

Memorandum

To: Employment Ontario Delivery Partners

From: Cordelia Abankwa
Assistant Deputy Minister, Employment and Training
Division Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills
Development

Date: January 26, 2022

Subject: **Update on transformation of the skilled trades system**

Dear Employment Ontario delivery partners:

I hope you and your families are well. I am writing to update you on developments regarding the government's plan to simplify and transform the skilled trades and apprenticeship system. The government announced that Skilled Trades Ontario has been established as the Crown agency to replace the Ontario College of Trades. The new industry-informed agency will, at maturity, become the single point of access for all apprenticeship and skilled trades clients.

In addition, tradespeople and businesses can begin using the Skilled Trades Ontario Portal, a new digital portal, to manage aspects of their training and certification. This will save time and simplify some common processes. The digital portal will be delivered in phases, with priority functionality for users in early releases. Our goal is to build a "one-window" channel for all skilled trades and apprenticeship clients. In the first phase, clients can use the portal to apply to be an apprentice, view exam results, change their sponsors and pay renewal fees online.

The Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development is now responsible for compliance and enforcement of work in compulsory trades. The ministry continues to be responsible for regulations and related matters pertaining to skilled trades and special purpose and funding programs that support apprentices, sponsors, and training providers.

Taken together, these changes will help simplify many processes for apprentices, journeypersons, businesses, and industry. They represent an important milestone in the government's plan to modernize the skilled trades system and support broader economic growth.

At its maturity, Skilled Trades Ontario will be responsible for developing industry-informed training standards and examinations, registering and monitoring apprenticeships, and issuing industry-recognized certificates. This is expected to take up to three years. In the interim, the co-delivered service model between the ministry and Skilled Trades Ontario will continue while

functions are gradually transferred to the agency.

What this means for you

If you currently work with staff in the ministry's Employment and Training Division on matters related to the skilled trades, continue to do so. If you worked with or contacted the Ontario College of Trades, you may now contact Skilled Trades Ontario, except for matters related to compliance and enforcement. Those matters can be directed to the ministry's [Occupational Health and Safety Branch](#).

Some additional information can be found in a Questions and Answers document posted on the [Employment Ontario Partners' Gateway](#) and on [Ontario.ca](#). You can also learn more about Skilled Trades Ontario on [the organization's website](#).

As Skilled Trades Ontario begins its work, the ministry will continue to focus on minimizing disruptions and ensuring a simplified experience for clients in Ontario's skilled trades system. The ministry will also continue to develop new functionality for the digital portal to ensure our skilled trades system meets the needs and expectations of a modern workforce.

Thank you for your work in supporting Ontario's skilled trades and apprenticeship system.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Cordelia Abankwa,
Assistant Deputy Minister, Employment and Training Division
Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development

c: Andrew Irvine,
Assistant Deputy Minister,
Workforce Policy and Innovation Division

Jody Young
Assistant Deputy Minister
Fair, Safe, Healthy Workplaces Division