

2021/2022 ANNUAL REPORT



Canada-Alberta Workforce Development Agreement



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Canada-Alberta Workforce Development Agreement: 2021/2022 Annual Report | Alberta Jobs, Economy and Northern Development

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Contents

Introduction	4
Ministry Partners	5
Eligible Programs and Services	6
Individual-Focused Activities	6
Programming for Persons with Disabilities	6
Employer-Focused Programming	6
Living Allowance	7
Eligible Beneficiaries	7
WDA Programs and Services Success Stories	8
Restart Your Career Program	8
Indigenous First Medical Responder Program	8
Alberta Jobs Now Program	9
Canada-Alberta Job Grant	9
Training and Employment Services	10
Well-Site Abandonment and Reclamation Training	10
Indigenous Relations Projects	10
Stakeholder Engagement	11
Adult Learning Stakeholders	11
Community Stakeholders	11
Stakeholders with Disabilities	12
Indigenous Stakeholders	12
Employers and Industry Stakeholders	13
Immigrant Stakeholders	14
Results and Expenditures	15
WDA 2021/2022 Program Expenditures	15
WDA 2021/2022 Program Results	16
Conclusion and Looking Forward	20

Introduction

The Canada-Alberta Workforce Development Agreement (WDA) addresses labour market needs to build an integrated, client-centred, outcomes-driven employment and training framework that responds to the evolving needs of individuals, employers and communities in Alberta.

To achieve the goals of increasing the participation of Albertans in the labour force and helping Albertans develop the skills needed to find and keep meaningful and long-term employment, the governments of Canada and Alberta agreed to:

- Foster inclusive labour market participation: help all individuals access labour market opportunities and support successful integration of those facing obstacles to finding and maintaining employment;
- Align skills with labour market needs: help workers and employers access the skills they need to adapt to the changing requirements and encourage employer involvement in training and continuous learning opportunities for workers; and
- Create efficient labour markets: support a strong and responsive labour market infrastructure and timely, effective programs that contribute to improved productivity and economic growth.

Case study: Integrated Training

As an immigrant, Owen said he found it challenging navigating a new place and a socio-economic landscape different from his place of origin. One of the things he found difficult was dealing with the instability in the oil industry. He jumped from one project to another once a project ended, and while the pay was good, his mental health was beginning to be affected by the instability.

Looking for an industry that was rock-solid and stable, Owen applied for the Integrated Training program for health care workers.

Owen is currently working as a home care worker on a casual basis with full-time hours, while he looks for a full-time, permanent position. Owen's previous resume had employment history in the oil industry but none from home care. Through the Integrated Training program, Owen was able to successfully transition from the oil industry into the home care industry.

"So far, the training has met and sometimes exceeded my expectations. I have learned a lot in areas of communication, understanding the ethos of the care plan, which is really to make the client better. The teachers and tutors have been amazing in delivering the course with a variety of individualized styles, using personal experiences to augment the learning. It has enriched my understanding of the field. I hope to continue learning, absorbing knowledge and skills, with the hope it will be the beginning of a new and rewarding career."

Source: Community & Home Care Worker Integrated Training program

Ministry Partners

In 2021/2022, Alberta received \$281,736,422 in WDA funding, which includes base funding of \$83,805,488 and a top up of \$22,691,299, as well as \$175,239,635 carried forward from 2020/2021 because of circumstances created by the pandemic.

Four ministries shared this funding allocation to deliver programs and services to individuals and employers across the province and to track the results:

- Labour and Immigration (LBRI), which focused on meeting the needs of individuals and employers and building a skilled workforce (note: in October 2022, programs under this ministry moved to the Ministry of Jobs, Economy and Northern Development);
- Advanced Education (AE), which focused on the province's adult learning system and financial supports for adult students (note: in October 2022, programs under this ministry moved to the Ministry of Skilled Trades and Professions);
- Community and Social Services (CSS), which leads income, employment, disabilities and community-based supports as well as the delivery of career services through Alberta Works/Alberta Supports Centres, and contracted agencies (note: in October 2022, this ministry was renamed Seniors, Community and Social Services); and
- Indigenous Relations (IR), which works with Indigenous communities and organizations, the Government of Canada, industry and other stakeholders to enhance the quality of life of Indigenous peoples in Alberta.

Case Study: Self-Employment

The six-month Self-Employment program teaches people everything they need to know to start their own business through a combination of in-class training, coaching and mentorship. David said the program “*simplified the process of starting a business*” and because of what he learned, he knew what he needed to do to get up and running. After being laid off from his job as a journeyman electrician, and with the local area fairly saturated with electricians, he decided to start his own business with a twist. He would focus on high-end holiday lighting for residential and commercial properties and lighting for advertising on commercial buildings.

Starting a business during the pandemic was not without challenges. He said the biggest ones were finding the right people, sourcing the best products, and of course, dealing with COVID-19. He took it all in stride and still managed to keep his customers happy.

Since opening the doors in early 2020, his company continues to expand and grow. It is now a team of eight people with two locations; they are considering opening a third location and purchasing a commercial building. David joined the local Business Networking International (BNI) and the Chamber of Commerce; he has been asked to be an influencer on social media and will be featured on a popular podcast called “Behind the Studs” in the near future. In 2021, David and his company were nominated for a People's Choice Award by the Chamber of Commerce.

Source: Self-Employment program

Eligible Programs and Services

Individual-focused activities

- Skills Development:
 - Occupational Skills Training: Training that leads to a certificate or diploma.
 - Short-Term Training: Training that addresses specific skills, job or labour market needs.
 - Literacy, Essential Skills, Language Training and Adult Basic Education: Training that includes upskilling and assistance to prerequisite high school or equivalency courses.
- Work Experience:
 - (Targeted) Wage Subsidies: Support for individuals employers would not ordinarily hire to provide work experience and/or on the job training.
 - Self-Employment Assistance: Support for individuals starting a new business.

Programming for Persons with Disabilities

- Skills Development:
 - Short-term skills development, including literacy, essential skills, language training and adult basic education.
 - Other skills development activities, i.e., transitional vocational program (TVP).
- Employment Assistance Services:
 - Includes job search assistance and other employment assistance or disability-related employment support services.

Employer-focused Programming

- Employer-Sponsored Training:
 - Includes skills-based training where employers determine the type of training and share the costs.

Alberta's Skills Development Programs

- Occupational Training (AE)
- Part-time Occupational Training (AE)
- Integrated Training (AE, LBRI)
- Immigrant Bridging (AE, LBRI)
- Employment Partnerships Program (IR)
- Work Foundations (Basic Skills, Academic Upgrading) (AE)
- Part-time Work Foundations (Basic Skills, Academic Upgrading, ESL) (AE)
- Integrated Foundational Pathways (AE)
- ESL (AE)
- Settlement and Language Training (LBRI)

Alberta's Work Experience Programs

- Workplace Training (LBRI)
- Self-Employment (LBRI)

Alberta's Programming for Persons with Disabilities

Skills Development:

- Basic Skills for Persons with Disabilities (AE)
- Academic Upgrading for Persons with Disabilities (AE)
- English as a Second Language for Persons with Disabilities (AE)
- Integrated Foundational Pathways for Persons with Disabilities (AE)
- Transitional Vocational Training (AE)
- Transitional Vocational Training Financial Assistance (AE)

Employment Assistance Services:

- Disability-Related Employment Supports (CSS)
- Specialized Assessments (CSS)
- Workforce Development (CSS)
- Employment Preparation for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (CSS)
- Employment Placement for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (CSS)

- In Alberta, this includes the Canada-Alberta Job Grant and the Alberta Jobs Now Program.
- Employer Awareness Activities:
 - Includes tools and activities that support employers to plan and manage their human resource needs.
 - In Alberta, this includes the Attraction and Retention Partnerships.

Alberta’s Employer-focused Programming

- Aboriginal Training to Employment (LBRI)
- First Nations Training to Employment (LBRI)
- Alberta Jobs Now Program (LBRI)
- Canada-Alberta Job Grant (LBRI)
- Workforce Attraction and Retention (LBRI)

Living Allowance

- Financial assistance costs for participants attending full-time approved training determined to have a financial need.

Alberta’s Living Allowances

- Training for Work (Integrated and Self-employment) Financial Assistance (LBRI)
- Work Foundations (Basic Skills, Academic Upgrading)
- Financial Assistance (AE)
- Integrated Foundational Pathways Financial Assistance (AE)
- ESL Financial Assistance (AE)

Eligible Beneficiaries

Eligible beneficiaries of WDA funding support include:

- Canadian citizens;
- Permanent residents;
- Protected persons within the meaning of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* entitled to work in Canada; and
- Employers with the exception of federal, provincial and territorial governments, and federal Crown corporations and agencies.

Case Study: Transition to Employment Services

Jenn was new to the area having recently moved from the city and leaving behind a job she held for 12 years at a tire store. She was grieving her job loss and underestimated her worth and ability to contribute to her family.

Jenn attended workshops on resume re-development, cover letter assistance, interview skills/marketing yourself/self-esteem workshops. With an active teenaged son, she wanted an administrative position that allowed her to have evenings free to attend his sporting events. Although she did not have a diploma or training in this field, the service provider ensured her resume captured all of her previous experience and transferrable skills and helped target resumes to the positions she wanted to apply for. With Jenn’s experience in the automotive field, she was encouraged her to apply for several management/service manager/parts person positions. She applied, interviewed, was offered and accepted a position at a local car dealership.

“They provided reassuring support and helped me weigh the pros and cons of different employment opportunities. Throughout this process, I knew they had my back.”

Source: TES, Resume/cover letter development, Interview skills/Marketing yourself/Self-esteem workshops

WDA Programs and Services Success Stories

The following are some of the innovative programming Alberta offered in 2021/2022:

Restart Your Career Program

This employment-focused skills training program is designed for unemployed or underemployed adult Albertans with disabilities and/or barriers. EmployAbilities provides a supportive learning environment to help students develop their skills towards employment in entry-level positions. The program provides practical learning activities for individuals who have barriers to employment, such as a permanent medical condition, disability, mental health concern, permanent injury, learning disability, or low school completion. For many, it is a combination of barriers, along with the lack of essential and technical skills needed to regain and retain employment in the current labour market. Approximately 53 students were funded to attend the program in 2021/2022 for a cost of \$448,175. This amount covered tuition, books and supplies as well as a monthly allowance for living expenses for the duration of the training.

EmployAbilities reported 70 per cent of students successfully completed the program. Ninety-five per cent went on to employment as: receptionists, administration assistants, front desk clerks, food service workers, retail clerks, file clerks, intake workers, drivers, shipping and receiving workers, inventory assistants, call centre agents, executive assistants and customer service representatives and five per cent went on to further education/training.

Indigenous First Medical Responder Program

Kainai Transition Centre Society developed a First Nations Training to Employment Program (FNTEP) to train members to become first medical responders. The project included the occupational training component as well as unique training components to provide better services to Elders and the whole community.

On the Blood Tribe First Nation, the Deputy Fire Chief of Emergency Services explained to a local community organization that they are challenged to retain staff hired from outside the community. The community organization decided to deliver a First Medical Responder (FMR) Training to Employment program so the Blood Tribe Department of Health, Emergency Services would be able to hire qualified community members that would stay in the community.

The community organization partnered with Labour and Immigration, Blood Tribe Employment and Skills Training, Blood Tribe Department of Health and Blood Tribe Social Development to train 12 First Nation members to become FMRs. The employer partner, Emergency Services, through the Blood Tribe Department of Health, participated in a steering committee to oversee the planning, delivery and evaluation of the project and helped choose the training provider. Emergency Services also provided practicum placements which included 24-hour shifts to ensure participants had a real understanding of the job.

This training included the participation of Elders who incorporated traditional knowledge, culture, values, beliefs, protocols and common Blackfoot words into the provision of emergency medical services. It also included information about residential schools, impacts on those who attended and the resulting intergenerational trauma. The technical training was delivered by Professional Medical Associates. This blend of traditional knowledge with formal training prepares participants to provide exceptional care to those accessing emergency medical services while increasing the patients' comfort and confidence in the care they receive.

Ten of the 12 participants (or 83 per cent) who started the program, successfully completed the training and are now employed.

While the results exceeded expectations, they also support the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action:

23. We call upon all levels of government to:

- Increase the number of Aboriginal professionals working in the health care field, and
- Ensure the retention of Aboriginal health care providers in Aboriginal communities.

Alberta Jobs Now Program

Alberta Jobs Now Program is a grant program designed to help private business and non-profit employers re-open or expand their operations. Employers can cover wages or training costs when hiring workers in new or vacant positions. If they hire persons with disabilities (PWD) or individuals unemployed for at least 27 consecutive weeks, the grant is 1.5 times higher than the amount for other employees.

An employer from Lethbridge, hired a person with a disability during the first intake of the program. One of the core values of the employer is inclusivity, so when the organization hires, this is top of mind as they want to ensure employees reflect the broader community.

The individual they hired has become a valued team member. The employer says his depth of knowledge has been a huge asset to the organization.

Canada-Alberta Job Grant (CAJG)

CAJG has contributed to job creation and retention in the province since 2014 by providing grant funding to employers to assist with training new hires, as well as existing employees.

The program conducts satisfaction surveys for employers based on a calendar year and for trainees based on a fiscal year. In the 2021 calendar year, 93.9 per cent of employers reported they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the program (Source: CAJG Employer Feedback Survey 2022).

During the 2021/2022 fiscal year, 62 per cent of employees who participated in CAJG-funded training reported that they were satisfied with the training (Source: CAJG Trainee Post-training Survey 2021/2022).

The following comments are from employers and employees who accessed the program during 2021/2022.

Employers said:

- *“CAJG is a tremendous help to our agency in training employees in the field they love. We would not be able to provide these training opportunities otherwise. The employees are excelling in their chosen professions - providing the best service to our clients. A very big thank you from the bottom of our hearts!”*
- *“CAJG program has become so much more user friendly; I really appreciate all the changes made over the years. It is much easier to use.”*
- *“This program helped us hire and train the much-needed new staff during a very difficult period. We are so grateful to the Government of Alberta for this program, which not only helped us employ unemployed Albertans but also provided support for us to do so.”*
- *“The CAJG is a game changer for small business. It allows us to train our staff and build a better more competitive business.”*

Employees said:

- *“Upon completion of my training course, I was promoted to a management position and became the go-to person for all questions and concerns related to my field of work. I have become more efficient and feel a lot more confident in the work that I am doing.”*
- *“A typical university STEM program teaches you the technical skills to get started in your career. However, they don't prepare you with the soft skills that are necessary if you are promoted into a leadership position. Taking this course as I moved into a managerial role was extremely valuable so I can more effectively communicate with and empower my team.”*

Training and Employment Services

Workplace Training (Edmonton) provided youth-focused occupational training or work experience to enable youth to acquire the skills and qualifications needed to find and maintain employment. This client-centered program supports individual needs by providing a progression of training and work experience that leads to sustainable employment. It offered employers a subsidy during the workplace training and offered youth supplemental training courses (up to \$7,000) to support their job placement.

In the first two years of the Workplace Training program, over 71 per cent of youth have been successful in maintaining employment following the program.

Integrated Training (Edmonton) provided an occupational skills training program that includes essential workplace skills and access to the labour market for unemployed immigrants who want to pursue careers in construction project management. The training is 26 weeks in duration and includes a 10-week work experience placement.

Over the past three years, over 72 per cent of the immigrant Albertan participants in Integrated Training have been successful in gaining and maintaining employment following the program.

Immigrant Bridging Training (Calgary) provided 26 weeks of training for skilled immigrants with prior education and/or experience in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) so they could successfully move into the profession in Alberta. It included training and work experience through the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT). Approximately 63 per cent of participants were non-Employment Insurance (EI) recipients and therefore WDA eligible.

Sixty-nine percent of participants were employed in their field following training, and more than 60 per cent of participants were female.

Well-Site Abandonment and Reclamation Training

FNTEP supported a well-site abandonment and reclamation training program for Indigenous people in 12 different locations across the province. This partnership program attracted 14 partners including employers, industry, post-secondary institutions, Indigenous organizations and other levels of government.

The training included certification in well-site abandonment and reclamation practices and safety procedures. It provided employment support to 180 unemployed or under-employed Indigenous job seekers who found employment in oil and gas related industries after the training.

Indigenous Relations Projects

IR supported 14 WDA grants for eight organizations in 2021/2022, including:

- Athabasca Tribal Council for the Indigenous Haul Truck Program;
- Community Futures Treaty Seven for an Administrative Assistant Certificate and Medical Office training/ Computerized Bookkeeping; Career Development and Academic Advising Certificate; Class 1 Driver Training; and Heavy Equipment Operator;
- Enoch Cree Nation #440 for the Healing Garden Project: Carpentry and Concrete Training;
- Ermineskin Cree Nation for the Hospitality and Tourism Training Program;
- Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council for Driver Training and Pre-Trades and Apprenticeship Training;

- Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council (LSLIRC) for Heavy Equipment Operator Training and LSLIRC Safety Ticket;
- Paul First Nation for Heavy Equipment Training and Security Training; and
- Tribal Chiefs Employment and Training Services Association for Pixel Blue Graphic Design and 3D Printing Training.

In all, approximately 197 participants and 4,784 community members have or will benefit from these projects in the future. For example, the Healing Garden Project taught program participants the basics of carpentry and concrete work and the completed structure will provide a space for peace and healing for the entire Enoch Cree Nation community for years to come.

Stakeholder Engagement

In 2021/2022, guided by their respective mandates, each partner ministry engaged with stakeholders to help identify labour market priorities, shape the design and delivery of programs to meet current needs and adapt to the public health measures still in place because of the pandemic.

Adult Learning Stakeholders

AE is committed to strong stakeholder engagement. Department representatives attend annual general meetings, events, conferences and other opportunities provided by various groups, associations and committees, e.g., the Alberta Student Awards Personnel Association (ASAPA), the Provincial Academic Upgrading Committee (PAUC), to share information, monitor trends and gather input, feedback and direction from its stakeholders.

Foundational Learning and Skills Development (FLSD) has a dedicated Stakeholder Relations unit responsible for sharing information, maintaining communication and consulting with stakeholders to gather feedback on programs and ensure continuous improvement. The unit is also the first point of contact for program development opportunities. FLSD engaged each of the 43 educational institutions and First Nations colleges to forecast their ability to deliver designated foundational and skills development programs based on student demand and existing capacity.

Feedback from training providers confirmed the importance of flexible policies during the pandemic that allowed them to adapt delivery formats quickly while maintaining high quality programming. Stakeholder feedback led to several system-wide improvements which also benefits adult learners with disabilities, including:

- A streamlined eligibility and funding structure to reduce red tape and make it easier for Albertans to access Foundational Learning Assistance;
- Higher funding thresholds to better address the needs of students so they can be more successful in their studies;
- A new online application process to reduce processing time and make it easier to apply for funding; and
- An alternative identification verification process for rural students who want to access online services but cannot get to a registry office for the documentation needed to verify their identity.

Community Stakeholders

Staff within CSS consulted with stakeholders through regular, ongoing communication to obtain feedback and knowledge about the current state of contracted service delivery and its impact due to COVID-19. Planning with stakeholders included how to deliver ongoing services more efficiently through virtual services. CSS staff

communicated and engaged with contractors on a continual basis to discuss challenges with service delivery due to COVID-19. These discussions were informal and contributed to the formal monitoring processes.

CSS staff conducted regular meetings with colleagues in the Ministry of Labour and Immigration to share local labour market information, funding and/or grant opportunities for employers, employees and small businesses, and upcoming business and staff development workshops, conferences and surveys.

CSS held consultations with Buy Social Canada, Ecompass, Private Career Development Contractors (PCDC), Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, City of Edmonton, City of Calgary and various civil society organizations to develop techniques to include a socially conscientious or innovative component to increase the social/environmental value in career and/or employment programs.

In cooperation with Calgary Learns, CSS brought together organizations that delivered services to clients in poverty with low literacy and essential skills to develop best practices, innovative strategies, and common tools to achieve success.

Stakeholders with Disabilities

CSS staff in the North Zone (northwest area) engaged with stakeholders to gather information regarding client needs and service delivery for PWD. CSS heard that this client group is best-supported in-person by an agency who understands the local community resources along with the local labour market. Stakeholders indicated that programs should be easily accessible by all Albertans with disabilities requiring employment supports.

CSS identified the need for more pre-employment supports for clients with high barriers to employment and connected with stakeholders to discuss how to meet these needs. Feedback confirmed the need so CSS released an Expression of Interest (EOI) for Skills for Success to provide these supports.

CSS entered into a number of agreements for career and employment services with organizations serving PWD, including: Alberta Council of Disability Services (ACDS); Columbia Training Centre; Gateway Association; Calgary Alternative Supports Services (CASS); Vecova; Inclusion Alberta; Inclusion Foothills; Prospect Human Services; and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Network. For example, grants provided to:

- The Columbia Training Centre and the Calgary Fetal Alcohol Network helped provide new services and expand existing/establish new partnerships with employers to create more job opportunities for PWD.
- The Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Network supported the delivery of the FASD Employment Initiative in northeastern Alberta.
- The Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) Alberta and Northwest Territories supported the Come to Work program to connect job seekers with vision loss with employers.

Indigenous Stakeholders

IR facilitates and participates in collaborative projects with other governments, Indigenous communities and other non-profit organizations to increase labour market inclusion for Indigenous Albertans. Stakeholder feedback informs IR's ability to manage current funding and adequately prepare clients for future programming.

IR continued to work with the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program (ISET) agreement holders, who are the main stakeholders for WDA-funded activities, to develop industry partnerships.

IR connected with stakeholders mainly through virtual meetings throughout the year to discuss community priorities and goals, both on a formal and informal basis.

In 2021/2022, the Employment Partnerships Program (EPP) funded two Indigenous industry-engagement events in the province, both of which used a hybrid model of a virtual platform and an in-person event. These events help build connections and partnerships among Indigenous leaders, organizations, government representatives and industry

stakeholders to better understand workforce development challenges and increase employment opportunities for Indigenous people.

In 2021/2022, the program saw an increase in applications for Heavy Equipment Operators (HEO) and Mandatory Entry Level Training (MELT) for Class 1 and 2 drivers. Other projects included administrative training, career development and academic advising certification, a carpentry and concrete training healing garden project, hospitality and tourism training, pre-trades and apprenticeship training, security training, and graphic design training.

Alberta Jobs, Economy and Northern Development (formerly Alberta Labour and Immigration) continues ongoing engagement with stakeholders through the work of staff dedicated to engaging and working with Indigenous partners: Indigenous Partnership Coordinators (IPC). IPCs each have a geographical area in which they maintain a relationship of ongoing communication with Nations, Settlements and urban Indigenous people. Stakeholders continue to support this method of relationship development and maintenance and the ease of communication through this ongoing contact. Training projects are supported based on priorities identified by Indigenous stakeholders and employers. This community-driven labour market need and opportunity identification will continue to be the catalyst for next year's priority programming. During the pandemic restrictions in 2021/2022, more online meetings occurred to support consultation and share priorities. Some of the results of the consultations include:

- Training projects were extended as COVID-19 impacted and locked down communities;
- COVID-19 created more need for positions in security and health care, which led to new programming in these areas for related occupations;
- Projects were agile and able to pivot to online supports with the changing restrictions. One project could not deliver practicum placements within the school districts due to risks associated with COVID-19 so the instructors developed case studies with practical scenarios for the participants to put their new knowledge to the test;
- Many communities noted that their members were still hesitant to enter new training programs, fearing another wave of the pandemic; and
- Project participation declined towards the end of 2021/2022. This was due to changes in local labour markets and an increase in available employment opportunities. Albertans were able to access employment without training.

Employers and Industry Stakeholders

Partner ministries seek input from their stakeholders to identify training needs and gaps as well as the demand for new and updated skills development. The results help to establish training and employment priorities for WDA funded activities.

CAJG receives ongoing communication and correspondence from stakeholders throughout the year. Program staff and management responded to 9,320 emails and 3,627 phone calls in 2021/2022.

The annual employer survey, conducted in May 2022, focused on employers who used the program in 2021/2022. Employer feedback gathered through the survey are used to adjust program processes. For example, in February 2022, the temporary changes to eligibility criteria became permanent elements of the program. The changes, introduced in 2021, responded to stakeholders' requests to broaden opportunities for businesses to access support, reduce red tape and assist with economic recovery. The changes were:

- Eligible trainees now include employed family members of eligible employers;
- Business owners (incorporated, unincorporated/sole-proprietor and partnerships) with four or fewer employees, including all owners, are now eligible trainees; and
- Training is not required to be incremental.

According to employers and industry partners, the changes enhanced CAJG flexibility to better support employer needs, and in particular, the needs of small businesses. CAJG reached over 1,200 new employers in the first seven months of these changes being implemented, which accounted for 15 per cent of the total employers served in 2021/2022.

The Alberta Jobs Now Program Implemented stakeholder recommendations to expand business/organization eligibility, improve access and be inclusive of all Alberta workers. The changes included:

- New businesses and organizations established within the last year can apply to the program to support further job-creating investment;
- The minimum number of hours a person must work was reduced from 30 to 15 hours per week increasing flexibility in hiring part-time positions and encouraging hiring PWD who may not be able to work full-time;
- The maximum number of new hires was reduced to help more employers access the program; and
- Permitting employers to fill available positions with employed Albertans if there is a business need. The focus of the program remains on unemployed Albertans.

The Training for Work team consulted with cross-ministry colleagues, industry stakeholders, employers and community stakeholders to identify needs and substantiate or validate program planning and offerings. This was accomplished through annual and quarterly round-table discussions with contacts in AE, CSS and training and employment service providers (PCDC), as well as ad-hoc conversations with local economic development stakeholders, community leaders and industry and employer contacts.

Immigrant Stakeholders

Consultations between the Settlement and Language Programs team (formerly with Labour and Immigration and as of October 2022 with Trade, Immigration and Multiculturalism) and their stakeholders involved phone calls, emails and virtual meetings to discuss progress in their projects. In addition, training providers submitted status updates, interim and final reports.

Overall, in-person training was difficult to plan and conduct during COVID-19 lockdowns and mandatory isolation periods. These circumstances led to an increase in hybrid and virtual classroom training, which required additional digital literacy support for clients and re-working instructional material to fit online platforms. The need to improve students' digital literacy, while an important and unanticipated benefit, also slowed the pace of learning and required additional instructional time.

In addition to transforming the learning environment and program delivery, many training providers noted that they found it challenging to recruit participants during the pandemic. In some cases, particularly for post-secondary institutions, extensions to grant agreements were requested in order to increase training participation and to align with academic semesters.

Case Study: Integrated Training

After being laid off from the oil and gas industry, Ovo looked for work for months before applying for the Integrated ICT Training program with a plan to pivot his career in the direction of information technology. With effort and diligence, he learned new skills, achieved the relevant certifications, and entered a new industry. After successfully completing the training in machine learning and data science he was invited to many interviews and received two job offers – a full-time contract with potential for renewal and a part-time casual position.

He plans to take both jobs and said *“It's really looking good, from here on out!”*

Source: Integrated ICT Training program.

Results and Expenditures

WDA 2021/2022 Program Expenditures

The table below provides a breakdown of spending on programs and services under the WDA, including program administration, i.e., staffing and program and service evaluation. Skills Development/Training, Work Experience, Programming for PWD, Employer-focused Programming, Labour Market Connections and Living Allowance are expenditure categories under the WDA. Programming for PWD are cost shared with Alberta.

EXPENDITURES

WDA Eligible Programs	Expenditures (‘000)
Skills Development/Training	\$26,802
Work Experience	\$19,664
Programming for Persons with Disabilities (See breakdown below)	\$55,688
Employer-focused Programming	\$155,107
Labour Market Connections	\$505
Living Allowance	\$19,072
Administration	\$10,650
TOTAL	\$287,488
Cost Shared Programs for Persons with Disabilities	Expenditures
Career Development Services/Disability Related Employment Supports	\$17,118
PDD Employment Preparation and Placement Supports	\$22,253
Foundational Learning Programs/Work Foundations	\$5,898
Alberta Jobs Now Program	\$27,455
Canada-Alberta Job Grant	\$5,636
Total Provincial Expenditures	\$78,360
Federal Contribution	\$55,688

Source: Government of Alberta Canada-Alberta Workforce Development Agreement: Statement of Contributions and Expenditures for the Year ended March 31, 2022

WDA 2021/2022 Program Results Individual-Focused Activities

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT/TRAINING

Federal Categories	Alberta Intervention Titles	Clients ¹	Interventions
Occupational Skills Training	Occupational Training	15	15
Short Term Training	Integrated Training	278	283
Literacy, Essential Skills, Language Training and Adult Basic Education	Academic Upgrading	1496	2250
	Basic Skills	277	346
	Immigrant Skills and Language Training	347	348
	Integrated Foundational Pathways	398	416
	Language Training	930	1632
	Part-time Work Foundations	1182	1432
Skills Development/Training TOTALS		4923	6722

WORK EXPERIENCE

Federal Categories	Alberta Intervention Titles	Clients ²	Interventions
(Targeted) Wage Subsidies	Workplace Training	73	73
Self-Employment Assistance	Self-Employment	38	38
Work Experience TOTALS		111	111

TOTAL INDIVIDUAL-FOCUSED ACTIVITIES **5034** **6833**

Source: LMTA Co-Located Database

¹ The client totals may not equal the itemized client counts because some individuals take more than one program during the time period.

² The client totals may not equal the itemized client counts because some individuals take more than one program during the time period.

Programming for Persons with Disabilities³

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT/TRAINING

Federal Categories	Alberta Intervention Titles	Clients	Interventions
Other Skills Development	Transitional Vocational Program	33	34
Literacy, Essential Skills, Language Training and Adult Basic Education	Academic Upgrading	162	258
	Basic Skills	21	26
	Integrated Foundational Pathways	26	26
	Language Training (ESL)	18	31
	Part-time Work Foundations	146	179
Skills Development/Training TOTALS		406	554

EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE SERVICES

Federal Categories	Alberta Intervention Titles	Clients	Interventions
Job Search Assistance	Job Placement	945	989
Other Employment Assistance Services	Disability Related Employment Supports (DRES)	38	45
	Employment Assistance for PWD	1974	2329
Employment Assistance Services TOTALS		2957	3363

TOTAL PROGRAMMING FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES	3363	3917
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Source: LMTA Co-Located Database

³ For LMTA reporting purposes, Alberta uses the following definition:
A disability refers to a physical, mental, sensory, intellectual or learning impairment, which in interaction with various barriers, may hinder labour market participation. Disability is a self-declared response. Options include:
Yes - indicating the participant has or identifies as a person with a disability.
No - indicating the participant does not have or does not wish to identify as a person with a disability.
Prefer not to report.

Employer-Focused Programming

Canada-Alberta Job Grant (CAJG):

- The objective of CAJG is to train current and prospective employees with the skills required to improve performance in existing roles and/or provide the skills required for future employment.

Aboriginal Training to Employment Program (ATEP) and First Nations Training to Employment (FNTEP):

- ATEP and FNTEP are the primary funding programs for Indigenous businesses and organizations to support their community, region and industry-specific training projects.

Alberta Jobs Now Program (AJNP):

- AJNP provides private and non-profit businesses with job supports to get Albertans back to work. Employers can apply for Jobs Now funding to offset the cost of hiring and training Albertans in new or vacant positions.

Attraction and Retention Partnerships (ARP):

- ARP projects involve partnerships of employers, employer associations and other stakeholders to assist in the attraction and retention of workers.

EMPLOYERS AND PARTICIPANTS

Employer-Focused Programming	Number of Employers	Number of Participants
Canada-Alberta Job Grant (CAJG) ⁴	3,272	10,182
Aboriginal Training to Employment Program (ATEP) and First Nations Training to Employment Program (FNTEP) ⁵	19	594
Alberta Jobs Now Program (AJNP) ⁶	3,367	12,678
Attraction and Retention Partnerships (ARP) ⁷	5	1,000
TOTAL EMPLOYER-FOCUSED ACTIVITIES	6,663	24,454

TYPES OF EMPLOYERS, INDUSTRIES, SKILLS AND PARTICIPANTS BY DESIGNATED GROUPS

Employer Size	CAJG		ATEP/FNTEP		AJNP		ARP	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Small (50 or fewer employees)	2,337	72%	13	71%	2827	84%	3	60%
Medium (51-499 employees)	763	23%	6	29%	488	14%	2	40%
Large (500 or more employees)	167	5%	-	-	52	2%	-	-
TOTAL	3,272	100%	19	100%	3,367	100%	5	100%

⁴ CAJG data source: CAJG Customer Relationship Management (CRM).

⁵ ATEP and FNTEP data source: Indigenous Training to Employment Program System (ITEPS) CRM.

⁶ AJNP data source: AJNP Customer Relationship Management (CRM).

⁷ ARP data source: Labour Market Partnerships (LMP) Grant Tracker.

Type of Employer	CAJG		ATEP/FNTEP		AJNP		ARP	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Private	2,991	92%	2	11%	3,078	92%	-	-
Public	-	-	1	5%	-	-	-	-
Not for Profit	267	8%	-	-	289	9%	5	100%
Other	8	0.3%	16	84%	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	3,272	100%	19	100%	3,367	100%	5	100%

Top Industry Sectors to access grants	CAJG		ATEP/FNTEP		AJNP		ARP	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services ⁸	553	17%	-	-	498	15%	-	-
Food services and drinking places	-	-	-	-	397	12%	-	-
Specialty trade contractors	-	-	-	-	162	5%	-	-
Construction of buildings	218	7%	-	-	153	5%	-	-
Truck transportation	174	5%	-	-	-	-	1	20%
Support activities for mining, and oil and gas extraction	155	5%	1	5%	103	3%	-	-
Oil and gas extraction	154	5%	-	-	-	-	1	20%
Wood product manufacturing	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	20%
Social assistance	-	-	1	5%	-	-	-	-
Educational Services	-	-	3	16%	-	-	1	20%
Religious/grant-making/civic/professional orgs	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	20%
Aboriginal Public Administration	-	-	14	74%	-	-	-	-

Type of Training for Skills Development	CAJG		ATEP/FNTEP		AJNP ⁹		ARP ¹⁰	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Entry Level	1,540	10%	340	71%	-	-	-	-
Upskilling or Upgrading	11,844	77%	139	29%	-	-	-	-
Maintenance	1,905	12%	0	0%	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	15,289	100%	479	100%	-	-	-	-

⁸ As defined in the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Canada 2017 version 2.0, the main components of this sector are legal services; accounting, tax preparation, bookkeeping and payroll services, architectural, engineering and related services; specialized design services; computer systems design and related services; management, scientific and technical consulting services; scientific research and development services; and advertising, public relations and related services.

⁹ Completion information about the type of training and type of skills was not yet collected for AJNP at the end of fiscal 2021/2022.

¹⁰ ARP grants are intended for recruitment and retention activities and do not include skills development and training.

Type of Skills Learned	CAJG		ATEP/FNTEP		AJNP		ARP	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Essential Skills	2685	17%	294	37%	-	-	-	-
Specialized or Technical Skills	6983	46%	349	44%	-	-	-	-
Management Skills	5246	34%	44	6%	-	-	-	-
Soft Skills	375	2%	111	14%	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	15,289	100%	798	100%	-	-	-	-

Number of Participants by Designated Groups	CAJG		ATEP/FNTEP		AJNP		ARP	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Indigenous	309	3%	594	100%	265	2%	-	-
Recent Immigrants	125	1%	0	0%	579	5%	-	-
Immigrants	654	6%	0	0%	1020	8%	-	-
Persons with Disabilities ¹¹	1,833	18%	0	0%	2,282	18%	-	-
Women	4481	44%	208	35%	5955	47%	-	-
Youth	817	8%	166	28%	3098	24%	-	-

Conclusion and Looking Forward

The Government of Alberta is committed to providing timely, relevant employment and training programs and services to help Albertans gain the skills they need to connect with the ever-changing labour market. Alberta continues to collaborate across its ministries and with diverse stakeholders, including employers, industries, training providers, local communities, Indigenous stakeholders, and other levels of government, to increase the labour force participation of under-represented groups, build and diversify the economy and get Albertans back to work.

In 2021/2022, Alberta's WDA partner ministries delivered the programs and services needed to build a skilled, adaptable workforce during on-going COVID-19 health restrictions, business disruptions and closures, and shifting labour market needs.

As our economy continues to grow, Alberta is committed to investing in skills development and supporting actions that strengthen and diversify our economy and ensure a prosperous future for all Albertans.

¹¹ Source: 2017 Statistics Canada data indicates 18 per cent of Alberta's labour force are persons with disabilities.
www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1310073001

www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1410039301&pickMembers%5B0%5D=2.2&cubeTimeFrame.startYear=2017&cubeTimeFrame.endYear=2021&referencePeriods=20170101%2C20210101