

October 26, 2023

Dear Colleagues,

I am absolutely thrilled to have the honour of being the Executive Lead for Govfest 2023, and I could not be more excited to be a part of this fantastic event. Govfest, now in its 17th year, is not just any music and art festival. It is a celebration of collective efforts in the Broader Public Sector to raise funds for incredible charity partners such as [United Way](#) and [Ryan's Well](#).

This year, we have partnered with the City of Toronto to host the festival's flagship events, and it promises to be bigger and better than ever. As a proud leader in the Ontario Public Service (OPS), I have the privilege of championing this year's festival, which includes the highly anticipated Battle of the Bands. The battle will run from November 1 to November 18, with preliminary rounds taking place at popular venues in Toronto and Kingston. The Grand Finale is set for December 1 at the iconic El Mocambo, where our talented finalists will compete for the prestigious title of Band of the Year!

Supporting your favourite bands is not only a great way to enjoy some incredible music, but it is also an opportunity to make a positive impact. You can visit [CanadaHelps](#) to donate and support the bands you love. For every dollar (excluding the cost of tickets) you contribute to Govfest, you will receive a tax receipt.

But that is not all – Govfest has more to offer! On November 23rd, we have the Wine and Art Soiree, where we will be showcasing the talents of local artists from all corners of Ontario. This wonderful event, held at Rapport Credit Union (18 Grenville St.), will feature a silent art auction and wine tasting. It is a fantastic opportunity to appreciate art, savour some fine wine, and make a difference.

One of the things that make Govfest truly special is the incredible team of volunteers. Many of them are current and former public service employees who generously dedicate their time and talents. Over the past few years, they have raised tens of thousands of dollars in support of the charities that have a meaningful impact on individuals, families, and communities across the province.

I invite you to join us in the festivities of this year's Govfest. It is all about celebrating the arts and culture that unite us and make our community stronger. I am not just participating as an honorary judge at the Battle of the Bands; I am also your enthusiastic lead representative for this remarkable cause. Let us come together, have a blast, and make Govfest 2023 a resounding success!

Best regards,

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Denise Allyson Cole
Deputy Minister, Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services
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