SECOND CAREER (SC) GUIDELINES

Effective June 1, 2012
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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 program guidelines integrate the Ontario Skills Development (OSD) Guidelines of August 2007 and the SC Operational Guidelines of June 2010. These SC guidelines supersede all previous SC guidelines and incorporate SC Questions and Answers (Qs & As) and are effective as of June 1, 2012.

1.2 Context

1.2.1 Employment Ontario

The vision of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (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 OSD program.

In 2008, the Ministry implemented the SC program to help laid-off, unemployed workers make the transition to new 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 as one program called SC in November 2009.
The SC program is part of a broad number of services and programs offered through the integrated employment and training network, EO and is designed to support laid-off, unemployed individuals who want to take control of their careers.

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 contribute to 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 eligible and most suitable individuals will receive through the SC program.

For consideration under the SC program, individuals must be assessed based on the SC eligibility (see Section 2.3) and suitability requirements (see Section 2.4). Employment Service (ES) providers must use the Second Career Eligibility and Suitability Assessment Template to assess individuals against SC eligibility and suitability criteria (refer to the Employment Ontario Partners’ Gateway - EOPG website). 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 comply with the requirements outlined in Section 2.5 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 legally authorized to work in Canada; and
- demonstrate occupational demand for the skills training request with evidence of good employment prospects locally or within Ontario.
**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 definition 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. (Also see Section 2.3.6 Ineligible Individuals regarding transition from school to work).

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

**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 may have taken an interim job to make ends meet after their initial lay-off;
- on salary continuance or who have received severance pay.

An “interim job” is a job that laid-off individuals have taken while seeking better employment. It must have a lower wage than the initial lay-off job and be a low skill level job (i.e. NOC D of the Statistics Canada 2011 NOC Skills Matrix). These jobs may be full-time, part-time, and seasonal or contract work.

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

Severance 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.

Source of income, such as salary continuance, severance pay and EI Part I benefits is not an eligibility criterion for the SC program; however, it will be taken into consideration as part of the assessment for financial assistance.

**2.3.3 Resident of Ontario and Legally Authorized to Work in Canada**

Individuals must be a resident 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.
Individuals must also be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident legally authorized to work in Canada. Individuals working in Canada on a temporary work permit, who have been granted permanent resident status, are also eligible for the SC program. These individuals must provide documentation to support their change in status.

2.3.4 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); or
- submission of currently advertised job opportunities in the local labour market; or
- submission of attestations from employers that they are hiring for the occupation; or
- evidence of future job opportunities (e.g. future plant or office expansion, new employer).

The minimum number of advertised job opportunities or employer attestations required is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communities with a population</th>
<th>One (1) job opportunity or employer attestation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>under 100,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between 100,000 and 500,000</td>
<td>Two (2) job opportunities or employer attestations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 500,000</td>
<td>Three (3) job opportunities or employer attestations</td>
</tr>
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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;
providing workers with wages that are higher than their previously received social assistance.

- For the purposes of the SC program, skills training is vocational in nature and must provide all of the skills and knowledge required to gain employment in the specific occupation. Individuals who have previously taken professional development skills training courses or workshops (e.g., First Aid training, WHMIS, Word, Excel etc.) can be considered for the SC program. This type of training enhances the existing skills of individuals and is not considered SC skills training.

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 after maternity or parental benefits have ended and that job is not an interim job are not eligible for the SC program because they are considered to have “re-entered” the work force.

- Individuals who are in a work-sharing program are not eligible for the SC program. Work-sharing is a Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) 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 program until they become a permanent resident and are issued a new SIN. A 900 series SIN is issued on a temporary basis to those immigrants who are not Canadian citizens or permanent residents in Canada. The following exception applies:
  - Individuals with a 900 series SIN who have been determined to be a convention refugee 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.
• 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 consecutive 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 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.

2.4.1 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 individuals laid-off 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 the baseline score will be considered most suitable for the SC program. Individuals who score below the baseline must be redirected to other EO and community services and programs.

2.4.2 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 and the dedication of time and effort to preparing (e.g. the creation of resume and cover letters, interview practice, compilation of references, etc.), researching (e.g. review of job postings, utilization of job-finding clubs, attendance at job fairs, etc.) and pursuing work (e.g. cold calling, applying to known and hiring employers, etc.) for employment in fields related to an individual’s work experience, skills, education and training.

- 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/paternal 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 the relevant professional associations and/or professional bodies do not recognize his/her credential.

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/license may or may not be required for the chosen occupation. An individual demonstrates greater suitability if he/she must have a credential/license 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 2011) 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. An exception based on feasibility might include the lack of training institutions within commuting distance. This also applies to LBS training.

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 perquisite to skills training).

7. Experience - Occupational Skills
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.

2.4.3 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.

2.5 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 allowed even when the program is exempt from requiring the Ministry’s approval under the Private Career Colleges Act, 2005.

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 6 months) and long-term (i.e. up to 24 months) skills training are allowable.

The maximum duration cannot exceed 2 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 3 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.

2.5.1 Prerequisites and Types of Skills Training

2.5.1.1 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 everyday 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 bona fide job offer on employer letterhead.

2.5.1.2 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 second language training (in English or French) through the SC program. Second 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 the SC program for a request to attend basic 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).

2.5.1.3 Part-Time Skills Training

Part-time skills training is defined by each educational institution.

Part-time LBS training and skills training are 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 their annual gross household income. In some cases, clients will contribute to these costs.
- basic living allowance (BLA) and other supports will not be provided. Based on an individual financial needs assessment, exceptions however, can be made for persons with disabilities who cannot attend full-time skills training as a result of their disabilities;
- individuals in receipt of EI Part I benefits are responsible for contacting Service Canada to ensure they are fulfilling EI Part I obligations.

2.5.1.4 Correspondence/Online/Distance Skills Training
Correspondence/online/distance skills training can be considered for the SC program and should be 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 correspondence/online/distance skills training must not exceed the duration of similar programs which would be offered in a classroom type setting. For example, a traditional Certified Dental Assistant program duration may be 40 weeks; therefore support for a distance education course for the same type of skills training should not exceed the equivalent of 40 weeks.

Ministry staff should ensure that the following considerations have been taken into account before approval is given:

- 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 individuals’ learning style; and
- training institutions will offer ongoing assistance to individuals and monitor progress.

### 2.5.1.5 Single Skills Training

A single skill course may be considered for those individuals who have appropriate experience or have completed elements of skills training which have been assessed by a training institute to provide individuals with advance standing. Successful completion of the single skill course must lead directly to employment and provide individuals with a certificate or diploma for the program upon completion.

### 2.5.1.6 Combination Skills Training

Combination courses for skills training are only allowable at the discretion of the Ministry and must take 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. Skills training must always be considered as the most cost effective route to employment.

### 2.5.1.7 Work Placement/Practicum/Clinical Placement

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. 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. It remains the responsibility of the training institution to arrange the period of work placement.

The acceptable amount of work placement is generally up to 15% of the program and should be followed by at least one week in-school training (including online). 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. If there are 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.

As well, training institutions must provide supervision throughout the work placement. 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 being used as a “trial period” to gain experience by either individuals or employers.

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 it becomes apparent that the work placement could 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 options.

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

A clinical placement is defined as 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.

2.5.1.10 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.

2.5.1.11 University Training

Skills training provided by a university is allowable for NOC skill level B and C (of the Statistics Canada NOC Skills Matrix 2011) occupations. Skills training for university programs at NOC skill level A, however, are not eligible under the SC program.
2.5.1.12 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 (with no LBS training);
- 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 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.

2.5.1.13 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.

2.5.2 Additional Skills Training Considerations

2.5.2.1 Skills Training Outside of Ontario and Canada

The main premise in providing financial assistance to individuals through the SC program is that they will be accessing skills training at Ontario institutions. The skills training approved must be recognized in Ontario and applicable to the Ontario labour market. The Ministry will not support any skills training if individuals are living outside of Ontario or Canada.

Skills training outside of Ontario and Canada can be supported, in exception cases however, if one or more of the following conditions are evident:

- skills training is not offered in Ontario or Canada or the work placement/practicum portion is considered essential for the successful completion of the skills training which requires individuals to be outside the country for that period;
- 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 or Canada.

The reason for accessing an institution outside of Ontario or Canada 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.

2.5.2.2 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 3 weeks. Some costs, such as commuting costs, would not be paid during a break of this kind.

2.5.2.3 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.

2.5.2.4 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.

2.5.2.5 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).

2.5.2.6 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 supported by individual financial security posted by each PCC. PCCs must develop a plan so that individuals can complete their training in cases where a PCC is unable to continue to deliver training due to a variety of reasons. Individuals will be provided with an alternative organization (individual or PCC) 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.

2.5.2.7 Salesperson Registration Education Program (Real Estate Sales Agent)

Salespersons Pre-registration Segment - Step1 is eligible skills training under the SC program (see program structure below).

The Salesperson Registration Education program (Real Estate Sales Agent) consists of two logical learning steps:
Step 1: Pre-registration Segment
Individuals are able to achieve an initial registration as a salesperson. This step comprises of three modules:

- Real Estate as a Professional Career
- Land, Structures and Real Estate Trading
- Real Estate Transaction – General

Individuals can complete the above three 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 three 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.

2.5.2.8 Commercial and Helicopter Pilot Skills Training

Individuals who request assistance to take skills training to obtain a commercial pilot or helicopter pilot’s license can only be approved if they are already in possession of their private license and are wishing to pursue a commercial license.

2.6 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.

Individuals who meet the eligibility criteria and obtain the baseline suitability assessment score are then assessed to determine financial need. The Ministry is responsible for completing the financial needs assessment.

The SC financial needs assessment takes into account income level and expenses to determine the amount of financial assistance that may be required for individuals to attend skills training. Assistance is provided to cover all or a portion of the cost of tuition for a program of instruction and/or 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 Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) is an eligible expense for any of the eligible cost categories that can be funded.

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 from all sources.

Second Career Guidelines, June 1, 2012
Programs Branch, Strategic Policy and Programs Division
Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
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.)

2.6.1 Eligible Costs

Eligible costs include:
- basic living expenses including 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).

2.6.2 Ineligible Costs

Ineligible costs include (but are not limited to):
- alcohol;
- cable/satellite television;
- cigarettes;
- clothing;
- charitable donations;
- children’s activities such as sports, dance, etc.;
- computer/electronic devices purchase;
- 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.

2.6.3 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.

2.6.4 Definition of Terms
2.6.4.1 Household Income

Any monies that are or will be received by individuals during the skills training period, from an employer or any other person (including a trustee in bankruptcy) are considered household income. 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 must be included, such as family including spouse or common law partner (common law partner means living together as a couple and cohabitated for a continuous period of at least one year), rental, spousal and child support, earnings from part-time/self-employment, EI Part I benefits, pension, federal and provincial child tax benefits, child care benefit, allocation of earnings, severance pay and any other income.

- Monthly Net Household Income
  This is the Monthly Gross Household Income minus income taxes and mandatory employment related costs (MERCs). This amount is calculated at 0.66 of the Monthly Gross Household Income.

2.6.4.2 Basic Living Expenses

This is defined as 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.

2.6.4.3 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. The $410/week is based on the Ontario 2011 minimum wage of $10.25/hour for a 40 hour week.

2.6.4.4 Skills Training and Incremental Costs

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

2.6.4.4.1 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 maximum of $14/hour and a total maximum amount of $10,000. Exceptions to the $14/hr maximum are:
  • Heavy Equipment Operator related programs - $55/hr;
  • Truck Driver related programs - $40/hr;
  • Welding related programs - $25/hr.
• The above exceptions to the hourly tuition fees are also supported to a total maximum of $10,000. In all calculations the hourly rate must not be exceeded.

2.6.4.4.2 Other Instructional Costs

These are costs imposed by the skills training institution, excluding regular tuition costs, which can be associated with and considered essential for participation in skills training. 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 and software and equipment, art supplies, library and laboratory fees, photocopying charges and the like. This does not include computers and capital cost items or fees for licensing, medicals and driver abstracts which are considered requirements for employment. These costs must be reviewed to determine appropriateness of the amounts being requested.

Tutoring costs may be considered if tutorial services are necessary for successful completion of a program in the following circumstances:
• tutorial must be skills training related;
• individual’s attendance must be in good standing;
• confirmation must be obtained from the training institution indicating 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, e.g. truck driver. This is not an eligible cost under the SC program. The Ministry will not reimburse costs which are considered requirements for employment.

2.6.4.4.3 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 accommodation (i.e. 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 and only in excess of the distance of 24 km each way at 15 cents/km to a maximum of $250/month or $57.55/week and parking. Incremental 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 (LAFH) 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 support to individuals category is not an allowable expense.

SC participants should be able to use tools or other capital items that are supplied by the training institution. 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). Training institutions must provide the necessary laboratory equipment required for learning the curriculum. The leasing/renting of computers outside of the mandatory fee which the institution charges and includes under the tuition, is not an allowable expense.

2.6.4.4.4 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 he/she participates in skills training. A dependant must reside with the participant or be under his/her care; be wholly or partially dependent on him/her for support.

The Ministry must 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.

2.6.4.5 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 contact their training institution to determine their need for support services or equipment.

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 does not provide an individual with disability-related support services or equipment, the Ministry may, in exceptional circumstances, provide financial assistance for these disability-related costs to the individual.

If persons have 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.

2.6.4.6 Participant Contribution

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 (refer to Second Career Estimate of Financial Support document on the EOPG website). 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.

LICO is considered 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. LICO is based upon the figures that are published annually by Statistics Canada and adjusted 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.

2.6.5 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.

2.7 Additional Considerations

2.7.1 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 waive their obligation to actively look for work. The Ministry provides Section 25 approval on behalf of Service Canada; therefore, careful consideration is required in these cases.

Feepayers’ 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, win, and their EI Part I claims are established and antedated.

2.7.2 Feepayer

Feepayers are EI Part I claimants who have requested and received authorization 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.

2.7.3 Individuals with an Existing Family Order Agreement/Court Order

Individuals must disclose the existence of an existing Family Order Agreement (FOA)/Court Order as early in their case management process as possible, and at least, 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. 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. FRO has the legal authority to collect FOAs which are court ordered support payments and arrears of support and can take enforcement actions including garnishment.

2.7.4 Existing Overpayments

If the ESP is deemed appropriate by Ministry staff, the existence of an overpayment, 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 ES provider staff. If skills training is identified as the most appropriate way to address individuals' employment needs to help them find employment, 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.

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.

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

3.1.2 Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (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

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 (refer to EOPG website);
- 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
  - the reasons for the suspension, expulsion, withdrawal;
  - 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 publicly assisted CAATs and privately-funded PCCs. Numerous factors are taken into consideration in the identification of a suitable training institution, such as location of the skills training, skills training content and date of availability of the skills training.

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 the Ontario Colleges website.

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 determined by 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. A copy of the PCCA is available on the Service Ontario website in the e-laws section.

To determine if a skills training program is approved and offered at a registered institution, refer to the Private Career Colleges webpage on the Ministry website.

**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 CAAT for a skills training program for which the tuition fee is $15,000. If the conditions outlined above have been met, then the individual may be eligible for up to $15,000 for tuition fees (as determined by the SC financial assessment), out of which the CAAT may only pay a maximum of $10,000 and the hourly maximums to the PCC.

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 of Education**

Skills training provided by School Boards of Education 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 a conditional transfer payment which is subject to audit. The participant agreement sets out the legal terms and conditions of financial assistance.

4.2.1 Changes in Financial Circumstances

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

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

4.2.3 Refunds

SC participants should be advised of any financial implications that may result from them withdrawing from, or being 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 which they have contributed. If individuals do not reimburse the Ministry accordingly, an accounts receivable 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 Access to Information and Protection of Privacy

In order to comply with its obligations under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA), the Ministry will need to obtain the consent of the affected individuals to the indirect collection of their limited personal information. In addition, the Ministry will need to 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

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 instructional costs, the Ministry uses Canada Revenue Agency definitions for eligible tuition costs as follows:

- admission fees;
- charges for the use of library or laboratory facilities;
- exemption fees;
- examination fees (including re-reading charges);
• application fees (but only if the individual subsequently enrols in the institution);
• confirmation fees;
• charges for a certificate or diploma;
• membership or seminar fees that are specifically related to an academic program and its administration;
• mandatory computer service fees including software specific to skills training; and
• academic fees.

In the case of correspondence skills training given by a Canadian training institution, books and software may be included in the tuition amount as provided for in CRA regulations.

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.

A tuition tax credit (T2202A) can only be claimed for postsecondary education or for skills training provided by an institution certified by the Ministry for purposes of sections 118.5 and 118.6 of the *Income Tax Act*. In this instance certification refers to the certification of training institutions for income tax purposes to allow students to qualify for Tuition Tax Credits. When the HST is added to an eligible tuition fee, the amount of the fee including HST is eligible for the tuition tax credit.

To apply for certification, a training provider may contact:
Certification of Private Educational Institutions,
HRSDC, Phase IV, 4th Floor, Place du Portage,
140 Promenade du Portage
Gatineau, Québec, K1A 0J9  613-947-3131 or toll free 1-866-517-5650