

SUPERINTENDENT OF PRIVATE CAREER COLLEGES' UPDATE

APRIL 2016

Branch News

Dear Private Career College Sector:

After a busy 2015, I am pleased to take a moment to provide you with my first update for the 2016 calendar year, on a number of program and policy initiatives currently underway in the Private Career Colleges Branch (PCCB).

Recent and Ongoing Initiatives

In collaboration with the PCC sector, including the sector's association, Career Colleges Ontario (CCO), PCCB continues to move forward with a number of initiatives to support PCC students and to help PCCs deliver quality programs and support their continued innovation:

1. Registration and program approvals;
2. New regulations and ongoing policy development related to the Premier's Sexual Violence Action Plan;
3. Changes to Personal Support Worker training requirements and resulting vocational program impacts;
4. Continued management of the February 2015 closure of Everest Colleges Canada Inc. and;
5. OSAP changes.

Update on Registration & Program Approvals

Inspections

Inspections are prioritized using a risk-based approach and take into consideration many factors including a PCC's financial viability, compliance history, higher risk programs, complaints, and date of last inspection. As such, the number of inspections per year is not pre-determined. For the 2013, 2014 and 2015 calendar years, PCCB conducted 146, 240 and 270 inspections, respectively.

To help ensure a straight-forward inspection, we recommend the following best practices:

Inspection Best Practice: Routine Inspections

Store key documents and information in a single place (e.g., binder, filing cabinet) to ensure that all key inspection documents and information is available should your PCC be inspected.

The following is a list of documents/information that will be required by your inspector (additional items may be requested):

- Current student enrolment broken down to national/international students
- Current programs offered
- Example of a student transcript

- Copy of current transcript agreement and proof of most recent date transcripts were uploaded
- Student complaint procedure and student complaint file
- Expulsion policy
- Instructor qualification data forms
- Approved program curricula (including up to date practicum host agreements)
- Current Advertising material
- Trust fund information (if applicable)
- Current certificate of insurance
- Contact info of financial aid officer (if applicable)

Inspection Best Practice: Student Files

Review your student files on a regular basis to ensure that your student files are up to date. Typical non-compliance issues found during an inspection relate to student contract concerns, including missing student file details, instructor qualification details, transcript content, and student complaint procedures.

The following is a student file checklist that will assist you in your review:

- Full name
- Sex
- Date of birth
- Residential address and permanent address
- Residential and permanent phone numbers and cell phone number, if applicable
- Email address, if applicable
- Results of any academic evaluations by the PCC/ Midway evaluation
- Copy of a contract signed by the student and PCC
- Verification that student has met admission requirements
- If the student has withdrawn or been expelled from the program, copies of the withdrawal or expulsion letter, refund calculation and refund cheque
- Copies of receipts issued to students for the payment of fees
- Copies of transcript and diploma for graduated students

Program Changes and Approvals

For students to be successful in gaining employment in a particular vocation, vocational programs should provide the most up-to-date skills and knowledge. As soon as a change is made to any of your programs' content, a program change should be submitted to your Inspector in the Registration Information for Career Colleges (RICC) system.

It is equally important to maintain an up-to-date campus profile in RICC, including removing old programs that have been abandoned. These programs will show up as in-progress programs in RICC.

For the 2015 calendar year, PCCB approved a total of 3,142 program changes and approved 349 new programs.

Sexual Violence Action Plan

On March 6, 2015, Ontario released its “Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment,” a ground-breaking initiative that outlines concrete steps to help change attitudes, provide more supports for survivors, and make workplaces and campuses safer and more responsive to complaints about sexual violence and harassment.

A key feature of the Action Plan is the amendment of several pieces of legislation, including the *Private Career Colleges Act, 2005*, to enshrine important elements of the initiative in the law.

On July 2, 2015, I invited comments on the Action Plan and the proposed amendments to the *Private Career Colleges Act, 2005* from all registered PCCs. The majority of the responses we received were positive; in fact, some PCCs even provided copies of policies against sexual violence and harassment that they currently have in place.

On October 1, 2015, I issued a revised Statement of Students’ Rights and Responsibilities to all registered PCCs to raise awareness of the Action Plan in the PCC sector and to provide information to students about sexual violence. As you know, this revised Statement is now mandatory in all PCC enrolment contracts.

On October 27, 2015, the Ontario government introduced Bill 132, *The Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act (Supporting Survivors and Challenging Sexual Violence and Harassment), 2016*. If passed, this legislation would help make Ontario’s postsecondary campuses safer and would require public colleges, universities, and PCCs to implement standalone policies to address sexual violence affecting students.

On December 10, 2015, I posted proposed new regulations in support of the Action Plan and Bill 132 on the government’s Regulatory Registry to gather feedback from the public. This posting was viewed approximately 250 times over the mandatory 45-day posting period.

Bill 132 received Royal Assent on March 8, 2016. As a result, *The Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act (Supporting Survivors and Challenging Sexual Violence and Harassment), 2016* will be available on E-laws shortly. The amendments to the *Private Career Colleges Act, 2005* will come into effect on January 1, 2017. Proposed regulations in support of those amendments will also, if approved by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, come into effect on January 1, 2017.

PCCB continues to work closely with CCO to ensure that meaningful steps are taken to address sexual violence in the PCC sector. In 2015, CCO formed a Sexual Violence Action Plan Working Group for this specific purpose and tasked the group to develop a sexual violence policy template. This template will be available to all PCCs and will help them to comply with the requirement for a sexual violence policy. I would like to thank CCO for their leadership in striking the working group and for their meaningful contributions to the Action Plan. I would also like to thank the PCCs who were involved in the working group. Your participation and support is greatly appreciated.

For more information, the [Action Plan](#) is available on the Government of Ontario’s public website. I encourage all PCC operators (and their students) to read these documents and to contact my office with any further comments or concerns.

PSW Standard Change and Resulting Program Impacts

As a reminder for PCCs who currently offer or intend to offer a Personal Support Worker (PSW) training program, [Policy Directive #13: Personal Support Worker \(PSW\) Training Standard](#), issued on September 1, 2015, sets out new PSW program requirements for PCCs and associated timeframes for submitting program changes. Here is a summary of the new requirements:

Previously approved PSW programs (approval obtained pre-September 1, 2015)

PCCs offering PSW program(s) that were approved before September 1, 2015 were required to comply with the following three requirements by March 31, 2016:

1. Adopt the new *Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Personal Support Worker Training Standard, 2014*.
2. Obtain third party assessment attesting to compliance with the new *Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Personal Support Worker Training Standard, 2014*, (see [Fact Sheet #3 – Third Party Program Assessment](#)).
3. Submit a complete program approval application to the Superintendent in the RICC system.

PCCs that failed to meet these three requirements by March 31, 2016 will lose approval to offer their PSW program and the related credential on August 1, 2016.

New PSW programs (applications submitted post-September 1, 2015)

PCCs applying for approval of a new PSW program after September 1, 2015 must also meet the above three requirements when they submit their program approval application.

Please visit the ministry's website to review our new [Frequently Asked Questions](#) related to implementation of the new PSW program standard.

Everest Colleges Canada Inc. Closure

Since the immediate suspension (February 19, 2015) and revocation of registration (March 13, 2015) of Everest Colleges of Canada Inc. (Everest) last year, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (ministry) has been working to help the over 2,700 who were undergoing or about to start their training at Everest at the time of its closure.

Within the first 48 hours of Everest's suspension, 47 ministry staff provided over 40 information sessions to more than 2,000 students at Everest's 14 Ontario campuses. Shortly after, ministry staff reviewed over 30,000 hard copy student files obtained from Everest's campuses and were able to locate 242 signed Everest diplomas. These diplomas were then mailed to individuals where Everest's records indicated that they had graduated.

Where the ministry was not able to locate a signed diploma and Everest's student files indicated that an individual had graduated prior to February 19, 2015, the ministry provided CCO – Everest's former transcript service provider – with the most up-to-date grades data available so that CCO could produce an interim transcript for these students upon request.

PCCB continues to focus its efforts on organizing training completions or refunds for the 2,721 students who were undergoing training at Everest at the time of its closure. As of March 18, 2016:

- 73 postsecondary institutions have been approved to provide training completions for affected students;
- 90% (2,462) of all affected students have been provided with a training completion option and 89% (2,196) of these students have chosen a training completion or refund option (74% or 1,635 training completions; 26% or 561 refunds);
 - To date, 1,316 students have completed their training and 175 are currently in class.
 - Only 1.5% (24) of students who chose a training completion are still waiting to commence that training completion: 11 individuals are waiting for approval of their Prior Learning Assessment Recognition (PLAR) and 13 are waiting to start their program.
- 2 students have yet to make a TCAF claim or submit the necessary claim forms and supporting documents to process their TCAF claim. The ministry has sent additional reminders to these students to submit their completed claim or missing documents; and
- The ministry has received and is responding to 9,049 emails and has conducted 7,868 telephone counselling sessions through the ministry's Everest hotline.

I intend to leverage the lessons learned from Everest's closure to streamline our processes for managing major PCC closures and facilitate training completions and refunds for affected students. In October 2015, PCCB hosted two closure consultation sessions with the TCAF Advisory Board and PCCs from the sector to discuss Everest-related experiences – both within the ministry and the PCC sector – and to identify best practices and areas of improvement for future major closures. The feedback from these consultations will help inform the ministry's ongoing review of the *Private Career Colleges Act, 2015* and the review of the TCAF training completion process.

In an effort to ensure a thorough consultation process, PCCB hosted two focus groups with students who were affected by Everest's closure in March 2016. Following these focus groups, a web-based survey will be sent to all students who were undergoing training at Everest at the time of its closure, to ensure they all have an opportunity to share feedback. Feedback from the focus groups and web-survey will help determine where our current regulatory framework and operational policies may be modified to better meet student needs.

I would like to express my appreciation to you for your assistance throughout the closure. I understand that the months following the closure were a challenging time. Thank you for your efforts and support in helping to facilitate training completions for former Everest students.

Other Important News: OSAP Changes

As announced in the 2016 budget released last month, Ontario is enhancing elements within the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) through a two-phased approach. Changes in Phase One, beginning in the 2017/18 include creating a single up-front Ontario Student

Grant (OSG) that is available to fulltime students, including mature single students, married students, and students with children and increasing weekly aid maximums.

Phase Two will be implemented by 2018/19 and involves expanding the availability of low-cost loans through OSAP for students from middle-income and high-income families by reducing parental and spousal contribution amounts to better align with the federal government.

These changes will result in the following:

- Greater non-repayable support for the students and families who need it most
 - **Key Results:** 170,000+ students with more non-repayable aid and 250,000+ students with non-repayable aid that meets or exceeds what they previously received under OSAP;
- Expanded financial support for mature students, as well as married students and sole-support parents
 - **Key Results:** 99% of single parents who earn less than \$50,000 per year will receive enough in grants to more than cover the cost of average tuition;
- Greater assistance maximums, while maintaining a fair debt cap
 - **Key Results:** 80% of OSAP-eligible students will have less debt; and
- Expanded interest free loans to middle- and upper-income families
 - **Key Results:** Students from families of four who earn up to \$175,000 will be eligible for the new Ontario Student Grant.

While the 30% Off Ontario Tuition and other grants are being eliminated and consolidated to create the OSG, no eligible student will receive less in grants than today and lower to middle income students will receive additional grant assistance.

In Closing

On behalf of PCCB, I hope that you found this update informative. We look forward to sharing ongoing progress on all of our initiatives throughout the year.

Over the coming weeks, please stay tuned for key branch updates pertaining to publication of the Consultation Paper and the upcoming Everest student information sessions. Once posted, we would appreciate your feedback on the proposed changes to regulations made under the *Private Career Colleges Act, 2005*.

We would appreciate hearing about any topics you'd like to see included in future Superintendent's updates. Your feedback can be sent to PCC@Ontario.ca.

Regards,

[Original Signed]

Carol Strachan
Superintendent of Private Career Colleges