

# Summer Temporary Employment Program (STEP) Guidelines

Alberta



## STEP: Employer Program Guidelines

### 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 experiences, 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 process

STEP forms can be found online at: [albertacanada.com/STEP](http://albertacanada.com/STEP).

Please use the 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)
2. STEP Student Hiring Application (Form B) & STEP Grant Agreement
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:

- Submitting forms electronically, by 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 an authorized signing official.

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### **STEP Employer Application (Form A):**

This application determines employer and position eligibility.

- Complete the Employer Application form (Form A) and mail the original signed form to the Government of Alberta (address shown on page 2).
- The Employer Application (Form A) must be received no later than February 29, 2016.
- Once the application is assessed, processing staff will notify employers of their STEP eligibility status.
- Approved employers have until June 1, 2016, to find an eligible student candidate and submit Form B and the Grant Agreement (described below).
- If Form B and the Grant Agreement are not submitted by June 1, the application will be cancelled.
- Employers may submit Form A, Form B and the Grant Agreement together, if a student has already been interviewed and offered summer employment. However, the summer job cannot start until we have assessed the application and employer receives the notice of approval.

### **STEP Student Hiring Application (Form B)**

This application determines student eligibility; it includes an employer section and a student applicant section.

- Complete Form B with the student candidate. The original copy must be signed by the student and mailed to STEP by June 1, 2016 after receiving approval of Form A.
- The student candidate applicant will be assessed for eligibility and employer notified of final approval.
- The candidate cannot start working prior to the start date that the employer has provided on Form B or the employer will be ineligible for STEP funding.

### **STEP Grant Agreement (submit with Form B)**

This is a legally binding agreement which outlines the obligations of the Government of Alberta and the employer.

- Print off the online Grant Agreement, sign it and attach the original copy to Form B - Student Hiring Application.

### **STEP Completion Form**

All employers must submit a Completion Form at the end of the STEP position/employment term. This initiates the final and/or only payment.

- Attach corresponding proof of payments (i.e. copies of paystubs or payroll information).
- Include your direct deposit information.
- Payments will be based on actual hours worked for the duration of the STEP position.
- Attach proof of payments (e.g. paystubs or payroll records) for all pay periods up to and including the date the form is submitted. Information must include:
  - Name of the employee;
  - Pay period covered by each statement;
  - Total number of regular and overtime hours worked;
  - Number of hours taken off in lieu of overtime;

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- 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.
- The Completion Form must be received and date stamped no later than 30 days after the STEP position ends.

### STEP Interim Reimbursement Form (optional for non-profit organizations)

Non-profit organizations have the option to receive an interim payment for STEP positions that are longer than twelve weeks in length.

- Complete and submit STEP Reimbursement Form between 6-8 weeks after the placement start date.
- Attach direct deposit information.
- Attach proof of payments (e.g. paystubs or payroll records) for all pay periods up to and including the date the form is submitted. Proof of payment information is described above.

### Assessment Considerations

The following considerations will be applied when assessing STEP applications:

- 1) All applications received by the application deadline will be considered;
- 2) The Government of Alberta strives to provide access to all eligible employer types (e.g. small businesses, non-profits, etc.), but reserves the right to allocate different levels of funding based on employer types; and
- 3) Applications will be assessed to ensure there are benefits regionally across the province.

## Employer Eligibility

### Eligible Employers

- 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>

### 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 emergency services (e.g. police, firefighters, etc.) and health care providers (e.g. hospitals).
- Provincial or federal Crown agencies, boards, and commissions or corporations.

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### 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;
- 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;
- **Not** eliminate, reduce, or otherwise affect 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 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 rules, extra-provincial employers from British Columbia or Saskatchewan 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.

## STEP Job Criteria

### Eligible Positions

- Full-time positions (minimum of 30 hours/week) for a minimum of four weeks to a maximum of 16 weeks in duration
- Position must start no earlier than May 1 and end no later than August 31
- 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](http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/English/NOC/2011/Welcome.aspx)

Note: An employer can apply for several different positions, durations, and wage amounts (refer to employer caps).

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### Ineligible Positions

- Positions shorter than four weeks or longer than 16 weeks.
- 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. A list of these trades and occupations can be found at <http://tradesecrets.alberta.ca/trades-occupations/trades-occupations-list/>
- Positions funded through existing employment programs and placements (e.g. co-ops, employer internships).

### Student Eligibility

#### An eligible STEP student is:

- At least 15 years of age;
- A Canadian citizen, a permanent resident, or person protected under the Canadian [Immigration and Refugee Protection Act](#) and legally entitled to work and study in Canada:
  - Students in other immigration categories (e.g. International Students and Temporary Foreign Workers) are not eligible for STEP; and
  - 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 in the province;
- Currently attending a high school or a post-secondary institution and returning to school full time in the fall (no later than November 1);
- Eligible post-secondary students must be enrolled in a program which will result in a credential (e.g. certificate, diploma, degree, etc.). Apprenticeship Technical Training Programs leading to journey person credentials 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:
  - Immediate family includes spouses, common-law or adult interdependent partners, children or parents; and
  - Staff responsible for hiring may include human resource representatives, interviewers, supervisors, management and owners.

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### 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	5

#### 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	5
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
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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Grant MacEwan University Mount Royal University Northern Alberta Institute of Technology Southern Alberta Institute of Technology University of Alberta University of Calgary University of Lethbridge	40
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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:

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 2016, 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)



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### Financial Contribution

The Government of Alberta will provide an employer with a wage subsidy of \$7 per hour for a maximum of 37.5 hours per week. The wage offered for a STEP position will be determined by the employer, but they must pay at least minimum wage (currently at \$11.20/hour).

### Pay Information

- Employers must place the STEP employee on their payroll and pay them directly.
- 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 employees.
- The employer will be paid the STEP grant at the end of the summer job for each placement, upon submitting the STEP Completion Form.

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

Wage and salary information is available at: [occinfo.alis.alberta.ca](http://occinfo.alis.alberta.ca) and the Government of Canada Job Bank: [jobbank.gc.ca](http://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 employee over the duration of the 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](http://albertacanada.com/jobgrant).

### STEP Position Terminations

If the STEP position ends early, regardless of whether it's initiated by the employer or the employee, the employer must notify Government of Alberta immediately and submit a Completion Form, providing pay information up to and including the final pay period.

### Non-Compliance with Terms and Conditions

The Government of Alberta has the right to cancel the STEP grant, retroactive to the start date, at any time, if the employee or employer contravenes the program guidelines or Terms and Conditions of the grant agreement or if there is inappropriate employer conduct. Employers may not be allowed to find a different employee within the current year or may be barred in accessing STEP funding in future years.

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The Government of Alberta may also stipulate that funds have to be repaid. If a refund is requested, the employer must repay the funds to the Provincial Treasurer within 30 days of the billing letter. If repayment is late, interest will be charged at a rate of one per cent each month, compounded annually.

## **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](mailto:step@gov.ab.ca)

Website: [www.AlbertaCanada.com/STEP](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/STEP)

## STEP: Employer Program Guidelines

### STEP Employer Checklist

- Complete and submit Form A - Employer Application to determine your eligibility by February 29, 2016
- Receive notification of approval
- Advertise your STEP position
  - Use the Canada-Alberta Job Bank: [jobbank.gc.ca](http://jobbank.gc.ca) or other job search methods
- Screen eligible student candidates, interview and offer conditional STEP employment to a qualified candidate
- Complete Form B - Student Hiring Application with your STEP candidate. Ensure candidate signs the form
- Submit both Form B and the signed STEP Grant Agreement by June 1, after receiving approval of Form A
- Receive notice of STEP student eligibility
- Place STEP employee on payroll, making appropriate deductions, and issuing pay cheques
- 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
  - Include STEP employee payroll information
  - Include Direct Deposit information
- Receive payment