
ENGAGEMENT OF APPRENTICES ON PUBLICLY FUNDED CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. WHAT IS THE AIM OF THIS PROGRAM?

This program aims to increase employer participation in apprenticeship training with a requirement for contractors to have apprentices employed when bidding on any Nova Scotia construction projects over \$1M.

2. WHICH TENDERS CAN I BID ON UNDER THE SCOPE OF THIS PROGRAM?

The Program applies to all Government of Nova Scotia construction contracts OVER \$1M. All subcontractors whose portion of a bid is equal to or exceeds \$100,000 are required to participate unless eligible for exemption.

3. WHAT DO I HAVE TO SUBMIT TO BID ON THESE CONTRACTS?

To be eligible for award of a contract, general contractors must submit, within 48 hours of a request by the Department of Public Services, either a Letter of Engagement or a Letter of Exemption issued by the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency. You must ensure that all subcontractors engaged in work in a designated trade, whose portion of the bid exceeds \$100,000, also submit a Letter of Engagement or a Letter of Exemption from the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency. You will be responsible for providing the necessary documentation from subcontractors within 10 days of bid award.

4. WHAT IS A LETTER OF ENGAGEMENT?

A letter of engagement is a formal letter from the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency that indicates that you are engaged in the apprenticeship system. To ensure efficiency, the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency will be automatically issuing Letters of Engagement to employers who are engaged in the apprenticeship system. These letters should be received by January 1, 2019. Any employer who does not receive a letter can still apply through the regular application process.

5. WHAT IS A LETTER OF EXEMPTION?

A Letter of Exemption will be issued to:

- Any contractor who does not engage in work within a designated trade as defined in the *Apprenticeship and Trades Qualification Act*.

- Any contractor who employs less than three persons during the term of the contract.
- Any contractor who works in one of the designated trades where apprenticeship training is not offered.
- At the discretion of the Chief Operating Officer, Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency, any contractor who adequately demonstrates that he/she has limited ability to hire an apprentice may be eligible for an exemption.

6. HOW DO I KNOW IF MY TRADE HAS APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING AVAILABLE?

On our website at www.nsapprenticeship.ca/trades, there is a list of all trades where apprenticeship training is available.

7. CAN MY APPRENTICE BE REGISTERED WITH ANOTHER JURISDICTION OR MUST THE APPRENTICE BE A REGISTERED NOVA SCOTIA APPRENTICE?

Your apprentice(s) do(es) not have to be registered in Nova Scotia to be considered. However, the contractor will be required to provide proof of the apprentice's registration in another jurisdiction. Confirmation from outside Nova Scotia could take a bit more time so submit your application as soon as possible.

8. WHAT HAPPENS IF I NO LONGER EMPLOY AN APPRENTICE AFTER WINNING THE BID BUT BEFORE COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT?

An employer/contractor must commit in writing to remain engaged in the apprenticeship system over the duration of the project. The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency will monitor ongoing improvement over the duration of the project and will report on the results that may inform future changes to the program.

9. WHAT IF I AM ONLY GOING TO HIRE APPRENTICES IF I AM ONE OF THE SUCCESSFUL BIDDERS?

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency is committed to registering the apprentices and issuing the letter of engagement within the 10 day turnaround post-award. However, we encourage all contractors to apply for their Letter of Engagement as early as possible.

10. IF I AM AN EMPLOYER/CONTRACTOR FROM ANOTHER JURISDICTION, DO THE SAME RULES OF THE PROGRAM APPLY?

All employers/contractors who are working in one of the designated trades is subject to the rules of the program. A list of designated trades is available at www.nsapprenticeship.ca/trades.

11. WHAT IF I AM NOT CURRENTLY INVOLVED IN THE SKILLED TRADES BUT I AM INTERESTED IN THIS PROGRAM?

Employers/contractors who are working in the skilled trades will either need a *Letter of Engagement* or *Letter of Exemption* to be eligible. A list of designated trades is available at www.nsapprenticeship.ca/trades.

12. I AM THE PRIME CONTRACTOR, WHAT ARE MY OBLIGATIONS?

The prime contractor must receive a *Letter of Engagement* or *Letter of Exemption* from the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency.

13. HOW DO I SUBMIT MY BID AND WHAT DO I NEED TO INCLUDE?

An application form can be found at www.nsapprenticeship.ca. The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency will respond within 5 (five) business days. If you need to register an apprentice to meet the requirement, please email the Agency at apprenticeship@novascotia.ca at least 10 days prior to the deadline. Please see Question 3 for more information on what to include.

14. MY APPRENTICE IS CONTRACTED THROUGH A JOINT REGISTRATION AGREEMENT AND/OR A UNION, HOW DO I CONFIRM ENGAGEMENT?

A letter confirming engagement in the apprenticeship system from the Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee must be submitted to the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency.

15. WHAT IF I HAVE AN APPRENTICE(S) BUT THEY ARE NOT GOING TO BE WORKING ON THE PROJECT I AM BIDDING ON?

The apprentice does not have to be employed at the site but could be employed at another job site for the same employer. However, the Agency does monitor this during the program evaluation.

16. WHAT CAN I EXPECT AS ENFORCEMENT FROM NOVA SCOTIA APPRENTICESHIP AGENCY?

All job sites that fall under the program and are subject to enforcement will be inspected at random intervals.

17. WHAT IF I CANNOT MEET THE CRITERIA BUT I WOULD STILL LIKE TO BID ON A PROJECT?

A Letter of Exemption will be issued to:

- Any contractor who does not engage in work within a designated trade as defined in the *Apprenticeship and Trades Qualification Act*.
- Any contractor who employs less than three persons during the term of the contract.
- Any contractor who works in one of the designated trades where apprenticeship training is not offered.
- At the discretion of the Chief Operating Officer, Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency, any contractor who adequately demonstrates that he/she has limited ability to hire an apprentice may be eligible for an exemption.