



October 7, 2009

**Message from Laurie LeBlanc, Assistant Deputy Minister
Employment and Training Division**

Thank you for your interest in Second Career or the Ontario Skills Development program. Making a decision to upgrade your skills to find a higher-skills job is an important one, and one which the Ontario Government is proud to support.

As Ontarians continue to struggle with the global economic recession, many people find themselves out of work through no fault of their own. The government responded to this need when it introduced Second Career – providing long-term training opportunities for laid-off workers. The program was intended to serve 20,000 Ontarians over three years; in fact, almost 21,000 people have now successfully enrolled in Second Career in just 16 months.

In September alone, 13,000 Ontarians enrolled in training through Second Career and the Ontario Skills Development program. Second Career experienced an 800 per cent increase in applications compared to a typical month. The Ontario Skills Development program has seen an increase of 175 per cent over last year.

Second Career has been a tremendous success, and we will continue to offer this important training program. Over the next few months, we will be bringing in some new rules so we can continue to provide Second Career opportunities for laid-off workers who will benefit most from job retraining. Changes will be in place in time to assess applications for January start dates. In the interim, we will be processing Second Career and Ontario Skills Development applications on a first-come, first-served basis.

We currently have a large volume of applications in our offices. It will take some time to deal with these applications under the new rules, so I encourage you to work with the counsellors in your assessment centre office to set a realistic time frame for your training. I also encourage you to explore other employment programs and services available in our offices to help you on your road to employment.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Laurie LeBlanc
Assistant Deputy Minister