

## **Important Notice** **Skills Development Financial Assistance Information**

The Skills Development Employment Benefit is a federally funded employment program that provides financial assistance to eligible individuals to pay for some of the costs associated with skills training.

### **Eligibility:**

To be eligible for Skills Development individuals must meet the following basic criteria:

- be an **unemployed** individual *at the time of application* and
- have an established current EI benefit period or an EI benefit period that ended in the previous 36 months or
- have had a benefit period that began in the previous 60 months and have been paid special benefits (maternity or parental) during that period and subsequently withdrew from active participation in the labour force to care for a newborn child and are now seeking to re-enter the workforce

Clients must also be out of school and have an attachment to the labour force for 24 months. Some exceptions may apply where only 12 months labour force attachment is required. Other criteria may also apply.

### **Employment Needs Assessment and Return to Work Action Plan:**

As a first step in the application process, applicants **must** have an employment needs assessment interview and develop a **Return to Work Action Plan (RTWAP)** with a case manager from an external organization approved by Service Canada. A Return to Work Action Plan (RTWAP) is a plan that you and your case manager will develop together to assist you in becoming employed. These services are provided, free-of-charge, by an approved external organization. A list of these organizations can be found at the following site:

[http://www.lmda.pe.ca/view\\_initiative.php?id=246](http://www.lmda.pe.ca/view_initiative.php?id=246)

### **Information Sessions:**

If you are considering applying for financial assistance under Skills Development it is **strongly recommended** that you attend one of the information sessions delivered by Service Canada in either Charlottetown or Summerside. Please call one of the following numbers in your area to book into a session.

Charlottetown	902-566-7766
Summerside	902-432-6815
Montague	902-838-5586
O'Leary	902-859-1918 (press 5)
Souris	902-687-7202

### **Important:**

**Due to the volume of applications it normally takes 4- 6 weeks for your Skills Development application to be assessed once it reaches the Service Canada Centre. We recommend that you go to an External Service Provider listed on the website above and begin the process ASAP. Also if you quit your job (including summer, seasonal or part-time employment) or start training without prior approval from a program officer at Service Canada you will not be approved for Skills Development. In addition, your entitlement to EI Benefits will be at risk. You can access a Skills Development application and additional information on the following website:**

<http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/en/sc/skills/skillsdevelopment.shtml>