

Dufferin County continues economic recovery

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Dufferin County is showing more signs of recovery in the economy, with the local unemployment rate dropping 1 percent between August and September.

The Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin (WWD) said in a press release last Thursday (Oct.15), that the unemployment rate had gone from 8.8 percent in August to 7.8 percent in September.

"We are continuing to see a declining unemployment rate in our rural areas, along with an increasing demand for workers with a variety of skills," said Charlene Hofbauer, executive director of the Workforce Planning Board of WWD. "As the rate continues to decline without a corresponding rise in people participating in the labour market, rural and small-town employers like those in Dufferin may find it difficult to find people, much like it was before the pandemic."

Hofbauer went on to note that this will be dependent on the progression of the pandemic and its effects on local businesses.

While the economy in Dufferin County continues to recover, with a reported 719 jobs at 330 companies posted for September, and the unemployment rates decreases, the Workforce Planning Board of WWD is seeing demands for specific job sectors and roles.

Hofbauer said that they are seeing a continued demand within the health care and manufacturing industry, as well as skilled trades and labour roles within construction.

"We are seeing as well some growth in administrative positions for things like administrative assistant receptionist, administrative officers, that is one area we are seeing some growth in Dufferin County," said Hofbauer

She added, "Any sort of occupation that is getting goods to people."

Despite the decrease in unemployment, Ontario is currently going through its second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, how the second wave will impact the recovering economy Hofbauer said will be hard to judge.

"Some industries will see that unemployment, they let off more people again, and other industries may stabilize," said Hofbauer. "I will say going forward right now that health care is going to need people, that is definitely going to be an area where there's going to be job occupations."

Hofbauer concluded that depending on health measures and restriction some industries might be able to retain employees.