

Funding for Training

Video Companion Information (EI Clients)

AES April/16

OVERVIEW:

- One option to assist with training is funding available to eligible persons with an attachment to Employment Insurance.
- The Employment Program of B.C. (EPBC) can assist individuals who qualify as insured participants to return to work by providing them with a financial contribution towards the costs of training that will give them skills for employment.

WHO CAN APPLY?

A person who:

- Has a **regular** active EI claim, or one that has ended within the previous 36 months, or has established a parental employment Insurance claim in the previous 60 months. You are not eligible to apply if *currently* receiving EI benefits other than regular benefits (i.e. medical, maternal, parental, compassionate benefits).
- Has exhausted their search for work with their existing skills.
- Has an Action Plan identifying an applicant is in skill need. This plan must identify a barrier preventing employment with current skills and that the requested training will resolve this barrier and return the person to employment.
- Is unemployed by definition (averaging less than 20 hours of work per week). If you have a layoff notice or Authorized Quit contact an Employment Service Centre (ESC) Case Manager or Amber Education Representative.
- Has a demonstrated financial need.
- Lives in the service area of a WorkBC Employment Service Centre.

ELIGIBLE SCHOOLS:

Note: Outside of the following points, when training is similar in all respects, guidance is not provided on an applicant's choice of program or institution.

- Public schools in Canada.
- Private Schools in the Province of BC must be registered with the [Private Career Training Institutions Agency \(of BC\) - PCTIA](http://www.pctia.bc.ca) (www.pctia.bc.ca). In order for a training course or program to be eligible for EPBC Client participation, Private training providers are also required to be accredited, if the training is 12 weeks or longer in duration.
 - Professional driver training schools and schools that only offer courses less than 40 hours in length and charge less than \$1000 in tuition may be exempted from any PCTIA requirement.
- For private schools outside of B.C., applications will be reviewed on a case by case basis. We suggest you discuss this with an Amber Representative prior to completing an application.
- Full-time participation in the training is expected (if living with a disability, to the extent of one's abilities), at the closest most logical institution.
- Part-time training is eligible for support if the training identified as needed is not available full-time or an EI Client is not able to attend full-time because of a disability or other health-related issues.



- While structured in-class training is preferred, it is possible to participate in Distance Education/Correspondence/Internet-based courses. These types of classroom training alternatives should always take place in a structured and interactive environment (such as interactive web learning in the case of on-line learning), where clear progress benchmarks and timelines for completion exist.
 - Approval of these courses should not exceed the duration of similar courses which would be offered in a classroom type-setting.
- The main premise is that clients will access training at British Columbia institutions. Training outside of BC may be supported. Please see an AES Representative if you are looking to receive training from an institute outside of British Columbia.
- Occupational Skills training cannot assist with apprenticeships or with multi-year training to obtain a degree. Financial assistance to pay for testing of current skills or for recertification is not typically approved.

WHAT COSTS DOES THE PROGRAM CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS?

Amount of contribution is negotiated with each applicant on a case by case basis.

- Tuition, registration and most other training fees to a maximum total of \$7,500 per Action Plan.
- Books and supplies.
- Living Support for basic living needs only. Amounts of support provided are based Ministry basic cost of living information guidelines.
- Dependent Care – licensed care facilities are preferred. One must apply for the Provincial Child Care subsidy if applicable or demonstrate an inability to qualify for the subsidy.
- Transportation costs – ask about detailed requirements to qualify for this.
- Living away from home allowance – ask about detailed requirements to qualify for this.
- Tools that are not “tools of the trade” and cost less than \$250, except for devices meant to assist persons living with a disability to engage in training.
- Tutoring and required Disability Supports to participate in training. – Program support maximums may apply.
- Financial Supports are only intended to assist Clients with needed and agreed to eligible costs in situations where Clients lack the means or resources to cover all or part of the cost themselves. They are not intended to cover all the Client's expenses and Clients are always expected to contribute to the cost of their own success, to the level of their means and financial ability.

TAX CONSEQUENCES:

This financial support is not a loan, scholarship or bursary. However, it is considered taxable income.

- Appropriate amounts will be deducted and forwarded to Canada Revenue Agency.
- A school may not provide a tax deductible tuition receipt (called a T2202A). Be sure to ask.
- On occasion, when training is longer than 12 months or runs over two calendar years the school may require 100% of tuition up front but only provide a tax receipt for the current calendar year. This may affect one's income taxes.
- A tax slip (T4) will be issued to each participant for funds received in a calendar year. This must be added to income tax reporting and additional taxes may be payable.
- As the supports received from the program will increase the amount of taxable income. Programs such as the Child Tax Benefit and GST payments may be affected.

Everyone is urged to see a tax professional if you have any questions regarding how the program may impact your taxes.



KEYS TO A STRONG APPLICATION:

- Completeness. An incomplete application does not provide the information required to make a decision. If necessary, please ask an Amber Representative for assistance.
- The likelihood of finding work after the training is finished is one of the biggest factors in considering an application. Labour market information identifies where the jobs are likely to be upon course completion. We recommend a minimum of 3 recent employer interviews and additional job postings within your designated work search area, noting detailed job possibilities, including expected hours and wage rates, should be included with your application.
- Showing that you can't find work with your current skills is also part of the foundation of the program. Please be sure that your job search has been very thorough prior to applying. An exception to this requirement may be possible in specific circumstances. Ask an AES Representative for clarification.
- Ensure the planned training is the most direct route to return to work, with the minimum amount of training required. The first intent is for an applicant to remain in their field. Requests for training that would lead to a career change may be possible. Strong supporting reasoning should be provided. Some possible reasoning for a career change may include injury, illness or steep decline of an industry.

DECLINED APPLICATIONS:

- Most common reasons for decline are: poor information on job opportunities; incomplete applications and insufficient time to process applications as training "Must Not" have started prior to EPBC approval (signing of a training agreement).
- High risk to program funds may result in an application being declined.
- Allow enough time to allow for the adjudication and a two step appeal process if you disagree with reasons for decline. Four to six weeks prior to the start of class is the suggested time frame.

STEPS TO APPLY:

- Discuss and review with a Case Manager to obtain a supported Action Plan.
- Choose to complete and submit a Pre-Application. We suggest this step as an opportunity to get the feedback on preliminary information necessary for a strong application submission.
- Complete and submit the EPBC training application to your Case Manager. We suggest at least 4 to 6 weeks in advance of training start date. This should allow sufficient time for review and conditional approval. If declined, you may choose complete the appeal process identified by your AES Representative.
- Once provided conditional approval, take necessary steps to meet requirements. Examples include satisfactory criminal record check, credit check and letter from a medical professional.

MISCELLANEOUS:

- Continued receipt of your Active EI benefits (Section 25) may require an additional time for approval.
- Participating in this program is not unlike working for an employer in that we expect 100% attendance in the training. Absences need to be communicated to your AES Representative and program support amounts may be affected as a result of the missed time in training.
- It is the responsibility of the participant to keep receipts, report attendance or study hours as required and communicate with a Case Manager/AES Representative as necessary.
- Extended training breaks such as a summer break require the participant to maintain certain EI eligibilities. Speak with a representative if this applies to you to ensure continued eligibility to participate in the EPBC support program.

APPLICATIONS REQUIRE OR MAY REQUIRE:

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| * Acceptance Letter | * Job Search list |
| * Course cost breakdown | * Medical note |
| * Labour market information (Employer Interviews, Job Postings) | * Course supply list |
| * Criminal Record Check | * Driver's license/abstract |

For more information ask a WorkBC Employment Service Centre Case Manager or an Amber Education Representative at 1-855-789-2701 or email questions to info@ambered.com.

Thank you.