wish to contribute their experiences may do so through the AAA intake process: <https://advocates4access.ca/intake-form>

Shared experiences help strengthen documentation, inform public dialogue and support greater awareness of accountability practices within publicly funded systems.

Meaningful accountability begins with documentation. Documentation begins with lived experience.

Founder's Statement

Lori Ann Comeau is the founder of Advocates for Access & Accountability (AAA), a public-interest initiative established to document systemic accountability gaps within Ontario's publicly funded developmental care programs and services.

AAA was created on a simple principle: when administrative systems fail to produce determinations, documentation must become part of the public record. Through its *See • Document • Act* framework, AAA works to bring visibility to systemic patterns where process exists without meaningful enforcement and where families are left navigating complex systems without clear accountability. The initiative encourages collaboration among families, advocates, communities, service providers, and government to help ensure vulnerable individuals are not left without oversight protection.

This work is grounded in the belief that families, community organizations, service providers, and government share a collective duty of care. When that balance fails, transparency and documentation become essential tools for restoring accountability.

AAA was established to bring greater structure to conversations about accountability, documentation, and oversight within publicly funded developmental care programs and services. Through its documentation work, AAA seeks to ensure that systemic patterns affecting vulnerable individuals are recognized, that experiences are not dismissed as isolated events, and that accountability remains central to how care systems are evaluated.

This work also reflects growing concern that when families raise legitimate care or service concerns, administrative responses may shift toward process management rather than problem resolution, leaving families to navigate prolonged delays, fragmented communication, and unresolved risks. When collaboration is replaced by procedural responses, both vulnerable individuals and their families may be left without the protections these systems are intended to provide.

Elected Silence represents one contribution to this broader effort by examining how process, funding, and oversight function in practice, while supporting a growing public accountability record intended to strengthen understanding of these systemic patterns.

At its core, AAA exists to help ensure that voices often lost within complex administrative and care systems are documented, understood, and acted upon, and that accountability practices reflect the fundamental societal values of dignity, respect, inclusion, and justice. This work is grounded in a simple commitment: there should be no lost voices within Ontario's publicly funded developmental care programs and services, and that this principle should guide how communities protect vulnerable individuals through accountability, dignity and inclusion.

About the Author



Lori Ann Comeau is a Toronto-based advocate with professional experience across the public, municipal and non-profit sectors in program development, governance and stakeholder engagement. Her work has included leadership roles supporting community programming, accessibility initiatives and partnerships serving youth and families.

Her community involvement has included work connected to social justice initiatives, seniors' supports, youth engagement, mental-health awareness and community responses to homelessness — work that has consistently focused on strengthening access and equity for vulnerable populations.

She is the legal guardian of her brother, Harlan Murray Comeau, whose experience within Ontario's developmental-services system became the catalyst for four years of documented regulatory escalation and accountability advocacy.

Lori Ann is also a single mother of two teenagers and continues to balance family responsibilities while advancing public accountability work through Advocates for Access & Accountability.

Her advocacy is grounded in a long-standing family belief in community inclusion following Ontario's transition away from institutional care in the late 1970s — a movement her brother was part of as an early example of supported community living. That belief remains central to her work: inclusion must be matched by oversight and funding must be matched by care.

She lives in Toronto and continues to advocate for stronger safeguards to ensure vulnerable individuals and their families are not left navigating systems without enforcement.

Media inquiries available upon request.

About Advocates for Access & Accountability

Advocates for Access & Accountability (AAA) is a public-interest initiative focused on documentation, transparency and accountability within publicly funded care systems. AAA works through a framework of:

See
Document
Act

The initiative encourages families and communities to ensure vulnerable individuals are not left navigating systems without oversight and enforcement.

Website:

www.advocates4access.ca

Intake:

<https://advocates4access.ca/intake-form>

Contact:

connect@advocates4access.ca

