

Memorandum

To: Employment Ontario (EO) Transfer Payment Recipients

From: David Cronin, Director
Program Delivery Support Branch

Date: May 10, 2022

Subject: Purchasing Gift Cards with Government of Ontario Funding

The Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (the “**ministry**”) released a [memo](#) on April 12, 2022 about gift cards and the use of Government of Ontario funds. The ministry would like to clarify that the memo was primarily addressing the inappropriate use of gift cards to incentivize program clients. When operational funds or financial supports are used to purchase gift cards without consideration for Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) funding eligibility, it is considered an inappropriate use of funds.

The ministry understands the barriers that clients face while seeking employment in our current labour market, however, it is the ministry’s responsibility to maintain transparency and accountability for Provincial funding.

Transfer Payment Recipients (TPRs) may reimburse clients for expenditures supported with submitted receipts. TPRs may also make financial support purchases on the client’s behalf retaining all receipts. In exceptional circumstances, gift cards may also be used by a TPR to address the specific needs of a client. Receipts for all transactions must be retained by the TPR for audit and accountability purposes, and gift cards should never be purchased in bulk.

For additional information about purchasing gift cards with Government of Ontario funds, please refer to the posted Qs & As document. If you require clarification on what is considered an eligible expenditure under a particular program, I encourage you to review program guidelines on the [Employment Ontario Partners’ Gateway](#) or the Audit and Accountability Requirements (Schedule “H”) of your TPA. For an overview of the rules governing the ministry’s transfer payments, please review the [Transfer Payment Accountability Directive](#), available on Ontario.ca.

Please note that this direction is meant to be interim and will be further defined and reflected in your TPAs next year.

If you have any questions regarding the contents of this memo, please contact your ministry representative.

Thank you,

David Cronin
Director

cc: Charles Bongomin, Central Region – A/Regional Director
Heather Cross, Western Region – Regional Director
Andrew Irvine, Northern Region – Regional Director
Tariq Ismati, Eastern Region – Regional Director