



Community Social Services Labour Adjustment and Education Fund

Caring for a Living

The Community Social Services Bargaining Association of Unions collectively represents more than 15,000 community-based social service workers in British Columbia.

BC General
Employees' Union (BCGEU)

Canadian Union of
Public Employees' (CUPE)

Hospital Employees' Union (HEU)

Health Sciences Association
of BC (HSABC)

Laborers' International
Union of North America
Local 1611 (LIUNA)

United Food and
Commercial Workers'
Union Local 1518 (UFCW)

United Steelworkers
of America (USW)

BC Nurses' Union (BCNU)

Christian Labour
Association of Canada (CLAC)

Eligibility and Funding Guidelines

Background

1. The Community Social Services Labour Adjustment and Education Fund (LAEF) is an initiative of the Community Social Services Bargaining Association of Unions (CSSBA) and the Community Social Services Employers' Association (CSSEA), as established under Memorandum of Agreement #20.
2. The purpose of the LAEF is to:
 - a) Enhance the skills of frontline community social services workers covered by the Community Living, General Services and Indigenous Services collective agreements.
 - b) Support continued employment in the community social services sector for workers impacted by layoffs, downsizing, or restructuring through retraining and professional development support.
3. The LAEF is funded by \$975,405.95 under the 2022 to 2025 collective agreements.

Eligibility Criteria

1. Education and training must be for bargaining unit members covered by the 2022 to 2025 Community Living, General Services or Indigenous Services collective agreements.
2. The fund is designed to cover education/training commenced between April 1, 2024 and December 31, 2025.
3. Individual or group applications for funding can be made by CSSEA, Employers, or members of the unions of CSSBA. The same eligibility criteria will apply to all applications. Where group applications are submitted, the application may include "in-kind" support (e.g. venue, meals) to assist in lowering the cost to the Fund through economies of scale.
4. Applications related to the education and training of employees impacted by layoffs, downsizing, or restructuring are a priority.



5. Education and training must be relevant to continuing work in the community social services sector. Eligible education may include:
 - a) Workshops, seminars, conferences, courses, or degree/certificate programs; and/or
 - b) Instruction that requires in-person attendance, distance learning, or clinical placement; and/or
 - c) Short duration offerings, such as a single day course, or a lengthier pursuit of credentials, such as a diploma, advanced certification, or a degree.
6. Education costs that are eligible for reimbursement include tuition fees, registration fees, and the cost of books/materials. Other education/training-related expenses may be considered, at the discretion of the committee and Fund Administrator.
7. Previous recipients of LAEF funds are eligible to receive reimbursement up to the new funding maximum regardless of previous amounts reimbursed.
8. Training required by legislation or a collective agreement is not eligible for funding.
9. Training through B.C. public education providers is strongly encouraged.
10. The steering committee may make exemptions to any of these criteria in unique circumstances, including maximum funding amounts.

Funding Guidelines

1. When an application is deemed to satisfy the eligibility criteria, it will be approved subject to sufficient remaining funding.
2. Applicants must disclose if they have received, or anticipate receiving, any funding from another source for any cost related to their application for funding. Reimbursement from the LAEF can only be made for costs incurred by the applicant not already covered by other funding.
3. The LAEF Administrator will inform successful applicants by e-mail that their application has been approved and that the fund will reimburse them for their receipted actual costs, in the amount specified.
4. Successful applicants must provide detailed receipts, including proof of payment, proof of registration, and course descriptions for all claimed expenses. Receipts must be submitted to the LAEF Administrator via e-mail at laef@bcgeu.ca in a timely manner using the provided expense claim form and, in any event, by January 30, 2026. Reimbursement will only be made following an applicant's submission of satisfactory receipts.



5. Following receipt of the applicant's proof of payment of approved, eligible expenses, the fund will reimburse the applicant for those actual costs, subject to the following funding caps:
 - a) There is a \$3,000 cap per member on reimbursement of tuition fees, registration fees, the cost of required books/materials, and other reasonable education/training-related expenses. For members impacted by layoffs, downsizing, or restructuring, this maximum is \$5,000;
 - b) There is a \$10,000 cap per group application on reimbursement of tuition fees, registration fees, the cost of required books/materials, and other reasonable education/training-related expenses. For groups impacted by layoffs, downsizing, or restructuring, this maximum is \$15,000.
6. Approvals are application specific and cannot be transferred to other courses by the same provider or within the same program.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can I apply for funding for a course I haven't taken yet?

Yes, so long as the course begins within the funding period of April 1, 2024 to December 31, 2025, you may apply for funding. Conditional approval may be given for courses not yet completed, however, proof of successful completion will be required.

2. What if the training and associated costs are in a foreign currency?

As exchange rates fluctuate daily, please enter the cost on your application form in the currency that is listed by the provider. When submitting your expense claim, you must show both the original cost in the foreign currency and the actual amount paid in Canadian dollars at time of purchase.

3. What if I can't attend the training after I've been approved for funding?

If the training is cancelled or you are unable to attend, you do not need to take any action, as funds will only be reimbursed upon receipt of a completed expense claim. Approvals cannot be transferred to a different course but can be applied towards another offering of the same course without receiving additional approval as long as it starts before December 31, 2025. If the course is cancelled without another offering, if you withdraw from the course, or if it is otherwise not completed, you must return any funding received.

4. What if I have to travel for the training?

For eligible travel and accommodations as part of your training within B.C.:

- a) Mileage will be reimbursed at the rate of \$0.68/km (\$0.70/km for travel starting on or after July 1, 2024). Other travel costs include airfare, ferry tickets, and transit passes (provided there is a detailed history of eligible trips and proof of purchase by the applicant).
- b) Accommodations costs include stays at hotels, sublets, and other short-term rentals. Stays in private dwelling can be reimbursed at the rate of \$100 per overnight stay.

5. Will I receive a tax receipt for approved funding?

No. The Labour Adjustment and Education Fund is a reimbursement fund and not a scholarship. Therefore, the funds received are not taxable income.

6. What if my question isn't answered here?

Please visit our website at <https://laef-bcgeu.nationbuilder.com/faq> for more information, or e-mail laef@bcgeu.ca

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