

Skills Development Program

An External Guide for Individuals

2022-23

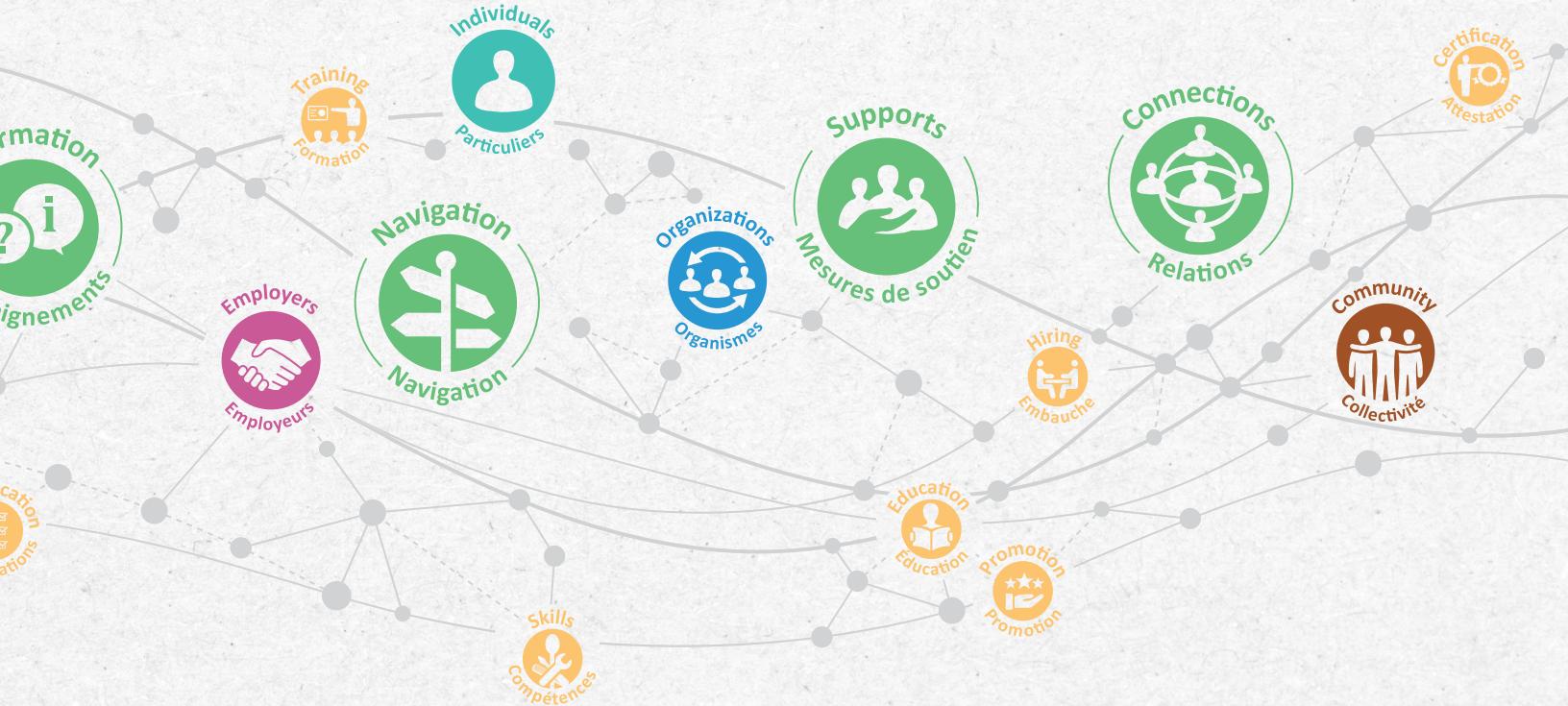




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1.0 Background

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE), through its Skills 4 Success (S4S) initiative, maintains the vision that: *“NWT residents have the skills, knowledge and attitudes for employment success.”*

[The Skills 4 Success 10-Year Strategic Framework](#) sets out a 10-year path for ongoing partnership, engagement, action planning and implementation to ensure that the NWT education and training system keeps pace with the changing dynamics of the labour market.

[The Northwest Territories Labour Market Forecast and Needs Assessment \(LMFNA\)](#) presents an overview of the socio-economic profile and labour market forecasts for the NWT up to the year 2030. Between 28,500 and 36,700 job openings are forecasted with approximately 78% of those jobs requiring post-secondary education.

The employment rate in the Northwest Territories (NWT) is lowest in small, remote communities. In some small communities, the overall employment rate can be as low as 33.3%, compared to a range of 60% to 78% in larger regional centres (Census, 2016). Similarly, unemployment rates are higher in small communities when compared to larger regional centres.

Youth in communities are particularly affected by unemployment as their education levels are typically lower and fewer employment opportunities are available to them. The employment rate in the NWT for youth aged 15 to 24 is significantly lower than the employment rate for residents aged 25-54 (Census, 2016). In response, ECE delivers a number of territorial and federally-funded programs to support labour market development in the NWT, including in small communities.

These programs support the goals of ECE and the 19th Legislative Assembly's priority of increasing employment in small communities, making strategic investments in workforce development and expanding opportunities for post-secondary education, trades-oriented and northern educational institutions.

2.0 Program Description and Objectives

The Skills Development Program (SDP) provides support for eligible recipients to participate in training opportunities to upgrade skills and knowledge and/or develop essential employability skills.

The objectives of the Skills Development Program are to:

- Enhance the labour market participation of NWT residents, including low-skilled workers and under-represented groups;
- Enhance individuals' ability to find long-term employment opportunities through training and education;
- Support apprentices and individuals to obtain the formal instruction required for certification in designated trades and occupations and to progress in their chosen occupation; and
- Provide NWT residents access to supports and incentives that are relevant, effective and aligned with territorial labour market needs.

3.0 Eligibility

ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS

To be eligible for skills development supports, an individual must:

- Reside in the NWT;
- Be a Canadian citizen, permanent resident; or a protected person, as defined by the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, who is entitled to work in Canada;
- Be unemployed and in need of skills development to obtain a job; or
- Be employed, but low-skilled and in need of skills development to obtain a better job.

Low-skilled, employed individuals are considered to be those who do not have a high school diploma or a recognized certification, or who have low levels of literacy and essential skills.

An individual may access skills development funds more than once during their years of labour market participation; however, they must show that they have used the skills previously acquired to find related employment. A progression of skill building should be demonstrated on their action plan.

ELIGIBLE PROGRAMS

Eligible skills development activities include such as:

- Literacy and numeracy programs;
- Upgrading to meet English, Math and Science, post-secondary school requirements;
- Workplace essential skills;
- Life skills, such as positive self-esteem, healthy choices and decision-making skills;
- Employment readiness programs;
- Pre-employment training courses;
- Skill-specific training programs; and
- Post-secondary program leading to a formal credential.

Academic upgrading may be supported, but it is intended to be a bridge to further education and training. Academic upgrading may be supported for up to 6 months or two semesters and must be followed by further short-term training. The academic upgrading and short-term training must be able to be completed within the same 52-week period. The end goal for the Skills Development Program is for individuals to re-enter the labour market after completion of training.

4.0 Program Funding

Assistance provided under the Skills Development Program will not exceed a total value of \$26,000 for up to 52 weeks. The maximum value encompasses all eligible costs, with the exception of persons with disabilities, who may access additional support funding. SDP will only contribute to full-time training courses (at least 60% of a full course load or 30 hours per week training program).

The Career Development Officer (CDO) will work with an individual to develop a funding schedule, based on eligible costs to the maximum allowable amounts.

Financial assistance may include: tuition costs, books, technology, travel, living allowances, special equipment and supports, child care, and licence or certificate fees.

Financial assistance will not extend past the completion date of the course, program or training, and interventions are intended to lead directly to entry or re-entry into employment.

PROGRAM/COURSE PARAMETERS

The Skills Development Program focuses on training that allows a client to return to work and find long-term employment. This must always be a factor when considering a client's choice of programs.

Clients will be expected to enrol in full-time studies (at least 60% of a full course load OR 30 hours per week minimum, including correspondence studies). Part-time studies will not be considered for funding under the SDP.

Support will be provided in priority to clients with career goals aligned with territorial labour market needs.

5.0 Application Process

The Skills Development Program is administered through [Regional ECE Service Centres](#). To access funding, an individual must first complete an Application for Service form. Following the initial application, the CDO must assess the individual's readiness for academic upgrading or skills training. This involves the completion of a Career Action Plan, which will assist the individual and the CDO in developing the learning and development plan.

This assessment is critical to the success of the chosen skills development intervention. The CDO will support the individual through this process.

Individuals must provide proof that they have been accepted into a training program prior to being approved under the SDP. A formal letter of acceptance from the institution is mandatory. The letter must state:

- Student's program;
- Start and finish date of program;
- Full-time studies;
- Cost of tuition and course materials; and
- Certification expected upon completion.

If it is determined that an individual is eligible and ready to undertake skills development training, an approval letter will be issued that outlines their responsibilities and the financial support they will receive.

6.0 Funding Administration

Once approved for the program, an individual can expect to receive payments on a monthly basis. If they require payments issued more frequently, they can discuss these arrangements with their CDO.

The CDO will continue ongoing monitoring and support, to ensure positive progress with the client. At the completion of training, individuals will provide proof of successful completion, such as a certificate, diploma, or other credential issued from the institution.

If an individual terminates a program of study before it is completed, the individual must notify the Regional ECE Service Centre within one week of termination.

The individual must disclose:

- Date of termination;
- Reason for termination; and
- Future plans.

7.0 Monitoring

Regular monitoring, reporting and evaluation is required in order to ensure that programs are responsive to individual needs and that program objectives are being met.

The Application for Service form is the foundation upon which solid analysis is built. The GNWT requires that this form be fully completed to determine eligibility. The information collected on this form also assists in determining which programs and interventions have the best results for NWT residents.

An individual is required to work with their CDO to devise a method for reporting attendance and progress. They may not be eligible for continued funding if they do not regularly attend classes or make acceptable progress. “Acceptable” progress is defined as “the ability to successfully finish a course, program or training within the normal completion time outlined by the educational institution.”

An individual is required to notify the CDO when they have completed their training program, and inform the CDO of their employment status.

The CDO will contact the individual after they have completed their intervention to conduct a 12-week follow-up survey to determine employment status and if further career services are needed.

Should an individual not complete the 12-week follow-up survey, the program may be considered incomplete and may result in recovery of funds.

8.0 Client's Roles and Responsibilities

An individual will work with the Career Development Officer (CDO) by:

- Completing and signing an Application for Service form;
- Developing a Career Action Plan with their CDO;
- Providing an updated copy of their resume to the CDO;
- Setting goals to support their career action plan;
- Determining training needs and requirements, and completing an training need requirements and complete an Application for Financial Assistance form;
- Providing training program information from an approved training institution;
- Reporting any change in circumstances that may affect program eligibility, funding and/or successful completion of training program;
- Advising of any issues with academic progress, where necessary academic progress issues, where necessary;
- Disclosing whether they are receiving funding from other sources, including *active Employment Insurance benefits* and providing written notification from the funding source detailing the contribution amount;
- Reading and signing the ECE Approval Letter to confirm that they fully understand their responsibilities under this program;
- Reporting to their CDO at the agreed upon intervals;
- Managing their own personal budget for the training period;
- Providing proof of program completion to their CDO; and
- Participating in the 12-week follow-up survey.

9.0 Client's Required Document Checklist

- Application for Service form;
- Career Action Plan;
- Copy of their resume;
- Application for Financial Assistance form;
- Training program information and costs;
- Proof of acceptance (letter from the institution);
- ECE Approval Letter (signed);
- Client's Proof of Training Program Completion (transcripts, certificates, etc.);
- Individual 12-week follow-up survey.

Regional ECE Service Centres

<p>Beaufort Delta ECE Service Centre Location</p> <p>Mailing Address: Beaufort Delta ECE Service Centre Department of Education, Culture and Employment BAG SERVICE #1 INUVIK NT X0E 0TO</p> <p>Building Address: Kigiaq Centre 106 Veterans Way Phone: 1-867-777-7365 Toll Free: 1-855-283-9311 Fax: 1-867-777-7218</p>	<p>Sahtu ECE Service Centre Location</p> <p>Mailing Address: Sahtu ECE Service Centre Department of Education, Culture and Employment BOX 147 NORMAN WELLS, NT X0E 0VO</p> <p>Building Address: Office #106 Edward G. Hodgson Building 1A Raven Road Phone: 1-867-587-7157 Toll Free: 1-866-814-9840 Fax: 1-867-587-2612</p>
<p>Deh Cho ECE Service Centre Location</p> <p>Mailing Address: Deh Cho ECE Service Centre Department of Education, Culture and Employment BOX 740 FORT SIMPSON NT X0E 0NO</p> <p>Building Address: Chief Baptiste Cazon building 9802 – 98th Ave Phone: 1-867-695-7338 *collect calls accepted Fax: 1-867-695-7351</p>	<p>South Slave ECE Service Centre Locations</p> <p>Fort Smith Mailing Address: South Slave ECE Service Centre Department of Education, Culture and Employment BOX 1406 FORT SMITH, NT X0E 0PO</p> <p>Fort Smith Building Address: McDougal Square 195 McDougal Road Phone: 1-867-872-7425 *collect calls accepted Fax: 1-867-872-4507</p>
<p>North Slave ECE Service Centre Location</p> <p>Mailing Address: North Slave ECE Service Centre Department of Education, Culture and Employment BOX 1320 YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2L9</p> <p>Building Address: Main Floor, Nova Plaza 5019 – 52nd Street Phone: 1-867-767-9356 Toll Free: 1-866-768-8145 Fax: 1-867-873-0423</p>	<p>Hay River</p> <p>Mailing Address: South Slave ECE Service Centre Hay River ECE Service Centre 8 Capital Drive HAY RIVER NT X0E 1G2</p> <p>Building Address: Courthouse Building Phone: (867) 874-5050 *collect calls accepted Fax: (867) 874-5062</p>