

News Release

Ontario Setting Up Apprentices and Employers for Success

March 5, 2021

Province's expanded apprenticeship programs will build a robust, skilled workforce

TORONTO - The Ontario government is investing \$47 million in 2021-22 to hire more apprentices, improve the quality of training and help them complete their training and certification through the new [Achievement Incentive Program](#) and the expanded Apprenticeship Capital Grant. These programs are designed to support those who train apprentices, such as businesses, colleges and other training organizations, providing more young people with high quality training that will lead to successful careers.

"This is critical investment as our apprentices will be the ones who will help provide essential services and build our future hospitals, highways and homes," said Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development. "Through these programs our government is supporting this important training pipeline, creating the next generation of our skilled workers and providing more young people with opportunity to get good jobs in their communities. Our economic recovery and future growth depends on having a robust skilled workforce."

Ontario's \$23 million Achievement Incentive Program will provide over 11,000 employers in the construction, industrial, service and other sectors with up to \$4,000 in funding per apprentice as they reach key training milestones. For example, a hair salon, restaurant, childcare centre or autobody shop could receive a \$1,000 payment once their apprentice reaches a new in-class training level or receives the highest level of trade certification. Employers, especially small businesses, are critical to training the next generation of workers in the skilled trades, and Ontario wants to encourage more of them to participate in apprenticeship programs.

Additionally, the government is investing \$24 million - a \$10 million increase from last year - through the Apprenticeship Capital Grant to help colleges, unions and apprentice training providers upgrade their equipment and facilities to ensure apprentices are learning and using state-of-the-art infrastructure during their in-class training. Examples include new virtual reality training equipment and simulators, new tools or upgraded accessibility supports, all of which help apprentices acquire the skills they need to be job ready.

These initiatives are part of the government's Skilled Trades Strategy, which includes reducing the stigma related to a career in the skilled trades, simplifying the apprenticeship system, and encouraging business participation.

QUICK FACTS

- In 2020-21, Ontario will invest \$21 million in the Achievement Incentive. This investment will grow to \$23.1 million in ongoing funding in 2021-22.
- The Achievement Incentive is now available to eligible apprenticeship sponsors who will receive an email from the ministry today with a web-link to apply electronically through a secure, one-time on-line application.
- Statistics show there is a shortage of skilled trade workers in Ontario. Data suggests that the need to replace retiring workers is greater for workers in the skilled trades than for other occupations. In 2016, nearly 1 in 3 journeypersons were aged 55 years or older.
- An average apprentice takes 3 to 5 years to complete their training to become a journeyperson – or certified skilled tradesperson.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Hire An Apprentice](#)
- [Online Trades Hub](#)
- [Employment Ontario](#)
- [Group Sponsorship Grant](#)

QUOTES

"Small businesses have and will continue to form the backbone of the Ontario economy. The new Achievement Incentive Program is a positive step towards helping employers as they take on new apprentices to meet the infrastructure needs of their growing communities while addressing the skilled trades labour shortage. Thank you Premier Ford and Minister McNaughton for your continued support of the skilled trades."

— *Mike Gallardo, President & CEO, Merit Ontario*

"Employers are an essential participant in the apprenticeship system providing jobs, training and mentorship for our next generation of skilled workers. As we begin to recover from the pandemic, it is imperative that employers are supported to continue to train and employ the tradespeople our economy will rely upon."

— *Karen Renkema, Vice President, Ontario, Progressive Contractors Association of Canada*

"This is a good step that will encourage more employers to hire and train apprentices. Employers provide critical on-the-job training for apprentices entering the trades. This investment will encourage more small and medium sized companies to be involved in the apprenticeship system so Ontario becomes a leader in the skilled trades."

— *Stephen Hamilton, Chair, Ontario Skilled Trades Alliance*

"Minister McNaughton's announcement will be extremely welcome by small businesses employing or wanting to employ apprentices, which make up a majority of the Electrical Contractors' Association of Ontario (ECAO). The Achievement Incentive Program will benefit our entire community – employers, our labour partners, all of those eager to begin apprenticeships. This will help us to continue to build careers for Ontarians; not simply find them jobs."

— *Graeme Aitken, Executive Director, Electrical Contractors' Association of Ontario (ECAO)*

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