

March 5, 2018

Dear Partners,

As you know, the Canada-Ontario Job Grant provides an opportunity for employers to invest in their workforce, with help from the government.

Over the past several months, the ministry sought feedback from our service delivery partners and employers who have accessed the program. These consultations have provided important first-hand perspectives, as well as insight into improving the program to support the needs of employers.

Based on this feedback, the ministry is making enhancements to COJG to offer a more balanced approach to serving all employers. These enhancements include a renewed focus on supporting small employers, especially those who face barriers to investing in workforce training, by streamlining administration and increasing their access to the program.

Enhancements also include increasing funding toward consortium-based training, which will allow organisations to act on behalf of employers who pool their resources to support common training objectives and goals. Research has shown that there are positive benefits / outcomes that can come from partnership-based industry-driven “intermediary” approaches to skills development.

In addition, the ministry will be winding down the COJG pilots (Customized Training and Upskill) and analysing the results to inform future improvements to the COJG program. The ministry will continue to provide programs that support similar training needs to those supported by the pilots through the suite of programs offered through Employment Ontario.

Effective April 2018, the following changes to COJG will be implemented:

Renewed focus on supporting small employers:

- The definition of “small employers” will be expanded to include firms with 1-99 employees, which aligns with other federal and provincial definitions.

- Access will be expanded by providing higher levels of support for small employers by decreasing the contribution requirement from 1/3 to 1/6, and eliminating the “in-kind” contribution requirement. This will also reduce the administrative burden of accessing the program.
- Contribution requirements will increase for large employers (100 or more employees) from 1/3 to 1/2, to offer a more balanced approach to cost-sharing between government and employers who have greater capacity to invest in their workforces.

Making it easier for employers who wish to apply as part of a consortium:

- Administrative support funding will be introduced for organizations who act as intermediaries of consortium-based training, coordinating and managing training agreements with the ministry.

Winding down the COJG pilots (Customized Training and Upskill) will provide insights into improving the COJG program. The Upskill pilot and associated training activities ended on September 30, 2017. The ministry will stop accepting applications for the Customized Training pilot on March 31, 2018.

Applications to COJG received on or before March 31, 2018 will be assessed under the current guidelines and must be approved in the system before the system update scheduled for April 20. Applications received on or after April 1, 2018 will be assessed under the new guidelines and must be entered into the system after April 20.

We appreciate your help in working with employers who are currently applying for the Canada-Ontario Job Grant by communicating these changes. We have developed Qs and As to support you in having these conversations with employers, as well as a template letter you may wish to distribute to your employer network regarding these changes. These documents can be found on the [EOPG](#). Information on training will be shared at a later date.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to supporting employers through our Employment Ontario network.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By

David Carter-Whitney
Assistant Deputy Minister
Employment and Training Division