

Summer Temporary Employment Program (STEP) Guidelines

Out of date



About STEP

STEP is a four to 16 week wage subsidy program that provides funding to employers to hire high school or post-secondary students into summer jobs, from May to August.

The program provides students with work experience, builds transferable skills, and provides career awareness, while supporting Alberta employers.

Purpose of this Guide

The STEP Guidelines contain valuable program information that will assist you in successfully completing the STEP application. Review this entire document carefully to be sure you understand the terms and conditions of STEP.

Application and Reimbursement Overview

STEP forms can be found online at: albertacanada.com/STEP. Please use Internet Explorer to open the forms.

Employers must complete and submit the following forms to complete the STEP process:

1. STEP Employer Application (Form A) & STEP Grant Agreement
2. STEP Student Hiring Application (Form B)
3. STEP Completion Form

Employers must fill out all forms electronically, print them, sign them, and mail the original copies with original signatures to:

STEP
P.O. Box 1016
Edmonton Main
Edmonton, AB T5J 2M1

Employers will be notified by mail if they qualify for funding.

Please note:

- Applicants must use STEP PDF 2018 forms, currently on the website at albertacanada.com/STEP
- Forms must be sent using Canada Post. Submitting forms electronically, by courier, email or fax is not available at this time
- Copies will not be accepted
- Applications will be returned if they are incomplete or not originals

Application and Assessment Process

All applications will be assessed according to the eligibility criteria. Submitted applications must be filled out completely and signed by the employer, or an authorized signing official.

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STEP Employer Application (Form A) and Grant Agreement

This application determines employer and position eligibility.

- Complete the Employer Application form (Form A) and Grant Agreement and mail the original signed form to the Government of Alberta (address shown on page 2).
- The Employer Application (Form A) and Grant Agreement (described below) must be received no later than February 9, 2018.
- Once the application is assessed, employers will be notified of their STEP eligibility status.

STEP Grant Agreement

- This is a legally binding agreement which outlines the obligations of the Government of Alberta and the employer, and must be signed by an authorized signing official for the employer.
- The Agreement is not in force until it has been approved and signed by the Minister or the Minister's delegate, which will not occur unless/until the STEP Student Hiring Application(s) (Form B) for the employer has been approved.
- The employer submits one Grant Agreement, and the terms and conditions will apply to all of their approved STEP students.

STEP Student Hiring Application (Form B)

This application determines student eligibility and is submitted after receiving approval of Form A; it includes an employer section and a student candidate section.

- Complete Form B for the student candidate for each position.
- Form B should be submitted as soon as possible, or at least two weeks prior to the start date indicated in Form A.
- If Form B is not submitted by June 15th, 2018, your application may be cancelled and reallocated to wait-listed employers after this date.
- The original copy must be signed by the student and employer and mailed to STEP at least two weeks prior to the start date indicated on Form A to allow time for processing.
- The student candidate will be assessed for eligibility and the employer notified of final approval.
- If your student candidate is approved, the Grant amount paid out cannot exceed the amount calculated on Form B.
- If your student is found ineligible, STEP funding will not be provided and you will be responsible for all costs incurred for the time the student has been in your employ.
- Include your direct deposit information when submitting Form B.

STEP Completion Form

All employers must submit one Completion Form once all STEP positions are finished. Approval of the Completion Form initiates the final and only payment.

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The Completion Form must be accompanied with corresponding proof of payment (e.g. copies of paystubs or payroll information) for all STEP student employees.

- Payments will be based on actual hours worked for the duration of the STEP position, and therefore may not match with but cannot exceed the estimated amount calculated on Form B.
- Information on the paystubs must include:
 - name of the student;
 - pay period covered by each statement;
 - total number of regular and overtime hours worked;
 - number of hours taken off in lieu of overtime;
 - wage rate and overtime rate;
 - earnings paid, showing each component of the earnings separately (e.g. wages, overtime, holiday pay, etc.); and
 - amount of deductions from earnings and the reason for each deduction.
- Please do **not** include documentation with Social Insurance Numbers. STEP does not require this information.
- The Completion Form must be received and date stamped no later than 30 days after the final STEP position ends.
- If the STEP Grant is over \$100,000, the Minister will require additional financial reporting. When applicable, additional details on reporting requirements will be provided to employers.

Assessment Considerations

The following considerations will be applied when assessing STEP applications:

- 1) an eligible application does not guarantee funding;
- 2) applications will be assessed by employer types as the program allocates different levels of funding; Applications will be assessed by region to ensure there are STEP positions throughout the province; and
- 3) applications will be assessed on a first-come, first-serve basis, if required.

All decisions regarding the eligibility of the employers, students and reimbursable costs will be made by the Ministry of Labour (“Ministry”) at the Ministry’s sole discretion.

Employer Eligibility

Eligible Employer

- Non-profit organizations and public libraries
- Small businesses (1-49 employees)
- Municipalities, First Nations and Métis Settlements
- School boards (public, separate or francophone)
- Publicly funded post-secondary institutions in Alberta
 - Eligible institutions can be found at <http://eae.alberta.ca/post-secondary/institutions/public.aspx>

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Ineligible Employers

- Federal or provincial governments, including the Legislative Assembly and constituency offices
- Political parties
- Medium (50-499 employees) and large (500+ employees) sized businesses
- Franchises and corporately-owned chains
- Publicly funded organizations including but not limited to emergency services (e.g. police, firefighters, etc.) and health care providers (e.g. hospitals, long-term care facilities, etc.)
- Provincial or federal Crown agencies, boards, and commissions or corporations

Employer Requirements

To qualify for STEP funding, employers must meet all of the following requirements:

- be incorporated by, or registered under, an act of the legislature of a province or the Parliament of Canada;
- be located in Alberta;
- have been operating for no less than one year, from the date of application;
- provide safe working conditions, be in good standing and comply with the *Employment Standards Code*, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, the *Workers' Compensation Act*, and all other applicable legislation and regulations;
- **not** hire an existing employee for this program,
 - previous employees are eligible, provided it has been thirty days or longer since they last worked for you;
- **not** eliminate, reduce, or otherwise impact the security of work hours of any existing employee as a result of this program; and
- **not** assign, subcontract or transfer the position to another employer during the STEP position term.

Employer Verification

- Small businesses must be registered in Alberta and have a valid Alberta Corporate Access Number (ACAN).
 - Your company's ACAN can be found on your Certificate of Incorporation document from a Service Alberta Corporate Registry office.
 - Please contact a Registry Agent if you have any questions about your ACAN number. <http://www.servicealberta.gov.ab.ca/find-a-registry-agent.cfm>
- Non-profit organization must provide either an ACAN, a Charity Number, a provincial Registration Number (e.g. Societies Number) or submit documentation demonstrating that they are incorporated, established or registered (e.g. certificate of incorporation).
- Under New West Partnership Trade Agreement (NWPTA) rules, extra-provincial employers from NWPTA members can use their provincial corporate account number, although the location of the STEP position must be in Alberta.
- All employer requirements and eligibility criteria are subject to verification.

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STEP Job Criteria

Eligible Positions

- Full-time positions (defined as an average of 30 hours/week or more) for a minimum of four weeks to a maximum of 16 weeks in duration.
 - Note: There are more than 16 weeks between May 1, 2018 and Aug 31, 2018.
- Funding is only available for STEP positions between May 1st and August 31st. If employers choose to hire a student prior to May 1st or extend them beyond August 31st, STEP funding cannot be used to subsidize those wages beyond the timeframes.
- Positions can be under any National Occupational Classification (0, A, B, C, or D). More information can be found at www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/English/NOC/2011/Welcome.aspx

Note: An employer has the option to apply for several different positions, durations, and wage amounts. Refer to Employer Placement Caps for the maximum, eligible number of positions.

Ineligible Positions

- Positions not occurring between May and August.
- Positions where the wage subsidy is already funded by provincial or federal government sources (e.g. Canada Summer Jobs).
- Compulsory or optional apprenticeship trades and occupations, involving registration as an apprentice or completion of an Alberta Trade or Occupational Certificate. A list of these trades and occupations can be found at <http://tradesecrets.alberta.ca/trades-occupations/trades-occupations-list/>
- Co-ops, employer internships, as well as positions funded through existing employment programs/placements.

Student Eligibility

An eligible STEP student is:

- at least 15 years of age, by the STEP position start date;
- a Canadian citizen, a permanent resident, or protected persons under the Canadian [Immigration and Refugee Protection Act](#) and legally entitled to work and study in Canada:
 - Note: students in other immigration categories (e.g. International Students and Temporary Foreign Workers) are not eligible for STEP; and
 - Note: students with a Social Insurance Number starting with 9 must provide documentation confirming that they are a protected person under the *Canadian Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* with a valid work permit.
- an Alberta resident with an Alberta address and living and/or attending school in the province;
- attended a high school or a post-secondary institution in 2017-18 Academic Year (September 2017- August 2018) and is returning to school full time in the following year (no later than November 1, 2018);

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- Note: eligible students must be enrolled in a program which will result in a credential (e.g. certificate, diploma, degree, etc.) and/or completing academic upgrading courses. Apprenticeship Technical Training Programs are ineligible;
- available for full-time summer employment;
- only able to participate in one STEP position per calendar year;
- **not** currently employed with the organization in a paid capacity;
- **not** immediately related to organization's owners or staff responsible for hiring:
 - Note: immediate family includes but not limited to; spouse, common-law partner, adult interdependent partner, child (biological, step, adopted), parent, sibling, grandparents etc.).
 - Note: staff responsible for hiring may include human resource representatives, interviewers, supervisors, management and owners.

Employer Placement Caps

The following caps have been set on the number of STEP positions a single employer is entitled to have per year. Caps are based the number of positions, whether they are four weeks or 16 weeks in length.

Small Business

Type of organization	Maximum number of STEP positions
Small Business	3

Non-Profit Organizations and Libraries

If a non-profit organization or library has multiple locations, the cap below will be applied to each physical location.

Type of organization	Maximum number of STEP positions
Non-profit Organizations	3
Public Libraries	1

Post-Secondary Institutions

Caps for the publicly funded post-secondary institutions are based on institution size and are applied to the entire institution, regardless of whether there are multiple campus locations.

Post-Secondary Institution	Maximum number of STEP positions
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Alberta College of Art and Design Ambrose University Athabasca University Bow Valley College Burman University Concordia University of Edmonton Grande Prairie Regional College Keyano College King's University, The Lakeland College Lethbridge College Medicine Hat College NorQuest College Northern Lakes College Olds College Portage College Red Deer College St. Mary's University	10
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MacEwan University Mount Royal University Northern Alberta Institute of Technology Southern Alberta Institute of Technology University of Alberta University of Calgary University of Lethbridge	35
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Municipalities, First Nations and Métis Settlements

Municipalities, First Nations and Métis Settlements will have the following maximum STEP positions per year, based on community population size:

Population	Maximum number of STEP positions
1 – 2,500	2
2,501 – 30,000	5
30,001 – 150,000	10
150,001+	40

School Boards

School boards will have the following maximum STEP positions per year, based on student population size:

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School Boards	Maximum number of STEP positions
Less than 30,000 student population	2
30,000+ student population	5

Employer Type Funding Targets

STEP will provide \$10 million to employers in 2018, allocated by employer type.

Employer Type	Funding Targets
Non-profit Organizations and Public Libraries	40% (\$4M)
Small Business	20% (\$2M)
Municipalities, First Nations and Métis Settlements	20% (\$2M)
Publicly funded post-secondary institutions and School Boards	20% (\$2M)

Financial Contribution

The Government of Alberta will provide an employer with a wage subsidy of \$7 per hour for a minimum of 30 hours per week (on average) and a maximum of 37.5 hours per week. Additional hours may be offered to students but must be paid in full by the employer. STEP positions can range from a minimum of four to a maximum of 16 weeks. The wage offered for a STEP position will be determined by the employer, but they must pay at least minimum wage (currently \$13.60/hour).

Pay Information

- Employers must place the STEP employees on their payroll budget and pay them directly.
 - Note: In circumstances where the municipality uses their payroll to pay STEP employees for non-profit organizations, the positions will be considered under the municipality's placement cap.
 - If the municipality has reached their placement cap, funding for these position(s) could be declined
- Related costs such as Employment Insurance, Canada Pension Plan, vacation or general holiday pay, taxes or benefits will be the responsibility of the employer.
- The employer cannot claim for any days that the position is vacant (e.g. sick days, vacation, etc.)
- The employer is responsible for providing the appropriate tax forms to the STEP employees.
- A STEP Completion Form and payroll information is required after the STEP position(s) is finished.
- For employers with multiple STEP employees, one combined STEP grant will be paid for all eligible STEP participants, upon approval of the STEP Completion Form.

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Employment Standards Fact Sheets that outline the rights and obligations of employers and employees are found at: work.alberta.ca/employment-standards/999.html

Wage and salary information is available at: occinfo.alis.alberta.ca and the Government of Canada Job Bank: jobbank.gc.ca.

Accessing Other Program Funding

If approved for STEP funding, the employer cannot accept any other federal, provincial or municipal government financial contributions for wage subsidies for the same STEP position.

Employers can access training funding for the employee through other programs, such as the Canada Job Grant. Application forms for these programs can be found here: albertacanada.com/jobgrant.

STEP Position Terminations

If the STEP position ends early, regardless of whether the termination is initiated by the employer or the employee, the employer must notify Government of Alberta immediately and submit a Completion Form, along with proof of final payment to the student.

- Employers may have the option to replace that student with a different eligible student. This depends on the circumstances why the STEP position ended early and requires Government of Alberta approval from program staff.
- A new Student Hiring Application (Form B) can be submitted no later than July 15, in order to determine eligibility for funding for a new participant.
- As STEP funding is based on actual hours worked by the participants, the grant amount will be adjusted accordingly.
- The employer will receive one lump sum payment after the Completion Form and payroll information is submitted for the replacement participant and any other approved STEP employees.

Non-Compliance with Terms and Conditions

The Government of Alberta may terminate the STEP grant agreement in certain circumstances. This may occur if the student or employer contravenes the program guidelines, the Terms and Conditions of the Grant Agreement, or does not meet the eligibility requirements. Employers may not be allowed to find a different student within the current year or may be barred from accessing STEP funding in future years.

If the Minister or Minister's delegate is of the opinion that any false or misleading information has been provided or any relevant or significant fact was concealed in the Applications, the Minister or Minister's delegate may decline the employer's application or terminate the grant agreement, and may require the employer to repay any grant funds received. The employer may also be banned from applying for future grants.

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Information Collection and Program Evaluation

The Government of Alberta requires the collection of certain information from employers and employees. By participating in this program, employees agree to provide personal information on the application, relevant to the program and to allow for data and information collection through reporting measures such as surveys, interviews, phone calls, etc.

If requested, employers must allow Government of Alberta program staff access to all documents and information relating to the STEP grant. Program staff may also interview employees on the job site, by phone, or in writing at any time during the program.

Contact

If you require further information that is not provided in this guide:

Phone: 1-780-638-4727

Toll Free: 1-866-338-4727

Email: step@gov.ab.ca

Website: www.AlbertaCanada.com/STEP

STEP Employer Checklist

- Complete and submit Form A - Employer Application and the Grant Agreement to determine your eligibility by February 9, 2018
- Receive notification of approval
- Advertise your STEP position
 - o Use the Canada Job Bank: jobbank.gc.ca or other job search methods
- Screen eligible student candidates, interview and offer conditional STEP employment to a qualified candidate
- Complete and submit Form B - Student Hiring Application with your STEP candidate, after receiving approval for Form A. The form is required to be signed by your organization and the student candidate
 - o Include direct deposit information
 - o Form B will be accepted no later than June 15, 2018, for summer jobs starting after this date.
- Receive notice of STEP student eligibility
- Place STEP employee on your payroll, making appropriate deductions, and issuing paycheques
- Continue to comply with the Employment Standards Code, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, *Workers' Compensation Act* and any other applicable legislation
- Supervise and mentor your STEP employee(s)
- Submit Completion Form
 - o Include STEP employee payroll information
- Receive payment