



October 7, 2009

Dear Employment Ontario Partner,

I am writing to update you on the status of Second Career and other training programs. As you know, I communicated on September 28, 2009 that ministry officials were working hard to develop options for potential changes to the program. I also indicated that we were looking at approaches to deal with applications currently in the system.

I know you will not be surprised to hear that the popularity of the Second Career program is unprecedented, and as a result, we have applications in our offices and in assessment centres awaiting review. The large volume of applications processed over the last few months, in particular leading up to the September intake, cannot be continued over the long term. Second Career is an important program that must continue to be available to Ontarians in need. As such, we are taking steps to make sure Second Career is sustainable over the long term.

As you are aware, the Honourable John Milloy, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, has said that we will be making some changes and setting some new rules for Second Career, as well as for some of the other training programs offered through Employment Ontario. We anticipate those modifications will be completed within the next few weeks, and training for staff and service providers will begin shortly afterwards. Program changes will be in place in time to assess applications for January start dates.

In the interim, we will process a limited number of applications for Second Career and Ontario Skills Development in our Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) offices using the existing guidelines. Those applications will be processed based on the date of first receipt in ministry offices – a first-come, first-served process. These efforts will not deal entirely with the volume of applications in the assessment centres; however, they will allow us to serve clients, while we bring in a sustainable modified program to help those who have been hurt by the global economic recession and who will benefit from job retraining.

Assessment centres should continue to receive applications. Clearly, given the volume of the applications in the system now, you should also be working with clients to determine if there are other appropriate interventions that may serve their need to find employment.

As a result of the high number of applicants leading up to September, any new applications submitted to MTCU will be assessed using the new program rules currently under development. Please ensure that, as you work with clients submitting applications, you also set realistic expectations for potential training time frames in the new year. As always, Regional Directors and their staff will be happy to have further discussions with you.

As you are aware, significant demand for Employment Ontario programs is not limited to Second Career and the Ontario Skills Development program. The Ontario Targeted Wage Subsidy and Ontario Job Creation Partnership programs have provided numerous unemployed Ontarians with opportunities to gain valuable employment experience. As such, we will continue to accept applications for these programs and provide approvals on a limited basis, ensuring that those who will benefit most from these programs continue to have that opportunity.

The Ontario Self Employment Benefit program and Ontario Labour Market Partnerships have provided a large number of Ontarians with important supports and training during this time of need. We will continue to work with our clients and partners within existing agreements; however, effective October 9, 2009, we will not be entering into any new Self Employment Benefit and Labour Market Partnership agreements. If your agency delivers the Self Employment Benefit please contact your Regional Director for further guidance, including a process to notify any outstanding Self Employment Benefit applicants.

Please ensure that applicants are informed of the modifications identified in this letter. I have attached information, which I encourage you to provide to clients who have submitted or are planning to submit applications for one of our training programs. It is important to emphasize that they are not to begin training until they get final approvals in writing from MTCU offices.

Thank you for your continued support and co-operation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laurie LeBlanc". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L'.

Laurie LeBlanc
Assistant Deputy Minister

Attachments