

Newfoundland and Labrador

Annual Plan | 2024-25

Canada - Newfoundland and Labrador Workforce
Development Agreement (WDA)

Overview:

- In 2024-25, Newfoundland and Labrador's notional WDA allocation is \$9,642,245.
- As outlined in the WDA, Newfoundland and Labrador may retain and carry forward up to five per cent of the contribution paid into the next fiscal year. This equates to \$482,112 allowable for carry forward into fiscal 2024-25. While all carry forward will be confirmed with the audited financial statements, for planning purposes here, the province of Newfoundland and Labrador will project not using the carry forward provision.
- Newfoundland and Labrador will allocate \$619,300 to administrative costs in 2024-25.
- As required under the WDA, Newfoundland and Labrador must contribute an allocation towards persons with disabilities. For 2024-25, this is projected to be a minimum of \$3,124,744. As a result, the federal/provincial programming outlined in this document totals \$10,638,800.

Labour Market Challenges and Priorities

Newfoundland and Labrador's economy was resilient in 2023, despite a challenging economic environment due to higher interest rates and persistent high rates of inflation. While the labour market and most indicators of consumer spending posted growth for most of the year, growth in employment and retail sales slowed in the later months as high interest rates dampened economic activity. Population growth continued with record-high numbers of international immigration, which contributed positively to the local labour supply, while contributing to tightness in the housing market in conjunction with historically low housing starts.

Newfoundland and Labrador's labour market performed well in 2023, recording employment gains on a year-over year basis in all but one month and reaching a historically low annual unemployment rate. A review of change from 2022 to 2023 indicates an increase in job posting levels for the retail and wholesale sectors, natural resources, educational services and public administration. There are continued pressures on the healthcare sector, with specific occupations such as nurses and home support continuing to experience high levels of job postings.

An increase was observed in the number of job postings from 2022 to 2023 seeking college level credentials indicating that more employers are seeking skilled individuals, and a need for continued focus on skills and training measures in the province.

The oil and gas industry advanced construction on the West White Rose oil project and the Terra Nova FPSO vessel returned to production in November 2023. In the mining industry, lower production and prices for some of NL's key mineral exports had a negative impact on the value of mining exports, while work continued to ramp up to full production at the underground Voisey's Bay Mine Expansion project. In the fishery and aquaculture sector, the wild fishery was impacted by significantly lower prices for key species, while the aquaculture industry experienced considerable growth. The tourism industry continued to rebound from the pandemic and there were several positive developments in the emerging wind-hydrogen sector. Prospects for growth in the long term will include opportunities in the green energy, oil and gas, mining, and aquaculture industries boosting economic activity. The wind-hydrogen sector continues to evolve, including multiple advances in 2023 with the approval of the first project in 2024.

Increased interest and demand for green fuels and the identified opportunities for wind/hydrogen activities in Newfoundland and Labrador, will create increased demand for both industrial construction jobs along with a need for production workers. Expected demand in the electric vehicle sector and technology manufacturing is resulting in increased interest in mineral exploration and development. This will require continued training and upskilling of workers to meet these needs, as well as attracting unique talent to fill skills gaps.

Newfoundland and Labrador continues to be impacted by an aging work force and population. This may be mitigated through the noted increase in immigration over time. With the changing

skill needs of sectors as new technologies and opportunities present themselves, Newfoundland and Labrador is well positioned to meet these needs through a responsive public and private post-secondary education system using both regular programming along with growing and reactive micro-credential offerings.

Labour Market Transfer Agreements (LMTA) are the primary funding source utilized in Newfoundland and Labrador to improve worker skills and earnings, help employers find skilled workers, and increase workforce participation by groups furthest from the labour market. Reductions in LMTA funding amounts for fiscal year 2024-25 will have significant impacts on Newfoundland and Labrador's ability to continue to serve the employment and training needs of many populations in this province, ultimately impacting our growth and economic competitiveness, and minimizing our ability to respond to immediate pressures in construction and healthcare sectors.

Details on how the province intends to assist with these challenges for 2024-25 is outlined in the [Description of Planned WDA Programs](#) section of this report. Programming will help respond to employers and industry groups continued needs for assistance in accessing required skills and labour, as well as the supports for individuals to pivot quickly to meet these emerging needs. All of this, further reiterating the need for continued federal and provincial collaboration, including funding agreements such as the labour market transfer agreements.

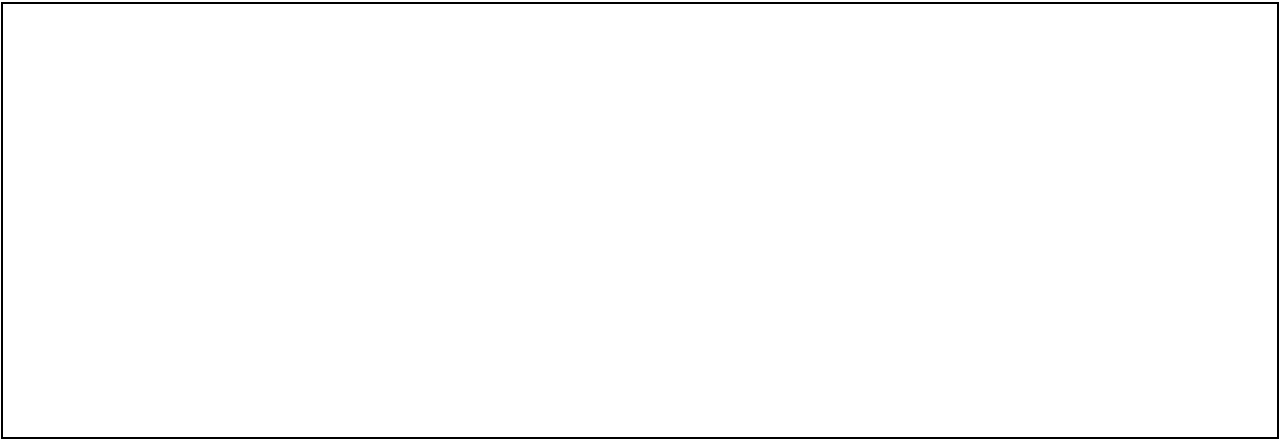
Description of Planned WDA Programs

Program: Canada – Newfoundland and Labrador Job Grant	Projected expenditures: \$282,032
<p>Brief description of program - Areas of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This program is designed to increase labour force participation and help develop the skills necessary to find and keep meaningful long-term employment and encourage continued employer involvement in training to ensure skills are aligned to job opportunities. • Due to a potential reduction in Federal Funding, this program is currently under review for suspension in the 2024-25 fiscal year. As a result, the projected expenditures is based on continuing agreements from 2023-24. • Financial assistance to private and non-profit employers to offset the costs of providing training to new or current employees. • These grants to employers will support training programs of up to a year in duration and be delivered by a third party recognized by the province. 	
<p>Target Client Groups: Unemployed or Underemployed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers and their employees 	
<p>Benefits and expected results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers hire and train unemployed individuals to fill their job vacancies. • Employers use the grant to support expansion of their workforces. • The grant supports the creation of permanent, sustainable full-time jobs • The grant enables incumbent workers to remain in their current positions, or for incumbent workers to take new positions within the business that offer greater responsibilities and/or rates of pay. • Approximately 86 employers will be provided funding to train about 318 employees in 2024-25 – all precommitments from 2023-24. 	

Program: Labour Market Integration for Newcomers	Projected expenditures: \$1,000,000
Brief description of program - Areas of focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides funding to support employers, employer or employee associations, community groups and communities in developing and implementing labour market strategies and activities for dealing with labour force adjustments and meeting human resource requirements. • The focus is on supporting innovative approaches to increasing capacity and enhancing services for newcomers to the province. • The program is designed to enable service-providing organizations and communities to develop and/or deliver programs to expedite the attachment of newcomers to the labour market. 	
Target Client Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newcomers, immigrants and refugees 	
Benefits and expected results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better connections between newcomers and local employment opportunities will be made. • Newfoundland and Labrador employers will be assisted to find skilled labour they need to address workforce shortages through provincial immigration pathways. • Approximately 20 projects will be supported in 2024-25. 	

Program: Summer Employment Program for Students	Projected expenditures: \$1,651,179
Brief description of program - Areas of focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The program provides a subsidy to assist private sector and not-for-profit organizations, which include school districts and municipalities to create summer jobs for high school and post-secondary students entering or returning to studies in the upcoming school year. • Students benefit by gaining valuable work experience that will facilitate future labour market participation. 	
Target Client Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students 	
Benefits and expected results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality work experiences for youth is provided. • Access to the labour market for youth is increased. • Opportunities for youth to develop and improve their skills is provided. • It is anticipated that over 600 students will become employed in 2024-25. 	

Program: Employment and Training Supports	Projected expenditures: \$600,000
Brief description of program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides eligible clients with support to participate in pre-employment training that may include personal life skills development, career planning, employment readiness, or job maintenance. As well, the program provides eligible clients with work related supports to assist them with seeking, obtaining or maintaining employment (e.g., work boots). • Provides financial support for short-term training of less than 12 weeks in duration. This includes supports to attend literacy/academic upgrading and Advanced Level Apprenticeship training. • Support can also be provided for an educational assessment to identify areas of strength and areas of need with respect to academic and cognitive functioning. It can be used to identify a learning disability, an intellectual disability or giftedness. An educational assessment can be considered when an individual is experiencing academic or workplace learning difficulties for which there is need to obtain greater understanding to the underlying cause for these difficulties to assist with the facilitation of the client employment planning process. • To be considered for funding individuals must be engaged in a case management and have an employment plan developed. 	
Target Client Groups: Unemployed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income Support, Income Support eligible, or unemployed individuals • Low literacy/ low skilled • Unrepresented groups, such as Persons with Disabilities, youth, Indigenous population, women, and other subsets that may be identified throughout the fiscal year 	
Benefits and expected results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The labour market participation of Newfoundland and Labrador residents will be enhanced, including low-skilled workers and under-represented groups. • Individuals' ability to find long-term employment opportunities through training and education will be enhanced. • Apprentices will be supported to obtain the formal instruction required for certification in designated trades and to progress in their chosen occupation. • Approximately 660 individuals will be supported in 2024-25. 	



Program: Wage Subsidies	Projected expenditures: \$1,188,490
Brief description of program - Areas of focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wage subsidy programs are designed to bring employers and employees together by providing funding to employers to create employment opportunities for unemployed/underemployed individuals, including recent graduates, apprentices, and persons with disabilities. Eligible individuals may be provided employment supports related to the subsidized position, including tools, equipment, and short-term training. • The JobsNL Program supports employer/employee connections that promote sustainable long-term employment or seasonal/short-term employment. • The Apprenticeship Wage Subsidy Program assists apprentices to gain work experience in their skilled trade, and progress to journeyperson certification by providing a wage subsidy to employers who hire apprentices. • Funding is also provided to Community Coordinator's that promote and manage wage subsidy agreements to assist specific client groups. • The Employment Enhancement Program is a wage subsidy program designed to support employers in the forestry, aquaculture, agriculture and fishing sectors engaged in value- added secondary processing by providing funding to employers to create sustainable, long-term employment or seasonal employment and a training allowance to support new employees. 	
Target Client Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployed or underemployed • Unrepresented groups, such as Persons with Disabilities, youth, Indigenous population, women, and other subsets that may be identified throughout the year. 	
Benefits and expected results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals will be provided opportunities to gain work experience and increase workplace skills. • Employers will hire unemployed individuals with minimal work experience whom they would not normally hire in the absence of a subsidy. • It is anticipated that employers will hire approximately 100 individuals in 2024-25. 	

Program: Opening Doors	Projected expenditures: \$1,000,000
Brief description of program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Office of Employment Equity for Persons with Disabilities has a mandate to increase the number of persons with disabilities employed in the public sector through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Opening Doors Program comprised of full time, permanent positions designated for persons with disabilities and limited to members of this employment equity group; ○ The Student Summer Employment Program provides career-related work experience for post- secondary students with disabilities for their future entry into the labour market; and ○ Career support services provide practical job search and career counseling assistance to persons with disabilities registered with the Office. • This Opening Doors Program is an employment equity initiative that supports the hiring of persons with disabilities through the provision of wage subsidies. 	
Target Client Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons with disabilities 	
Benefits and expected results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals with disabilities will be provided opportunities to gain work experience and increase workplace skills. • Employers will hire unemployed persons with disabilities whom they would not normally hire in the absence of a subsidy. • Over 80 positions for persons with disabilities will be supported across the province through the Opening Doors Program in 2024-25. • It is anticipated that the Office of Employment Equity for Persons with Disabilities will provide over 250 career and employment counselling sessions with participants. 	

Program: Work Related Disability Supports	Projected expenditures: \$242,400
Brief description of program - Areas of focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This program provides persons with disabilities work related supports to assist with seeking or maintaining employment. • Supports can include workplace accommodations, adaptations, assistive technology devices, and technical equipment to a maximum of \$5,000. 	
Target Client Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employed or unemployed individuals with disabilities 	
Benefits and expected results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals are provided with supports needed to seek and maintain employment. • Approximately 10 individuals will be supported in 2024-25. 	

Program: Grants for High Needs Students	Projected expenditures: \$100,000
Brief description of program - Areas of focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This program assists individuals to cover education-related costs associated with a permanent disability that exceeds the amount available from the Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Students with Permanent Disabilities. • Students will be automatically assessed for the Grant when applying to Student Financial Services. 	
Target Client Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with disabilities 	
Benefits and expected results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with permanent disabilities are provided with supports required to access and successfully complete post-secondary education. • Students supported in 2024-25 will be based on identified need. 	

Program: Community Partnerships	Projected expenditures: \$1,296,300
Brief description of program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding provided to community-based organizations to support opportunities for persons with disabilities to prepare for, attain and maintain employment. • This program provides support to community agencies to work with individuals to enhance their employment readiness. 	
Target Client Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployed individuals with disabilities 	
Benefits and expected results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual's ability to obtain and maintain employment will be increased. • Increased employment of clients in unsubsidized employment or return to school for academic upgrading or skills training. • Increased self-reliance through employment plan success. • In 2024-25, six organizations will be provided funding to assist over 350 persons with disabilities to prepare for, attain, and maintain employment. 	

Program: Supported Employment	Projected expenditures: \$8,000,100
Brief description of program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Employment Corporations offer supported employment services to adults with intellectual disabilities to allow these individuals to participate in meaningful employment within their communities. • Supports for individuals are provided to ensure their success in employment and that all duties are performed to the employer's satisfaction. • Supports available range from orientation and work analysis to the full-time support for a job trainer. • The School to Work Transitions Program provided high school students with developmental (intellectual) disabilities the support necessary to assist with making the transition from school to work by providing access to after school/summer work opportunities with the assistance of a Job Trainer. 	
Target Client Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals with intellectual disabilities 	
Benefits and expected results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job Trainers will provide individuals with intellectual disabilities with provision of one-on-one support in the workplace. • Community Employment Corporations will assist individuals with intellectual disabilities to participate in employment. • In 2024-25, 18 Community Employment Corporations throughout the province will deliver the Supported Employment Program, with projections of over 650 individuals obtaining/maintaining employment. Approximately 75 high school students will also be supported to find employment. 	

Consultation Process

The department regularly engages with industry, labour, community, and education stakeholders to inform policy and budget priorities and to ensure programs and services are effective and relevant.

In addition, through IPGS' Regional Employment Services Offices and affiliated community partners delivering labour market programs, IPGS regularly obtains information from service delivery staff and management to gain a better understanding of client and employer needs. This provides important insight into current and future government-supported programming.

The province's Workforce Innovation Centre (WIC) hosts engagement sessions with underrepresented groups, exploring labour market challenges and opportunities, as well as research projects to support improved employment outcomes. Sessions and discussions are held with organizations, including those representing: Indigenous people, persons with disabilities, youth, older workers, women, and newcomers to the province. Findings and feedback from these sessions are helping to inform program and policy development.

Several key themes have emerged from these engagement activities, including:

- Increased collaboration and partnerships;
- Continued emphasis on immigration and attracting talent, including- the recognition of foreign credentials;
- Improved access to labour market information;
- Closing skills gaps through skills development and mentorship opportunities, in particular in priority sectors such as healthcare, construction, and renewable energy;
- Preparing individuals, and supporting employers in emerging sectors and advancing technologies, including automation and artificial intelligence;
- Enhanced awareness and access to programs and services; and
- Promotion of inclusive and diverse workplaces, particularly as it relates to our newcomer population.

With the shifting nature of work, it is critical that the Provincial Government's employment and training programs and services continue to evolve. Given that the responses envisioned by Newfoundland and Labrador are as multidimensional as the challenges themselves, continued engagement and collaboration with stakeholders and partners will be instrumental in allowing the province to promote new economic growth as well as address existing and future labour market challenges.

Examples of stakeholders	
Employers	Employers such as Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services, World Energy GH2, Verafin, Anaconda Mining, DF Barnes Fabrication, Corner Brook Pulp and Paper, Newco Metals, and small to medium sized enterprises

Examples of stakeholders	
Community Groups	Community groups, including organizations supporting persons with disabilities, such as Community Sector Council, Vera Perlin, Stella's Circle, Choices for Youth, Heritage Foundation of NL, Sharing our Culture, Association for New Canadians, and Supported Employment Newfoundland and Labrador
Indigenous Partners	Indigenous partners such as Labrador Aboriginal Training Partnership, First Light (St. John's Native Friendship Centre), and Nunatukavut Community Council
Business and Industry Associations	Business and industry associations such as Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Association, Community Business Development Corporations, Newfoundland and Labrador Employers Council, Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses, Hospitality NL, NL Forestry Industry Association, techNL, Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture, Oceans Advance, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters – Newfoundland and Labrador, econext, and Newfoundland Aquaculture Industry Association
Provincial Government Departments	Other Provincial Government Departments such as Departments of: Education; Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture; Industry, Energy and Technology; Children, Seniors and Social Development
Educational Institutions	Educational institutions such as Memorial University, Marine Institute, College of the North Atlantic, Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Career Colleges, Association of Building Trades Educational Colleges, and private training institutions
Official Language Minority Communities (OLMC) stakeholders	Official language minority representatives such as Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador (RDÉE TNL), and La Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador (FFTNL)
Labour Organization	Labour organizations such as Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour, Fish, Food and Allied Workers, and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
Youth Groups	Youth groups such as Premier's Youth Council, Conservation Corps, and St. John's Boys and Girls Club
Municipal Government	Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador, towns, and local service districts
Federal Government Departments	Employment and Social Development Canada, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada