

Community Enhancement Employment Program (CEEP) 2026-27 Project Administration Guidelines



Changes have been made to these guidelines. Please review carefully.

The sponsoring organization is responsible for thoroughly reviewing this document and adhering to all project administration guidelines.

Note: Failure to follow these guidelines may result in a non-compliance letter being issued by the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. Repeated instances of non-compliance could affect the final release of payment, lead to financial penalties, and/or impact eligibility for future funding.

If you have any questions or require further assistance, please contact Employment Support toll free at 1.866.508.5500.

A separate guide for completing the 2026-27 CEEP Application is available on the CEEP website; <https://www.gov.nl.ca/mca/ceep>, to assist sponsors with their submissions.

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1. Hiring

1.A. Advertising for Employment

To ensure all eligible individuals have an equal opportunity for employment consideration, project sponsors must advertise job openings for a minimum of seven (7) calendar days. This can include job posters, announcements on the local community channel, and other commonly used local advertising methods. These advertising costs may be reimbursed under the Administration Costs of the Final Report. To support project sponsors, the Department has developed a sample job poster that is available on the CEEP website at <https://www.gov.nl.ca/mca/ceep>

1.B. Hiring Process

Project sponsors are expected to offer equal employment opportunities and are encouraged to welcome applications from all eligible individuals. All applications should be considered fairly and without discrimination, in accordance with the *Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Act*. This includes, but is not limited to, protections related to age, sex, race, marital status and disability. Please note that applicants requiring a support worker must be evaluated alongside all other eligible candidates.

Hiring Committee: The Department recommends priority be given to individuals requiring the fewest number of employment hours. It is also recommended that project sponsors establish a Hiring Committee to make staffing decisions. This committee should consist of at least three members, with a minimum of two members participating in each individual hiring decision.

Retaining Hours: Sponsors must **not** retain hours for potential future employees unless other qualified employees are unavailable at the time of hiring.

1.C. Avoiding Conflicts of Interest When Hiring

Sponsors should contact Employment Support **in advance** if they need to clarify any issues related to potential conflicts of interest.

Hiring Family Members: Sponsors need to ensure they avoid conflicts of interest in deciding who is employed on a project.

- Individuals involved in the hiring process should not participate in decisions involving members of their immediate family. Immediate family would include a parent, step-parent, foster parent, sibling, spouse (including common-law partner), child, step-child, parent-in-law, sibling-in-law or any other relative who permanently resides with the person involved in hiring decisions.
- If a hiring committee member is in a potential conflict of interest, such as when an immediate family member applies to work on a project, the committee member must excuse themselves from the meeting during discussions about the applicant and must not participate in the hiring decision.

Municipalities: If the project sponsor is a Municipality, the Hiring Committee must also ensure compliance with the *Towns and Local Service District Act, 2023*. Specifically, Section 45(1)(i) which requires prior written approval of the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs before a councillor can be hired for the project.

Local Service Districts: If the project sponsor is a Local Service District, the Hiring Committee must follow the *Towns and Local Service Districts Act, 2023*. In particular, Section 231(2)(d) which requires prior written approval of the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs before a committee member can be hired for a project.

1.D. Worker Eligibility

All individuals hired for the project **must be currently unemployed**. Casual, part-time and call-in individuals **are not** eligible. Additionally, they must have not accumulated enough insurable hours during the current year to already qualify for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits. The Department recommends that project sponsors prioritize hiring individuals who require the fewest hours of employment.

To qualify to work on a CEEP project, individuals must have at least **20 hours** of eligible EI insurable hours. If the CEEP applicant's last ROE was issued by the project sponsor, then the individual cannot be hired on the CEEP project for a minimum of **30 calendar days** from the last day of work entered on the ROE.

Last Three Weeks of EI Claim: Individuals who are currently receiving EI benefits and are within the last three weeks of their claim may be considered eligible for the program.

Maximum Hours of Employment: Individuals may be employed on a project for a maximum of **470 hours**. Insurable hours of employment already worked during the current year for the purpose of establishing EI benefits are to be deducted from the 490 hours required for EI eligibility.

- For example, if a worker has 120 hours of other employment this year, they would only be eligible for 370 hours of project employment.
- Individuals cannot receive more than 470 total hours of project employment through CEEP. For example, a worker requiring in excess of 470 hours to become EI eligible, cannot receive 470 hours from one project sponsor and more hours from another project sponsor.
- Individuals who require more than 470 hours of project employment to receive EI benefits are not eligible to participate in this program.

Service Canada Implements Changes in the number of hours required for EI Eligibility: If the number of hours required for Employment Insurance (EI) changes during the program term, the maximum allowable hours will be adjusted accordingly. Any such changes will be communicated by email to all project sponsors via official circular. Project sponsors must submit a request to the Department for approval if an individual requires more or fewer hours than originally authorized, based on updated requirements from Service Canada.

EI Eligibility: Workers should obtain the hours required for EI eligibility by the program end date. Please contact the Department if further clarification is required.

- Individuals cannot combine previous year CEEP hours with current CEEP hours for EI eligibility.
- If individuals receive EI hours through other sources while employed on a CEEP project, they must notify the sponsor immediately and will no longer be eligible to continue to work on that project.

Ineligible Workers: All workers must be preapproved by the Department before commencing on a CEEP project.

Please Note: After completing the review of the Final Report, if it is determined that preapproval was not obtained for a worker, the full cost of unapproved hours worked by that individual will be deducted from the project's final payment.

Residency: Individuals who reside outside the community/district are eligible to work on a CEEP project, provided all other eligibility requirements are met.

1.E. Required Employee Forms

Prior to the Start of Employment, sponsors must obtain written approval from the Department to hire identified individuals for a project.

As a condition of employment, individuals must submit the following documents to sponsors:

1. a completed **Employee Declaration Form** to confirm the number of employment hours required to become EI eligible (up to a maximum of 470 hours, subject to change);
2. a copy of My Latest Claim from "My Service Canada Account" if they are currently on an EI claim and within the **last 3 weeks** of that claim ending;
3. all **Record(s) of Employment** obtained within the last 12 months.

The sponsor must submit the above documents to the Department at least **seven calendar days prior to the individual starting work on the project.**

This program typically serves applicants unable to secure EI eligible hours due to shortage of work (code A). Any applicants with codes other than A on their ROE are subject to review and approval by the CEEP review committee.

PLEASE NOTE:

Sponsors must seek pre-approval from the Department if the hours required by a worker change during their employment on a project from the hours stated on their Employee Declaration Form (EDF). The Department will not fund hours paid by the sponsor that exceed the hours on the worker's EDF, but consideration may be given if the sponsor receives prior approval through a revised EDF. Please note that by signing the EDF, the applicant is providing consent for their information to be shared with the Department.

If an individual makes a false statement with respect to the number of hours they require for EI eligibility, they can be refused future employment through the CEEP.

2. Employment

2.A. Wage Rates

Regular Wage Rate: The regular wage rate paid by the Department under the program is the provincial minimum wage rate (\$16.35/hour, effective April 1, 2026). If sponsors have additional funding from other sources, the sponsor has the discretion to pay higher wages; however, the Department will not reimburse these additional costs. Sponsors will only be eligible for approved wages incurred during the project.

Specialized Wage Rate: If specialized or skilled labour (e.g., supervisor, heritage specialist, carpenter, or plumber) is required for a project, a wage premium of up to an additional \$2.00 per hour may be paid. Project sponsors must receive **written** approval from the Department before paying the specialized wage rate.

The wage premium can only be paid to individuals who are pre-approved by the Department. If individuals have multiple skills (for example, carpentry and supervising) they can only receive a single wage premium of \$2.00 per hour. To qualify for the supervisor rate, there must be at least 6 workers employed on the project. The supervisor rate must be adjusted if at any point during the project the number of hired workers drops below the required minimum 6 workers. There is also a limit of one specialized labour position per project, up to a maximum of 470 hours.

If the project sponsor wishes to request the specialized wage rate after the start of the project, the sponsor must submit a written request and wait until written approval is received from the Department.

2.B. Labour Cost Eligibility Timeframe

No labour costs from before the approval date of the project or after the end date of the project will be eligible for reimbursement. All expenses under this program must be incurred **before February 19, 2027**.

2.C. Mandatory Employment Related Costs (MERC)

As an employer, the project sponsor is responsible for ensuring that all payments required by law are made. These include such things as workers' compensation, income tax, employment insurance, Canada pension, payroll tax, vacation pay, and any other payments as required. Sponsors are able to claim MERC incurred during the project.

Vacation Pay: Project sponsors must pay four percent (4%) vacation pay to workers.

Canada Revenue Agency: All Canada Pension Plan (CPP) contributions, Employment Insurance (EI) premiums and income tax deducted from wages paid to the employees must be remitted to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). The T4 slip must be issued to each employee by the end of February 2027 for all wages paid in 2026, and the end of February 2028 for all wages paid in 2027. For more information, contact the Canada Revenue Agency at 1.800.959.5525.

WorkplaceNL: As an employer, the project sponsor must register with WorkplaceNL under the Newfoundland Industry Classification (NIC) Code of 8275 – Provincial Government Funded Projects. **The WorkplaceNL rate for 2026 is 1.51% (subject to change for 2027).**

Sponsors must submit a copy of their WorkplaceNL registration along with their accepted Offer of Funding and Application Amendment **when their funding is approved**, and a copy of the **WorkplaceNL statement or invoice** will need to be submitted with their Final Report.

All sponsors are responsible for making and arranging these payments.

Contact WorkplaceNL at 1.800.563.9000 or .709.778.1291 for more information.

2.D. Employment-related Legislation

Project sponsors must ensure that they comply with all employment-related legislation. This includes:

- *Environmental Protection Act* and regulations
- *Human Rights Code*
- *Labour Standards Act* and regulations
- *Employment Insurance Act*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and regulations, including First Aid regulations
- *Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Act*

2.E. Paid Public Holidays

In accordance with the *Labour Standards Act*, CEEP employees are eligible to receive an average day's pay at their regular rate for the following paid public holidays **if they meet the following qualifiers:**

- (a) employee must have been employed for at least 30 calendar days on the CEEP project; and
- (b) employee must work the scheduled shifts before and after the holiday.

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial/Canada Day
- Labour Day
- Remembrance Day
- Christmas Day

If the holiday falls on the employee's normal day off, they receive the next workday off with pay or another day which the employee and employer agree on.

Note: Boxing Day & Thanksgiving Day are not paid public holidays.

As many sponsors do not operate on Boxing Day and Thanksgiving Day, employees may work an additional day or extra hours during the same work week to receive the 8 hours for the day. The additional time(s) must be noted on employee time sheets on the day(s) the hours are actually worked.

If a paid public holiday is worked, the sponsor (employer) must follow the Labour Standards Guide for rate of pay on a paid public holiday. It is the sponsor's decision on whether to work or not on a paid public holiday and as such, Government will only reimburse for the regular rate of pay for that day.

For clarification on this topic, please contact the Labour Standards Division at 1.877.563.1063.

Note: Employees who do not qualify for a paid public holiday or who miss work due to illness may have the opportunity to make up the time by working on the Saturday of that week, or by extending their hours on the other workdays. This option is subject to the sponsor's discretion. If an approved sponsor closes their office beyond the days we have listed as paid holidays, please contact Employment Support for guidance at 1.866.508.5500.

2.F. Leave

Sick/Medical Leave: As per the *Labour Standards Act*, CEEP workers are not entitled to *paid* sick leave or medical leave.

Bereavement Leave: As per the *Labour Standards Act*, CEEP workers employed on a project for less than 30 calendar days are entitled to 2 days of **unpaid** bereavement leave. CEEP workers employed on a project for 30 calendar days or more are entitled to 1 day of paid bereavement leave and 2 days of unpaid bereavement leave. CEEP workers are entitled to bereavement leave for the death of an immediate or extended family member, including spouse, child, grandchild, parents, siblings, grandparents, and in-laws.

2.G. Hours of Work

CEEP workers can work a **maximum** of 40 hours per week. This includes 8 hours of *paid* time for work per day and one hour of *unpaid* time for lunch per day. Any hours in excess of 40 hours per week will not be reimbursed by the Department. While there is some flexibility on the part of the sponsor in managing hours of work, it is important to note that CEEP workers must only be paid for hours actually worked.

- **All work must be completed by approved CEEP employees only.**
- **Individuals can only be paid for actual hours worked when they work them; advance payment is prohibited.**
- **Sponsors must maintain weekly timesheets for hours worked by each employee. The employee and supervisor must sign these timesheets. Verification of payroll, time sheets and/or payments may be requested by the Department at a later date.**

3. General Project Administration

3.A. Avoiding Project Conflicts of Interest

By accepting government funding, sponsors assume responsibility for managing public funds and ensuring they are used solely for their intended purpose, such as improving services, property, or infrastructure of the community or non-profit organization.

Project materials, labour or funds must not be used for the benefit of private individuals. Sponsors should consult Employment Support in advance to address any potential conflicts of interest.

3.B. Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission

The *Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Act* requires all employers performing work in Newfoundland and Labrador to register with the Commission and pay assessments based on worker earnings (see section 2.C. above).

[RSNL1990 CHAPTER W-11 - WORKPLACE HEALTH, SAFETY AND COMPENSATION ACT](#)

A copy of the registration must be submitted to the Department with the signed Offer of Funding and Application Amendment within 10 days of the date on the approval letter.

3.C. Liability

Your organization is responsible for any safety issues related to your project. While many municipalities carry liability insurance to cover potential claims, some organizations do not. We recommend evaluating the liability risks of your project and determining if your organization needs to secure appropriate liability insurance.

3.D. Application Amendment

The project sponsor must complete an Application Amendment form and submit it along with the signed Offer of Funding and copy of the WorkplaceNL registration. The amendment form should outline the updated project activities, and the materials needed to carry them out within the approved funding. Funding is subject to the Department's review and approval of the information provided in the Application Amendment Form.

3.E. Changes or Additions to the Project Activities or Materials

If the project sponsor must change the activities or materials after the application amendment has been approved, the sponsor must submit a written request via email of the revised activities and/or materials to the Department for approval. **Sponsors must receive written approval from the Department before starting the new activities, or purchasing materials related to the changes.**

3.F. Materials and Administration Costs

Materials Costs: The materials budget is intended to provide CEEP workers with the necessary supplies to carry out the activities outlined in the approved project scope. Sponsors may claim up to 25% of the eligible total labour costs for materials expenses. All purchased materials are reviewed to ensure they are eligible and align with the project work. Sponsors **must** submit official invoices from registered suppliers for purchased materials, along with proof of payment and/or evidence of expenses (e.g. copy of cleared cheque, bank statement, etc.) with their completed final report.

All invoices must clearly indicate the supplier's name, address, business number, description of CEEP items, unit price, and the date they were purchased. Any invoices submitted with purchases not related to CEEP, must be clearly marked and only CEEP related items claimed on the Final Report.

All submitted invoices must be in the name of the sponsoring organization. Invoices in the name of CEEP workers, the sponsor's staff, volunteers, umbrella agencies, etc. are NOT eligible for reimbursement.

Any rental invoices must be from a registered rental company, and rates must be at reasonable market prices. (Any other rental arrangements must be pre-approved by the Department). ***Please note that lost tools or damages to any rented equipment are the responsibility of the sponsor.***

Please note:

- Employment Support may contact suppliers to verify expenses.
- Invoices from individuals or community organizations are *not* eligible for reimbursement.
- Invoices that do not confer with CEEP guidelines will be subject to review.
- When credit card/debit cards are used for payment of project invoices, cards must be in the name of the sponsoring organization. **The use of personal credit cards/debit cards for payment of project expenses is prohibited.**
- All invoices must be accompanied with a proof of payment (ie. cleared cheque, bank statement, credit card statement, etc.)
- Expenses reimbursed under this program are ineligible for the GST rebate.

Eligible Material Costs (25% of eligible labour costs) include:

- Materials necessary for CEEP project workers to complete approved project activities.
- Select safety equipment and tools necessary to complete approved project activities. Limited to the lesser of 5% of labour costs or \$1,000. (i.e., Gloves, hardhats, safety vests, first aid kits, hammers, levels, shovels, screwdrivers, wheelbarrows, saws, axes).
- Consumables required to complete approved project activities such as garbage bags and cleaning supplies.
- Cost of any associated permits and fees.
- Rental of portable toilets for work projects in remote locations.

Please note that tools and/or equipment purchased for use on a CEEP project should be maintained in the sponsor's inventory for use on possible future projects.

Ineligible Material Costs include, but are not limited to:

- Capital expenditures which include such things as computers, scanners, video/audio recorders, printers, furnishings, chainsaws, generators, shop vacs, portable heaters, hot water boilers, oil tanks, septic systems, water and sewer pipes, kitchen appliances, computer software, etc.
- Travel expenses, including the use of private and sponsor owned vehicles.
- Rental of workspaces.

- Electrical material and supplies.
- Fuel expenses, except for reasonable use for chainsaws, generators, etc.
- Personal items, such as clothing, boots, jackets.
- Design and printing costs for signage (if not completed by CEEP workers).
- Rental of sponsor owned or other community organization's equipment.
- Materials purchased to assist volunteers, regular employees of the sponsor or sponsor hired contractors/individuals will not be eligible for reimbursement.
- Banking service charges, interest charges, postage, office and payroll supplies, job advertising.
- Utility expenses, including oil, heat and light, telephone, internet, etc.
- Costs related to the use or rental of heavy machinery, vehicles, trailers, or power equipment requiring licensing.
- Miscellaneous items such as toiletries, groceries, light bulbs, Christmas decorations, carpet rugs, etc.
- Costs related to road repair, ditching, culverts, water and wastewater repairs.
- Costs related to traditional craft making where items produced will be retailed.
- Costs related to the demolition of physical buildings and structures will not be considered an approved activity.

Under special circumstances, some items from the excluded list may be considered but **pre-approval from the Department must be obtained**. Any funding approved for these expenses may be done so on a cost-shared basis.

Any item(s) not considered an eligible material cost may be funded from the Administration Budget.

Use of Contractors: Sponsors must contact the Department prior to hiring a contractor. Sponsors **must** receive written pre-approval, and any funding approved for the use of a contractor will be done on a cost-shared basis.

Cost Eligibility Timeframe: Any materials purchased before the approval date of the project or within seven (7) calendar days prior to the end date of the project may not be eligible for reimbursement. A written request for consideration outlining the details of the purchase would need to be submitted to the Department for review. Any materials not used within the active project timeframe **will not be** eligible for reimbursement and should be returned to the place of purchase.

All labour expenses under this program must be incurred **before February 19, 2027**.

Administration Costs: The administration budget is designed to support sponsors with the administrative costs related to their project. A representative from the sponsoring organization must oversee the project's progress and manage its finances and administration. This role does not need to be full-time and can be filled by a volunteer; however, this individual **cannot** be a worker on the project.

Adjustments Based on Eligible Labour Costs: As the cost allowances for materials and administration are a percentage of eligible total labour costs, if a project does not use all its approved hours of employment, **the budget for materials and administration will be adjusted downwards accordingly**. Therefore, sponsors should not commit the full value of their materials and administration budgets until they are certain that they will use all the hours of labour approved for the project.

If the eligible labour costs for a concluded project is significantly lower than the approved amount, the 75% advance may have been greater than the overall project cost. If this situation develops, the project sponsor will be required to refund the difference, between the eligible cost and the 75% initial advance, back to the Department when submitting their Final Report.

3.G. Worker Survey

Individuals employed through this program may be invited to participate in a worker survey. The survey will collect information to help the Department evaluate and improve the program and may include questions to confirm hours worked and activities completed on the project.

3.H. Non-Compliance

By accepting project funding, sponsors are responsible for ensuring that public funds are used appropriately and that all program guidelines are followed. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in a reduced final payment, financial penalties, or impact the organization's eligibility for future funding.

4. Final Report

The Final Report must be submitted within **14 calendar days** following the CEEP employee's last day of work, which may fall well before the February 19, 2027 program end deadline.

Sponsors are required to complete the Final Report form and are advised to consult the checklist at the top of the form to ensure all necessary documentation has been included. Failure to meet the submission deadline may result in a reduced final payment and/or affect a sponsor's eligibility for future project funding.

All sections of the Final Report must be completed. Incomplete reports will be returned, delaying the final payment process. Sponsors are also required to respond promptly to any follow-up requests from the Department regarding their Final Report. Any documents submitted after the Final Report has been processed, may not be considered for reimbursement.

Please note that consecutive non-compliance may lead to financial penalties, a reduction in the final payment and/or impact the sponsor's eligibility for future funding.

4.A. Employee Declaration Variances

Sponsors should pay particular attention to **Section C.2.** of the Final Report, **Employee Declaration Variances.** In this section, project sponsors **must** record and provide details for workers whose hours on their Record of Employment differ from the hours reflected on their EDFs.

4.B. Additional Documentation

The following documentation **must also be submitted** with the completed Final Report:

- Copies of each worker's Record(s) of Employment (ROE). (If there is another funding source for the total wages paid on any of the attached ROEs, please note amounts and sources of all wages paid).
- Copies of invoices, receipts and/or other supporting documentation itemizing specific materials purchased for the project.
- Copies of proof of payment (ie. cleared cheque, bank statement, business statement of account, and/or credit card statement) for each invoice. The Department will accept proof of payment up to 60 days after a final payment has been processed.
- Receiver General remittance calculations.
- Copy of WorkplaceNL statement or invoice.

Please note: The Department reserves the right to request proof of payment for project expenses, as well as photographs of CEEP project activities or any items related to the project, either during its implementation or after its completion. If such a request is made, Sponsors are required to provide the requested information within the specified timeframe.

4.C. Submission of Final Report

Final Reports may be submitted by mail, email or fax to the below:

Employment Support

Department of Municipal and Community Affairs
Fourth Floor, West Block
Confederation Building
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

Email: employmentsupport@gov.nl.ca

Fax: 709.729.2019