



# Workforce Navigation Toolkit

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Finding your way through hiring, training, and workforce supports

NORTHWEST TRAINING AND  
ADJUSTMENT BOARD

FEBRUARY 2026

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# COMPANY OVERVIEW



## WHO WE ARE

The Northwest Training and Adjustment Board is a not-for-profit workforce planning board serving the Kenora and Rainy River Districts. NTAB works with employers, service providers, Indigenous organizations, educators, and community partners to understand workforce trends and support informed decision-making across the region.

## WHAT WE DO

NTAB's work centres on understanding labour market conditions and helping the workforce system respond effectively.

This includes:

- analyzing local labour market data and trends
- supporting collaboration between employers and service providers
- identifying workforce gaps, pressures, and opportunities
- sharing timely, region-specific information to support planning

Through this work, NTAB helps ensure that workforce strategies reflect the realities of Northwestern Ontario.

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## HOW DID WE DO?

Please access our short survey by visiting:

[https://form.simplesurvey.com/f/s/2026-02-13\\_NTAB-WNToolkit](https://form.simplesurvey.com/f/s/2026-02-13_NTAB-WNToolkit)

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Northwest Training and Adjustment Board's Directors and staff recognize that we gather on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe and Métis Peoples within the Kenora and Rainy River Districts. It is our hope that the information that is gathered and shared through the work of the Northwest Training and Adjustment Board will assist in the process of truth and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and augment the intended sharing of resources that these lands provide to its residents.

# WHY WE BUILT THIS GUIDE



## OVERVIEW

Employers in Northwestern Ontario have access to many hiring, training, and workforce supports, but those supports are spread across different organizations, systems, and application processes.

Knowing where to start, which options fit, and what to expect can be challenging, especially when time and capacity are limited.

This complexity often makes it harder to move forward, even when supports are available.

## BUILT FOR LOCAL REALITIES

- Workforce challenges in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts are shaped by smaller labour pools, long distances, seasonal work, and limited internal capacity. Approaches that work elsewhere do not always translate locally.
- This guide reflects those realities by focusing on supports that are relevant to the region and by embedding local context throughout. NTAB does not deliver employment or training programs directly. Instead, this guide reflects NTAB's role in regional workforce planning by helping employers understand how available supports connect and where to turn next.

## THE LOCAL REALITY AND OUR RESPONSE

The Local Reality	How This Guide Responds	What That Means for Employers
Workforce supports are delivered through multiple organizations	Organizes content around real employer situations rather than program lists	Clearer direction and less guesswork
Hiring and training decisions often overlap	Groups related supports together by purpose	More coordinated planning
Program rules, timelines, and eligibility vary	Highlights what to expect before taking action	Fewer delays and surprises
Employers face changing local conditions	Includes local planning insights and workforce context	Decisions grounded in regional realities

## WHAT THIS GUIDE HELPS YOU DO



### Navigate the landscape

Organized around real employer situations rather than long program lists, so you can quickly see what applies to you.



### Understand your options

Highlights common routes, relevant types of support, and practical actions to help you move forward.



### Have better conversations

Helps you connect with service providers better prepared, with clearer questions and direction.

# UNDERSTANDING THE EMPLOYER PATHWAYS



The next section of this guide is organized into a set of employer pathways. Each pathway reflects a situation that employers commonly experience when hiring, training, or responding to workforce changes.

You do not need to read every pathway. Instead, choose the one that most closely matches your current situation. Each pathway is designed to stand on its own and can be revisited as your needs change.



## USING PATHWAYS TOGETHER

Many employers move between pathways over time. For example, hiring youth may lead to training existing staff, or responding to turnover may involve a mix of recruitment and upskilling.

The pathways are designed to work together. You can move between them as conditions change or use them in combination to plan your next steps.

There is no single right way to move through this guide. Employers are encouraged to start where they are, follow the pathway that fits, and adjust as needed.

## BEFORE YOU START

*A quick check before hiring, training, or applying for support*

### Clarify what you actually need

Be clear about what you're trying to solve. Is this a short-term, seasonal, or long-term need? In some cases, training current staff may be an alternative to hiring.

### Consider time and supervision

Hiring and training usually take more time upfront than expected. Consider who will supervise, train, and onboard, especially during busy periods.

### Understand timing and approvals

Most wage and training supports require approval before hiring or training begins. Application windows and processing times vary, which can affect options.

### You're not alone

Employment service providers and business support organizations can help you navigate options and next steps.

# PATHWAY A: HIRING YOUR FIRST EMPLOYEE

## WHERE YOU ARE NOW

You are preparing to hire your first employee due to business growth, increased workload, or the need for additional capacity. This is an important milestone and often comes with questions about employer responsibilities, supervision, and where to find support.

Hiring your first employee is a foundational moment that shapes future staffing decisions, workplace culture, and business operations.

## THIS IS A COMMON ROUTE

- Many employers across the Kenora and Rainy River Districts reach this point. Small businesses, sole proprietors, non-profits, and seasonal operations often begin hiring when demand outpaces what one person can manage.
- First-time employers frequently share similar concerns, including limited time, uncertainty about obligations, and not knowing which supports are designed for early-stage hiring.



### What to expect

Hiring your first employee often takes more time and planning than expected, particularly around onboarding and supervision.



### Starting small

Starting with a part-time, seasonal, or supported role can reduce risk and build confidence.



### Using supports together

Employers often use more than one support over time, combining recruitment, wage, and training options.

## SITUATIONS, ROUTES, AND SUPPORTS

Employer Situation	Common Routes	Programs and Supports That Often Fit
Hiring your first employee (general)	Start small, reduce risk, and seek guidance before committing to full-time hiring	Employment Ontario Service Providers; Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs); municipal business advisory services
Testing capacity before committing to long-term hiring	Use short-term, seasonal, or part-time roles to assess workload and supervision capacity	Canada Summer Jobs; youth or student employment programs; Employment Ontario Service Providers
Hiring help for peak or seasonal workload	Add temporary or seasonal staff during predictable busy periods	Canada Summer Jobs; youth employment programs; local recruitment support through Employment Ontario Service Providers
Hiring an entry-level worker with limited experience	Combine hiring with structured onboarding and early training	Employment Ontario Service Providers; youth or student employment programs; Get SET (Skills, Education and Training) program
Hiring a student or youth as a first step into being an employer	Align hiring with school schedules and provide close supervision	Canada Summer Jobs; Student Work Placement Program (SWPP); high-school co-op or OYAP connections
Unsure about employer responsibilities or compliance	Seek early guidance before posting a job or onboarding	Employment Ontario Service Providers; municipal or CFDC business advisory services
Transitioning from self-employment to having staff	Formalize roles, payroll, and supervision gradually	CFDC business advisory services; Employment Ontario Service Providers

# PATHWAY B: HIRING BUT STRUGGLING TO FIND APPLICANTS

## WHERE YOU ARE NOW

You have an open position but are not receiving many applications, or the applicants you are getting are not a good fit. This can happen even after posting the job multiple times or using different platforms.

For many employers in Northwestern Ontario, this challenge reflects broader labour market realities rather than issues with the business itself.

## THIS IS A COMMON ROUTE

- Across the Kenora and Rainy River Districts, employers in many sectors report difficulty attracting applicants. Smaller labour pools, competition for workers, seasonal work, and geographic factors all affect recruitment.
- It is common for employers to feel stuck at this stage, unsure whether to change the role, the posting, or the recruitment approach.



### What to expect

Hiring challenges are common in tight labour markets. It often takes more than one attempt, and adjustments along the way are normal.



### Why flexibility helps

Employers who broaden requirements, adjust hours, or pair hiring with training often reach candidates they might otherwise miss.



### Using supports together

Recruitment supports are frequently combined with wage or training programs, especially when applicant supply is limited.

## SITUATIONS, ROUTES, AND SUPPORTS

Employer situation	Common Routes	Programs and Supports That Often Fit
Posting a job but receiving few or no applicants	Revisit job requirements, expand where the role is promoted	Employment Ontario Service Providers; local and regional job boards; municipal or CFDC business supports; Northwestern Ontario Works Portal
Applicants exist but are not a strong fit	Separate “must-have” skills from those that can be learned on the job	Employment Ontario Service Providers; supported recruitment paired with training options; Get SET
Competition with larger employers or other sectors	Adjust role structure or explore wage-supported hiring	Wage subsidy-supported placements; youth or student employment programs; Indigenous employment and training organizations
Hiring in a rural or remote area	Use local networks and service providers to widen reach	Employment Ontario Service Providers; Indigenous employment organizations; community-based recruitment initiatives; Northwestern Ontario Works Portal
Time constraints limiting recruitment effort	Seek hands-on recruitment support rather than self-managing postings	Employment Ontario Service Providers; Northwestern Ontario Works Portal

# PATHWAY C: TRAINING YOUR CURRENT STAFF

## WHERE YOU ARE NOW

You already have staff, but skills, certifications, or capacity need to grow. This might be driven by new equipment, safety requirements, expanded responsibilities, retention concerns, or the need to future-proof your workforce.

Many employers reach this point knowing training is needed, but not knowing which supports apply or how to begin.

## THIS IS A COMMON ROUTE

- Employers across Kenora and Rainy River commonly use training to retain experienced staff, build internal capacity, and adapt to regulatory, safety, or technology changes.
- Investing in current employees is one of the most practical and effective workforce strategies used locally.



### What to expect

Training often takes coordination and lead time, especially when funding or external providers are involved. Planning ahead makes a difference.



### Why targeted training helps

Short, focused training allows employees to build needed skills without long absences from work or major disruption to operations.



### Using supports together

Employers often combine training delivery with cost-sharing or advisory supports to reduce expense and improve outcomes.

## SITUATIONS, ROUTES, AND SUPPORTS

Employer Situation	Common Routes	Programs and Supports That Often Fit
Employees need new skills to meet job demands	Identify specific gaps and use short or targeted training	College short courses or micro-credentials (e.g., Confederation College); Canada-Ontario Job Grant (when active); Employment Ontario Service Providers training navigation
Introducing new equipment or technology	Deliver focused, role-specific training	Vendor- or manufacturer-led training; college technical training; sector-based training initiatives
Compliance, safety, or regulatory changes	Schedule required certifications or safety training	Workplace Safety North training; WSIB Health and Safety Excellence Program; mandatory certification courses
Productivity or performance challenges	Address foundational skills alongside job training	Literacy and Essential Skills programs; Get SET; Employment Ontario Service Providers; customized workplace training
Wanting to upskill rather than recruit	Invest in current staff to retain knowledge and stability	Skills Development Fund-supported projects (where available); college or sector-led training programs

# PATHWAY D: UPSKILLING FOR CHANGE & COMPLIANCE

## WHERE YOU ARE NOW

Your business is adjusting to new equipment, technology, systems, or regulatory requirements. This may include updated safety standards, new software, machinery upgrades, or changes to industry rules that affect how work is done.

Upskilling in response to change is often time-sensitive and necessary to maintain compliance, productivity, or service quality.

## THIS IS A COMMON ROUTE

- Employers across the Kenora and Rainy River Districts regularly face change driven by technology, regulation, or operational upgrades. In many cases, the challenge is not whether training is needed, but how quickly it can be delivered without disrupting day-to-day operations.
- This pathway is common in regulated, technical, and resource-based sectors, as well as in workplaces adopting new digital tools.



### What to expect

Upskilling tied to change often comes with tight timelines. Training usually needs to happen quickly and with minimal disruption to operations.



### Why focused training helps

Targeted, role-specific training allows employers to meet requirements without pulling staff away from work for extended periods.



### Using supports together

Employers often combine vendor training with external certifications or safety programs to fully meet operational and regulatory needs.

## SITUATIONS, ROUTES, AND SUPPORTS

Employer Situation	Common Routes	Programs and Supports That Often Fit
Introducing new equipment or systems	Arrange short, role-specific training tied directly to the change	Vendor or manufacturer-led training; college technical courses or certifications; sector-based training initiatives
Responding to new regulations or compliance requirements	Schedule required certifications or refresher training	Workplace Safety North training; WSIB Health and Safety Excellence Program; mandatory regulatory courses
Technology upgrades affecting multiple roles	Deliver targeted training across teams rather than retraining entire staff	College short courses or micro-credentials; customized workplace training through training providers
Needing training quickly to avoid operational disruption	Use short, intensive training rather than long programs	Vendor-led instruction; short-term certifications; safety or compliance-focused training
Planning for future regulatory or technology changes	Upskill proactively to avoid future disruptions	Sector-led training initiatives; college programs aligned with emerging requirements; Skills Development Fund-supported projects (where available)

# PATHWAY E: HIRING YOUTH OR STUDENTS

## WHERE YOU ARE NOW

You are considering hiring a youth or student, either to meet short-term staffing needs or to build longer-term workforce capacity. This may include summer positions, part-time work during the school year, or placements tied to education or training programs.

For many employers, youth hiring offers flexibility and an opportunity to build future talent, but it can also raise questions about supervision, training time, and retention.

## THIS IS A COMMON ROUTE

- Across the Kenora and Rainy River Districts, employers regularly hire youth and students, particularly in seasonal, service, and entry-level roles. Youth hiring is often used to address peak workload periods, support succession planning, or create a pipeline of future employees.
- Employers commonly balance the benefits of youth hiring with the need for clear expectations and structured onboarding.



### What to expect

Youth and student hiring often involves additional supervision and onboarding, particularly at the start of the placement.



### Why youth hiring helps

Hiring youth or students can meet short-term needs while helping employers build long-term workforce connections.



### Using supports together

Wage subsidies, placements, and training supports are often combined to support youth hiring and reduce employer risk.

## SITUATIONS, ROUTES, AND SUPPORTS

Employer Situation	Common Routes	Programs and Supports That Often Fit
Needing short-term or seasonal support	Hire youth or students during peak periods	Canada Summer Jobs; youth employment programs; Employment Ontario Service Providers; Northwestern Ontario Works Portal
Looking to fill entry-level roles	Use youth hiring to build future talent pipelines	Youth or student employment programs; Employment Ontario Service Providers; Literacy and Essential Skills programs; Get SET; Northwestern Ontario Works Portal
Wanting to reduce hiring risk	Pair youth hiring with wage subsidies or placements	Canada Summer Jobs; Student Work Placement Program (SWPP); Employment Ontario Service Providers-supported placements
Interested in work-integrated learning	Offer structured placements tied to learning outcomes	SWPP or co-op placements through post-secondary institutions; high-school co-op programs
Exploring youth hiring for skilled trades	Introduce youth early through exposure and training	Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP); Employment Ontario Service Providers youth supports; apprenticeship advisory services

# PATHWAY F: TAKING ON AN APPRENTICE

## WHERE YOU ARE NOW

You are considering taking on an apprentice to build skills within your workforce and support long-term capacity. This may be driven by difficulty recruiting skilled workers, upcoming retirements, or the need to pass on specialized knowledge within your business.

Apprenticeships combine paid work with formal training and are most common in skilled trades, but they require planning and a long-term commitment from both employers and apprentices.

## THIS IS A COMMON ROUTE

- Across the Kenora and Rainy River Districts, employers in trades and technical fields often use apprenticeships to develop talent locally.
- Apprenticeships are frequently used by small and medium-sized employers who rely on experienced workers and want to grow skills internally rather than recruit from outside the region.
- While apprenticeships take time, many employers view them as an investment in workforce stability.



### What to expect

Apprenticeships are a longer-term commitment that require planning for training time, supervision, and gradual skill development.



### Why apprenticeships work

Apprenticeships allow employers to build skills that match their operations while developing loyalty and long-term capacity.



### Using supports together

Employers often combine registration support, training delivery, and incentive programs as apprentices move through each stage.

## SITUATIONS, ROUTES, AND SUPPORTS

Employer Situation	Common Routes	Programs and Supports That Often Fit
Needing skilled labour for the long term	Train an apprentice internally rather than recruiting fully qualified workers	Skilled Trades Ontario apprenticeship registration and advisory support; in-school training through colleges
Considering whether an apprenticeship is the right fit	Start with pre-apprenticeship or youth exposure programs	Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP); Employment Ontario pre-apprenticeship supports
Hiring an apprentice with limited experience	Combine on-the-job training with structured oversight	Apprenticeship Achievement Incentive sponsor payments; apprenticeship tax credits; Employment Ontario support
Balancing training time with operational demands	Plan training timelines around production cycles	College training schedules; Skilled Trades Ontario guidance on trade-specific requirements
Supporting apprentice progression and retention	Use incentives tied to training milestones	Apprenticeship Achievement Incentive payments; Apprenticeship Job Creation Tax Credit (federal)

# PATHWAY G: RESPONDING TO DISRUPTION, OR SUDDEN CHANGE

## WHERE YOU ARE NOW

You are responding to unexpected workforce changes. This may include staff departures, extended absences, operational disruptions, or sudden shifts in demand.

These situations often require quick decisions while balancing day-to-day operations. In smaller teams or rural settings, even one change can have a significant impact.

## THIS IS A COMMON ROUTE

- Employers across the Kenora and Rainy River Districts experience periods of instability due to turnover, seasonal fluctuations, or external pressures.
- These challenges are often outside an employer's control and can affect productivity, morale, and service delivery.
- Many employers move through this pathway more than once as conditions change.



### What to expect

Disruption often brings time pressure and uncertainty. Employers may need to act quickly while decisions are still evolving.



### Why flexibility helps

Using temporary, supported, or phased approaches allows employers to respond without locking in long-term decisions too early.



### Using supports together

Recruitment, training, and advisory supports are often used together to stabilize operations and support recovery over time.

## SITUATIONS, ROUTES, AND SUPPORTS

Employer Situation	Common Routes	Programs and Supports That Often Fit
Unexpected staff departures or vacancies	Stabilize operations quickly while planning next steps	Employment Ontario Service Providers (rapid recruitment and referrals); short-term or supported placements
Sudden increases or decreases in workload	Adjust staffing temporarily rather than committing long term	Wage-supported placements; youth or student employment programs; short-term contracts
Business disruption (closure, restructuring, supply changes)	Focus first on stabilization, then recovery	Employment Ontario Service Providers; Ontario Job Creation Partnerships (project-based roles); CFDC or municipal business advisory supports
Loss of key skills or institutional knowledge	Rebuild capacity through targeted training or phased hiring	Short-term training supports; college or sector-led training; Employment Ontario Service Providers navigation support
Needing time to reassess workforce needs	Pause, seek guidance, and explore options before rehiring	Employment Ontario Service Providers; NTAB for system navigation and labour market context
Trade, tariff, or supply-chain disruption	Stabilize cash flow, prevent layoffs, and reassess sourcing or export strategy	Work-Sharing Program (temp. layoff prevention); Regional Tariff Response Initiative; Trade Commissioner Service (export and tariff guidance); Export Development Canada trade financing supports; CBSA Duties Relief and Drawback Programs; Ontario Protect Ontario Financing Program (sector-specific liquidity support); CFDC or municipal advisory supports

# LOCAL GUIDES & PARTNERS



Employers in Northwestern Ontario rarely work with just one organization. Hiring, training, and workforce planning often involve multiple supports over time. This page helps you understand who does what.

This is not a complete list of every organization in the region. Services, programs, and catchments change, and many supports work best through conversation.

## TAKING ACTION: HIRING, TRAINING, AND WORKFORCE SUPPORT

### Employment Ontario Service Providers

Employment Ontario Service Providers offer free, employer-facing support funded by the province. They are often the best place to start if you are hiring, exploring wage subsidies, or unsure which supports apply.

### Indigenous Employment & Training Organizations

Indigenous employment organizations offer flexible, relationship-based supports. These may include wage subsidies, training dollars, and employer guidance tailored to both the employer and the individual.

### Colleges & Training Institutions

Colleges and Indigenous Institutes deliver technical training, micro-credentials, trades training, and continuing education. Many funding programs require training to be delivered by a recognized third-party provider.

### Inclusive Employment & Workforce Preparation Providers

These organizations support literacy, essential skills, and workplace readiness, often before or alongside formal training.

## PLANNING & NAVIGATION: BUSINESS, GROWTH, AND LOCAL INSIGHT

### Community Futures Development Corporations

CFDCs support employers with business planning, financing, mentorship, and referrals that often intersect with workforce decisions.

### Municipal Economic Development Offices

Municipal economic development offices support local employers through business retention, partnerships, and workforce initiatives.

### Funders & Economic Development Programs

Some employers engage directly with funders when workforce needs are part of a larger project.

### Workforce Planning & Labour Market Insight

NTAB provides local labour market insight and helps employers understand current regional workforce related opportunities and challenges.

# TRAINING & SKILL BUILDING

## OVERVIEW

In Northwestern Ontario, training supports are delivered through a mix of provincial and federal funding programs, post-secondary institutions, and local service providers. Most options require advance planning and coordination with a training partner.

## KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Be specific.
  - Targeted training tied to a clear business need is more effective and easier to approve.
- Plan ahead.
  - Most funding must be approved before training begins.
- Expect to combine supports.
  - Training is often paired with wage subsidies or placement programs.
- Use local guidance.
  - Availability and delivery vary by region. Local providers help with fit and timing.
- Recommendation:
  - Clarify the skills gap, then speak with a local provider before selecting a program.

## WHAT THE DATA TELLS US

- Apprenticeship registrations are rising
  - +44% new registrations in Kenora
  - +55% in Rainy River
  - Active apprentices and certificates issued also increased
- COJG remains underused locally
  - Fewer than 10 employers accessed COJG in each district
  - Regionally, 94–100% of employers report training met their needs
  - At the time of writing, the program is currently paused. Employers should confirm availability before planning applications.
- Employers report gaps in practical workplace skills, including communication, problem-solving, and basic digital competencies.
- Barriers such as transportation, child care, and digital access continue to limit participation in training.

## COMMON SUPPORTS



### Canada–Ontario Job Grant (COJG) *Paused at the time of writing*

Cost-shared third-party training for new or existing employees. Employer contributions vary by size, with added flexibility for some small employers.



### Skills Development Fund (SDF)

Project-based funding for training initiatives, usually accessed through partnerships or training providers rather than individual employers.



### Micro-Credentials and Short Courses

Short, targeted training delivered by colleges or Indigenous Institutes, designed for upskilling without extended time away from work.



### Safety and Compliance Training

Required health, safety, or regulatory training tied to specific roles, equipment, or sectors.



### Sector-Based Training Initiatives

Industry-specific training for fields such as mining, forestry, childcare, or manufacturing. Availability varies by region and intake.



### Better Jobs Ontario

Training support for individuals facing job instability. Employers may benefit when trained candidates are job-ready for in-demand roles.



### APATISIWIN – Employment and Training

Employment and training supports for Indigenous individuals, including skills development and workplace readiness.

# WAGE SUBSIDIES, INTERNSHIPS & HIRING INCENTIVES

## OVERVIEW

Wage subsidies and hiring incentives help employers offset the cost of bringing someone new into the workplace. Most wage supports are time-limited and require approval before a job starts. Employers often use them as a starting point rather than a long-term solution.

## KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

These supports lower risk, not responsibility.

- Subsidies help with wages, but employers are still responsible for supervision, onboarding, and day-to-day management.
- Timing matters.
  - Many incentives follow fixed intake cycles or competitive application windows.
- Short-term is normal.
  - Most wage supports are designed to support entry, testing fit, or transition, not permanent funding.
- Recommendation:
  - Use wage incentives to create opportunities, then plan early for what comes next.

## WHAT THE DATA TELLS US

- Strong employment outcomes
  - 64% (Kenora) and 71% (Rainy River) of Employment Services participants secured employment
- High Indigenous participation
  - 48% of clients in Kenora
  - 51% in Rainy River
- High reliance on income supports
  - 73% of Kenora participants relied on OW/ODSP or had no income source
- Labour shortages persist in health care, construction, mining, early childhood education, retail, and hospitality.
- The discontinuation of RNIP has increased pressure on rural employers seeking workers.

## COMMON SUPPORTS



**Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ)**  
Wage subsidies for short-term summer employment for youth aged 15–30.



**Student Work Placement Program (SWPP)**

Wage subsidies for hiring post-secondary students in paid work-integrated learning placements, with enhanced support for under-represented groups.



**NOHFC Workforce and Internship Funding**

Paid internships and workforce development supports available in Northern Ontario. Streams and eligibility vary by organization and project.



**Science Horizons Program**

Paid work placements and training support for young professionals with post-secondary education, typically in science, technology, or environmental fields.



**Green Jobs Science & Tech. Internship Program**

Internship support for roles connected to environmental and green economy work.



**Indigenous Wage Subsidies and Employment Supports**

Flexible wage and training supports delivered through Indigenous employment and training organizations.



**Sector-Specific Wage Subsidy Programs**

Wage supports tied to industries or initiatives, such as:

- Electricity Human Resources Canada (EHRC)
- WILLWorks
- TECHNATION / WIL Digital

# TAX CREDITS, PLANNING & NAVIGATION SUPPORTS

## OVERVIEW

Employers often use these supports alongside training or wage incentives rather than on their own. These supports are often used when employers are unsure where to start, are facing hiring challenges, or want guidance before committing to a specific program.

## KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- You don't need to start with a program.
  - Employers frequently benefit from talking to a service provider before choosing a pathway or applying for funding.
- Navigation saves time.
  - Early guidance can help avoid missed intakes, ineligible applications, or unnecessary steps.
- Local context matters.
  - Labour market conditions, candidate availability, and delivery options vary by community.
- Recommendation:
  - If you're unsure what fits best, start with a navigation or advisory support before moving forward.

## WHAT THE DATA TELLS US

- Many employers and workers are often unsure where to start and often learn about supports only after hiring or training has already begun.
- Programs are underused not because of lack of need, but because of timing, paperwork, or uncertainty about eligibility.
- Small and rural employers report limited internal capacity to manage applications, reporting, and compliance requirements.
- Workforce decisions are closely tied to housing, transportation, and child care realities, which require cross-sector coordination.

## COMMON SUPPORTS



### Co-operative Education Tax Credit (Ontario)

A refundable tax credit for employers hiring students enrolled in eligible co-op programs.



### Apprenticeship Tax credits and Incentives

Federal and provincial tax credits and incentive payments tied to hiring and training apprentices in eligible trades.



### Ontario Innovation Tax Credit

A tax credit for eligible research and development expenditures, which may indirectly support workforce-related innovation.



### Employment Ontario Service Providers

Free employer-facing services including job postings, candidate referrals, recruitment support, and navigation of hiring and training programs.



### Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs)

Business planning, financing, mentorship, and referrals that often intersect with workforce decisions.



### Municipal Economic Development Offices

Local employer support, workforce collaboration, and business retention or expansion assistance.



### Northwest Training & Adjustment Board (NTAB)

Labour market insight and neutral navigation to help employers understand labour market related trends and data.



## **Northwest Training and Adjustment Board**

100 Casimir Ave #113, Dryden ON P8N 3L4

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