

## **LAE Information & Contacts for COVID-19 Inquiries** (as of March 25, 2020)

Government's best advice is to follow the science and follow the facts. The Government of Nova Scotia's coronavirus website, <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/>, provides the most current public health information, advice and links. It is being updated continually as information becomes available. We encourage you to rely on this site for information and guidance. Below are some resources that may help answer some of the employment-related questions you may have.

### **Workplace Safety**

- We appreciate that some individuals are concerned about their exposure to COVID-19. If COVID-19 is identified as a potential workplace hazard, workplace parties have the duty to develop internal process to reduce risk to their staff. Should an employee feel there is a hazard that puts them at risk they should review the situation with their immediate supervisor / manager. If not resolved, then the matter is to be referred to the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee if one exists.
- Those who have specific questions about safe working conditions, and whether LAE will continue to inspect worksites and schedule technical safety exams should consult the department's Safety Branch at: <https://novascotia.ca/lae/healthandsafety/> or 1-800-9Labour.

### **Labour Standards – Pay and Job Security**

- The NS *Labour Standards Code* provides job protection for employees who are unable to perform work due to an emergency as defined under the Code. Emergency includes a direction or order of a medical officer – or a public health emergency declared – under the *Health Protection Act*. Emergency leave extends to individuals who need to care for a family member affected by an order or direction under that Act.
- Those who have specific questions about pay, job security and layoffs should contact the department's Labour Standards Division at: <https://novascotia.ca/lae/employmentrights/> or 1-888-315-0110.

### **Financial Supports to Workers and Businesses**

- On March 18<sup>th</sup>, the Government of Canada announced a \$82 billion aid package to help Canadian workers, students and businesses deal with some of the current financial challenges caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic.
- For individuals: in addition to Employment Insurance (EI) benefits, new supports for those not EI-eligible include an Emergency Care Benefit and Emergency Support Benefit; a top-up payment in May for those receiving the Canada Child Care Benefit and GST credit; a six-month interest-free suspension on the repayment of Canada Student Loans; enhancement of the EI work-sharing program; and an extension of tax filing and payment deadlines. For more details on eligibility and how to apply, visit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html#individual>
- For businesses: a three-month wage subsidy for small businesses; a Business Credit Availability Program to support businesses experiencing cash flow challenges; deferred tax payment deadlines; and more to

come on sector-specific supports. For more details on eligibility and how to apply, visit:  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html#business>

- The Province has further announced a six-month interest-free suspension on the repayment of Nova Scotia Student Loans. Plus, suspension of payments and increased access to credit under the Small Business Loan Guarantee Program and deferral of payments on all government loans and small business renewal fees (including business registration and workers compensation) until June 30<sup>th</sup>. For more details, visit: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/#support>

### **Post Secondary Education**

- Most post-secondary institutions have suspended face-to-face classes in favour of remote education and are in communication with their students regarding the completion of the term.
- Individual private career colleges are moving to remote delivery or suspending programs, depending on their capacity and the program type. Programs with mandatory work practicum components have been disrupted by workplace closures. Colleges are waiting on COVID-19 developments to best assess options for resuming program delivery for students. For additional information from government, please phone 902-424-5636.
- The Student Assistance Office is now offering services online. Staff are continuing to assess applications, respond to inquiries and issue funds. Please use the “Ask Us” feature in MyPATH for secure inquiries. If you do not have a MyPATH account, please send an email to: [stuasst@gov.ns.ca](mailto:stuasst@gov.ns.ca). Borrowers need not apply for the newly announced six-month interest-free suspension of Nova Scotia Student Loan payments.

### **Apprenticeship**

- The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency remains open for business and all apprenticeship transactions are still being processed via phone (1-800-494-5651), e-mail ([apprenticeship@novascotia.ca](mailto:apprenticeship@novascotia.ca)) and through our online applications (<https://nsapprenticeship.ca/agency/forms-publications>).
- Industry Training Consultants are working but limiting face-to-face interactions. A list of Industry Training Consultants can be found here: <https://nsapprenticeship.ca/contact>.
- All technical training and examinations are deferred until further notice. We will be in contact with affected individuals when training and examinations resume. For those of you who are unable to return or continue to work, please contact Service Canada regarding your Employment Insurance (EI) claims at 1-833-381-2725 or by visiting <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei.html>.

### **Specific Concerns for Training Clients and Service Providers**

- LAE is maintaining agreements with employment service providers, community living organizations and their clients (including the provision of a living allowance, where applicable). Workplace Initiatives will also reimburse businesses, organizations, service providers and working Nova Scotians funded through the One Journey Initiative, the Workplace Education Incentive, the Sector Council Program and the Workplace Innovation and Productivity Skills Incentive agreements for activities impacted by COVID-19.
- People who have specific questions about current contracts and funding agreements, and training programs including co-ops should contact Employment Nova Scotia at 1-877-223-0888.