

Providing Post-Secondary Students with the Supports Needed to Gain Employment

Submitted by the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce, co-sponsored by the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce, North Bay District Chamber of Commerce, Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce and Windsor-Essex Chamber of Commerce

Issue

Lack of eligibility for Employment Ontario services is a barrier to post-secondary students to enter the workforce and results in inequity of services and access to youth.

Background

Employment Ontario providers offer training, skills development, job placement, incentives and job search supports to job seekers across Ontario; however, post-secondary students (both domestic and International) enrolled in full-time study are not eligible to access these services under current Government-developed service provider guidelines.

As a result, post-secondary students, and particularly international students, are limited in their ability to access training in vital areas such as resume and cover letter writing, job search skills and job interview mentoring. Research clearly indicates that job seekers with access to Career Services have greater success in finding employment and also have a higher likelihood of securing employment in their field of study. For international students this lack of support is a significant barrier to obtaining employment both during the school year and post-graduation when the clock starts ticking on their immigration permit expiry timelines. Our communities are missing vital opportunities to recruit and retain a highly skilled and trained workforce on our doorstep every academic semester.

In order to ensure that the transition from post-secondary education to employment is as seamless as possible, and to ensure Ontario is able to meet the growing need for highly skilled workers, Employment Ontario eligibility for service policies must be changed to include post-secondary students. Statistically early interventions move youth closer to the labour market and with a greater probability of success than unsupported transitions.

Recommendation

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce urges the Government of Ontario to:

1. Amend Employment Ontario eligibility for service policies to include both Canadian and international post-secondary students.

Estimated Financial Impact to the Province:

Cost-neutral to the government

OCC Policy Committee Position: The Policy Committee supports this resolution.