



**Ministry of
Advanced Education
and Skills
Development**

**Ministère de
l'enseignement
supérieur de la
Formation
professionnelle**

SECOND CAREER (SC) GUIDELINES

Effective April 6, 2018

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Second Career (SC) Guidelines is to provide the required information and policy direction needed to deliver the SC program. These SC guidelines supersede all previous SC guidelines and are effective as of **April 6, 2018**.

1.2 Context

1.2.1 Employment Ontario

The vision of the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (the Ministry) is to have the most educated people and highly skilled workforce in the world in order to build the province's competitive advantage and quality of life.

In 2007, Employment Ontario (EO) brought together employment and training services from the federal and provincial governments into one coherent and comprehensive service delivery system. The Ministry operates EO as a one-stop source of information, services and programs for students, job seekers and employers.

The EO service promise is to:

- ensure the highest quality of service and support to help individuals meet career or hiring goals;
- provide opportunities to make it easier for individuals to improve their skills through education and training;
- ensure that no matter which EO office individuals walk into they will get the help they need;
- work with employers and communities to build the highly-skilled, highly-educated workforce Ontario needs to be competitive.

1.2.2 Background

Under the Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA), Ontario was given the authority to administer employment benefits and support measures under Part II of the *Employment Insurance Act (EI Act)*, effective January 1, 2007. Prior to this time, the federal government delivered the Skills Development program. Funded under the LMDA, it became the Ontario Skills Development (OSD) program.

In 2008, the Ministry implemented the SC program to help laid-off, unemployed workers make the transition to careers in growing areas of the economy.

In order to simplify the delivery of EO skills training programs, the SC and OSD programs were merged into one program called SC in November 2009.

The SC program is part of a broad number of services and programs offered through the integrated EO employment and training network and is designed to support laid-off,

unemployed individuals who need skills training to help them find employment in occupations with good job prospects in Ontario

2.0 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

2.1 Objective

The objective of the SC program is to provide laid-off, unemployed individuals with skills training to help them find employment in occupations with demonstrated labour market prospects in Ontario. The intention of the SC program is to return individuals to employment by the most cost effective path.

The SC program is appropriate for individuals who plan their own future, commit to an Employment Service Plan (ESP), and actively pursue its implementation. It is important to note that the SC program is intended to be one option among many EO services and programs.

2.2. Consideration for SC Approval

There are three distinct and incremental levels of assessment to determine participation in the SC program:

1. Eligibility – Determines if individuals meet the baseline requirement for further assessment and consideration.
2. Suitability (relative need/priority for skills training) – Determines if eligible individuals meet the recommended threshold.
3. Financial Need – Determines the amount of financial assistance individuals who have been found to be both eligible and suitable to participate will receive through the SC program.

For consideration under the SC program, individuals must be assessed against the eligibility requirements (see Section 2.3) and suitability criteria (see Section 2.5). Employment Service (ES) providers must use the Second Career Eligibility and Suitability Assessment Template to assess individuals against the SC eligibility requirements and suitability criteria (refer to the [Employment Ontario Partners' Gateway](#)). The Ministry is responsible for reviewing the eligibility and suitability assessment submitted by ES providers as well as assessing the financial need of individuals.

All skills training requests under the SC program must also comply with the training requirements outlined in Section 2.4 Skills Training.

2.3 Eligibility

To be eligible, individuals must:

- have been laid-off on or after January 1, 2005;

- be unemployed;
- be a resident of Ontario;
- be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident **or** be a convention refugee claimant who meets the requirements set out in Section 2.3.4
- not be ineligible pursuant to Section 2.3.6.
- demonstrate occupational demand for the skills training request with evidence of good employment prospects locally or within Ontario.

2.3.1 Laid-off

For the purposes of the SC program, “laid-off” individuals also include those:

- whose employment contract has ended;
- who have received EI Part I 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.

While there is no specific requirement regarding labour market attachment (i.e. time in job before lay-off) for the SC program, the intention is to support individuals who have established employment in the local labour market.

The individual does not have to have been laid off from a job in Ontario; the lay-off may have occurred in another province of Canada or in another country.

2.3.2 Unemployed

For the purposes of the SC program, “unemployed” includes individuals:

- working less than an average of 20 hours per week;
- who have taken an interim job to make ends meet after their initial lay-off; or
- 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 a low skill level job (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 involve 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 a lump sum payment in one or more instalments paid to employees upon termination. Severance compensates employees for loss of seniority and job-

related benefits. The allocation of the severance package will affect the calculation of individuals' financial assistance under the SC 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 SC program. However, any income will be taken into consideration later in the process as part of the assessment for financial assistance.

2.3.3 Resident of Ontario and Legally Authorized to Work in Canada

Individuals must be residents of Ontario (i.e., their home address is in Ontario) and legally authorized to work in Canada to be eligible for the SC program. There is no specific required length of time for having resided in Ontario.

2.3.4 Eligible Convention Refugee Claimants

Individuals with a 900 series SIN who are recognized as convention refugees by the Refugee Protection Division of the Immigration and Refugee Board and are awaiting their official documents (i.e., certification, regular SIN). Usually, these individuals will have a letter to this effect and must present documentation to support their change in status. Individuals must present the Ministry with their new non 900 series SIN when they receive it.

2.3.5 Additional Considerations for Eligible Individuals

- Individuals who were laid-off but are now in receipt of a "recall to work" notice from their former employer are eligible for the SC program. The ESP should confirm that skills training is the appropriate intervention rather than returning to their previous employment.
- Individuals who have lost their jobs because of business closure and were required to take early retirement packages as a result are eligible for the SC program. This applies to individuals who were laid-off and required to take early retirement packages since the implementation of the SC program in June 2008.
- Individuals who quit or were fired from an interim job after being laid-off are eligible for the SC program.
- Individuals who are seasonally unemployed are eligible for the SC program in extenuating circumstances if skills training will result in at least one of the following:
 - lengthening the period of seasonal employment thereby decreasing the lay-off period;
 - providing skills that lead to year-round employment;

- providing skills necessary to find alternate work in the off-season;
- preventing job loss where the seasonal job will change and the employee will need new skills that the employer cannot provide. The potential for job loss and skills training requirement must be verified by employer. Skills training would occur during the period of unemployment; or
- providing workers with wages that are higher than their previously received social assistance.

2.3.6 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 Training, Colleges and Universities 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.
- 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 an interim job) but quit or were terminated from the job, are not eligible for the SC program.
- Individuals who are working in a full-time job (excluding an interim job) after maternity or parental benefits have ended 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 I to employees eligible for EI Part I benefits who work a temporarily reduced work week while their employer recovers.
- Individuals with a 900 series Social Insurance Number (SIN) are not eligible for the SC until they become a permanent resident and are issued a new SIN. The only exception is for convention refugees who can present a Notice of Decision letter from the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) indicating the applicant is a protected person or the decision letter and verification of status document from a senior immigration officer indicating the applicant is a protected person

- 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 SC 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. These cases must be well documented and be approved by Ministry Regional Directors.
- Individuals who are intending to return to school in the upcoming academic year, and who have not made the transition from school to work (i.e., not worked a continuous period of 12 months), are not eligible for the SC 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 SC program.
- Individuals who have taken a leave of absence are not eligible for the SC program.
- Individuals who quit or are terminated from their employment (excluding an interim job) are not eligible for the SC program.

2.4 Eligible Training

Individual applicants must demonstrate that the proposed training:

- is vocational in nature; that is, it will provide all of the skills and knowledge required to gain employment in the specific occupation; and
- is for an occupation for which the individual can demonstrate occupational demand with evidence of good employment prospects locally or within Ontario.

2.4.1 Professional Development

Professional development (e.g., First Aid training, WHMIS, Word, Excel etc.) generally does not qualify for funding under the SC program since most professional development enhances the existing skills of individuals and is not considered vocational skills training. Please refer to Section 2.6.1.5. for additional clarification on single skills courses.

2.4.2 Occupational Demand with Evidence of Good Employment Prospects

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 (refer to EOPG website);
- submission of currently advertised job opportunities in the local labour market;
- 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).

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

2.5 Suitability

Individuals must meet the SC eligibility requirements to be assessed for SC suitability. ES providers must use the Second Career Eligibility and Suitability Assessment Template to complete the assessment process.

2.5.1 Second Career Eligibility and Suitability Assessment Template

The template is a tool to help determine which individuals are most suitable for the SC program by:

- prioritizing individuals based on transparent, consistent and measurable criteria;
- combining and balancing the needs of the laid-off individuals with the needs of the economy, demands for labour in emerging and growth sectors and/or a more highly-skilled workforce.

Individuals are assessed against seven criteria, each of which has two or three measurably different indicators of suitability. The criteria are based on the needs of individuals and demands of the economy for labour. The criteria reflect characteristics, experiences and barriers that demonstrate whether skills training is appropriate for individuals.

Those individuals who meet or exceed the baseline score will be considered suitable for the SC program. Individuals who score below the baseline must be redirected to other EO and community services and programs.

2.5.2 Suitability Criteria

The following are the SC suitability criteria. (For scoring information, refer to the Second Career Eligibility and Suitability Assessment Template.)

1. Active Job Search

Duration of job search, creation of job search tools (e.g., 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.

- More than 26 weeks.
- 13 to 26 weeks.
- Less than 13 weeks.

An individual's participation at an Action Centre is considered evidence of active job search.

Action Centres are designed to address a community need or a specific need within the community and support individuals who have lost employment. They can provide individuals with the support they need in looking for work, information on other services within the community, etc. They may be referred to under several different labels (e.g., Job Action Centre, Employment Action Centre or just Action Centre within a particular community).

Time spent in an interim job may be included in job search time when documentation of job search is provided to and supported by the ES provider.

2. Duration of Unemployment

The number of weeks an individual has been out of work based on lay-off date.

- More than 26 weeks.
- 13-26 weeks.
- Less than 13 weeks.

Time spent in an interim job is included in the duration of unemployment. For an individual who has been on maternity/paternity leave, the duration of unemployment should be calculated based on when the individual began seeking to re-enter the work force.

3. Educational Attainment

The highest education level an individual has completed.

- High school completion or less; or postsecondary completion not recognized in Ontario.
 - High school completion or less is recorded if an individual's highest level of education completed is an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) or equivalent, e.g. the General Educational Development (GED), or the equivalent in other jurisdictions, or any amount of secondary schooling up to that point.
- High school completion with some postsecondary or some apprenticeship training.
- Postsecondary completion or apprenticeship completion (Certificate of Apprenticeship or Certificate of Qualification).

For postsecondary completion not recognized in Ontario, the individual must present documentation that indicates that a relevant professional association or agency that assesses foreign education, has completed a review of the client's documentation and attests that the credential would not be recognized in the Ontario labour market.

4. Work History

Duration an individual has worked in the same occupation.

- More than 7 years.
- 3 to 7 years.
- Less than 3 years.

Work history outside of Canada should only be considered if the individual was a permanent resident of Ontario while gaining the work experience.

5. Labour Market Prospects

A credential/licence may or may not be required for the chosen occupation. An individual demonstrates greater suitability if they must have a credential/licence in order to obtain employment.

Credential/licence requirements are specific to the employment requirements associated with the specific occupation/trade. These prerequisites are stipulated by a provincial or territorial governing/regulatory body that recognizes the credentials and allows the holder to work in the occupation and/or trade.

6. Type of Skills Training

Skills training that leads to a credential and meets additional SC skills training considerations.

- Occupationally-specific skills training in NOC B or C (of the Statistics Canada NOC Skills Matrix 2016) and best skills training delivery/cost option.
- Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) training/language skills training to qualify for occupationally-specific skills training in NOC B or C.

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 skills training. This also applies to LBS training.

An example of a situation where it would not be feasible to research the required three institutions would be if there were not three institutions offering the proposed training within commuting distance.

Cost effectiveness involves several considerations such as the cost of tuition, duration of skills training (e.g., a longer skills training duration would require more basic living allowance), location of skills training and most direct route (e.g., direct participation in skills training versus LBS training as prerequisite to skills training).

7. Need for Retraining

Extent of skills and experience an individual possesses that are relevant to the current labour market and available opportunities; need for retraining.

- Work experience in NOC D occupations and there are few opportunities for sustainable, long-term employment; and/or a disability prevents an individual from using existing occupational skills.
- Work experience is in NOC B and/or NOC C occupations and there are few opportunities for long-term employment; and/or a disability prevents an individual from using existing occupational skills.

2.5.3 Suitability Decision

The assessment criteria enable a flexible, multi-faceted and defensible evaluation of an individual's need for the SC program. Building on the assessment, the decision model establishes a consistent baseline standard for SC suitability.

The baseline or threshold is 16. (It is based on analysis of typical individual scenarios and profiles.)

Individuals who score 16 or higher on the combined suitability criteria are considered most suitable for the SC program.

Individuals who do not meet the SC threshold may be considered if there are any exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances are considered at the discretion of Ministry Regional Directors. Individuals allowed under this exception must still meet SC eligibility requirements and be assessed for financial need.

2.6 Skills Training

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

Allowable skills training includes skills training for specific occupations, 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 for 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 Statistics Canada NOC Skills Matrix 2011) occupations and equivalent with good employment prospects in Ontario. This includes programs provided by universities.

Both short-term (i.e., under six months) and long-term (i.e., up to 24 months) skills training are allowable.

The maximum duration cannot exceed two calendar years (24 months), excluding a maximum of one calendar year (12 months) for LBS training or language training. In exceptional cases, the final semester/term in skills training may extend beyond the three year limit. In these exceptional cases, the final semester/term should end within a reasonable time (i.e., within one or two months) of the three-year window.

For persons with disabilities, the 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 certificate or diploma.

2.6.1 Prerequisites and Types of Skills Training

2.6.1.1 Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS)

The 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.

LBS activity described previously as “academic upgrading” is now described more specifically **for SC purposes** as preparing individuals for one of the following goal paths: postsecondary - the learning program used to prepare individuals for transition to college and other training institutions;

- employment - the learning program used to prepare individuals who require secondary school credit or secondary school equivalency for a job that they have been offered .

2.6.1.2 English as a Second Language (ESL) or French as a Second Language (FSL)

Individuals who cannot secure employment in their trade or occupation or unskilled workers who cannot be placed in suitable employment because of a lack of fluency in one of the two Canadian official languages are eligible for language training (in English or French) through the SC program. This language training (in English or French) consists of language training specifically designed to remove an employment barrier which hinders the job search efforts of individuals. The ESP must demonstrate that the lack of the vocationally related language training or language upgrading is a barrier to employment.

Upon completion of the language training, individuals should have acquired sufficient communication skills to become employed in a job that requires those skills or be proceeding with further skills training as identified in their ESP.

Caution should be exercised when considering funding under the SC program for a request to attend basic English or French language instruction as this type of training is often offered in the community at minimal or no cost. It is useful to know that the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program provides free basic French and English language courses to adult permanent residents, and is delivered by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC).

2.6.1.3 Continuing Education and Other Part-Time Skills Training

Continuing education and part-time programs are defined by each educational institution. Recommendations for these types of programs must be based on a thorough assessment and lead to employment as per the objective of SC. Part-time skills training is allowable under the following conditions:

- A ministry contribution for the cost of tuition and other instructional costs will be determined according to individual assessments based on annual gross household income. In some cases, clients will contribute to these costs.
- Basic living allowance and other supports will not be provided during part-time training. Based on an individual financial needs assessment, exceptions can be made for persons with disabilities who cannot attend full-time skills training as a result of their disabilities.

2.6.1.4 Correspondence/Online/Distance Skills Training

Correspondence/online/distance skills training can be considered for the SC program and should be carefully assessed on a case by case basis. These types of skills training alternatives must take place in a structured and interactive environment where benchmarks and timelines for completion exist. Skills training start and end dates must be clearly identified. Approval of these types of programs must not exceed the duration of similar programs which would be offered in a classroom type setting. The following considerations should be taken into account before a recommendation is made:

- Availability and accessibility of other training institutions and training methods;
- Industry recognition of certification and training provider;
- Ability/motivation of individuals to work independently;
- Suitability of this skills training method to individual learning styles; and
- Whether training institutions will offer ongoing assistance to individuals and monitor progress.

2.6.1.5 Single Skills Training

Single skill courses or a continuing education program can be taken to build on a career, education or training that an individual may already have. Any recommendation regarding SC support must be based on a thorough assessment and must move the client forward on their path to employment by the most cost effective route.

Successful completion of the single skill course must lead directly to employment and provide individuals with a certificate or diploma upon completion of the program.

2.6.1.6 Combination Skills Training

Combination courses provide training in the skills and knowledge needed for more than one occupation. Such courses are only eligible for SC funding at the discretion of the Ministry, taking into account the local labour market and employment requirements.

For example, in some areas, skills training on one piece of heavy equipment may suffice, whereas in another area skills training on one or more additional pieces may be required.

The SC-funded training must always be the most cost effective route to employment.

2.6.1.7 Clinical Placement/ Work Placement/Practicum

A clinical placement is part of a skills training program in a real life setting (e.g. hospital, clinic, laboratory) where individuals perform actual clinical procedures under the direction of an instructor. This type of placement actually moves the classroom to a hands-on facility with individuals and instructors remaining together. To be approved, a clinical placement must be a requirement for graduation and it may be up to 50% of the total program duration. It must not be approved if it is a stand-alone activity.

A work placement or practicum is a period of supervised practical application of learned theory that is a mandatory part of the skills training curriculum. This component is necessary to graduate and receive a certificate or diploma. It is an unpaid activity (i.e., no salary) that is regularly supervised and evaluated by the training institution. It is the responsibility of the training institution to arrange the work placement or practicum.

Individuals participating in a work placement or practicum component that is part of the established curriculum are eligible to continue receiving financial assistance during this period.

The acceptable amount of work placement or practicum is up to 15% of the program. A longer work placement may be acceptable if it is a requirement for certification in a particular field of study, such as the health care or education sectors. For any other exceptions to the 15% maximum, individuals must demonstrate that a longer work placement is an integral and mandatory part of the skills training program.

Training institutions must provide supervision throughout the work placement.

A work placement or practicum should be followed by at least one week in-school training (including online). In the exceptional cases where the program does not end with at least one week of in-school training, individuals must demonstrate that some form of supervision and evaluation by the training institution will take place after the work placement and for final program assessment and completion.

The Ministry must ensure that the placement is not solely a benefit to employers. The primary objective of the placement is to have the individual gain experience.

Work placements/practicums which are scheduled to take place outside of Canada cannot be supported through the SC program unless it is a mandatory requirement of the curriculum. This requirement must be identified and approved by the Ministry **prior to commencement of the program**. An example is a truck driving program where the routes are often north and south of the Canada-U.S. border.

If the work placement does not develop into an employment opportunity after graduation and lack of work experience has been identified in the ESP, individuals should work with their ES provider to explore the potential for other employment service options.

Paid work placements are allowable, however the income earned will be used in the calculation to determine the amount of SC financial assistance.

2.6.1.8 Certification Exams

Individuals cannot be supported through the SC program for the sole purpose of writing a certification exam as no skills training is involved. Certification is the issuing of a formal document attesting to a set of skills, knowledge and abilities gained through completion of set education/skills training requirements. Certification exams are required by a regulatory body that governs the practice of the occupation (e.g., registered nurses, journeypersons).

If individuals attend skills training for an occupation that requires workers to be certified as part of the skills training, the cost of the certification exam may be covered under Other Instructional Costs.

2.6.1.9 University Training

Skills training provided by a university is allowable for NOC skill level B and C (of the Statistics Canada NOC Skills Matrix 2016) occupations. Skills training for university programs at NOC skill level A, however, is not eligible under the SC program.

2.6.1.10 Examination/Test Preparation Courses

Examination/test preparation courses that have the sole purpose of preparing individuals for an examination/test and which do not provide any LBS training and skills training, are not eligible for the SC program.

Examples of courses that do not include LBS training or skills training are:

- General Educational Development (GED) preparation classes for individuals wanting to receive their high school equivalency certificate;
- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) which may be a requirement for admission into colleges and universities where instruction is in English and English is not the individual's first language.

However, examination/test preparation courses may be considered for support through the SC program if it is evident that they are part of a skills training program.

2.6.1.11 Licensing Fees

Supporting registration costs so that individuals can be “registered” or “licensed” with an association or regulatory body is not allowed through the SC program. Being registered or licensed with an association or regulatory body is not required in order for individuals to receive a certificate or diploma. While registering may include a competency exam, individuals do not receive skills training. Also, these costs are usually an annual fee, not a one-time cost.

2.6.2 Additional Skills Training Considerations

2.6.2.1 Skills Training Outside of Ontario

Generally, the Ministry will not support any skills training outside of Ontario. The skills training approved must be recognized in Ontario and applicable to the Ontario labour market.

Skills training outside of Ontario can be supported, in exceptional cases however, if one or more of the following conditions are met:

- skills training is not offered in Ontario
- an essential work placement/practicum portion of the training requires individuals to be outside of Ontario;
- skills training must be identified prior to the commencement of the program and be more cost effective for the Ministry than if taken in Ontario .

The reason for accessing an institution outside of Ontario cannot be based solely on the fact that the individual could start training at an earlier or more convenient time than at an institution in Ontario.

2.6.2.2 Short Breaks in Skills Training

Individuals may continue to receive financial assistance under the SC program during short scheduled breaks in skills training such as March break or the closure of training institutions during the summer for up to three weeks. Some costs, such as commuting costs, would not be paid during a break of this kind.

2.6.2.3 Breaks between Skills Training

During a break or gap between programs, such as the break between LBS training completion and the start of skills training, individuals will not receive SC financial assistance. Where applicable, this must be discussed before approving their ESP in order to ensure that they have the financial ability to support themselves during this period.

2.6.2.4 Interruption of Skills Training – Strike

In the event of an interruption of skills training resulting in the closure of entire classes or skills training institutions due to circumstances beyond the control of the individual (i.e., strike), financial assistance may continue to be paid until the original end date of the skills training program. If the duration of the interruption is unduly long, the Ministry may suspend financial assistance or may discuss alternate solutions.

2.6.2.5 Breaks in Skills Training Due to Illness

There are no provisions in the SC program for leave. However, there may be exceptional and unforeseeable situations which warrant special consideration on a case by case basis (e.g., short-term injury or illness).

2.6.2.6 Training Institute Closure

For situations which result in temporary and/or permanent training institute closure (e.g., an investigation or a bankruptcy), the Ministry may use its discretion and continue to pay financial assistance for a temporary period.

For permanent training institute closures, *the Training Completion Assurance Fund (TCAF)* protects individuals at registered PCCs. TCAF is an industry insurance fund. Individuals will be provided with an alternative organization that could provide the remaining training. Where it is not possible to provide alternate solutions for SC participants, refunds are issued and must be returned to the Ministry.

2.6.2.7 Salesperson Registration Education Program (Real Estate Sales Agent)

Salespersons Pre-registration Segment - Step 1 is eligible skills training under the SC program (see program structure below).

The Salesperson Registration Education program (Real Estate Sales Agent) consists of two learning steps:

Step 1: Pre-registration Segment

This step is made up of five modules:

- Real Estate as a Professional Career
- Land, Structures and Real Estate Trading
- The Real Estate Transaction – General and Residential
- The Commercial Real Estate Transaction
- Real Property Law

Individuals can complete the above five modules within 6 months, depending on exam success and specific scheduling availability.

On completion of Step 1, individuals are able to apply to the Real Estate Council of Ontario (RECO) for Initial Registration as a Salesperson. The application requires individuals to seek out a real estate broker who is willing to sign their application and take them into their brokerage. It is at this point that individuals are able to sell real estate.

Individuals must register for all five modules at the first available schedule.

Step 2: Articling Segment

Individuals are able to complete the educational requirements for renewal of the registration as a salesperson. Step 2 is not eligible for funding under the SC program. Individuals are no longer unemployed; they are working under their Initial Registration as a Salesperson while they complete Step 2.

2.6.2.8 Commercial and Helicopter Pilot Skills Training

Individuals who request assistance to take skills training to obtain a commercial pilot or helicopter pilot's licence can only be approved if they already have their private licence.

2.7 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 and have the ability to succeed.

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. The Ministry undertakes an assessment of basic living expenses and household income. The following sources of income are **not** to be included in the calculation of household income for Second Career:

- Ontario Works,
- Ontario Disability Support Program,
- HST/GST Rebates,
- Child Tax Benefit,
- Universal Child Care Benefit,
- Ontario Child Benefit,
- Ontario Child Benefit Equivalent Savings Program,
- Rental Opportunity for Ontario Families (ROOF)
- Child support payments (but spousal support is included in calculation of household income)
- Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (ACSD), Special Services at Home (SSAH) and other disability supports for children.

Assistance may be provided to cover all or a portion of the cost of tuition for a program of instruction and living expenses. Assistance may also be provided to cover all or part of the incremental costs of participation, such as expenses relating to dependent care, disability needs, transportation and accommodation. The eligible cost of any of these categories includes taxes that would normally be charged, such as the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST).

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 LBS training. While there is no limit for these exceptions, the Ministry will determine the extent of financial assistance based on allowable costs (e.g., is the cost indeed incremental, alternative sources of funding, etc.)

2.7.1 Eligible Costs

Eligible costs include:

- basic living expenses: rent/mortgage, food and utilities (i.e., hydro, heat, water, phone and Internet);
- skills training and incremental costs including tuition costs, other instructional costs, other personal supports and transportation costs and dependent care costs;
- disability needs.

Maximum Ministry contribution amounts for eligible expenses are included on the Second Career Estimate of Financial Support document (refer to EOPG website).

2.7.2 Ineligible Costs

The following are examples of ineligible costs:

- alcohol;
- cable/satellite television;
- cigarettes;
- clothing;
- charitable donations;
- children's activities such as sports, dance, etc.;
- credit card debts and repayment;
- entertainment;
- gym membership;
- insurance (car, residence(s) or life);
- pet supplies;
- personal grooming (hair stylist, aesthetician, etc.);
- recreation;
- RESP/RRSP contributions;
- vacations.

2.7.3 Overview of Financial Assessment Calculation

The SC financial needs assessment takes into account the following:

- household income;
- basic living expenses;
- skills training and incremental costs;
- costs associated with disability needs; and
- participant contribution.

2.7.4 Definition of Terms

2.7.4.1 Household Income

Any monies that are or will be received by the individual and other members of the individual's household during the skills training period, from an employer or any other person (including a trustee in bankruptcy) are considered household income, with the exception of those sources identified in Section 2.6. This includes any material monetary gifts such as scholarships, bursaries and inheritances.

If household income changes, individuals must contact the Ministry to request a review of their financial assistance.

Two categories of household income that are considered in the financial assessment calculation are:

- Monthly Gross Household Income

Income from all sources, except those identified in Section 2.7.4.1, must be included. This includes spousal support, earnings from part-time/self-employment, EI Part I benefits, pension, allocation of earnings, severance pay, and income from a rental property, received by any member of the individual's household. Any member of the household includes a spouse or common law partner (common law partner means living together as a couple for a continuous period of at least one year), and any other adults living in the house.

Monthly Net Household Income

This is the Monthly Gross Household Income minus income taxes. This amount is calculated at 0.66 of the Monthly Gross Household Income.

2.7.4.2 Basic Living Expenses

This is total monthly expenses to cover basic living needs including rent, mortgage or room and board, food, and essential utilities.

The maximum allowable basic living expenses are as follows:

- rent, mortgage or room and board are up to \$1300/family/month;
- food is up to \$200/person/month;
- phone is up to \$40/month;
- Internet is up to \$40/month;
- hydro and heat is up to \$200/month;
- water is up to \$50/month.

Costs such as credit card payments, car loans, etc., should be taken into consideration when determining if the individual is in a financial position to attend skills training; however these are not expenses that the Ministry will support.

2.7.4.3 Basic Living Allowance (BLA)

Financial assistance during skills training should be sufficient to allow for participation of those determined to be eligible and most suitable for skills training and to improve their access and ability to succeed.

Three major factors are taken into consideration in the calculation of BLA:

- total allowed monthly basic living expenses;
- total monthly net household income; and
- duration of the skills training.

During the period SC participants are in receipt of EI Part I benefits, a contribution from the Ministry may be provided towards basic living expenses up to an amount not exceeding \$410/week including EI Part I benefits. When participants are not receiving

EI Part I benefits, the Ministry may consider a contribution for the remainder of the skills training duration if the basic living expenses exceed net household income. Up to a maximum of \$410/week may be provided.

2.7.4.4 Skills Training and Incremental Costs

Skills training and incremental costs include tuition, other instructional costs, other personal supports, transportation costs, living away from home allowance, and dependent care.

2.7.4.4.1 Tuition Costs

- Tuition fees for CAAT programs are set in accordance with Ministry fee guidelines.
- Tuition fees for PCC programs will be supported based on actual costs up to a ceiling of \$10,000.
- Within that ceiling, tuition fees for PCC programs are also subject to a \$14/hr maximum, except as follows:
 - Heavy Equipment Operator related programs - \$55/hr;
 - Truck Driver related programs - \$40/hr; and
 - Welding related programs - \$25/hr.

2.7.4.4.2 Other Instructional Costs

These are costs imposed by the skills training institution, excluding regular tuition costs, which are associated with and considered essential for participation in skills training. These are outlined in Section 5.3 of these guidelines. Other instructional costs can include application fees (if the CAAT has not waived this fee), charges for a diploma or certificate, certification exams that are part of skills training, student fees, obtaining a student card, mandatory skills training related books, software, mobile computing devices or other electronic equipment, supplies, library and laboratory fees, and photocopying charges.

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, client 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 training year to a maximum of \$1000 per client.

In order to qualify for funding for mobile computing devices or other electronic equipment, the client must:

- Demonstrate that the institution requires the mobile computing device (or other electronic equipment) to fully participate in the program of study. Acceptable evidence of the institution's requirements should be included in the acceptance

letter. Alternatively the client can provide a print out from the school's website stating that the equipment is required for that program,

- Provide three written quotes for the purchase or upgrading of the device,
- Provide receipts that demonstrate that the device, or upgrading of the device, was paid for after the client was approved for Second Career.

The MAESD contribution toward the cost of the mobile computing device or other electronic equipment must not be offset by another funder.

Other instructional costs does not include fees for licensing, medicals and driver abstracts which are considered requirements for employment.

All Instructional costs must be reviewed to determine appropriateness of the amounts being requested.

Tutoring costs may be considered if tutoring services are necessary for successful completion of a program in the following circumstances:

- tutoring must be skills training related;
- individual must be attending all training unless absent for an acceptable reason (for example, short term illness);
- training institution must confirm a need for tutoring; and
- actual tutor must be recommended by the training institution.

There are instances in which individuals must pass a medical examination prior to being accepted into a program, for example, truck driver. This is an eligible cost under the SC program.

The Ministry will not reimburse costs which are considered requirements for employment. For example, the Ministry will not reimburse fees for testing or certification needed for employment on completion of skills training.

2.7.4.4.3 Other Personal Supports and Transportation Costs

These are incremental costs associated with participation in skills training such as uniforms, footwear, and safety equipment not already covered under the other instructional costs. Financial assistance may also be made towards costs related to transportation and living away from home allowance. Transportation costs are those costs that may be incurred for incremental daily commuting expenses to and from the training institution such as bus/subway/train pass or may be paid on a per-kilometre basis. These costs must be paid based on local rates for public transit when available or vehicles when required. For travel by individual vehicle, these costs are paid only for distance in excess of 24 km each way at 15 cents/km to a maximum of \$250/month or \$57.55/week and parking. Travel costs may also be incurred when individuals travel between their ordinary place of residence and the location where the skills training is provided at the beginning and end of skills training.

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 and they are not receiving financial assistance for travel (i.e., a commuting allowance).

The purchasing or leasing of capital assets under the Other Personal Supports category is not an allowable expense.

Training institutions must provide the laboratory equipment, tools or other capital items required for learning the curriculum, except as provided under “Other Instructional Costs”. It is further recognized that “tools of the trade” should be either supplied by the employer at the time of hiring or purchased by the workers themselves (for the employed or self-employed).

2.7.4.4.4 Dependent Care Costs

Financial assistance for incremental dependent care costs may be provided if they are incurred for the care of children or other persons who are dependent upon the participants while they are participating in the SC program. These are incremental costs incurred for the care of a child under 14 years of age or person with a disability who is dependent upon the participant for care while they participate in skills training. A dependant must reside with the participant or be under their care and be wholly or partially dependent on their for support.

In determining the incremental dependent care costs, the Ministry will take into account how dependants were cared for prior to individuals participating in the SC program and will be cared for when participants have completed the program.

Financial assistance may be considered for dependent care provided by household members if this arrangement had previously been in place, acceptable proof is presented and if the need is incremental. For example, a grandparent was caring for a child one day a week, but must now care for the child five days a week to allow a participant to attend skills training (i.e., four days may be considered for financial assistance).

The maximum rate of coverage is \$1,000/dependant/month to a maximum of \$2,000/household/month.

2.7.4.5 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 discuss their need for support services or equipment with their training institution.

Services and equipment provided by training institutions to persons with disabilities may include:

- assessments or advice on learning strategies;
- academic materials in alternative formats including digitized text, Braille, large print, voice activated software, assisted hearing devices;
- sign language interpreters or real time captioning for persons who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing;
- adaptive technology and training on it;
- in-class assistance from specialized professionals;
- in-class supports (e.g., tutors, interpreters).

Note: 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.

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 participation in the SC program is extended, the Ministry will continue to provide 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.

2.7.4.6 Participant Contribution

The SC participants may be required to contribute to their skills training costs and incremental costs as a demonstration of their commitment to the ESP. The required contribution is a percentage of the total of the allowable amount for skills training and incremental costs. Costs associated with addressing disability needs are not included when calculating participant contribution.

The Second Career Participant Contribution Chart has been developed to determine the amount of contribution that a participant must contribute, based on gross household income. This chart takes into consideration the Statistics Canada 2008 before tax Low Income Cut-off (LICO) for urban areas with a population over 500,000 to provide the greatest benefit to all participants. Participant contribution is only required if the gross household income is several thousand dollars over the LICO amount.

The LICO is an income threshold based on gross household earnings below which a family must devote a significant share of its income to the necessities of food, clothing and shelter, and as such suffers financial hardship. The LICO is based upon the figures that are published annually by Statistics Canada for Ontario. To reflect differences in the cost of necessities among families of different sizes, there are six levels of family sizes per Income Level Group.

The contribution percentages are specified in the contribution chart. The amount of the contribution determined through this process will be deducted from the SC participant agreement amount.

2.7.5 Financial Hardship

The Ministry has the capacity to address the financial situation of individuals which may prevent them from participating in the SC program. The consideration of financial hardship includes all aspects of the financial needs assessment including allowable expenses and participant contribution. In exceptional circumstances, individuals experiencing financial hardship maybe be considered for additional funding at the discretion of Ministry Regional Directors. The overall participant agreement value, however, cannot exceed the maximum of \$28,000.

2.8 Additional Considerations

2.8.1 Employment Insurance Act (Part I) and Section 25 Approval

Individuals are required to be capable of and available for work and must demonstrate that they are actively seeking employment in order to be entitled to EI Part I benefits. In approving the SC program for active EI Part I claimants, a Section 25 approval from the Ministry will release them from their obligation to actively look for work while they are pursuing their SC training. The Ministry provides Section 25 approval on behalf of Service Canada; therefore, careful consideration is required in these cases.

Requests for backdating Section 25 approval **may** be considered in cases where individuals who had initially been disqualified by Service Canada from receiving EI Part I benefits, appeal the case and win, resulting in their EI Part I claims being established and backdated.

2.8.2 Feepayer

Feepayers are EI Part I claimants who have requested and received section 25 approval from the Ministry to continue to collect EI Part I benefits for the duration of their entitlement period while attending approved skills training. Like individuals who receive SC financial assistance, feepayers must be case managed. They too must develop a

mutually agreed upon ESP that identifies a lack of skills as the barrier to employment and which supports their request for Section 25 approval under the EI Act.

Feepayer approval must only be used when individuals are able to pay for their skills training but require their EI Part I benefits for the entire skills training duration. Feepayer approval **must not be used** if individuals will require SC funding in order to complete skills training.

Feepayers must sign an acknowledgement form that states that they will not request financial assistance from the Ministry under any circumstances to support them with their training plan.

2.8.3 Individuals with an Existing Support Order or Agreement

Individuals must disclose the existence of a Support Order or Agreement as early in their case management process as possible, and in any event before approval of their SC applications.

The Family Responsibility Office (FRO) receives every support order made by Ontario courts and enforces the payments of the amounts owed under the support order. The FRO also administers private written agreements that have been registered with it and court orders made in other jurisdictions that have reciprocal arrangements with Ontario. The FRO has the legal authority to collect support payments and arrears of support and can take enforcement actions including garnishment for support orders and agreements that are filed with FRO.

2.8.4 Existing Overpayments

If the ESP is determined to be appropriate by Ministry staff, the existence of an overpayment owing to the Province, whether or not a repayment plan is in place, should not, in itself, change the referral decision to be considered for the SC program.

It is very important to discuss with individuals the circumstances which lead to the establishment of any outstanding overpayments and/or penalties. The Ministry would not increase the amount of Part II financial assistance to help individuals repay an existing accounts receivable/penalty. Individuals approved under the SC program can request a deferral of overpayment recovery until after the end of the skills training plan.

3.0 PROGRAM DELIVERY

3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1.1 Employment Service (ES) Providers

Individuals interested in skills training must meet with ES provider staff and complete a thorough employment service needs assessment and explore EO and other community employment programs and services. It is important to note that the SC program is one of many EO options; referral to the SC program should be carefully considered.

Through the assessment process, individuals will develop a mutually agreed upon ESP with an ES provider staff. If skills training is identified as the most appropriate way to address individuals' employment needs, it must be specified in the ESP. The ESP must also include a confirmation that individuals have demonstrated that they have completed a thorough job search and it has proved unsuccessful before being referred to the SC program.

The ES providers are also responsible for assessing individuals against the SC eligibility and suitability requirements. This includes responsibility for completing the Second Career Eligibility and Suitability Assessment Template. By signing the template, ES providers are attesting to the fact that they have assessed SC eligibility and suitability for individuals. Although the assessment is conducted by ES providers, the decision to approve individuals for the SC program is made by the Ministry. If there is inconsistency in the information provided by ES providers, the Ministry may request further information and documentation.

The ES providers are also responsible for follow-up and reporting on SC participant outcomes.

3.1.2 Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (the Ministry)

The Ministry is responsible for:

- providing general information and advice to individuals about the SC program;
- directing individuals to an ES provider;
- confirming individuals' EI Part I status if applicable and approving Section 25 Referral for active EI Part I claimants;
- approving or denying individuals based on a review of their ESPs and SC application packages;
- advising individuals in writing that their SC applications has been denied. The denial letter must advise individuals why the Ministry has not approved their application, how individuals can request a review of the decision and where possible, offer alternate options;
- administering the Skills Training Application Review Process (STARP);
- assessing financial need and specifying the amount of SC financial assistance for approved individuals;
- signing an SC participant agreement;
- ensuring participants understand their responsibilities;
- issuing financial assistance payments; and
- administering SC participant agreements including monitoring individuals' progress and financial activity.

3.1.3 SC Participants

The SC participants are responsible for:

- developing a mutually agreed upon ESP with an ES provider;
- submitting the Second Career Application for Financial Assistance and required accompanying documentation;
- providing evidence of the need for financial assistance;
- signing an SC participant agreement;
- using the financial assistance as outlined in the SC participant agreement;
- pursuing skills training diligently and making their best efforts to complete it successfully;
- providing the Ministry with proof of payment to the training institution of each instalment of their tuition immediately after payment of the instalment;
- keeping receipts, vouchers or other documentary proof of all their skills training costs and submitting them as requested;
- notifying the Ministry immediately in writing of:
 - any income (including OSAP, scholarships and bursaries) they receive during their skills training that was not included in the application for financial assistance
 - any other changes in their financial situation
 - any employment while in skills training
 - any change in skills training content or if it is cancelled
 - their intention to withdraw from the skills training
 - their absence from skills training for any reason
 - any suspension, expulsion, withdrawal and the reasons for same;
 - any change of address(es); and
- following the SC program direction and/or advice provided by the ES provider and/or the Ministry.

3.1.4 Training Institutions

Quality skills training is provided by both Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (CAATs) and Private Career Colleges (PCCs). Numerous factors are taken into consideration in the identification of a suitable training institution, such as location and duration of the skills training, skills training content, and date of availability of the skills training.

The ES providers and the Ministry must not encourage individuals to select public or private institutions on the basis of personal bias. Individuals' preferences should be fully considered with emphasis placed on skills training that provides the most cost effective path to employment.

3.1.4.1 College of Applied Arts and Technology (CAAT)

Publicly assisted CAATs offer a range of skills training programs that may be approved under the SC program. To find more information on the colleges and the programs offered at each college, refer to [Colleges Ontario](#).

3.1.4.2 Private Career College (PCC)

A PCC is an independent business. PCCs operating in Ontario must be registered and must have their programs approved by the Ministry (unless they are exempt). PCCs must comply with the registration requirements in keeping with the provincial regulations and standards under the *Private Career Colleges Act, 2005* (PCCA). A decision to support individuals through the SC program should be made in view of those existing policies and legislation.

Individuals enrolled in skills training that is exempt from approval under the PCCA must be made aware that they are not entitled to student protection measures under the PCCA.

The *Private Career Colleges Act, 2005* came into effect on September 18, 2006. The primary goals of the PCCA are to protect students, improve quality and strengthen the accountability of all institutions that make up the PCC sector.

To determine if a skills training program is approved and offered at a registered institution, refer to the [Private Career Colleges](#) section of Ontario.ca.

3.1.4.3 Partnership between a CAAT and PCC

When a CAAT enters into a partnership or other arrangement with a PCC to deliver skills training programs, the CAAT shall not pay, transfer or otherwise remunerate the PCC greater amounts than the applicable SC PCC tuition policy (e.g., \$14/hour up to a maximum of \$10,000 tuition costs with some defined exemptions as previously set out).

For individuals registered with a CAAT, the conditions for providing SC funding to them when a CAAT/PCC partnership exists are:

- the CAAT must identify in the individuals' letter of acceptance that it is partnering with a PCC to deliver the skills training program;
- the credential must be granted by the CAAT; and
- they must meet all other SC program requirements.

Example:

An individual applies to a PCC for a skills training program for which the tuition fee is \$8,000. If the conditions outlined above have been met, then the individual may be eligible for up to \$8,000 for tuition fees (as determined by the SC financial assessment), assuming a similar program at a CAAT also has \$8,000 tuition.

Other instructional costs not covered under the tuition definition may also be paid according to existing guidelines.

3.1.5 Other Training Deliverers

3.1.5.1 School Boards

School Boards and School Board affiliates are also eligible skills training providers for LBS training and skills training.

3.2 Additional Considerations

3.2.1 Employment While Attending Skills Training

Participants may work while attending skills training as long they can still fulfill the terms of their SC participant agreement. The intention is to ensure that individuals devote enough time to their studies for successful completion.

Participants must advise the Ministry of any change in financial circumstances as it may have an impact on their Ministry financial assistance. Individuals receiving EI Part I benefits must contact Service Canada regarding their reporting requirements prior to starting employment.

4.0 ACCOUNTABILITY

4.1 Expected Outcome

The expected outcome for the SC program is skills attainment to help individuals find employment in occupations with demonstrated labour market prospects in Ontario.

4.2 Participant Agreement

The Ministry enters into an SC participant agreement with all approved participants. The participant agreement is subject to audit. The participant agreement sets out the legal terms and conditions of financial assistance.

4.2.1 Changes in Financial Circumstances

The SC participants must advise the Ministry of any changes to their financial circumstances during skills training. Changes in financial circumstance may necessitate the re-assessment of the amount of financial assistance that was originally determined.

4.2.2 Leave of Absence or Termination of Participant Agreement

There are no provisions in the SC program for leave. However, there may be exceptional and unforeseeable situations which warrant special consideration on a case by case basis (e.g., short-term injury or illness).

An SC participant agreement can be terminated if participants do not adhere to participant agreement terms and conditions.

The participant agreement may be terminated if skills training is cancelled.

The Ministry can also terminate the participant agreement if participants:

- withdraw from skills training;
- are expelled from skills training ;
- are suspended from skills training;
- complete skills training early;
- fail to comply with obligations in the participant agreement;
- provide information in their applications that is untrue, inaccurate or incomplete.

The Ministry must notify a participant in writing of the termination of the SC agreement. The letter should clearly state how participants failed to fulfill their obligations, including following advice provided by the Ministry, and should also include details of final payments or overpayments, if applicable.

4.2.3 Refunds

The SC participants should be advised of any financial implications that may result from them withdrawing from, or being suspended or expelled from skills training as outlined in the SC participant agreement.

If individuals terminate their skills training and, as a result, a refund from the skills training institution is payable, the Ministry would be entitled to an amount that bears the same ratio to the amount the Ministry funded. If individuals do not reimburse the Ministry accordingly, an overpayment must be established.

4.3 Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

All SC participant agreements are subject to monitoring of activities, expenditures and results. The principle purpose of SC monitoring is to ensure that participants are complying with their SC participant agreement and that the funds are spent as specified. Through monitoring, the Ministry is able to collect data on the ongoing success of participants as well as mitigate any potential risks of inappropriate use of funds, and to ensure that any monies owing or debt to Ontario is identified in a timely manner.

The Ministry should reinforce with SC participants the importance of submitting receipts to avoid an unnecessary overpayment if funds are not reconciled.

All files must contain evidence of monitoring along with additional supporting documentation as required. Documentary evidence of all monitoring whether in person, by telephone or mail must be placed on file.

The Ministry will review the SC program on an ongoing basis and evaluate the program as required to determine if participants are meeting expected outcomes.

5.0 ADMINISTRATION

5.1 Protection of Privacy

In order to comply with its obligations under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA), the Ministry will obtain the consent of the affected individuals to the indirect collection of their limited personal information via the SC Application for Financial Assistance and SC Participant Agreement. In addition, the Ministry will give these individuals notice of the uses it proposes to make of their personal information. One of these uses is sharing an individual's personal information with external third parties such as other service providers and other government departments.

5.2 SC Forms

The SC forms for ES providers are posted on the [Employment Ontario Partners' Gateway](#) (EOPG) website.

5.3 Taxation

For the purpose of determining eligible tuition and other instructional costs, the Ministry uses Canada Revenue Agency definitions for eligible tuition costs as follows:

- admission fees
- charges for use of library or laboratory facilities
- exemption fees
- examination fees (including re-reading charges) that are integral to a program of study
- application fees (but only if the student subsequently enrolls in the institution)
- confirmation fees
- charges for a certificate, diploma or degree
- membership or seminar fees that are specifically related to an academic program and its administration
- mandatory computer service fees
- academic fees

Under the *Income Tax Act*, all financial assistance provided from the Ministry to participants is to be included as income for income tax purposes with the exception of Adult Basic Education (i.e. LBS) tuition assistance and other skills training courses or programs that do not qualify for the existing tuition tax credit. Using additional Ministry funds to make up any shortfall due to income tax deductions at source is not permitted.

To claim tuition amounts the student must have received a Form T2202A - Tuition and Enrolment Certificate from their skills training provider.

The Tuition and Enrolment Certificate is issued to a student who was enrolled during the calendar year in a qualifying educational program or a specified educational program at a post-secondary institution, such as a college or university, or at an institution certified by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC).

Second Career participants requiring information on taxation should be directed to the Canada Revenue Agency at 1-800-959-8281 or <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/taxes.html>