



November 13, 2009

Dear Employment Ontario Partner,

I am writing to update you on the status of Second Career.

Second Career is an overwhelming success. It was designed to offer retraining to 20,000 laid-off workers over three years. In just 16 months, it has helped almost 21,000 people begin a retraining program.

The high demand has created challenges for the program. In September of this year, there was an approximate increase of 800% in applications over the previous year. For that reason, we conducted a review of Second Career to ensure it can continue to help workers affected by the global economic recession, in a sustainable and fiscally responsible manner.

We appreciate your hard work and dedication to making Second Career a success. Moving forward, we need your continued support to help us implement changes that are fiscally responsible. We are working with a finite amount of funding and need to make sure we are helping the people who will benefit the most from skills training.

New guidelines for Second Career will be in place, effective November 20, 2009. Applications that are not yet approved by the ministry will be reassessed under the new guidelines.

In order to simplify the delivery of Employment Ontario training programs, the new guidelines will apply to both Second Career and Ontario Skills Development clients. Clients will still be able to apply for short-term or long-term training.

Under the new guidelines, the program will focus on supporting people in need who will benefit the most from skills training. Several criteria will be used to objectively assess an applicant's level of need. Applicants will be considered to have a higher level of need when they:

- Are gaining new skills for a high-demand occupation;
- Have been unemployed for a longer period of time;
- Have a high-school education or less, or postsecondary education credentials that are not recognized in Ontario; and
- Are working toward a college certificate, diploma or licence.

The new guidelines will provide increased flexibility by allowing clients to pursue either full-time or part-time training. Second Career will continue to offer laid-off workers support for tuition, books, travel and other expenses to help them participate in training.

We need to work together to manage expectations and ensure that clients continue to be realistic in setting start dates. Priority will be given to clients whose applications have been in the system the longest, with a focus on clients who have applied for January training starts. Potential participants are not to begin training until they get final approvals in writing from MTCU.

For more details about the guidelines and other changes, including answers to frequently asked questions, please visit the Second Career website: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/tcu/secondcareer/>. If you have any other questions, please contact your local ministry office.

I understand that this has been a challenging time for our Employment Ontario and training partners. We appreciate your continued support and cooperation as we work to implement the new guidelines.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laurie LeBlanc". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L" and "B".

Laurie LeBlanc
Assistant Deputy Minister
Employment and Training Division

INFORMATION SHEET

SECOND CAREER

Second Career is changing

Ontario has made changes to Second Career that will allow this high-demand program to continue to help laid-off workers train for new careers in high-demand fields.

As of November 20 2009, Second Career will focus on supporting people in need who will most benefit from skills training.

Is Second Career right for you?

You can apply to Second Career if you:

- are laid off or have been laid off since January 2005
- are still unemployed or have been working an interim job since your lay off
- are choosing to retrain for a career that is in demand

Second Career provides help to laid-off workers in need who will benefit most from training to find work. Several factors will be used to determine who will receive funding. Second Career could be right for you if you:

- were laid off and have been actively looking for work for an extended period of time
- worked for a long time in an industry with limited job opportunities
- plan to train for a job which is in demand in your community, which requires a credential or licence to obtain work
- have a high-school education or less, or postsecondary education that is not recognized in Ontario
- Work in a job with no current employment opportunities

Talk to assessment centre staff to find out if you should apply for Second Career.

What will I be asked to contribute?

Your individual contribution to your training will depend on your financial situation and the cost of training. Second Career takes into consideration the cost for:

- tuition
- accommodation
- food
- phone, internet charges
- heat and hydro
- transportation
- dependent care

Students may be expected to contribute to their training costs.

How is my application reviewed?

If you have already applied to Second Career or Ontario Skills Development

The ministry is reviewing applications with priority given to those who have been kept waiting the longest and with January starts for courses.

Due to the high number of applications, it may not be possible to approve everyone who is eligible to start school in January. Potential Second Career participants should consider alternative start dates and courses.

Please remember that the Ministry's approval for Second Career funding is separate from college acceptance. Both approvals must be obtained before you start classes.

If you are intending to apply to Second Career or Ontario Skills Development

Second Career is just one option among many Employment Ontario program options to help laid-off individuals who require training to begin different careers in the new economy.

Talk to Employment Ontario assessment centre staff about your experience, skills and interests. Explore the options that may be right for you. Together you can develop a personal plan to return to work.

Due to the high number of applications, Second Career applications may take several months to process. Applicants are encouraged to talk to assessment centre staff about alternate programming, including other Employment Ontario offerings.

For more details about the new guidelines and other changes, including answers to frequently asked questions, please visit the Second Career website:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/tcu/secondcareer/>

Key Resources

EO website: www.employmentontario.ca

- The Employment Ontario website provides information on employment and training services offered in your area, including Second Career.
- EO services can be accessed by telephone, online and in person at offices located throughout the province.

EO Hotline: **1-800-387-5656** or TTY: **416-325-4084**

- Service descriptions are available in 25 languages.