

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Employment Ontario (EO) Service Providers Delivering Programs  
Managed in EOIS-SP Connect

**FROM:** Jacqueline Cureton, Director,  
Program Delivery Support Branch

**DATE:** November 17, 2017

**SUBJECT:** 2018-2019 Employment Ontario Business Planning Launch

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I am pleased to announce the launch of the 2018-2019 Employment Ontario (EO) business plan process. As part of the launch, your organization will receive program-specific business plans through EOIS-SP Connect. Business plans are due to the ministry by December 18.

The ministry remains keenly interested in continuing to build on its engagement and collaboration efforts with the EO network. Over the past few months, we have taken the time to engage with you and listen to your advice on how we can improve your experience with the 2018-2019 business plan process. The launch of business planning provides us an opportunity to increase our focus on working with communities and the network to better understand labour market needs and solutions. This effort will require ongoing engagement, over the coming months, with the network, employers and other key stakeholders.

### **Engaging the EO network**

I would like to share with you a sample of our engagement activities on business planning and program improvements.

At the EO network level, the EO Business Planning Survey provided the ministry with a wealth of information in the over 230 survey responses with over 3,000 comments. Ministry staff have undertaken a preliminary analysis of the feedback – some of which will be reflected in the 2018-2019 business planning cycle.

As a supplement to the survey, we engaged the Employment Service (ES) and COJG External Reference Group in a conversation, in early October, on how business planning can be improved. This session also afforded us an opportunity to discuss unique service coordination challenges present in certain communities, as well as other elements of business planning. We remain committed to working with our EO partners – across all sectors - as we plan for additional improvements to future cycles.

To support the government's interests in supporting the development of foundational skills, the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) network provided us feedback on the LBS funding initiatives for 2017-2018 and 2018-2019. As well, the recent LBS Symposium afforded the ministry an opportunity to strengthen communication channels and relationships with the network.

The Canada-Ontario Job Grant (COJG) deliverers continue to provide the ministry with important insights to employer experiences with the program. Earlier this fall, the COJG deliverers shared various viewpoints regarding the impact of the program changes implemented in April 2017. More recently, we also had an opportunity to discuss COJG with a small group of employers to garner their first hand perspectives.

Lastly, the ministry consulted with Youth Job Connection (YJC) service delivery partners; these consultations have informed a number of program improvements, which will take effect April 1, 2018. The first change you will see will be in YJC business plans, specifically in the weighting of core measures within the Service Quality Standard.

### **What's New - Highlights of 2018-2019 EO business planning improvements**

I would like to highlight a few of the immediate changes stemming from network feedback.

#### Reduced Administration

To reduce administration on service providers:

- ES and Youth Job Link (YJL) business plans have been consolidated into one template. The same consolidation has been made to the YJC and Youth Job Connection: Summer (YJCS) business plans. A similar consolidation will occur to the 2018-2019 transfer payment agreements for ES-YJL and YJC-YJCS.
- Information has been pre-populated into the template (e.g., core measures are listed in the Service Plan section of applicable templates as opposed to the previous years' open text fields), where possible.

#### Opportunities to highlight local labour market circumstances, service coordination & innovation

Business plans have been modified to allow:

- Service providers now have more space to articulate how local labour market conditions and, where applicable, service coordination circumstances are impacting service delivery.
- Service providers now have an opportunity to identify how they are closely examining their service delivery practices rather than simply improving on deficiencies. This is why an innovation question has been added to the continuous improvement section of the business plans.

#### Greater focus on positive outcomes

The overall tone and approach of the 2018-2019 business plans aims at a greater focus on organizational strengths. For the ES-YJL business plans, organizations that fit the model defined as "Results Scenario A" are only required to identify one area for improvement in the upcoming fiscal year, as opposed to two in previous years.

### Added user-friendly design features

A number of design improvements have been introduced to the business plan templates including:

- Expanded character limits to 3,000 characters in certain areas of the business plan.
- Embedded brief instructions into the business plan templates. This change has eliminated separate instructions documents.
- Deleted and/or altered low value questions to make them more relevant.
- Pre-populated data that is available in other sections of the system.
- Re-framed questions (e.g., business hours) so that detailed information is only required if changes are anticipated in the upcoming fiscal year.
- Hyperlinks to resources have been embedded within the templates, eliminating the need to do an independent search for supplementary information, if applicable.

These changes represent a sample of the improvements being introduced for 2018-19, which should result in a more positive business planning experience. Once again, the ministry looks forward to working with you to build on these changes.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind EO service providers to keep client and employer information managed in EOIS-CaMS up to date. 2018-2019 site allocations will be informed, in part, by 2017-18 Q3 data.

If you have any questions during your planning process please contact your employment and training consultant (ETC).

cc: ETD regional directors