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Government Assistance to Hire Youth

The purpose of this document is to provide employers with greater insight into the government support programs that are available to hire youth. Each program has unique eligibility criteria and application processes. As a result, this document has been divided into two sections; the first section outlines programs that employers can apply to, while the second section outlines programs that youth can apply to. This allows you to be aware of the youth application programs that are available and, therefore, encourage your young employees to participate.

Contact us to further discuss these opportunities and any questions you may have regarding program eligibility.

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Employer Application Programs

Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program

Program Overview

The Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) is a School to Work program that opens the door for students to explore and work in apprenticeship occupations starting in Grade 11 or Grade 12 through the Cooperative Education program. Students have an opportunity to become registered apprentices and work towards becoming certified journeypersons in a skilled trade while completing their secondary school diplomas.

In today's competitive economy, training is critical to the success of a business. But training can be expensive. Financially, OYAP participation can be beneficial to employers:

- Through OYAP, employers are provided with the opportunity to assess students before committing to employment or apprenticeship.
- WSIB coverage is provided by the Ministry of Education during the contract as long as the student is not paid a wage.
- OYAP provides employers with information on where to access wage subsidies to assist with the initial hiring costs of OYAP graduates and summer students.
- Through the Apprenticeship Job Creation Tax Credit (AJCTC), employers can claim up to \$2000/year for the wages of *each eligible apprentice*.
 - An eligible apprentice is someone who is working in a prescribed trade in the first two years of their apprenticeship contract. This contract must be registered with a federal, provincial, or territorial government under an apprenticeship program designed to certify or license individuals in the trade.

For more information related to finding and hiring apprentices in Ontario, please visit:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/hire-apprentice>.

Employer Eligibility

Employers who have qualified journeypersons or equivalent at their workplace and are willing to provide eligible students with supervision and training qualify for participation in the OYAP program and related funding.

Youth Eligibility

To be eligible for OYAP, students must:

- be at least 16 years old;
- have completed 16 credits towards the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) prior to starting the program;
- be enrolled as a full-time student during the program; and
- be working towards the completion of all OSSD requirements.

Students participate in OYAP through enrollment in a Cooperative Education program.

How to Apply

Employers will be able to claim the AJCTC on their individual income tax return, on line 41200 – Investment tax credit, by filing form [T2038\(IND\), Investment Tax Credit \(Individuals\)](#).

For more information regarding the AJCTC credit, please visit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/individuals/topics/about-your-tax-return/tax-return/completing-a-tax-return/deductions-credits-expenses/line-41200-investment-tax-credit/apprenticeship-job-creation-tax-credit.html>.

Hiring and Training Youth Funding

Program Overview

Employment Ontario provides employers with various levels of support to hire youth through Employment Service, Youth Job Connection, or Youth Job Connection Summer. Hiring a young person through one of these Employment Ontario programs awards employers with numerous benefits as these programs are aimed to provide employers with:

- An employee who is ready to work and has completed workshops to help prepare them for the workplace.
- Job coaches who provide ongoing support to employers and their young employee
- Financial incentives to help employers manage the costs associated with hiring and training youth through the Youth Job Connection and Youth Job Connection Summer programs.
- Financial incentives to provide on-the-job training for participants in job placements through the Employment Service program.
- A placement incentive to hire, register, and train an apprentice through the Apprenticeship Employer Signing Bonus.
- Additional financial help to offset training costs.

Employer Eligibility

Employers interested in hiring youth through Employment Service, Youth Job Connection, and Youth Job Connection Summer must:

- prove you are licensed to operate in Ontario;
- comply with workplace, human rights and labour legislation;
- have workplace safety and liability insurance; and
- offer job opportunities that take place in Ontario.

Employers who are already receiving other government financial support for a particular position, will not be able to qualify for the additional level of funding offered through Employment Service, Youth Job Connection or Youth Job Connection Summer.

Youth Eligibility

In order to receive help to find training, skills and experience through Employment Service, youth must reach out to an Employment Ontario service provider that will help connect them to a business that is looking to hire youth.

In order to apply for Youth Job Connection, youth must be:

- between 15 and 29 years old;
- unemployed;
- not attending full-time school or training; and
- a resident of Ontario.

It is important to note that if youth are under the age of 18, they must already be legally excused from school. This means that they have either graduated or are participating in a supervised alternative learning program that has been approved by their school board.

In order to apply for Youth Job Connection Summer, youth must be:

- between 15 and 18 years old;
- a resident of Ontario; and
- a high school student planning to stay in or return to school or planning to move on to postsecondary education.

How to Apply

To hire a young person through Employment Service, Youth Job Connection or Youth Job Connection Summer, please visit the corresponding application portal below:

- Employment Service:
<https://www.eoss.tcu.gov.on.ca/CitizenPortal/infoAboutYou.do?programCode=ESTI&lang=en>.
- Youth Job Connection:
<https://www.eoss.tcu.gov.on.ca/CitizenPortal/infoAboutYou.do?programCode=YJCE&lang=en>.
- Youth Job Connection Summer:
<https://www.eoss.tcu.gov.on.ca/CitizenPortal/infoAboutYou.do?programCode=YJCSE&lang=en>.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Youth Employment and Skills Program

Program Overview

The Youth Employment and Skills Program provides a wage subsidy to employers who hire youth for agricultural jobs. In order for projects to be considered, employers can apply after May 26, 2020 with opportunities that will provide youth with agriculture career-related work experience and skills in Canada. Examples of typical projects consist of:

- Farmers who wish to hire farm workers for planting and harvesting crops or managing livestock.
- Agricultural businesses, such as greenhouses, orchards, vineyards, vegetable producers who have labor needs.
- Small businesses who supply agricultural products or services.
- Food processors in need of labor.

Projects must provide youth with a full-time position (30+ hours/week) that lasts a minimum of 4 months and provides work experience towards increasing employability in the agriculture and agri-food sector. All projects must be completed by March 21, 2021. The program contributes 50% of a new hire's wages and benefits to a maximum of \$14,000. If the new hire must relocate for the position, the program offers 100% of costs for relocation to a maximum of \$5,000. It is important to note that applications will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis as long as funds are available. Employers who have recently hired youth may claim costs retroactive to April 1, 2020.

Employer Eligibility

Eligible employers consist of agricultural related organizations such as farmers, food processors and agricultural related non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Canada who can offer opportunities that will give youth agriculture career-related work experiences and skills. In addition, Indigenous individuals or organizations as well as employers who hire a youth facing barriers could be eligible to receive 80% of total eligible costs, up to a maximum of \$14,000, if approved. Employers who hire a youth facing barrier and address the employment barriers, could receive an additional \$5,000 to cover the costs of mitigating the barriers.

Youth Eligibility

Eligible employers are responsible for hiring and verifying the eligibility of participants for the Youth Employment and Skills Program. Eligible youth must be:

- 30 years or younger when starting the internship;
- unemployed or underemployed, a student, or a previous intern of any Youth Employment and Skills Strategy (YESS) program; and
- a Canadian citizen or permanent resident.

How to Apply

To apply for the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Youth Employment and Skills Program the following required documents must be included in the application:

- [Project Application Form.](#)
- [Signature of Applicant Authorized Representative.](#)
- A copy of the organization's Certificates or Articles of Incorporation.

For additional application details, please review the applicant guide: <http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/agricultural-programs-and-services/youth-employment-and-skills-program/applicant-guide/?id=1558438957602>.

Student Work Placement Program

Program Overview

The Student Work Placement Program gives post-secondary students across Canada paid work experience related to their field of study. Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) works with Employer Delivery Partners. Employer Delivery Partners are a group of recognized associations and organizations that represent the interests of employers in industries. They work with businesses and post-secondary education institutions to:

- Provide wage subsidies to employers that offer quality student work placements.
 - employers could receive up to \$5,000 for every student hired through the program.
 - employers could receive up to \$7,000 for every student hired that is in their first year or is from an under-represented group including women in STEM, persons with disabilities, newcomers and Indigenous student.
- Create partnerships with colleges, universities, polytechnics and CEGEPs to recruit students for these placements.

In response to COVID-19, several requirements have been waived in order to ensure that the needs of employers and students are met.

- Employers will have the flexibility to postpone placement start dates and reduce hours to avoid rescinding placements.
- Preapproval for funding.
 - Employers can apply for funding before they finalize their selection of students to hire.
- Students previously hired may be eligible for funding, net-new requirement has been temporarily suspended.
- Receive up to 75% of the wage subsidies up-front, and the remaining 25% halfway through the placement for SME (500 or less employees) including not-for-profit organizations.

- Stacking with provincial tax credits or incentives are allowed, but it's the employer's responsibility to follow their provincial tax credit guidelines and consult a tax professional. Please note, wage subsidy funds cannot be counted toward any tax credits, only actual paid wages. Employers cannot receive more than 100% of wages in any combination of incentives.
- Students will be able to work from home or other safe worksites.

Employer Eligibility

Employers who hire students for the purpose of experiential learning are eligible for to receive funding through the Student Work Placement Program. Student work placement activities can include, but are not limited to:

- mentorship programs;
- co-op placements;
- practicums;
- applied research projects; and
- internships.

Furthermore, employers can hire students in any program, including Arts, Business, and Science.

Youth Eligibility

In order for employers to qualify for funding through the Student Workplace Placement Program, students must be Canadian citizens, permanent residents or a person to whom refugee protection has been conferred under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act for the duration of employment.

How to Apply

To apply for wage subsidies through an Employer Delivery Partner, please visit:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/student-work-placements-wage-subsidies.html>.

Canada Summer Jobs Program

Program Overview

The Canada Summer Jobs Program is an initiative which aims to provide flexible and holistic services to support all young Canadians develop the skills and gain paid work experience to successfully transition in the labour market.

The program provides wage subsidies to employers from not-for-profit organizations, the public-sector, and private sector organizations with 50 or fewer full-time employees, to create quality summer work experiences for eligible youth. Not-for-profit employers are eligible to receive funding for up to 100% of the provincial or territorial minimum hourly wage, while public and private sector employers are eligible to receive funding for up to 50% of the provincial or territorial minimum hourly wage.

The deadline to apply for this federal program was closed on February 28th, 2020 and has not been extended. Employers must have applied for this program before February 28th, 2020 to be eligible. For employers that did sign up, the program deadline has been extended to February 28th, 2021. Further application dates for 2021 have yet to be announced.

Employer Eligibility

Eligible projects must:

- provide full-time work experience from May to August in Canada for a minimum of six weeks;
- provide a work experience in an inclusive non-discriminatory work environment that respects the rights of all Canadians; and
- support skills acquisition and development.

In order to receive funding for eligible projects, employer applications will be reviewed through the following steps:

- Screened for eligibility against the 15 mandatory eligibility requirements.
 - The project, as outlined in the application, will not be able to proceed for assessment if it does not meet all 15 eligibility requirements.
 - For a full list of eligibility requirements, please visit:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/funding/canada-summer-jobs/screening-eligibility.html>.
- Assessed for quality in relation to the program objectives:
 - provide quality work experiences for youth;
 - provide opportunities for youth to develop and improve their skills; and
 - respond to national and local priorities to improve access to the labour market for youth who face unique barriers.

Youth Eligibility

Eligible youth must:

- be between 15 and 30 years of age at the start of employment;
- be a Canadian citizen, permanent resident, or person to whom refugee protection has been conferred under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* for the duration of the employment; and
- have a valid Social Insurance Number at the start of employment and be legally entitled to work in Canada in accordance with relevant provincial or territorial legislation and regulations.

How to Apply

To apply for the Canada Summer Jobs Program, please visit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/funding/canada-summer-jobs/apply.html>.

Youth Application Programs

Ontario Second Career Program

Program Overview

Second Career is for laid-off/unemployed workers for which skills training is the most appropriate intervention to transition them into high-skill, demand occupations in the local labour market. Recently laid-off and unemployed workers can be active EI claimants, EI reachback or non-EI eligible. In addition to obtaining the specific skills needed for jobs that are currently in high demand, Second Career also provides financial support. If workers qualify for the program, they could apply for up to \$28,000 to help offset costs such as:

- Tuition
- Books
- Manuals, workbooks or other instructional costs
- Transportation
- Basic living allowance (maximum of \$410 per week)
- Childcare

Youth Eligibility

Youth qualify for Second career when:

- they have been laid off and have not been working;
- they have been laid off and are working a temporary job just to cover costs; or
- if they are receiving Employment Insurance (EI), or have in the past, they can still apply.

How to Apply

An employment service agency will support youth through the Second Career application process. When preparing their application, eligible youth must indicate:

- how long they have been unemployed, or working their temporary job, and looking for work;
- organizations they have applied to and positions they have applied for
 - cover letters, CV and responses from potential employers should be included in the application to verify job search activity;
- their attained level of education;
- where they worked before, for how long and what skills they needed for their position;
- what skills they would like to obtain and where they can receive training for these skills
 - at least three training institutions must be researched; and
- information showing the skills and job they want to train for are in demand
 - this can be shown through job postings and news of future job opportunities.

Financial information including income, household income (e.g. spouse), and current expenses must also be provided during the application process in order to determine the level of funding that will be provided to off-set the costs of skills-training.

To find an agency in their community and book an appointment with an Employment Ontario Counsellor, youth are asked to visit: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/second-career>. Agency staff will be available to help youth gather the information needed to support their Second Career application.

Employment Insurance for Apprentices

Program Overview

Youth who have been referred by their province or territory to attend full-time technical training (sometimes referred to as block-release training), may be eligible to receive Employment Insurance (EI) benefits while unemployed and attending their courses.

Youth who have lost their job through no fault of their own, and who are not attending full-time technical training, may visit the EI regular benefits page to apply for benefits:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-regular-benefit.html>.

Youth Eligibility

Before applying for EI Benefits, youth must obtain proof of referral in order to receive EI benefits. The applicable province, territory, or training institution will issue a 16-diget code as proof of referral when youth are approved to attend full-time technical training. This reference code must be provided when completing the online application. It is important for youth to contact their province, territory, or training institution if they do not know, or have not received their reference code.

How to Apply

Youth must apply for EI benefits up to seven days before their last day of work using Service Canada's online application. The following items must be taken into consideration when apply for EI benefits:

- All Records of Employment (ROEs) issued over the past 52 weeks must be provided.
- If employers issue ROEs in paper format, youth must request copies of all ROEs issued to them during the last 52 weeks and provide them to Service Canada as soon as possible after they submit their EI application. They must either mail Service Canada the original copies of their paper ROEs or drop them off in person at a Service Canada Centre. The mailing address will be provided on the Information Confirmation page once they submit their online application for EI benefits.
- If employers submit ROEs electronically to Service Canada, youth do not need to provide copies to Service Canada. They can view copies of their electronic ROEs by visiting My Service Canada Account.
- If youth are leaving work for the sole purpose of attending full-time technical training for which they are referred by their province or territory, the youth's apprentice employer should use Code J in block 16 as the reason for issuing the ROE.
- Errors or delays in providing ROEs may lead to delays in the youth's eligibility to receive benefits.
- If youth applied for or are already receiving EI before they start their full-time technical training, they should contact Service Canada to provide their proof of referral in order to receive EI benefits while on training.



For additional information related to updating their online profile and determining which other pieces of information they need to be aware of, youth are asked to visit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/apprentices/ei-apprentices.html>.

Youth Programs in Response to COVID-19

Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, announced comprehensive support of nearly \$9 billion for post-secondary students and recent graduates. These measures include:

- Launching the Canada Emergency Student Benefit, which will provide support to students and new graduates who are not eligible for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit.
 - up to \$1,250 per month for eligible students.
 - up to \$1,750 per month for eligible students with dependents or disabilities.
- Expanding existing federal employment, skills development, and youth programming through:
 - Doubling Canada Student Grants in 2020-2021.
 - up to \$6,000 for eligible full-time students.
 - up to \$3,600 for eligible part-time students.
 - Doubling Canada Student Grants for students with permanent disabilities and students with dependents.
 - Broadening eligibility for student financial assistance by removing the expected student and spouse contributions in 2020-21.
 - Enhancing the Canada Student Loans Program by raising the maximum weekly amount that can be provided to a student in 2020-21 from \$210 to \$350.
 - Increasing existing distinctions-based support for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation students pursuing post-secondary education by providing an additional \$75.2 million in 2020-21.
 - Extending expiring federal graduate research scholarships and postdoctoral fellowships, and supplement existing federal research grants, to support students and post-doctoral fellows, by providing \$291.6 million to the federal granting councils.