

ELMSD Policy Changes in Response to Budget Pressures – Questions and Answers

Client Perspective

I am in the process of completing an application for Skills Development funding. I have been approved by the training institution for the course. When I researched potential course options, I was not told about a cap on tuition when I started my application, but I have just been informed that my tuition is capped. Since I have already been accepted by the training institution, should I not be exempt from this cap?

- No, this cap applies to all successful applicants for Skills Development funding. While being accepted into a training program is prerequisite for submitting a complete Skills Development application, it does not signal that your application will be approved by the training provider. The tuition cap applies to all applicants who had not been approved for Skills Development funding prior to November 27, 2009.

I understand the government is facing budget pressures, but won't it cost more eventually to keep funding my employment insurance than to provide the upfront costs for my retraining so that I can find work?

- While the Skills Development program aims to assist both the immediate and long term employment prospects of Employment Insurance Part II clients, this assistance must not exceed the limitations of the annual Labour Market Development Agreement budget. The tuition cap was necessary in order to ensure that Skills Development program spending does not exceed the annual budget and clients across BC are treated equally in accessing that funding. Clients seeking assistance with more costly training programs are encouraged to seek other sources of supplementary funding.

The tuition for the program I intend to take exceeds the tuition cap. How can I make up the difference?

- We encourage you to review your options with your case manager at your local Employment Assistance Services office about options for funding. While clients are expected to make contributions to their training, we realize that the tuition cap creates a potential financial limitation. It would be appropriate under the current policy to apply for a Canada student loan *to make up the difference in tuition costs only.*

What should I do if I do not qualify for a student loan or can't otherwise make up the funding between the tuition cap and the actual tuition?

- This is an issue to discuss with your case manager. It may affect your training plans. Alternate training at lower costs may be available. We encourage you to explore all options.