



Youth Employment Programs

Cooperative Education Incentive (Co-op)

Department of Labour and Advanced Education
Youth Initiatives
Skills and Learning Branch
Youth Employment Programs

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1.0 Program Introduction

The Cooperative Education Incentive (Co-op) supports work experiences for post-secondary students in their chosen field of study. Co-ops administered by the Department of Labour and Advanced Education through the Labour Market Programs Support System (LaMPSS).

2.0 Purpose

The Co-operative Education Incentive helps co-operative education students in university and community college to secure paid, on-the-job work experience related to their field of study and career goals. Its purpose is to strengthen Nova Scotia's workforce by augmenting students' learning with practical work experience; honing their skills and developing business and industry relationships that will ultimately help them to secure a good job in their chosen career, while also meeting employer needs and improving workforce productivity.

The program provides a financial incentive to employers of \$7.50 per hour, or half of the minimum wage earned by the co-op student during their work placement. Applications are considered three times each year, for the summer, fall and winter work terms.

Preference is given to employers who:

- Provide challenging, knowledge-intensive work opportunities
- Pay above-average wages
- Demonstrate commitment to innovation and a culture of learning
- Are internationally competitive (export-focused)
- Operate in Nova Scotia's growth sectors
- Hire graduates for permanent jobs

Applications are currently accepted for all 3 work terms through the Labour Market Program Support System (LaMPSS). Once an application has been approved, the employer enters in to an agreement with the Department that clearly defines the relationship and outlines expectations and funding arrangements. This agreement is administered through LaMPSS.

3.0 Funding Duration

Agreements run from 12 to 16 consecutive weeks per term, depending on the requirements of the cooperative program. Thirty-two week placements will be funded if the work term is a mandatory 32 weeks. Employers receive \$7.50 per hour wage reimbursement at the end of the term. Employers will be reimbursed a minimum of 32.5 hours per week to a maximum of 40 hours per week.

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Youth Employment Programs – Cooperative Education Incentive Roles and Responsibilities

Defines the program, sets baseline standards for service delivery and quality. This includes:

- Designing the program and setting program policy
- Developing reporting requirements and tools
- Assessing applications and determine funding eligibility amounts
- Providing advice and guidance that clarifies Youth Employment Programs –Cooperative Education Incentive expectations
- Ensuring transparency and accountability by monitoring and evaluating delivery performance against agreement commitments and guideline compliance
- Issuing funds and recovering overpayments where required
- Providing employers with appropriate program guidelines
- Working with employers and applicants on application and report submission

4.2 Employers Roles and Responsibilities

Employers are responsible for:

- Developing, supervising and providing a valuable work experience;
- Paying a minimum of \$15.00 per hour to the student employee plus 4% vacation pay
- Providing feedback to the Department on the program, including how participants are progressing and the impact of the program on the business, through an online survey
- Ensuring all required documentation is completed in full

5.0 Organization Eligibility Requirements

The Cooperative Education Incentive is available to private sector, government funded, non-profit, social enterprise and charitable organizations and municipalities. In order to qualify, employers must pay a minimum of \$15.00 per hour plus 4% vacation pay. Employers are required to pay the hourly wage indicated on their application and are responsible for all mandatory employment related costs.

Work terms must count toward the student's academic credit and be endorsed in advance by a Nova Scotia University or Community College Cooperative Coordinator to ensure program requirements are met.

Private sector organizations that are eligible to receive the Co-op Incentive and are also in receipt of the Industrial Research Assistance Program (IRAP) or the Scientific Research & Experimental Development (SR&ED) tax credit, are eligible to receive 50% of the hourly wage to a maximum of \$10.00 per hour.

Employers are not eligible for this program if they are receiving funding for the same position through any other government student employment program.

5.1 Student Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for the Cooperative Education Incentive, the student must be enrolled in a cooperative program at a Nova Scotia post-secondary institution and live in the province.

LAE will provide incentives to employers to support the hiring of immediate family members only where it supports the employment of individuals from certain groups that are underrepresented in the labour market, and where the employer has followed a fair hiring process.

Individuals who self-identify as one or more of the following may be eligible:

- Mi'kmaq or Indigenous
- African Nova Scotians
- Visible minorities (including persons of African descent)
- Persons with disabilities (consisting of a physical, cognitive or mental impairment that presents a persistent barrier to work)

A fair hiring process includes:

- advertising the position, (which can include language that indicates a preference for candidates from one of the populations above);
- interviews; and
- a rationale for selection

5.2 Application Requirements

Organizations apply for funding through the Labour Market Program Support System (LaMPSS). Directions on using LaMPSS follow in this guide. Applicants must submit all required documents listed throughout this guide.

You need to have your position approved by a Co-op Coordinator at the post-secondary institution(s) you intend to hire from, before submitting your application to the Cooperative Education Incentive program.

6.0 Applying for the Cooperative Education Incentive through LaMPSS

6.1 Applying Online Using LaMPSS Self-Serve

The first step to entering into an agreement for the Co-op Incentive is to request LaMPSS access by completing the [LaMPSS External Access Form](#). This is a one-time process. You will receive your login credentials by email within a day or so, and then you will be able to utilize the LaMPSS self-serve capabilities.

Please note: if you are applying under a Parent Organization, such as a university, you will need to speak to the holder of the LaMPSS account within your organization to be given access to apply under that LaMPSS ID.

6.2 Completing an Application Form

We think you'll find the application form relatively easy to complete. This section provides a little additional explanation.

You access the application form through LaMPSS. Select 'Organization Home', and then 'Programs and Services'. Finally, select 'Cooperative Education Incentive'. Please ensure that you complete a separate application for each county you are applying in.

6.2.1 Organization Information

The name and mailing address of your organization will be pre-populated (or automatically entered) into the application. If your organization's name or mailing address has changed, please complete the [LaMPSS External Access form](#), and select 'Update Access'. Send the completed document to lampss@novascotia.ca and the LaMPSS team will update your information.

6.2.2 Organization Mandate

In this section, please provide a brief description of your business or organization's field of work – what it does and its impact on your market or benefit to your community.

6.2.3 Agreement Contact

You will see a drop-down bar in this section, which will allow you to choose from the contacts already associated with the login information for your organization. Please select the person who will be most directly involved with the position(s) for which you are applying. If the appropriate person is not on the drop-down list, you can add that name now. Please note that you cannot edit an existing contact, you can only add a new contact.

6.2.4 Work Locations

You will see the address associated with your organization information. If your student employee(s) will be working at a different location, please add the location address by clicking the 'Add Location' button at the bottom of the page. You can add as many locations as needed.

6.2.5 Position Information

Position Type – Select 'WageSubsidy-COOP'.

Position Title – Be as specific as possible when naming the position.

Position Description – In this section, please enter the job description.

Estimated Start Date – Please enter the day you expect your student to start.

of Weeks – Enter the number of weeks that you wish to employ your student. The program supports a minimum of 12 weeks to a maximum of 16 weeks. If the co-op program has a mandatory 32 week position, we will fund 32 weeks for those programs only.

of Positions Requested for this Job Description and Work Location – This refers to the total number of positions for this individual job description and work location.

If there are any variations between positions, for example: wage, start date, work location; click the 'Add Position' button to create a separate position definition.

Hourly Wage – The minimum wage for this program is \$15.00 per hour.

Hours per Week – Enter the number of hours per week your student will be working. The Co-op program reimburses a minimum of 32.5 hours per week to a maximum of 40 hours per week.

Work Location – Select the location the student will primarily be working from in the drop-down menu.

Is the organization receiving federal / provincial assistance for this position? – Select yes or no. If yes, explain the funding that you are in receipt of.

6.2.6 Co-op Program Information

Program of Study – select the program of study that you want your student to be enrolled in from the drop-down menu.

University / College – select the Universities and/or College that have reviewed and endorsed your position. Remember to provide the Co-op Coordinators with the job description and employment details (hours per week, number of weeks and hourly wage).

If you are looking to hire for a position with any variation from the first, different job description or location, you will click the 'add position' button and complete the above steps again.

6.2.7 Legal Signing Officers

Enter the legal signing officer(s) who are required to sign all legal documents.

6.2.8 Supporting Documentation

Private Sector Organizations that are eligible to receive the incentive and who are also in receipt of the Industrial Research Assistance Program (IRAP) or the Scientific Research & Experimental Development (SR&ED) tax credit, are eligible to receive 50% of the hourly wage to a maximum of \$10.00 per hour, and a maximum of 40 hours per week.

To receive the \$10.00 per hour wage reimbursement, organizations are required to attach proof of IRAP and SR&ED funding at time of application.

7.0 Application Assessment Process

Applications will be assessed by the Student Employment Program Officers, and the Youth Initiatives Director. Approvals are based on the quality of the job experience, the wage being offered, the track record of the employer and the impact of the organization on the community, recommendations of post-secondary co-op coordinators, the likelihood of the organization hiring a graduate for a permanent job and an equitable distribution of opportunity throughout the province.

8.0 Post Approval

Once the organization has been approved for the Cooperative Education Incentive, you will receive a PDF Agreement Contract in an email. Organizations will be required to have both their signing officer(s) sign and return the contract within 2 weeks of the date the contract agreement was issued.

Organizations whose applications are not approved may appeal the decision within one week of the date of the email notification. An appeal must contain additional information pertaining to the quality of the work experience and be emailed to your Agreement Manager.

9.0 Student Documentation

Once you've hired your chosen student, please submit a copy of the Student Confirmation Form, plus proof of enrolment in a cooperative program. You can download a copy of the Student Confirmation Form from our [website](#).

Ensure the student signs page 1 and 2 of the Student Confirmation Form and email all documents to your Agreement Manager.

9.1 Surveys

Near the end of the agreement, we require two people to complete surveys: the student, and the student's supervisor. Both individuals will be emailed a link by the YEP team, and it will direct them to the survey. The employer should direct the student to complete the survey before their last day with the organization. All information gathered in the surveys will remain confidential and will be used to evaluate and monitor the Cooperative Education Incentive.

9.2 Financial Reporting using LaMPSS

The organization will also be required to provide a completed Payroll Record at the end of the work term and a Record of Employment (ROE). If the organization continues to employ the student after the term ends, an ROE is not required. Organizations can download the Payroll Record Form from the Co-op website, and can then email the completed form to their Agreement Manager

Please ensure you fill out the form in full and tally up the totals for each column. Incomplete forms will result in a delay of processing.

Once program requirements have been met through submission of the Financial Report(s), the subsidy will be paid to the organization via direct deposit.

10.0 Youth Employment Program Contact Information

If you require any additional information, please contact your Agreement Manager

For all other general program inquiries:

Youth Employment Programs – Cooperative Education Incentive

Email: sepinfo@novascotia.ca

Telephone: 902-424-6000

Toll Free: 1-800-424-5418