
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2019AEST0027-000657
April 15, 2019

Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training

Survivors of violence and abuse to get skills training, employment support

VICTORIA – New skills training and employment programs throughout B.C. will soon be available for survivors of violence and abuse.

Funding of up to \$5 million annually will provide skills training and employment supports to about 450 people in British Columbia.

Final agreements for the expanded programming will be signed with service providers in June 2019 for programming throughout B.C. to start July 1, based on a call for responses issued in January 2019.

“People who have survived violence and abuse deserve opportunities to overcome barriers to finding jobs that will support them and create better circumstances for their families,” said Melanie Mark, Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training. “We’re expanding programming for vulnerable and under-represented people by creating pathways leading to hope and opportunity for people who may otherwise be left behind.”

Programs will include skills training, counselling and other supports to help participants break the cycle of abuse and overcome obstacles to employment. Programs and supports will include individual and group counselling and coaching, child care, and developing short-term and long-term goals for personal and economic success. They will also include academic programs, such as business and administration, introductory computer courses or adult upgrading programs for people who want to pursue post-secondary education.

Currently, the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training only provides funding to the Bridges for Women Society to deliver employment training and supportive programs on southern Vancouver Island specifically for women impacted by violence or abuse.

“Our goal is to help women break the cycle of violence, abuse, and trauma through healing, education and trauma-informed employment training,” said Victoria Pruden, executive director, Bridges for Women Society. “We support women to build skills, confidence and resilience that lasts a lifetime. Our employment program addresses isolation and poverty, and allows women to learn and support each other in a variety of classroom settings, while expanding their own professional, personal and community supports.”

A list of programs and where they are located will be available in June.

Quotes:

Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General –

“We are committed to ensuring all women and children who have experienced violence and abuse have access to the services and supports they need to heal from the impacts of violence. Ensuring access to training and employment opportunities is a critical way to help these individuals and their families.”

Mitzi Dean, Parliamentary Secretary for Gender Equity –

“Violence of any kind is unacceptable, and it is our shared responsibility to end violence in our province. We are also working to make sure survivors have support in rebuilding their lives. Programs that provide skills training can help people overcome barriers, achieve economic independence and move forward in healing.”

Carole James, Minister of Finance and MLA for Victoria-Beacon Hill –

“Bridges for Women Society is a critical resource for survivors in Victoria. Its work to end cycles of violence, in relationships and in society, makes people’s lives better and our community stronger.”

Quick Facts:

- Prevention of Violence Against Women Week 2019 runs April 14-20, 2019.
- The number of police-reported sexual assaults increased across Canada in 2017, with the number in B.C. increasing by approximately 15% between 2016 and 2017.
- In 2017, intimate partner violence was the most common type of violence experienced by women in Canada, impacting 45% of all female victims aged 15 to 89.
- The Province of B.C. and the Government of Canada signed the Workforce Development Agreement in 2018 to deliver programs that give people the skills and retraining that employers are looking for, with a specific focus on under-represented and vulnerable groups. Under the agreement, the Province will invest \$685 million over six years in programs such as the Skills Training for Employment Program to help people who face barriers to participation in the labour market.
- The 2018 edition of the B.C. Labour Market Outlook forecasts 903,000 job openings in the next decade until 2028 due to a mixture of retirements and economic growth; 77% of job openings will require some level of post-secondary education or training.

Contact:

Rodney Porter
Communications Director
Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and
Training
rodney.porter@gov.bc.ca
250 889-7494

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: news.gov.bc.ca/connect