



Workplace Support Program

Program Standards

Administered by **TEAM Work Cooperative**
in partnership with the **Employment Support Services** division
of the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services

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WORKPLACE SUPPORT PROGRAM

Purpose

The information contained in these Program Standards outlines the specifics of the Workplace Support Program which is administered through TEAM Work Cooperative with funding provided by the Employment Support Services division of the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services.

Included in this document are descriptions of each program component, the specific eligibility criteria, the funding requirements, and the process to access supports. We invite you to read the entire Program Standards document before making application.

Introduction

The overall objective of the Workplace Support Program is to improve employment outcomes of persons with disabilities by increasing and maintaining labour market participation rates.

There are two components within the Workplace Support Program:

1. Technical Aid and Assistive Device

Funding through the Technical Aid and Assistive Device component of the program is intended to support individuals with a disability to become attached or remain working in the competitive labour market and require a technical aid and / or assistive device to work.

Subsequent pages of this document outline the specifications for different sub-categories of labour market attachment such as those who are currently employed (including seasonal workers), individuals who are beginning a confirmed employment opportunity, those who identify as self-employed, and current post-secondary students.

2. Employment Attendant

Funding through the Employment Attendant component of this program is intended to support individuals living with a significant disability to begin work or remain employed in the competitive labour market and require supports related to the performance of the job. Funding priority will be given to recent graduates who have completed their studies within the previous three to five years.

This component of the program is not intended to support the individuals who are participating in Adult Day Programs or programs that compensate with training allowance or stipend.

Overall Eligibility for Workplace Support Program Funding

To be considered an eligible recipient for funding under the Workplace Support Program, you must:

- be a current resident of Nova Scotia and considered a person with a disability whereby the disability makes completing work tasks difficult;
- be requesting funding for an accommodation that specifically supports you in employment or in a post-secondary setting;
- not currently fall under the jurisdiction of the provincial education (public school) system;
- be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant;
- provide all required documentation requested when submitting a funding application.

Individuals may not be considered eligible for funding if you:

- are receiving support from another community-based or government funding program [e.g. the Employment Support and Income Assistance (ESIA) Program or Disability Support Program (DSP)] where funding support can be accessed by these means;
- have an active claim under the Worker's Compensation Board (WCB) Act and funding support for the technical aid or assistive device can be offered through WCB. More information can be found on the *Worker's Compensation Board of Nova Scotia* website [here](#).

Note: Considerations may be made for applications with supporting documentation indicating that funding support is not available through the WCB claim;

- have a claim under Veteran's Rehabilitation Act (Canada), Canada Pension Plan (CPP) disability benefit, or through a private insurance company;

Note: Otherwise eligible individuals receiving CPP disability benefits (or other federal income assistance programs) may be considered for funding provided you are reporting your earnings to Canada Revenue Agency, you have advised Service Canada of your employment and / or you are exploring a Return to Work Plan as per [Service Canada](#) requirements.

- are seeking supports for that are primarily health-care related expenses oriented toward medical treatment.

Other Terms and Conditions for the Workplace Support Program

The following are additional terms and conditions for funding under this program:

- Funding is approved on a first come, first served basis until the annual budget allocation is depleted.
- Funding under the Workplace Support Program expires on or before March 31st annually. Renewal of this program is dependent on an annual budget appropriation.
- Funding will not cover costs incurred prior to the approval of the application.

Review Process

Decisions made under the Workplace Support Program may be reviewed if you are not satisfied with the decision related to an application under either component of the Workplace Support Program.

Within 30 days of being notified of a decision, please submit a written request for review in addition to providing any new information not submitted at the initial application. Decisions cannot be made outside the scope of the program standards. The decision will be reviewed by the TEAM Work Cooperative Workplace Support Program Funding Committee (or designate) and a response will be provided within ten (10) business days.

For the review process to occur, please contact TEAM Work Cooperative directly.

Client Profile Indicators and Outcomes

The Department of Community Services has performance indicators making it mandatory to collect profile information for individuals receiving support throughout the application process. This information will support federal accountability and program evaluation. Failure to provide the following information will result in an application deemed incomplete and unable to be processed.

Required information collected on the application for statistical purposes include:

- gender
- age
- self-identified designated group
- Social Insurance Number (SIN)
- level of education
- employment status
- hours worked per week
- average weekly earnings

Technical Aid and Assistive Device Component

Eligibility Requirements for Technical Aids and Assistive Devices

This component of the Workplace Support Program is intended to support individuals with a disability to become attached or remain employed in the competitive labour market and require a technical aid and / or assistive device to work. If employed, you must work **a minimum of five (5) hours weekly** and if

attending post-secondary, you must be considered a **full-time student** to meet eligibility. Below are the specifications for each of the following categories related to labour market attachment:

- a. Currently employed, including seasonal workers
 - b. Beginning a confirmed employment opportunity
 - c. Self-employed
 - d. Current post-secondary student
- a. **Currently employed** – Individuals who meet other eligibility requirements and are currently employed but face an increased likelihood of vocational crisis without the use of a technical aid or assistive device.

Detailed employer information must be provided at application and may be contacted for verification. The employee must work a minimum of five (5) hours weekly.

If seasonally employed, the application will be processed no earlier than one month prior to or within the working season of the position.

- b. **Beginning a Confirmed Employment Opportunity** – Individuals who meet other eligibility requirements and have secured an employment opportunity but require use of a technical aid or assistive device to begin work.

Detailed employer information must be provided on application and may be contacted for verification. The employee must work a minimum of five (5) hours weekly in the competitive labour market.

If seasonally employed, the application will be processed no earlier than one month prior to or within the working season of the position.

Individuals who are actively participating in job search activities may be considered for funding if such activities are assisted by a Case Manager through a local Nova Scotia Works site, or equivalent.

- c. **Self-employed** – Individuals who meet other eligibility requirements and identify as being self-employed but face an increased likelihood of vocational crisis without the use of a technical aid or assistive device. Your business structure must be sole proprietorships or limited partnership.

You must provide your full T2125 tax document to indicate your business / professional income(s) outlined in *Part 4* [Net income loss (before adjustments)] and *Part 5* (Net income loss) as well as disclose your NET income (Line 236) located on your Notice of Assessment or Income Tax and Benefit Return Form.

The amount of **Gross profit (loss)** from the business / professional incomes minus the **Net income (loss)** must exceed the equivalent of working five (5) hours weekly at the current rate of minimum wage at the time of application.

Note: Self-employed individuals who have started a new business within the application year and have an undetermined business income may be assessed on an individual basis.

- d. **Currently Attending a Post-Secondary Study Program** - Individuals attending a post-secondary academic program can be approved if all eligibility requirements are met and the support items are not covered by other programs through Post-Secondary Accessibility Services within the Department of Advanced Education.

Post-secondary students must be attending their study program full-time, including online studies, at the following accredited institutions:

Note: Full-time status requirement can be waived if the student holds an approved medical accommodation according to their study institution.

- Community Colleges

Note: This also includes block training for apprentices working in a compulsory certified trade, a license, certificate or apprentice / trainee status under the *Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act* found on the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency website linked [here](#);

- Private Career Colleges;
- Universities

Eligible Supports for Technical Aid and Assistive Device Component

The below technical aids or assistive devices are considered eligible supports under this component of the program:

- appliances for the visually impaired, including blue tooth coverage
- basic level appliances for the hearing impaired – limited funding up to a maximum of **\$1,600** per unit every four (4) years

Note: Hearing aid repairs can be considered if the applicant already owns a hearing aid. Funds contributed towards the hearing aid repair will be subtracted from available funds if a new hearing aid within the four-year period.

- computer software (e.g., writing aids, magnification, screen reading, dictation, software to support learning disabilities)
- Voice-Activated Telephones
(for telephone purchase only – does not support monthly phone bill)
- Speech Recognition Software
- Optical Character Recognition (OCR) Software
- Visual and Graphic Organizers
- Automated Stamper
- Interpreters – limited funding up to a maximum of **\$500** per year
- Cochlear implants and / or supplies, including BAHA 5 device
- Power tilt / recline seating
- Office furniture modifications, if not covered by employer
- Wheelchair
 - limited funding up to a maximum of **\$5,100** for manual chair once every **five (5) years**
 - limited funding up to a maximum of **\$15,000** for power chair once every **five (5) years**
- Power Device for manual wheelchair

- Wheelchair repair
 - limited funding up to a maximum of **\$200** for manual chair per year
 - limited funding up to a maximum of **\$500** for power chair per year

Note: Wheelchair repairs can be considered if the applicant already owns a wheelchair. Funds contributed towards the repair will be subtracted from available funds if the applicant requires a new wheelchair within the five-year period.

- Vehicle Modifications – limited funding up to a maximum of **\$15,000** every **seven (7) years**

The annual budget for the Technical Aid and Assistive Device component is limited and subject to an annual budget appropriation. Funds are provided on a first come, first served basis until the annual budget allocation is depleted.

Completing Application for Technical Aid and Assistive Device Component

How to Apply for Technical Aid and Assistive Device Funding

To apply for funding, you must complete an application form and submit to TEAM Work Cooperative where a decision will be granted within three weeks of receiving a completed application.

Note: Applications can be accepted on self-referral basis or they may include an optional written statement from a Case Manager of a Nova Scotia Works Centre or a local District Office of the Department of Community Services.

To apply:

- You can complete an application found [here](#) or directly contact the Workplace Support Program through TEAM Work Cooperative to self-refer;

For support in completing the application, you can:

- connect with your nearest Nova Scotia Works Centre using their website [here](#) or;
- connect with your local District Office of the Department of Community Services on the *Province of Nova Scotia* website or [here](#).

Application Requirements for the Technical Aid and Assistive Device Component

All funding applications for this component must:

- include a completed application form specific to the *Technical Aid and Assistive Device* component;
- include an assessment and recommendation from a qualified medical / clinical practitioner (e.g., an audiologist, occupational therapist, etc.);
- include two cost estimates whereby funding approval will be granted based upon the most economical option to meet the required need;
- meet the income tested requirement and have a net income of \$54,000 or less annually.

Income table is found in Appendix A and illustrates the amount of funding available based on Net income or T2125 document for those who are self-employed.

Note: All post-secondary applicants will be required to provide enrollment confirmation from their academic institution.

Decision Process for Technical Aid and Assistive Device Component

A decision letter, including a detailed breakdown of your funding approval amount if applicable, will be

mailed to the address provided on your application. If approved, a separate letter simply stating your full name and your funding approval amount will be mailed and / or faxed directly to the preferred vendor with invoicing details.

Funding approvals under the Technical Aid and Assistive Device component of the program are made directly with the preferred vendor selected on the application or, by default, the vendor who provided the most economical quote.

Note: The applicant may choose to purchase the Technical Aid or Assistive Device from either service provider; however, the approval amount is determined using the more economical quote provided.

Employment Attendant Component

Funding through the Employment Attendant component of the program is intended to support individuals living with a significant disability to begin work or remain employed in the competitive labour market and require supports related to the performance of the job. Funding priority will be given to recent graduates who have completed their studies within the previous three to five years.

Before applying and to learn more about funding availability, please contact TEAM Work Cooperative for more information about the Employment Attendant component of the Workplace Support Program.

An Employment Attendant is a hired employee who provides task-related assistance specific to your job. The program is intended to be person-centered and flexible to fit the specific needs of your job as well as the needs of the organization where you are employed. The funding may be used to support wages, the cost of hiring needs and Mandatory Employment Related Costs (MERC) of the Employment Attendant. You as the hiring manager are responsible for recruitment, hiring, training, maintaining payroll and making all required submissions and deductions (Income Tax, EI, CPP, etc.) for your Employment Attendant.

To qualify for funding under this component, you must work a minimum of 20 hours per week, or if self-employed, your T2125 must indicate that your **Gross Profit (loss)** from the business / professional incomes minus the **Net income (loss)** is equivalent to earning an income of 20 hours at the current rate of minimum wage.

Funding levels will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis, with the maximum funding eligible per fiscal year under this program limited to \$20,000 (plus employer Mandatory Employment Related Costs costs) as a contribution towards the salary for the Employment Attendant and a maximum of \$1,000 as a contribution towards the cost of payroll services and / or advertising expenses incurred to recruit an Employment Attendant in the first year. Funding for payroll services in subsequent years will be reduced to a maximum of \$800 per year.

The parameters of these approval amounts may differ depending on the specific contract agreement created between applicant and the Province of Nova Scotia.

Note: Any additional costs related to employing your Employment Attendant is the responsibility of the funded recipient. This includes additional wages, MERC and payroll costs above the parameters of funding listed above.

Application Requirements for the Employment Attendant

To inquire above funding availability, please contact TEAM Work Cooperative who can provide further direction to complete application for funding.

All funding applications for the Employment Attendant component must include:

- a completed application form specific to the *Employment Attendant* component
- an assessment and recommendation from a qualified medical / clinical practitioner indicating the employment-related need for Employment Attendant
- the most current Notice of Assessment Tax document and, if self-employed, include your most recent T2125 (Part 1 to Part 5)

Reporting Requirements for the Employment Attendant Component

Once approved, an agreement created under the Employment Attendant component of the program is made directly with you, as the individual funded recipient. It outlines the amount of funding approved and a payment schedule for the funds to be issued to you. It will also outline the reporting requirements of the program.

The applicant who is approved for funding is deemed the employer of the Employment Attendant and as such, is responsible for the recruitment, hiring, training, maintaining payroll and completing all required submissions and deductions (Income Tax, EI, CPP, etc.) for the Employment Attendant. Recipients of funding will be required to provide financial reports to the TEAM Work Cooperative (or designate) detailing the monthly breakdown of the number of hours worked per week by the Attendant, the hourly wage paid, and evidence that the appropriate submissions and deductions were made. Appendix B provides the quarterly reporting document for this component of the program. Reports must be submitted on a quarterly basis every three months.

All financial reports are to be submitted to TEAM Work Cooperative as per the Reporting Schedule outlined in your approval letter / annual agreement.

Contact Information

For further information or to submit an application, please contact TEAM Work Cooperative:

Phone	(902) 422 - 8900
Video Relay Service	(902) 593 - 0215
Fax	(902) 422 - 3992
Email	workplacesupportprog@teamworkbridge.org
Mail	TEAM Work Cooperative Attn: Workplace Support Program Suite 501 - 7051 Bayers Road Halifax, Nova Scotia B3L 2C1

Appendix A:

Income test table specific to the Technical Aid and Assistive Device Component

This component is income tested where an applicant must have an annual net income of \$54,000 or less.

Funding eligibility is determined based on your net income indicated on your most current Notice of Assessment document or Income Tax and Benefit Return form:

Note: If you identify as self-employed, additional requirements located under section **Technical Aid and Assistive Device > Eligibility Requirements > c. Self-Employed**, must be met.

Note: In circumstances where a maximum limit of funding support for the specific items is listed, the funding contribution will not exceed the maximum (i.e. the maximum funding listed for basic hearing appliance is \$1,600 per unit therefore the funding amount will not exceed \$1,600 per unit regardless of the percentage calculation).

Net Earnings	Eligibility (%)
Below \$22,000	100% of aid or device cost less medical insurance and up to any listed maximum on the specific accommodation
\$22,001 to \$36,000	75% of aid or device cost less medical insurance and up to any listed maximum on the specific accommodation
\$36,001 to \$54,000	50% of aid or device cost less medical insurance and up to any listed maximum on the specific accommodation
Self-Employed	Please refer to the following section: Technical Aid and Assistive Device > Eligibility Requirements > c. Self-Employed

Appendix B: Reporting Requirements for Employment Attendant Component

Quarterly Financial Report for Workplace Support Program - Employment Attendant

FUNDED RECIPIENT INFORMATION	
Name of Funded Recipient (First Last)	

Quarterly Reporting Period (MM/DD/YY to MM/DD/YY)		
Date Report Submitted (MM/DD/YY)		

EMPLOYMENT ATTENDANT INFORMATION	
Name of Employment Attendant (First Last)	
Date of Hire (MM/DD/YY)	
Hourly Wage	
Number of Hours Weekly	

EMPLOYMENT ATTENDANT EARNINGS	
Total Gross Pay (from hours worked only)	
Total Vacation Pay (or indicate if included above)	

EMPLOYMENT ATTENDANT STATUTORY DEDUCTIONS	
CPP Contribution	
EI Employee Premium	
Income Tax	
WCB Contribution (if applicable)	

SIGNATURE		
Report Submitted By (Print / Sign)		
Date Submitted (MM/DD/YY)		
Workplace Support Program Designate (Print / Sign)		
Date Reviewed (MM/DD/YY)		