

General Information

You must use this application form to make your request for assistance under Second Career (SC). The date your completed application is received by the Ministry is when you are considered to have requested assistance for the purpose of determining your eligibility.

Before the Ministry can assess an application, you will need to receive an employment assessment from and develop an Employment Service Plan (ESP)/Employment Action Plan (EAP) with an Employment Ontario (EO) Employment Service (ES)/Integrated Employment Services (IES) provider. In addition, the ES/IES provider will complete the SC Eligibility and Suitability Assessment Template. Please contact the EO Contact Centre by phone at 1-800-387-5656 or visit the EO website at: www.ontario.ca/employmentontario for information on where you can find an Employment Ontario ES/IES provider in your area.

An application for SC must be approved by the Ministry before you start training.

It is important to note that any costs incurred prior to receiving approval from the Ministry are not eligible for reimbursement. If you have a job and are contemplating quitting it in order to attend a skills training course or program, you should not do so without consulting the Ministry beforehand.

Second Career Program and Eligibility

The Second Career program provides laid-off, unemployed individuals with skills training to help them find employment in occupations with demonstrated labour market prospects. To be eligible, individuals must:

- have been laid-off on or after January 1, 2005;
- be unemployed;
- be residents of Ontario;
- be Canadian citizens or permanent residents legally authorized to work in Canada; and
- demonstrate occupational demand for the skills training request with evidence of good employment prospects locally or within Ontario.

Second Career Fast Track Stream and Eligibility

The Fast Track Stream has been temporarily added to the Second Career program to support individuals most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Fast Track Stream is only individuals who:

- have been laid off on or after March 1, 2020 from a sector identified as highly impacted by COVID-19; and
- have no more than a high school education and/or have been laid off from an occupation that required no more than high school education; and
- Are seeking training for identified in-demand occupations in provincial or local community priority area; and
- Are unemployed; and
- Are a resident of Ontario; and
- Are a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident or meet the 900 series Social Insurance Number (SIN) policy.

For the purposes of SC, **laid-off** individuals also includes those:

- whose employment contract has ended;
- who have received Employment Insurance Benefits (EI) maternity or parental benefits and are seeking to re-enter the labour force;
- who have left work due to medical reasons;
- who were laid-off on or after January 1, 2005 and then became self-employed.

Individuals who were laid-off from a job in another province of Canada or in another country are eligible for the SC program and must meet all other SC program criteria.

On a **contract** job, an employee works under the direction of a company for a predetermined amount of time to work on specific projects.

Employment Insurance maternity or parental benefits are those payable to the biological, adoptive or legally recognized parents while they are caring for their newborn or newly adopted child or children.

For the purposes of SC, **unemployed** includes individuals:

- working less than an average of 20 hours per week.
- who may have taken an interim job to make ends meet after their initial lay-off.
- on salary continuance or who have received severance pay.

An “interim job” is a job that laid-off individuals have taken while seeking better employment. An interim job must be at a low skill level (i.e. National Occupational Classification (NOC) D of the [National Occupational Classification Matrix 2016](#)). These jobs may be full-time, part-time, and seasonal, or contract work.

Salary continuance is an alternative to paying laid-off workers in lieu of notice or severance. While no longer working, individuals receive their salary as per their regular pay schedule for a designated period and they may also receive some or all of their work benefits.

Severance pay is compensation that is paid to a qualified employee who has their employment ‘severed’. It compensates an employee for losses (such as seniority) that occur when a long-term employee loses their job. Not all laid-off individuals are eligible for severance pay. If an individual is eligible for severance pay and does receive it, the allocation of the severance package will affect the calculation of individual’s financial assistance under the Second Career program. Whether or not an individual has a source of income, such as salary continuance, severance pay, or EI Part I benefits does not impact their eligibility for the Second Career program. However, any income will be taken into consideration by the Ministry later in the process as part of the assessment for financial assistance.

Labour Market Research

Evidence of good employment prospects includes one or more of the following:

- the occupation is on the list entitled Labour Market Indicators for Second Career or;
- submission of currently advertised job opportunities in the local labour market; or
- submission of attestations from employers that they are hiring for the occupation; or
- evidence of future job opportunities (e.g., future plant or office expansion, new employer).

If an individual is not pursuing training in one of the provincial or local priority areas, they will be required to provide evidence of good employment prospects. The minimum number of advertised job opportunities or employer attestations required is as follows:

Communities with a population under 100,000	One (1) job opportunity or employer attestation
Communities with a population between 100,000 and 500,000	Two (2) job opportunities or employer attestations
Communities with a population over 500,000	Three (3) job opportunities or employer attestations

Ineligible Individuals

- Individuals are not eligible for SC financial assistance if they have been restricted from receiving assistance under the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) pursuant to paragraphs 1 or 2 of section 42.1 of Ontario Regulation 268/01 made under the *Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development Act* because they have:
 - failed to provide all required information and documents relating to OSAP; or
 - provided incorrect information relating to OSAP* (or other student financial assistance offered by Canada or a province/territory) or failed to promptly update information previously provided.

***See OSAP section, next page**
- Individuals who begin skills training before being approved by the Ministry are not eligible for the SC program.
- Individuals who were laid-off on or after January 1, 2005, who subsequently worked in a full-time job (excluding ‘interim’ jobs) but quit or were terminated from the job, are not eligible for the SC program.
- Individuals who are working in a full-time job after maternity or parental benefits have ended and that job is not an interim job are not eligible for the SC program because they are considered to have “re-entered” the work force.
- Individuals who are in a work-sharing program are not eligible for the SC program. Work-sharing is a Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) adjustment program designed to help employers and employees avoid temporary lay-offs when there is a reduction in the normal level of business activity that is beyond the control of the employer. The program provides income support under EI Part 1 to employees eligible for EI Part I benefits who work a temporarily reduced work week while their employer recovers.
- International students and temporary foreign workers with a 900-series Social Insurance Number (SIN) are not eligible for the Second Career program. Individuals who, regardless of funding source (e.g. self-funded, funded by the ministry), have completed a skills training program in the last two years (i.e. 24 months) are not eligible for the Second Career program. In exceptional cases (e.g. medical reasons), individuals who cannot pursue employment in the occupation for which they were trained may be considered prior to the end of the two-year period.
- Individuals who are intending to return to high school/college/university in the upcoming academic year, and who have not made the transition from school to work (i.e. not worked a consecutive 12 months), are not eligible for the Second Career program. Individuals who return to school after casual employment (e.g. summer employment or Christmas employment) would not be considered as having made the transition from school to work, and therefore are not eligible for the Second Career program.
- Individuals who have taken a leave of absence are not eligible for the Second Career program.
- Individuals who quit or are terminated from their employment (excluding an interim job) are not eligible for the Second Career program.

Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP)

When applying for Second Career you are required to state whether you are restricted from receiving OSAP assistance due to compliance issues or income verification. If you are unsure about the details of your OSAP restriction status, you may check this by logging in to your account on the OSAP website through the [OSAP Log-in](#) page.

Alternatively, if you do not recall the password for your OSAP account, you may contact the Student Financial Assistance Branch (SFAB) at 1-877-OSAP-411 (1-877-672-7411) to check your status.

If your OSAP account information indicates that there is no restriction, or that the restriction is not related to compliance issues or income verification, the response to the OSAP question in Section B. Eligibility should be “No”.

Before you are approved by the Ministry for SC financial assistance, Ministry staff will confirm whether you are ineligible because you are restricted from eligibility for OSAP assistance.

If you are approved for SC financial assistance and also receive OSAP assistance, your eligibility for OSAP assistance and type and amount of OSAP assistance may be reassessed and you may be required to repay all or part of your OSAP assistance.

Second Career Suitability (does not apply for the Fast Track Stream)

Individuals must meet the SC eligibility requirements above to be assessed for SC suitability. ES/IES providers must use the SC Eligibility and Suitability Assessment Template to complete the assessment process. Individuals are assessed against seven criteria, each of which has two or three measurably different indicators of suitability. Those individuals who meet the baseline score will be considered suitable for SC. Individuals who score below the baseline must be redirected to other Employment Ontario (EO) and community programs and services.

The suitability criteria are:

Active Job Search	Duration of job search and the dedication of time and effort to preparing (e.g., the creation of resume and cover letters, interview practice, compilation of references, etc.), researching (e.g., review of job postings, utilization of job-finding clubs, attendance at job fairs, etc.) and pursuing work (e.g., cold calling, applying to known and hiring employers, etc.) for employment in fields related to an individual’s work experience, skills, education and training. A client’s participation at an Action Centre is considered evidence of active job search.
Duration of Unemployment	The number of weeks an individual has been out of work based on lay-off date.
Educational Attainment	The highest education level an individual has completed.
Work History	Duration an individual has worked in same occupation.
Labour Market Prospects	A credential/license may or may not be required for the chosen occupation. An individual demonstrates greater suitability if he/she must have a credential in order to obtain employment.
Type of Training	Skills training that leads to a credential and meets additional SC skills training considerations. An individual must research at least three training institutions [including at least one College of Applied Arts and Technology (CAAT) and one Private Career College (PCC)], if feasible, and consider the cost effectiveness of training. An exception based on feasibility might include the lack of training institutions within commuting distance. This also applies to LBS training.
Experience: Occupational Skills	Extent of skills and experience an individual possess that are relevant to the current labour market and available opportunities; need for retraining.

SC Skills Training

Skills training must be vocational in nature (i.e. occupationally specific) in order to be eligible for SC consideration. Nonvocational programs, including professional development programs, are not eligible for SC funding.

Allowable skills training includes skills training for specific occupations, Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) training and English or French as a Second Language training for labour market destined individuals (i.e., LBS training if it is a prerequisite for the chosen occupational skills training or a specific employment opportunity and is not an end in and of itself). A specific employment opportunity would be a documented offer of employment on company letterhead.

Skills training is allowable for NOC skill level B and C (of the National Occupational Classification Matrix 2016) occupations and equivalent with good employment prospects in Ontario. This includes programs provided by universities. Individuals may be eligible to do skills training in a NOC A level if it is one of the identified, in-scope occupations under the Fast Track Stream.

The **Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS)** program serves individuals who are without the literacy and basic skills necessary to find and keep a job, to successfully participate in further education, to succeed in the apprenticeship program or other skills training or to meet every day needs.

The period between training start and end date cannot exceed one calendar year (12 months), excluding a maximum of one calendar year (12 months) for LBS training or language training.

Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), LBS training, language training and skills training duration may be extended to meet the special needs of these individuals, and if required the current maximum participant agreement of \$28,000 can be exceeded.

Skills training must lead to a credential, which may include micro-credentials, certificates and diplomas.

Financial Needs Assessment

Financial assistance during skills training may be provided to individuals who are determined to be eligible and most suitable for skills training. Individuals who meet the eligibility criteria and obtain the baseline suitability assessment score are then assessed to determine financial need. The Ministry is responsible for completing the financial needs assessment.

The SC financial needs assessment takes into account income level and expenses to determine the amount of financial assistance that may be required for individuals to attend skills training. As assistance is based on individual need, rates will differ from individual to individual.

Assistance may be provided to cover all or a portion of the cost of tuition and expenses. Assistance may also be provided to cover all or part of the incremental costs of participation in skills training, such as expenses relating to dependent care, disability needs (see section below), transportation and accommodation. The Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) is an eligible expense for any of the eligible cost categories that can be funded.

The SC program has a \$28,000 maximum for all costs excluding disability needs, dependent care, living away from home allowance and all costs related to Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) and/or language upgrade training.

The SC financial needs assessment takes into account the following:

- participant and spousal/partner income and potential resulting financial need for a living allowance, transportation allowance, and training access payment to support up-front costs;
- skills training and incremental costs (including tuition costs and other instructional costs, and dependent care costs); and
- costs associated with disability needs.

Household income includes any monies that are or will be received by the participant and/or their spouse/common law partner during the skills training period, from an employer or any other person (including a trustee in bankruptcy). A common law partner means living together as a couple for a continuous period of at least one year. If household income changes, individuals must contact the ministry at their earliest opportunity to request a review of their financial assistance.

For the purposes of Second Career, **household** includes the applicant, their spouse/partner, and their dependent children under the age of 18.

Tuition and Other Instructional Costs

Tuition	Assistance may be provided to cover all or a portion of the cost of tuition.
Training Access Payment	Participants with household income at or below the SC Income Threshold will receive an additional one-time payment of \$350, regardless of skill training duration, to assist with upfront training-related costs (i.e., uniforms, footwear, and safety equipment).
Living Away from Home Allowance	Individuals are eligible for Living Away from Home costs when the training institution is located at such a distance from the place of residence that individuals need to maintain (i.e., owns or rents) both a primary residence and a temporary second residence near the institution. Eligible individuals can receive \$240 per week in Living Away from Home costs.
Disability needs	The ministry expects training institutions to provide support services and/or equipment to persons with disabilities who are enrolled in skills training at the institution. Persons with Disabilities must contact their training institution to determine their need for support services or equipment. If the training institution cannot provide an individual with disability-related support services or equipment, the ministry may, in those exceptional circumstances, provide financial assistance for these disability-related costs to the individual. See below for additional details about disability needs.
Mobile computing device or other electric equipment	An institution may have Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy in place, in which case the purchase of a mobile computing device or other electronic equipment can be supported under Second Career. If it is more cost effective, participant owned equipment can be upgraded, in lieu of the purchase of new equipment. In either case the maximum amount that can be reimbursed is \$500 per participant.
Other instructional costs	Other instructional costs can include application fees (if the CAAT has not waived this fee), charges for the credential, student fees, obtaining a student card, software, supplies, library and, and photocopying charges.

Disability Needs

If required in order to accommodate participants with disabilities, the ministry may extend the duration of their participation in the SC program. Each request for an extension will be assessed by the ministry on an individual basis. If the duration of the participation in the SC program is extended, the ministry will continue to provide Basic Living Allowance (BLA) and financial assistance for all applicable costs during the extended period.

If persons with disabilities seek support for disability-related transportation costs from the ministry, they should be encouraged to first explore alternate sources of funding. If alternate funding cannot be obtained, individuals are required to provide supporting documentation to the ministry about their disability-related transportation costs.

If the ministry provides financial assistance for disability-related transportation costs, there is no maximum contribution amount in this category.

Income Tax

Financial assistance paid to Second Career participants is included as income for tax purposes. Tax will be deducted at source from financial assistance payable to participants with the exception of dependent care costs, disability costs and tuition, including tuition for Adult Basic Education, which is no longer subject to tax.

You may be able to claim the tuition tax credit for tuition that you pay in order to take a program if the training institution you attend is eligible to issue tuition receipts for purposes of the tuition tax credit.

It is your responsibility to check with the Canada Revenue Agency or any potential training institution to make sure it is eligible to issue these receipts (T2202). If the institution is not eligible, you should know that you will not be able to reduce the income tax you have to pay on the money you receive for tuition costs by means of the tuition tax credit.