
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Housing and Social Development

\$15-MILLION BOOST FOR APPRENTICESHIP SUPPORTS

VICTORIA – The Province’s Skills Development Apprenticeship Program will be enhanced by an additional \$15 million in federal funding for a total of \$21 million, announced Rich Coleman, Minister of Housing and Social Development.

“By enhancing the Skills Development Apprenticeship program, the Province is allowing EI-eligible participants to complete their technical training with greater personal supports,” said Coleman. “This is one of several innovative projects being rolled out across B.C. to provide increased support and information resources to our clients.”

The Skills Development Apprentice program is a critical service that provides financial support to individuals to attend and complete apprenticeship training programs. Apprenticeship training is an essential component of the provincial labour market that results in thousands of individuals becoming skilled tradespeople. Apprenticeship technical training is offered through a large network of public and private training providers throughout many communities in British Columbia. By enhancing this program, the Province, through its Labour Market Development Agreement with the federal government, is able to further support apprentices during the economic downturn.

“This program is another example of how the provincial and federal governments are working together to provide new options and create educational opportunities for the unemployed in these uncertain economic times,” said Moira Stilwell, Minister of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development. “We’re committed to ensuring that British Columbians receive the training they need today for success in the jobs of tomorrow.”

Enhancements to the Skills Development Apprentices program include:

- Full tuition support for apprentices during the economic downturn.
- Expanded eligibility to include apprentices who had established an EI claim within the past 36 months.
- Basic living expenses.
- Increases to incremental supports (may include day care, transportation, living away from home).

“These enhanced supports for apprentices complement the ITA’s efforts to encourage apprentices, including those currently out-of-work, to use the current economic slowdown as an opportunity to catch up on their technical training,” said Kevin Evans, chief executive officer of the Industry Training Authority. “The program will help enable more apprentices to complete their training, giving B.C. the skilled people it needs to compete and prosper as the economy turns the corner.”

The ITA is the provincial Crown agency responsible for B.C.'s industry training system.

The Ministry of Housing and Social Development will continue to work closely with other government ministries and stakeholder organizations in order to seek out and implement responsive and timely initiatives that support clients to receive the training they need to obtain long term, sustainable employment.

These enhancements support the ministry's commitment to provide British Columbians with access to the best system of supports in Canada, and meet a stated goal that clients achieve sustainable employment through flexible and individualize employment programming.

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