

GOVERNMENT OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADORS

2019-20 Annual Plan



Canada-NL Workforce Development Agreement (WDA)

 Newfoundland
Labrador
Advanced Education, Skills and Labour

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Labour Market Transfer Agreements Overview

The Government of Canada provides approximately \$3 billion annually in funding to provinces and territories (P/Ts) to deliver a range of training and employment programming for Canadians. The programs and services funded under labour market transfer agreements were designed by P/Ts to meet the needs of a wide variety of clients, including unemployed workers eligible for Employment Insurance (EI), unemployed workers not eligible for EI, low-skilled employed workers, persons with disabilities, older workers and other underrepresented groups.

As the demands of industries and indeed the workplace evolve, so too must the skills that workers bring to their jobs. Newfoundland and Labrador, in partnership with the Government of Canada is taking action through the new generation of labour market transfer agreements to support Canadians in achieving their labour market goals and to support both employers and governments in being more responsive to workers' needs.

In Budget 2017, the Government of Canada announced that it would invest \$1.8 billion over six years (2017-18 to 2022-23) in additional funding under the Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDA), as well as broaden eligibility for EI Part II-funded programs. It also introduced a new Workforce Development Agreement (WDA), supplemented by additional time limited funding of \$900 million over six years (2017-18 to 2022-23).

The increase in funding provided annually to the provinces and territories under the labour market transfer agreements continues to assist Canadians seeking employment opportunities by providing them with more prospects to upgrade their skills, gain experience, start their own business, and plan their careers.

As part of Budget 2018, the Government of Canada announced significant investments to support workers in seasonal industries, including providing up to \$41 million over two years to all P/Ts through LMDAs to provide skills training, wage subsidies and employment supports for workers in seasonal industries.

Note on the Annual Plan

Information on Newfoundland and Labrador's labour market is collected from several sources, including available federal and provincial information on labour market trends, economy and population statistics.

Provincial Labour Market Overview and Conditions

Economic factors continue to impact the province's labour market landscape and persist in influencing the provincial economic outlook:

- Labour Force Survey data has indicated an increase in employment, from 224,100 in 2017 to 225,300 in 2018.
- The unemployment rate has decreased from 14.8 per cent in 2017 to 13.8 per cent in 2018.
- Census 2016 reports a provincial median age of 46.0 versus 41.2 for Canada.

As in the previous year, prospects for economic activity in Newfoundland and Labrador remain modest as the province continues to experience a period of adjustment. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has and continues to implement initiatives to reduce spending and support economic growth while taking action to avail of new opportunities for service improvement, program transformation and economic growth.

Labour market transfer agreements are a critical source of funding for skills and employment training, providing essential supports for citizens to build better futures. With a strong focus on skills development in recent Federal Budgets, Newfoundland and Labrador is encouraged by the Federal Government's commitment to increase investments in labour market transfer agreements over the coming years.

The successful application of programming and services under labour market transfer agreements continues to assist in mitigating the effects of economic downturns and has demonstrated positive outcomes and impacts on clients, employers, and communities in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has successfully implemented programming and services under labour market transfer agreements, by providing flexible, responsive and innovative programs and services designed to help in training residents to address labour market demands; support displaced workers impacted by labour force adjustments and company closures; and address new and ongoing challenges and opportunities.

Newfoundland and Labrador remains committed to working with the Federal Government to develop innovative solutions to grow the province's economy and address its labour market challenges and opportunities. In partnership with industry, our government has released and commenced implementation of work plans to grow the agriculture, aquaculture, technology, forestry, mining, oil and gas sectors and volunteer sectors. This work will continue in 2019-20.

Labour market transfer agreements will continue to be a critical tool to allow our province to prepare individuals to capitalize on labour market opportunities as the province sets out to:

- Double the oil and gas production in Newfoundland and Labrador;
- Grow the potential of our provinces mineral resources;
- Diversify the forestry sector;
- Increase aquaculture-related employment by 1,100 person-years;
- Grow the technology sector;
- Build a sustainable, renewable energy plan focused on creating employment opportunities and further positioning the province as an energy hub through wind, hydro and tidal energy resources.

The Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour 2019- 20 Annual Plan

The Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour (AESL) 2019-20 Annual Plan outlines priority objectives and strategic investments, which the WDA will support during the period from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020.

Provincial investment priorities for fiscal year 2019-20 include:

- Providing mechanisms to develop a highly educated and skilled workforce;
- Implementing initiatives to support a strong labour supply to meet evolving labour market demands with a focus on under-represented groups;
- Developing and launching a comprehensive human resource plan as identified in the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's *The Way Forward* policy document to support sector diversification and the development of a productive and knowledge-intensive economy; and
- Developing a responsive and adaptive workforce, through effective employment and skills training programming, with a focus on unemployed and underemployed individuals from under-represented groups (women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous groups, youth, and mature workers).

On November 9, 2016, the Government of Newfoundland Labrador released *The Way Forward: A Vision for Sustainability and Growth in Newfoundland and Labrador*. This vision continues to guide Provincial Government actions to achieve greater efficiency, strengthen the province's economic foundation, enhance services and improve outcomes to promote a healthy and prosperous province. At the beginning of each fiscal year, our Government will announce priority actions to help achieve this vision.

On April 24, 2018, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador released Phase 3, *The Way Forward: Building for Our Future*, which continues the work carried out under the previous two phases of *The Way Forward* by advancing work to further strengthen our economic foundation and improve public sector efficiency, while improving services and outcomes for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

The Workforce Development Agreement

The Government of Canada's commitment to increase flexibility within the WDA:

- Provides improved administrative efficiency and better alignment with the LMDA;
- Remains the primary responsibility of the P/Ts with respect to the design and delivery of the employment and training programs funded under this Agreement;
- Provides eligible clients access to employment and training programming that addresses critical points along the path to full participation in the labour market;
- Highlights the importance of continuous improvement based on strengthened labour market information, sharing best practices, and fostering innovation;
- Provides transparency and accountability in the use of funding and the public reporting of outcomes under this Agreement; and
- Contributes to the development of performance measurement systems to track outcomes and demonstrate results to inform program and policy development.

Canada and Newfoundland and Labrador share a common vision to support the employment and training needs of the Canadian labour market through an integrated, client-centered, outcomes-driven, employment and training model which is responsive to the evolving needs of individuals, employers, and communities.

Objectives of the agreement include:

- Fostering inclusive labour market participation by helping individuals access labour market opportunities and by supporting successful integration of individuals facing obstacles to finding and maintaining employment;
- Alignment of skills with labour market needs to help workers and employers access the skills required to adapt to the changing requirements of jobs and the labour market, and by encouraging employer involvement in training and continuous learning opportunities for workers; and,
- Creation of efficient labour markets by supporting strong and responsive labour market infrastructure to allow for timely and effective labour market programming, which contributes to improved productivity and economic growth.

The following principles will guide the agreement:

- Client-centered: Flexibility to meet the needs of unemployed, underemployed and precariously employed individuals; to meet the needs of employers using the best available labour market information; and minimize barriers in accessing programs and supports;
- Inclusion: Support underrepresented groups who have challenges entering the labour market;
- Outcomes-focused: Track measurable milestones and targets, and develop ways to measure different forms of progress (e.g., improved employability);
- Flexibility and Responsiveness: Flexibility to address local labour market priorities and respond to emerging issues;
- Innovation: Identify and explore collaborative models for innovation, including continuous sharing of best practices and lessons learned; and
- Engagement: Collaboration and partnership between Federal and P/T governments; engagement with and services through Indigenous partners; consultation and engagement with stakeholders, and coordination to enhance program complementarity.

Newfoundland and Labrador is committed to supporting flexibility in eligible programming under the following areas of focus.

- Training: Improve levels of literacy, essential and work-related skills, and support upskilling for the employed and underemployed;
- Supports: Provide continuum of needs-based services to maximize potential impact of training, and continue to support persons with disabilities to enter and stay in the labour market;
- Employment Partnerships: Work in partnership with employers and other stakeholders to promote awareness and expand the availability, accessibility and quality of employment opportunities; and
- Building Knowledge: Inform priorities with labour market information to better meet skills needs and market demand, enhance the knowledge base to support continuous improvement of labour market policies and programs; and support new and innovative approaches to meet the diverse needs of clients, including underrepresented groups.

Development and Delivery of Programs

While there are differences between client types and needs, and programs and services delivered, results of the previous three agreements (CJF, LMAPD and the TIOW) have consistently demonstrated positive outcomes and impacts on clients, employers, and communities in Newfoundland and Labrador. Investments made through these agreements enabled the province to capitalize on a variety of economic and training opportunities leading to job creation and growth. Evidence demonstrates that clients develop skills, get jobs, and maintain employment as a result of their participation in employment and skills training programs.

Newfoundland and Labrador's program and service delivery models contribute to a stronger economic and labour environment by:

- Ensuring the province has the skilled workforce and highly educated graduates to participate in and contribute to their communities;
- Strengthening the workforce through education, training, financial and social supports;
- Equipping the province's workforce to meet current and future provincial labour market demands;
- Providing guidance and support to employers to recruit and retain the necessary workforces to grow their businesses;
- Offering guidance and support to residents in order to achieve the greatest benefit from the opportunities that exist in the province;
- Enhancing client case management;
- Supporting residents with career decisions and securing and retaining employment; and
- Providing guidance and support for the development of policy and procedures on employment and training programs.

Under the WDA, Newfoundland and Labrador provides employment and training supports to eligible beneficiaries to improve their ability to perform their current job, prepare for a new job, to enhance their labour market participation, help them develop the skills needed to find and keep a job, improve their labour market outcomes, and develop their workforce. Programs and services may include, but are not limited to, those that support the following activities:

- Skills training, ranging from basic skills such as literacy and numeracy to more advanced skills training;
- On-the-job training and workplace-based skills upgrading;
- Group interventions and job readiness assistance;
- Financial assistance and benefits such as grants and living allowance related to the delivery of an eligible program;
- Employment counselling and services;
- Labour market connections such as services that facilitate matching supply and demand;
- Employment opportunities or experiential learning and development on the job; and
- Employer-sponsored training.

The WDA targets a number of client groups, including:

- Unemployed or underemployed individuals;
- Individuals in receipt of income support;
- Persons with disabilities;
- Youth and students;
- Immigrants/newcomers;
- Apprentices;

- Community organizations; and,
- Private and not-for-profit employers.

WDA Investment Plan and Program Expenditure Summary

The Department of AESL is responsible for administering the WDA. Funding is allocated for programming delivered through AESL, the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development and the Human Resource Secretariat.

Workforce Development Agreement (WDA) - Investment Plan 2019-20				
Program/Service	Focus Area	Target Population	Program/Service Description	Planned Investment
Employment Development Supports and Services	Individual Supports	Underemployed, unemployed	Expands access to employment development programming to provide eligible unemployed individuals with a range of supports and services to assist them prepare for, find and maintain employment.	\$1,390,000
Apprenticeship Wage Subsidy (AWS) Program	Employment Partnerships	Apprentices	The AWS program provides Apprentices across all levels of apprenticeship with the opportunity to gain work experience and progress to Journeyperson certification by providing a wage subsidy to employers who hire an apprentice.	\$1,000,000
Job Grant Program	Training, Supports, Employment Partnerships and Building Knowledge	Underemployed, unemployed	Financial assistance to private and non-profit employers to offset the costs of providing training to new or current employees.	\$2,866,500
Transitions to Work Program	Training and Employment Partnerships	Individuals in receipt of Income Support	Supports individuals in receipt of Income Support prepare for the transition to the labour market by providing in-class training followed by intensive job search.	\$700,000
Student Mentorship Program	Employment Partnerships		The SMP brings students and mentors together for the opportunity to practice industry-specific, transferable, and self-management skills to improve the student's chances of future employment. The program provides valuable work experience that will facilitate future labour market	\$280,000

Workforce Development Agreement (WDA) - Investment Plan 2019-20				
Program/Service	Focus Area	Target Population	Program/Service Description	Planned Investment
			participation. Employers will match the student with an industry professional connected to the student's field of study or area of interest.	
Supports to individuals to further their education and training	Training and Supports	Underemployed, unemployed, Apprentices	A range of employment supports designed to provide funding to support various benefits and financial supports to clients in continuing their apprenticeship or educational assessments.	\$280,000
Partnership Agreements	Employment Partnerships		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.	\$800,000
Office of Employment Equity for Persons with Disabilities	Supports and Employment Partnerships	Persons with Disabilities	The Office has a mandate to increase the number of persons with disabilities employed in the Public Service through: a) the Opening Doors Program comprised of full time, permanent positions designated for persons with disabilities and limited to members of this employment equity group; b) 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 c) career support services provide practical job search and career counseling assistance to persons with disabilities registered with the Office.	\$1,100,000

Workforce Development Agreement (WDA) - Investment Plan 2019-20				
Program/Service	Focus Area	Target Population	Program/Service Description	Planned Investment
Post-Secondary Programs (General Vocational)	Training and Supports	Persons with Disabilities	In cooperation with the public college system, dedicated College of the North Atlantic staff, via selected campuses, assist persons with disabilities through the process of acquiring a post-secondary education.	\$1,537,885
Grants to Community Organizations to Support Persons with Disabilities	Training, Supports, Employment Partnerships and Building Knowledge	Persons with Disabilities	Funding provided to community-based organizations to support opportunities for persons with disabilities to prepare for, attain and maintain employment.	\$1,296,300
School to Work Transitions	Training and Employment Partnerships	Persons with Disabilities	Provides high school students with intellectual disabilities the support necessary to assist with making the transition from school to work by providing access to after school or summer work opportunities with the assistance of a job trainer.	\$250,000
Supported Employment Program (SEP)	Employment Partnerships	Persons with Intellectual Disabilities	Community Employment Corporations offer supported employment services to adults with intellectual disabilities to allow these individuals to participate in meaningful, integrated, employment within their communities. Supports for individuals are provided to ensure the success of the individual in the employment setting and can include support up to and including the provision of one-on-one support by a Job Trainer in the workplace.	\$7,202,200

Workforce Development Agreement (WDA) - Investment Plan 2019-20				
Program/Service	Focus Area	Target Population	Program/Service Description	Planned Investment
Training Services Program (TSP)	Training	Persons with Disabilities	Provides supports and services to eligible individuals with disabilities to pursue post-secondary training as part of a collaboratively developed employment plan.	\$677,900
Work Related Disability Supports	Supports	Persons with Disabilities	Responds to the disability related support needs of adults with disabilities who wish to participate in or maintain employment.	\$50,000
WDA Administration			Operating expenses and funds for system upgrade to meet reporting requirements.	\$1,289,100
Total Investment				\$20,719,885

Note: With Federal revenue of \$13,273,676.

Stakeholder Engagement

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador regularly engages with a broad array of general public and client groups to inform policy and budget priorities and to ensure programs and services are effective and relevant. The Department of AESL works to ensure the province has a highly educated and skilled workforce to meet evolving labour market demands. This includes creating and sustaining a collaborative climate which is conducive to economic growth, competitiveness, and prosperity.

The 2019-20 LMDA and WDA annual plans have been informed via ongoing strategic planning and information sharing with key partners as part of normal program and policy development. Key partners include:

- Employers such as Verafin, Anaconda Mining, D F Barnes Fabrication, Corner Brook Pulp and Paper, Newco Metals;
- Community groups such as Community Sector Council, Vera Perlin, Stella's Circle, Choices for Youth;
- Official language minority representatives such as Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador (RDÉE TNL), La Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador (FFTNL);
- Indigenous partners such as Labrador Aboriginal Training Partnership, St. John's Native Friendship Centre, Nunatukavut Community Council;
- Labour organizations such as Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour; Fish, Food and Allied Workers; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers;
- 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, Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Technology Industries, Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters – Newfoundland and Labrador, Newfoundland Aquaculture Industry Association;
- Educational institutions (private and public) such as Memorial University of Newfoundland, Marine Institute, College of the North Atlantic, Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Career Colleges, Association of Building Trades Educational Colleges, Academy Canada;
- Youth groups such as Premier's Youth Council, Conservation Corps, St. John's Boys and Girls Club;
- Municipalities such as Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador, Towns and Local Service Districts;
- Federal Government departments such as Employment and Social Development Canada, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada; and
- Other Provincial Government departments such as Departments of Education; Fisheries and Land Resources; Tourism Culture, Industry and Innovation; Natural Resources; Children, Seniors and Social Development; Office for the Status of Women; Disability Policy Office; Intergovernmental and Indigenous Affairs Secretariat (Executive Council).

Examples of engagement and other related activities that have informed the development of the annual planning process to date include:

- **The Way Forward: A Vision for Sustainability and Growth in Newfoundland and Labrador** – On November 9, 2016, the Government of Newfoundland Labrador released The Way Forward: A

vision for sustainability and growth in Newfoundland and Labrador based on input received from stakeholders and residents. In the first six months (November 9, 2016 to May 9, 2017), Government implemented Phase 1 of the vision “Securing Our Footing,” which focused on a variety of actions aimed at reducing spending and supporting economic growth.

On March 27, 2017, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador released Phase 2, The Way Forward: Realizing Our Potential, which focused on a variety of actions aimed at creating conditions for private sector job creation and economic growth.

On April 24, 2018, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador released Phase 3, The Way Forward: Building for Our Future, which focuses on a variety of actions aimed at further strengthening our economic foundation, while improving services and outcomes for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Unprecedented partnerships and collaboration with the business sector will continue this year as the Provincial Government partners with the mining, forestry, and community sectors to generate new economic activity and foster job creation. This work will follow the new model of engagement established in previous years with the province’s aquaculture, agriculture, and technology sectors. Much of this work has been coordinated through the Cabinet Committee on Jobs where the government of Newfoundland and Labrador partners with industry in joint decision making aimed at stimulating new business activity and creating new private sector jobs for residents throughout the province.

- **The Way Forward on Immigration** - Informed during public consultations to gather the input of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians on immigration and to inform the development of the immigration action plan. The five-year action plan outlines provincial actions and supports to collectively attract and retain immigrants with skills needed to build and contribute to the economy.
- **Adult Literacy Plan** – During 2018, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador held consultations on the development of an Adult Literacy Action Plan. Input from individuals and organizations that have insight and an in-depth knowledge of the impact of adult literacy on learners, communities and the workplace is central to the successful development of a Provincial Adult Literacy Action Plan.
- **Symposium on Impacts of Population Aging and Immigration** - Held in partnership with Memorial University of Newfoundland and the Atlantic Research Group on Economics, Immigration, Aging and Diversity. Brought together key stakeholders to discuss innovative solutions for Newfoundland and Labrador’s demographic challenges.
- **Initiatives to Support International Students and Graduates** - Held in partnership with the Association for New Canadians to assist international students and graduates from post-secondary institutions in this province gain meaningful employment in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- **Indigenous Leaders Roundtable** - Provided a new forum through which Indigenous Governments and Organizations can make progress on matters of common interest with the Provincial Government.

- **Provincial Tourism Product Development Plan** - Developed in coordination with industry and substantial stakeholder consultation, to create strategies to foster a strong business environment for private tourism investment and focusing public resources in product development areas that provide the greatest return on investment through increased visitation and spending.
- Establishment of the **Oil and Gas Industry Development Council** - A collaborative industry based approach to assess the long-term vision for the province's oil and gas industry and focus on developing a more sustainable and competitive industry.
- **The Department of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation's (TCII) Business Innovation Agenda** - A long-term action plan to expand the pool and capacity of Newfoundland and Labrador's economic wealth generators – innovation and growth-focused businesses.
- **Workforce Innovation Center (WIC)** - Established to provide a coordinated, central point of access to engage government, career and employment service providers, skills development organizations and stakeholders in the business and community sectors. The WIC's goal is to help research and test new and innovative workforce development models that make direct links to increasing individual employability.
- **Public Engagement Branch** - A unique and innovative Provincial Government entity whose activities include engaging the public in deliberative dialogue about sustainability issues and challenges, supporting collaboration between and among rural stakeholders including governments and facilitating and conducting research that helps inform government policy- and decision-making.
- **Pre-Budget Consultations** - As part of the budget process, the Department of Finance engages with people and organizations throughout Newfoundland and Labrador to help identify government spending priorities, and how to strike a balance between the province's financial situation and the need to deliver programs and services.
- **Premier's Youth Council** - The Premier's Youth Council was created in 2017 as a body of up to 25 young people, aged 16-24, to provide advice to the Premier by bringing a youth perspective to select topics of importance.
- **AESL Strategic Plan** - Provides a framework to strengthen the province's labour supply to take advantage of the many opportunities in a changing economy.
- **Comprehensive Human Resource Plan** - In The Way Forward, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador committed to the development of a Comprehensive Human Resource Plan to support sector diversification and foster a productive and knowledge-intensive economy. The Comprehensive Human Resource Plan grounded in labour market analysis is a key commitment to understand future labour needs and ensure a workforce that is ready to respond to the labour market of the future, including considering the needs of indigenous people, persons with disabilities, youth, older workers, women and newcomers to the province in order to prepare for opportunities. The plan, which is currently under development, has been informed based upon engagement with key stakeholders such as industry, labour, government, and the education sector.

- AESL engages with **Official Language Minority Community Representatives** including Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador (RDÉE TNL) and the La Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador (FFTNL) around the provision of employment benefits and support measures to Francophone communities. This includes:
 - Providing promotional materials for international trade missions;
 - The Department sponsors and participates in the Bilingual Career Orientation and Entrepreneurship Day hosted by RDÉE TNL bi-annually; and,
 - Collaboration opportunities related to job search and career counselling, including accessibility to materials in French.

Engagement Themes:

The Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour has participated in numerous engagement activities towards the development of the various phases of The Way Forward, including specific to the Immigration Action Plan, The Adult Literacy Plan, and The Comprehensive Human Resource Plan (now The Way Forward on Workforce Development). Also through the activities of the Workforce Innovation Centre, as well as through day to day program and service delivery. A number of key themes and focus areas have emerged specific to workforce development, including:

- Increased collaboration and partnerships;
- Continued emphasis on immigration and attracting talent;
- Improved access to labour market information;
- Closing skills gaps through skills development and mentorship opportunities;
- Enhanced awareness and access to programs and services; and
- Promotion of inclusive and diverse workplaces.