

Workforce Development Review Action Plan

Qs and As for Ontario Bridge Training Program Service Providers

Workforce Development Action Plan Overview

1. What is the purpose of the Workforce Development Action Plan (“the Action Plan”)?

The Ontario government is committed to building a skilled workforce, preparing more people for work and being open for business and jobs. Moreover, the significant impact of COVID-19 on Ontario’s economy and labour market requires a response that proposes “comprehensive action to help get people back to work and contribute to Ontario’s economic recovery, including a focus on the groups and sectors most impacted by the pandemic” [Budget 2020].

Before the onset of COVID-19, the Government had identified the need to update and streamline the province’s workforce development and training system. This is to ensure that programs and partners in workforce development could be better positioned to support job seekers, employers, and communities under evolving labour market conditions. This system includes a variety of training and partnership programs that aim to support individuals to gain skills, and employers to find or build talent.

2. What are you hoping to achieve with the Action Plan?

Through the Action Plan, the ministry aims to strengthen the workforce development and training system to achieve better outcomes for businesses, workers and communities; and to ensure that Ontario’s changing economy has a secure supply of talent, skills and workers, now and in the future with particular consideration for the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Is the Action Plan meant to streamline programs, find efficiencies, and/or find cost savings?

The government has a very complex system of programs with a lot of different services and supports. By closely reviewing and comparing program objectives, eligibility, and funding, the ministry will be able to identify instances where interventions are duplicative

or overlapping. At this time, no decisions have been made to wind down or replace any programs. The Action Plan will help identify opportunities to better serve Ontarians and achieve better value for money.

4. Is the Ontario Bridge Training Program in-scope of the Action Plan?

Yes, the Ontario Bridge Training Program is in-scope along with other Employment Ontario initiatives.

5. How will the Action Plan influence the government's commitment to the integration of highly skilled immigrants?

The ministry is aiming for a relevant, effective system that is responsive to labour market demand and more comprehensive, easy to navigate services, with fewer gaps for workers and businesses. Highly skilled immigrants are very important to the success of Ontario's economy, and the government understands its role in the integration of these highly educated, highly skilled, experienced and qualified newcomers to our province.

6. Will the outcomes/recommendations of this review be shared with the public?

Activities to support development of the Action Plan are underway. More details will be available at a later date.

7. How long will it be before the Government releases its Action Plan?

Activities to support development of the Action Plan are underway. More details will be available at a later date.

The Workforce Development Action Plan and the Ontario Bridge Training Program (OBTP)

8. When will service providers be advised about any changes, impacts, etc., to the OBTP?

Once the Action Plan has been developed, it will be possible for the ministry to advise service providers about any changes, revisions, additions, if any, to the OBTP Program.

9. Will the development of the Action Plan impact OBTP Projects? If so, in what ways?

The goal of developing the Action Plan is to strengthen service to all Employment Ontario job seekers including OBTP participants. Once the Action Plan has been developed, it will be possible for the ministry to advise service providers about any changes, revisions, additions, if any, to the OBTP Program. The Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development considers service to clients and students as a prime value. The ministry, as it has traditionally done, will negotiate with service providers to ensure any potential disruption to service is minimized.