# Canada- Ontario Job Grant (COJG) Program Update Questions and Answers

## General Questions

1. **Why are these changes being made to COJG?**

   The ministry continues to work on improving COJG to ensure funding for training provided with COJG funding provides value for money and aligns with the strategic objectives of the program. The ministry has worked to ensure that these changes have been made in such a way as to be respectful of the demands of COJG on your organization and the impact on the needs of employers.

2. **Did the ministry receive feedback from service providers on these program changes? If so, how?**

   Yes, the ministry consulted with service providers through the Service Provider Reference Group on April 20th. This session provided the ministry with valuable feedback from service providers on the proposed changes, including the new eligibility criteria and Reasonability Checklist as well as operational tools to support service providers in implementing the changes.

   The Service Provider Reference Group consists of 21 service providers who act as a resource body to review and analyze promising practices, suggestions for continuous improvement in service delivery, as well as the overall capacity development needs for the COJG network across the province.

3. **When do these changes become effective?**
   As stated in the memo released earlier this month, the changes were implemented as of May 12th. All applications currently being accessed should be accessed using the new eligibility and criteria.

4. **What are service providers to do with applications that were submitted before May 12th and currently being assessed?**

   All applications being assessed should follow the updated eligibility criteria and be reviewed using the Reasonability Checklist. If a contract has already been agreed to with an employer prior to the memo with changes being released (May 12th), please proceed with that agreement under the previous guideline criteria.

5. **Is the ministry reviewing the 12 business day service standard following the implementation of the Reasonability Checklist?**

   The ministry will be monitoring the response times of applications to review changes in response times with the implementation of the Reasonability Checklist and other program changes. Based on these findings, the ministry may alter the service standard.

6. **With the potential increased administrative burden with recent changes to COJG, is the ministry willing to increase the 15% administrative funding amount?**

   The 15% administrative funding is an amount set in the Job Fund Agreement with the federal government. The ministry understands the burden associated with COJG delivery and will continue to work towards reducing this burden on service providers.

7.  **Are further changes anticipated to the COJG program?**

    The ministry continues to review COJG to ensure that the value for money is provided in training supported by COJG funding. As a result of these reviews, further changes could be implemented to the program. The ministry will continue to communicate with service providers to update and keep service providers informed of program changes.

8.  **Are further consultations expected with service providers to discuss further program changes?**

    Feedback from service providers is vital to understanding the performance of the program and beneficial to support the delivery of the program. The ministry will continue to consult with the Service Provider Reference Group as needed to receive this valuable feedback.

9. **The Reasonability Checklist states service providers need to review training providers' and employers' history. How is this done?**

   A system update to EOIS-CaMS will be completed on June 15th. As part of this update, an Info Assist Tab that provides the approval and denial history for employers and training providers will be added, which will make this information easily accessible for service providers. Until this time, service providers should manually pull this information in EOIS-CaMS.

10. **Where do the $500 and $2,500 amounts in the Application Triage section of the Reasonability Checklist come from? How were these amounts set?**

    These amounts were set by conducting an analysis of data and developing a threshold of the amount of applications that would fall into this category. This threshold allows applications that provide a greater risk to the ministry to be identified and be evaluated further through the Reasonability Checklist. This ensures value for money is provided through COJG funded training.

11. **The current application states that three quotes are required when the cost of training per day is over $700 per person or over $25,000 but the Reasonability Checklist uses $500 and $2,500, why the difference?**

    The $700 and $25,000 outlined in the application are when three quotes are required, and in the Reasonability Checklist the $500 and $2,500 thresholds are set for applications that require further examination. Three quotes are only required in the situations outlined in the application form, not the threshold set in the Reasonability Checklist. For example, if the cost per day of training is $550 per person and overall cost is $9,500, three training provider quotes are not required.

12. **What is defined as a training day and how do service providers determine if training is part -time or full-time?**

    A training day is defined as any calendar day on which training takes place. For example, this could include 3 hours of training on a day or 10 hours on a day. When entering into EOIS-CaMS, to determine if training is part-time or full-time please use the training provider classification if it appears reasonable. For example, if training is 2 hours a day, every other day and is classified as full-time by the training provider, this would not be reasonable.

13. **What is considered "business consulting services?"**

    For the purposes of COJG, consulting services are defined as any situation where the proposed "training" would consist of a review of the business or organization rather than the development or improvement of skills for training participants. This includes situations where the training is dependent upon the "consulting" service being completed prior to or after the training. In these situations, the application is ineligible for funding.

    Example:
    A business undergoing a review of operations to look for efficiencies in distribution processes would be ineligible and be considered consulting services.

    On the other hand, training employees on project management skills so they can better project manage operations would be eligible as the individuals are learning or improving an existing skill.

14. **What is considered "controlling interest" in a company to determine COJG eligibility?**

For the purposes of COJG, a controlling interest is when an individual owns 50% or more of the company or when the individual has controlling authority (e.g. individual has voting power) over the board of directors.

15. **What is considered a conflict of interest?**

A conflict of interest can be deemed any situation where a training provider and employer have a relationship that may cause concern around the validity of the training. If the relationship may be perceived as a conflict of interest, a disclosure of potential conflict of interest must be made. The ministry or service provider will then determine whether there is a conflict of interest and how this may impact the COJG application.

16. **Are conferences at the end of training eligible?**

Conferences are ineligible under COJG. The training that occurs prior to a conference is eligible and should be submitted in an application without the costs associated with the conference.

17. **Is the Reasonability Checklist mandatory for every COJG application?**

If the COJG application is deemed eligible (i.e. eligible employers, participants and training), the assessor must continue to the Reasonability Checklist. At a minimum, the Application Triage section of the Reasonability Checklist must be completed for every COJG application and helps identify if further completion of the Checklist is required. The Checklist should be included in the service provider employer application file and future site monitors will include a review of the Checklist on file.

18. **Are professional development courses as part of the Charter Professional Accountant eligible?**

Yes, these professional development courses remain eligible under COJG.

19. **I have completed the Application Triage as part of the Reasonability Checklist; all questions had an answer of "No". Do I need to complete the remaining sections of the Checklist?**

If the results of the "Application Triage" section result in all "No" answers, the remaining parts of the Checklist do not need to be completed. The first page of the Checklist still needs to be put into the file for file review purposes.

20. **Section 1 "Value for Money" of the Reasonability Checklist has determined that an application should NOT be considered for funding, do I need to complete the remaining sections of the Checklist?**

If the result of a question in the Checklist is that the application should not be considered for funding, the remaining parts of the Checklist do not need to be completed. The Checklist should be put in the application file, and the application should no longer be considered for funding.

**21. What order should the Reasonability Checklist and COJG Assessment Tool be completed?**

COJG applications should be reviewed for eligibility first (see program guidelines). If the assessment is eligible, the Reasonability Checklist should be completed. If the application passes the Checklist, the COJG Assessment Tool is completed to prioritize the application and determine the tier.

**22. Will the Reasonability Checklist be put into EOIS-CaMS?**

At this time, there are no immediate plans to have the Reasonability Checklist put into EOIS-CaMS. Minimal data collection will be required e.g. if the application was assessed against the Reasonability Checklist, if application only required triage or full assessment, and the reason for application denial.

**23. Will service providers be asked to report on the results of the Reasonability Checklist?**

Having accurate data is important when programs are analyzed and reviewed. The ministry is reviewing the feasibility of tracking data in EOIS-CaMS for reporting purposes.

**24. What is the difference between product vendor training and private trainer training?**

As per the guidelines, a product vendor is defined as any training where the vendor is involved in the creation/sale of the product and is also conducting the training. "Product" refers to business-related materials (e.g. technology/equipment, software, or proprietary process) purchased by the employer.

Private trainer training is when the training is done by a trainer who is not a College of Applied Arts and Technology, publicly assisted university, school board, product vendor or a union based training centre.

**25. What product vendor training is eligible and ineligible?**

Product vendor training on either basic or advanced use of a product is ineligible. Product vendor training on a skill set that is not on the use of the product remains eligible.

Examples:
  i. A landscaping company purchases a new lawnmower. Basic training from the product vendor on how to operate the lawnmower is ineligible. A training course on landscape design would be eligible from the product vendor.
  ii. A firm purchases Microsoft Excel. Training on how to use the software and complete calculations using the software would be ineligible. A training course on statistical analysis which uses the software as part of the training curriculum would be eligible.

**Product Vendor Eligibility**

Eligible Training Scenarios:

  a. Private Trainer + Use of the Product Training= Eligible
  b. Private Trainer only trains for Product Vendor (independent and certified by the Product Vendor, but is not a seller of the product/equipment) +Use of the Product Training= Eligible
  c. Product vendor + Skills Training not related to the Use of the Product or Service= Eligible

Ineligible Training Scenarios:

    d. Product Vendor + Advanced Training on the Use of the Product = Ineligible

    e. Product Vendor + Basic Training on the Use of the Product = Ineligible

    a. Private Trainer is an exclusive trainer for Product Vendor + Use of the Product Training= Ineligible

    b. Product Vendor with Controlling interest in Private Trainer + Use of the Product Training = Ineligible

**26. Are individuals on a "probationary period" classified as previously unemployed and eligible for 100% coverage?**

100% funding is only eligible for participants who were previously unemployed and their employment is conditional upon completion of the training. Any unemployed individual who is hired prior to start or completion of COJG funded training, and is on probationary period will not be eligible for 100% funding.

**27. Are line managers included in the new eligibility criteria for senior management trainees?**

Line managers continue to be eligible for training under COJG for both small-medium and large employers.

**28. Do employers have to physically sign the denied application or can it be e-signature?**

No, employers do not have to sign the denied application. The record of the denied application must include a completed, signed and dated Employer Application Form as well as rationale to support the denial decision.

**29. Can exams exceed the $500 limit included in training costs i.e. is it part of tuition costs?**

Examination Fees do not fall under "Textbooks, software and other materials required to complete skills training".  The $500 limit for textbooks, software and other required materials does not apply.

**30. When is course curriculum development not considered product vendor training?**

The development of curriculum materials such as case studies that are not related to a proprietary process that the trainer has rights to and is selling is eligible. Training on a proprietary business process that the trainer is selling is considered product vendor training and is ineligible under COJG.

# System and Application Questions

**31. Until the EOIS-CaMS system change is implemented, what is the appropriate way to categorize training without a product vendor option?**

The ministry is working on adding "Private Trainer" as a training provider type option in the Employer/Consortium application form and EOIS-CaMS. The COJG Employer/Consortium application form and EOIS-CaMS will have the "Private Trainer" option available by July 2017. In the interim, please select "Registered Private Career College" in EOIS-CaMS when the training is being done by a private trainer. The service provider staff will be responsible for updating the training provider type in EOIS-CaMS when "Registered Private Career College" was selected on the application and the actual training provider type is a "Private Trainer." Please note private training is any other training not delivered by a Private Career College, public college, university, school board, union training centre or product vendor.

**32. What is the process for developing and implementing agreements including putting in EOIS- CaMS where an employer is training a previously unemployed new hire?**

**Over 25 Application With New Hires:**
The following steps should be followed for over 25 COJG funding application requests with New Hires.
1. Ministry staff reviews the application and if approved proceed to Step 2.
2. Employer signs the COJG agreement with the ministry.
   a. At this phase, the agreement will have the employer contribution for Unemployed New Hires is listed.
3. Employer should send the participant registration forms to the service provider.
4. Service Provider should create the Participant Service Plans.
5. The service provider should verify if the New Hires meet the 100% funding eligibility requirements by requesting proof of the participants' unemployment. The participants unemployment status proof can consist of:
   a. record of unemployment;
   b. attestation from the participant confirming they have been previously unemployed; or
   c. other proof that shows client was previously unemployed.
6. If the participant's unemployment status can be verified, then the service provider should notify ministry that participants are eligible for 100% funding.
7. The ministry will then amend the agreement (in the ministry's financial system outside of EOIS-CaMS) and sign the amended agreement with no employer contribution required for the Unemployed New Hires.
8. The service provider should update the Participant Client Summary "verified unemployed new hire" checkbox.
9. The contribution amount needs to be revised on the Employer Service Plan to reflect the increased ministry contribution, reduced employer contribution and if applicable, the reduced In-Kind contribution amount.
10. The 100% (of the $15,000 max.) client contribution amount can now be entered in the Participant Service Plan for the Verified Unemployed client.

**Under 25 Application With New Hires:**

The following steps should be followed for under 25 COJG funding application requests with New Hires.

1. Service provider staff reviews the application and if approved proceed to Step 2.
2. Update COJG application status to "Approved" in EOIS-CaMS.
3. Notify the employer their COJG application has been approved, but the final funding amount can only be determined after the participant registration forms have been received and reviewed.
   a. The system will only allow $0 contribution, after the participant service plan has been entered and the client is identified as a "verified unemployed new hire." Once this is completed, EOIS-CaMS will allow a $0 contribution amount.
4. Employer should send the participant registration forms to the service provider.
5. Service Provider should create the Participant Service Plans.
6. The service provider should verify if the New Hires meet the 100% funding eligibility requirements by requesting proof the participants' unemployment. The participants unemployment status proof can consist of:
   a. record of unemployment;
   b. attestation from the participant confirming they have been previously unemployed; or
   c. Other proof that shows client was previously unemployed.
7. The service provider should have the employer sign the agreement with no employer contribution required for Unemployed New Hires.
8. If the participants' unemployment status can be verified, then the service provider should update the Participant Client Summary "verified unemployed new hire" checkbox.
9. The contribution amount needs to be revised on the Employer Service Plan to reflect the increased ministry contribution, reduced employer contribution and if applicable, the reduced In-Kind contribution amount.
10. The 100% (of the $15,000 max.) client contribution amount can now be entered in the Participant Service Plan for the Verified Unemployed client.

## 33. How does an employer identify 100% funding for unemployed individuals on the Employer/Consortium application?

Employers with 50 or fewer employees who are training and hiring unemployed individuals are eligible for up to $15,000 per trainee. These employers are not required to make a minimum contribution to training costs for training funded through the grant. Please note that the 100% funding is not available for New Hires who were previously employed with another organization.

On the Employer/Consortium application form, the employer will be required to list the minimum required contribution for each participant. After the participants unemployed status has been verified by the COJG service providers, the minimum contribution requirement for the cost training will be waived for the New Hires participants who were previously unemployed.

## 34. How do service providers/ ministry staff review employer names if an employer has multiple variances of the employer name (ex. spelling mistake, no spaces)?

An employer's Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) number is used as a common identifier in EOIS-CaMS. This number can be used to look up and review any application that the employer has submitted under that CRA number and will include applications where the employer name has variances.

35. **In situations where follow-up data is not included in a file, what steps should ministry staff take to review past applications?**

In situations where this data is not readily available, service providers/ ministry staff should review the state of the previous applications. In situations where the training is not complete, no further action is required as data is not available. In situations where training is complete and data should be available, service providers should attempt to collect the required information to make an informed decision on the application by contacting the employer to determine the outcomes of the previous applications.

36. **How are service providers to manually look up training provider history prior to the June 12th release?**

The system does not currently allow for training providers to be looked up individually in EOIS CaMS. As part of the new functionality available June 12th, service providers will be able to see all the applications that match the first choice training provider for a given COJG application. Until this time, in situations where service providers have concerns around the training provider, the application assessment does not need to be finalized until the release is complete and the Reasonability Checklist can be accurately completed.

37. **How are service providers supposed to close previously open service plans when they do not meet the new requirements in EOIS-CaMS?**

The ministry is looking into this issue and will provide further details with a resolution to this in the near future.