

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Literacy Partners

**FROM:** Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

**DATE:** March 03, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Literacy and Basic Skills Agreements

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The purpose of this memorandum is to provide Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) organizations with information on changes made to the LBS agreement template and guidelines.

**Background**

The Ontario Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Program includes both lower level literacy training and academic upgrading to form a comprehensive and integrated adult learning service. Organizations provide literacy services that assist learners in moving toward their training, education, employability, and independence goals.

The Ministry enters into agreements under the LBS Program with:

1. Support Organizations
2. Service Delivery Organizations

Service delivery is the primary focus of the Program. It encompasses a number of specific services that are provided directly to learners. These services range from outreach to adults who want to upgrade their literacy and basic skills, to training that is tailored to learners' needs and level, through post-training follow-up to measure the impact of participation in the Program on learners' progress toward their individual goals.

Service development includes activities that support and improve delivery organizations' ability to provide quality literacy services. On-going assistance from service development organizations help the service delivery organizations to continuously upgrade their capacity to provide the services learners need.

These services help ensure that the Program is innovative and relevant to learners and communities, as well as cost-effective.

### **Key changes to the LBS Agreement template**

Sample LBS agreement templates are being posted on the Employment Ontario Partners' Gateway at: <http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/programs/training.html> for information purposes only and are subject to change. It is important that you carefully review the Agreement that is sent to your organization for signature by the Ministry.

### **Key changes to the agreements to note are:**

- LBS agreements for all organizations will be for two (2) years unless otherwise stated in the Article 1 of your agreement.
- The Literacy and Basic Skills Program Guidelines form part of the LBS agreement and are now available on the Employment Ontario Partners' Gateway at: <http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/programs/training.html>.
- Revisions have been made to the “*Access To Information And Protection Of Privacy*” clause (Article 9) of the LBS Agreement.
- In addition the agreements include the following schedules:
  - **Schedule “A”** - Program Description
  - **Schedule “B”** – Budget and Performance Commitments;
  - **Schedule “C”** – Payment Schedule
  - **Schedule “D”** – Reports, and
  - **Schedule “E”** – Notice of Collection of Personal Information and Consent (Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities).

### **Annual Budget and Performance Commitments**

In each funding year subsequent to the first funding year, the Ministry and each LBS organization shall establish a budget and set performance commitments for that funding year, according to the following process:

1. The LBS organization shall submit a proposed business plan for a funding year in a form within the timelines to be specified by the Ministry.

2. Upon receipt of the proposed business plan, the Ministry shall review the proposed business plan and:
  - a. Promptly advise the organization of any concerns with the contents of the proposed business plan and set a timeline for the submission of a revised business plan; or
  - b. Approve the proposed business plan.
  
3. If and when the Ministry approves the proposed business plan for a Funding Year, it shall provide the organization with a revised Schedule "B" establishing a budget and setting performance commitments for that Funding Year. The revised Schedule "B" shall be deemed to replace the previous Schedule "B" and form part of the Agreement.

Please note the above changes noted are being posted for information purposes only and are subject to change. It is important that you carefully review the Agreement that is sent to your organization for signature by the Ministry.

### **Regional Management of LBS Agreements**

The Ministry's ongoing business development needs an effective management and delivery of the LBS program, including contracting and information management, and comprehensive reporting. Starting April 1, 2011 all LBS agreements and payment processes for service providers and regional networks will now be managed out of the local MTCU offices and not Service Delivery Branch. This is consistent with the Ontario government's modernization agenda that is aimed at improving the delivery of Ontario government information and programs, improving internal operations and providing enhanced services cost-effectively.

#### What does this mean for your organization?

- LBS organizations will receive their new two (2) year agreements which include all of the service delivery sites in that region, sent from the Regional Director's office.
  
- LBS agreements now will be based on the region the sites are located. For example if an organization has two (2) sites in Eastern Region and four (4) sites in Central Region they will receive two (2) separate agreements
  - Agreement #1 will have the two (2) sites in the Eastern Region
  - Agreement #2 will have the four (4) sites in Central Region.
  - Both agreements will be managed separately in their respective regions

- LBS organizations will also be assigned new agency numbers or EOIS Site Number. The 2011-2012 Schedule B will now show two numbers:
  - **Old LBS Agency Number** (a combination of the Agency Number and Site Number as listed on your 2010-2011 Schedule B)
  - **EOIS Site Number** (this is the new Agency number)
- LBS Organizations must quote both numbers when calling the ministry.
- Service Delivery Branch will continue to work with LBS organizations as they close off the financial reporting for the 2010-2011 year including the receipt of audits etc. LBS organizations must refer to the 2010-2011 Audit Requirements that will be posted on the Employment Ontario Partners' Gateway at: <http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/programs/training.html> in March 2011 for more information on their financial reporting requirements.
- Starting April 1, 2011 LBS organizations must now direct all payment inquiries related to their 2011-2013 funding to their local MTCU office. Service Delivery Branch will no longer have access to payment information and will be unable to respond to questions. LBS organizations must refer to the 2011-2013 Audit Requirements posted on the Employment Ontario Partners' Gateway for more information on their financial reporting requirements.
- LBS organizations will have to contact their local MTCU office directly and not Service Delivery Branch to report any changes to payment and contact information as soon as possible to avoid any disruptions to their payments. The changes to the LBS-IMS system will mean organizations will no longer be able to update this information online.

Please note that the LBS support organization agreements (excluding regional network organizations) will continue to be managed out of Service Delivery Branch.

### **The Literacy and Basic Skills Program (LBS) Guidelines**

The LBS Program Guidelines form part of the LBS agreement and are now available on the Employment Ontario Partners' Gateway at: <http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/programs/training.html>. It is important to note that in the event of any inconsistency between the Guidelines and any other provision in the Agreement, the other provision in the Agreement shall prevail.

We have made minor amendments to the LBS Program Guidelines which include an update to the chapter on Research and Development (R&D), the addition of

an E-channel section, and an Addendum on the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF). We also made some terminology revisions, for example replacing the term "Native" with "Aboriginal".

In addition, we removed all references to contact hours in the LBS Guidelines as MTCU will not require contact hours to be reported in 2011-2012 while the Ministry transitions to a focus on learner progress and learner outcomes with the implementation of the OALCF. For more information on this change please refer to the Contact Hours Questions and Answers for LBS Service Delivery Organizations posted on the Employment Ontario Partners' Gateway at: <http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/programs/training.html>.

### **Audit and Accountability Requirements for LBS Organizations**

Audit and Accountability Requirements have been posted for both Service Delivery and Support Organizations. Please refer to Article 1 of your agreement for more information on these requirements. These requirements are available on the LBS-IMS system as well as the Employment Ontario Partners' Gateway at: <http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/programs/training.html>

We welcome you to visit the Employment Ontario Partners Gateway at [www.eopg.ca](http://www.eopg.ca). This site provides support to partners and agencies delivering Employment Ontario projects or services. Materials and information are posted on a regular basis, so be sure to check the site often for updates.

We appreciate your hard work and continued service to our LBS learners.

For more information please contact your local MTCU consultant.