

1. How is my EI paid if I leave the country? How is my provincial benefit to 75% paid if I leave the country?

An applicant must contact Service Canada about EI questions.

For Bridge to Re-employment, applicants must be actively searching for work to receive the relief grant.

For Bridge to Retirement, applicants must submit a monthly declaration of employment income to the Government of Alberta to verify ongoing payment eligibility. If an applicant does not report their gross monthly employment income they will not receive their relief payment during the unreported times.

2. The EI webpage says - As a general rule, to be entitled to regular benefits, you must show that you are unemployed, able and willing to work and actively looking for suitable work. Therefore, if you are taking a training course on your own initiative, without being directed to do so by a designated authority, you must show, without a doubt, that taking a course is not an obstacle to your active job search or to your acceptance of appropriate employment.

An applicant must contact Service Canada about EI questions.

The coal benefits state I can go to school for up to \$12,000, so how is this EI rule cancelled for coal workers?

A Government of Alberta Career and Employment Counsellor (CEC) is able to authorize EI payments while an approved employee is taking training using the voucher. It is critical that the employee work with the CEC and that accurate start and end dates for the program are provided to ensure the federal government receives this information.

3. What financial supports are available to complete Fall Protection and Lift Training that are OSSA certified, and, CSTS 09, training, while I am still employed – Bursaries? Scholarships? Grants?

If the presently employed person has received notice that they will be laid off, they can access the Transition to Employment Services (TES) program to explore if these courses could be paid. The person would need to register with the TES provider. TES short courses are limited to \$2500 per person. Taking these courses should lead to employment and short courses cannot be paid as a stand-alone without accessing the rest of the TES program. To find out how to register in the TES program, please talk to a Career and Employment Counsellor at an Alberta Supports Centre, or call the Alberta Supports Contact Centre at 1-877-644-9992.

To assist workers with their job search, Labour provides Transition to Employment services. These services can be accessed directly by contacting one of the three providers in Edmonton.

<https://www.alberta.ca/employment-training-services-directory.aspx>. When they access TES services, individuals may be eligible for short term training costs up to \$2500.

Steps:

1) contact one of the following 3 TES providers in Edmonton:

[BGS Enterprises Inc.](#)

102, 10665 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton PHONE: (780) 425-6655

- 'Job PLUS' Transition to Employment Services are for mature, experienced job-seekers in the Edmonton area who are, on average, 40+ years of age and seeking attachment or re-attachment to the labour market. The contractor offers personalized and professional services that acknowledge the experience and unique needs of this client demographic, and provides an array of service options to assist clients with obtaining and maintaining employment. Services will be offered on an individualized and flexible basis through a combination of group workshops and one-to-one assistance.

Bredin Centre for Learning

8th Floor, Harley Court, 10045 111 Street, Edmonton

780-425-3730

- The [Career Link](#) program under Transition to Employment Services (TES) program will implement and develop strategies and services to meet client's individual needs and support them back into the labour force as quickly as possible. Clients will have access to direct employment placement and supports, job matching and work experience. Short courses are also available to allow clients access to funded training that will make them more employable in a tough labour market

Manpower Services

10031 101 Street NW, Edmonton

780-420-0110

- [Career Leap](#) - Comprehensive and individualized Transition to Employment Services (TES) enabling job seekers to acquire skills to re-enter the workforce as quickly as possible. Employment preparation support, workshops, individualized coaching, job placement, job matching and unpaid work exposure are options.

2) Ask about the TES programs, and about eligibility for short-term course costs up to \$2500.

3) Register in the TES program if it suits your needs.

4. If my EI is clawed-back at the end of the year, how is the provincial portion increased to pay me the difference?

The relief grant amount will not be adjusted if your EI amount changes.

5. Employees expressed that they want to receive a portion of the tuition grant now, while they are employed, to start courses and ready for the future when they will be laid off. Why can't employees receive some of their funds now?

They can. The tuition voucher is available once an employee receives formal written notice of a layoff. This means training can start while they are still employed.

6. Even if I get a job and stop the bridge to re-employment payments, I want to continue to use up the \$12,000 for training for 5 years.

This is possible. The tuition voucher will remain available to the employee for the same value and same amount of time even if they take another job. For instance, an employee could use some of the voucher and take a job, realize that is not the career they had hoped for, then return to school and use the rest of the voucher balance.

7. How exactly is my bridge to re-employment calculated and paid if I receive 13 months of severance?

Under Bridge to Re-employment, any earnings you receive as part of a severance package will defer the start of your relief grant payments by the number of weeks to which your severance pay is allocated, at the rate of your normal weekly earnings (total severance pay divided by normal weekly earnings = number of weeks).

8. Are there caps for EI? For the provincial top-up? --- On the bridge to re-employment? On the bridge to retirement?

An applicant must contact Service Canada about EI questions.

Under Bridge to Reemployment, workers will receive financial support to cover 75 per cent of their previous weekly earnings which is a combination of Employment Insurance benefits plus the relief grant. The relief grant amount will not be adjusted if your EI amount changes.

For Bridge to Retirement workers will receive a relief grant of 75 per cent of a worker's previous weekly earnings.

9. The GoA rep said we can switch between the bridge to re-employment and bridge to retirement – how can I get both?

An applicant cannot collect both the Bridge to Re-employment and the Bridge to Retirement at the same time.

Should you choose to switch from Bridge to Re-employment to Bridge to Retirement you must meet the eligibility criteria of Bridge to Retirement and submit your application within three months from your date of lay-off. The number of eligible weeks collected in Bridge to Re-employment is counted towards the eligible duration of Bridge to Retirement and is not cumulative.

If you intend to switch, you must contact the Alberta Supports Contact Centre and submit a Change of Circumstance form to notify the Government of Alberta of your change of intent and submit a new application for Bridge to Retirement.

10. If I receive severance, what is the calculation for it to run-out, and then I start to receive the coal money?

For Bridge to Re-employment, see Q8 above.

Under Bridge to Retirement if you receive severance pay, it will delay the beginning of your relief grant and reduce the 72 week eligibility period. Any earnings received as part of a severance package will defer the start of your relief grant payments by the number of weeks to which your severance pay is allocated, at the rate of your normal weekly earnings (total severance pay divided by normal weekly earnings = number of weeks).

11. The EI website states that if the net income from all sources exceed \$64,125 you will be required to repay 30% - We are receiving more than this amount for the coal benefits, up to 75%, so how do I get the tax money back?

The amount of the Government of Alberta relief payment received will not result in a decrease to a worker's weekly Employment Insurance benefit amount.

The Bridge to Re-employment, Bridge to Retirement, and Relocation Assistance relief payments are taxable. This will be reflected in your payment amount.

12. An employee who had been laid off and rehired as a contractor (who had been back at the mine for over a year) would be eligible for the 75% bridge to re-employment but the guidelines say I am not eligible. Can you explain how I would be eligible for this?

An applicant must be continuously employed for at least one year immediately prior to the layoff date with an affected plant or mine and meet all other criteria to be eligible for the Bridge to Re-employment relief grant. The layoff date must be on or after January 2, 2018. An applicant is not eligible to receive the grant if they quit or were fired, were in a contract position or are retiring.

If an applicant was continuously employed for at least one year immediately prior to the layoff date, applied for the relief grant, and were later hired full time, their relief grant payments will be paused.

Eligibility criteria can be found in the Bridge to Re-employment Application Guide.

13. For how many years are the provincial financial benefits available for ?
- Lucie advised 6 years
 - Question – K3 is planned out for 10-12 more years, why are these affected employees not covered and considered ?

The commitment is for 6 years. The programs are in place to help those laid off from one of the listed coal mines or plants due to the extraordinary circumstances of the government's coal phase-out. The Government of Alberta has allocated funding to support these workers who are laid off.

14. I will be laid off, is my spouse eligible for any programs (education voucher) ? The government says 'they have our backs', so that includes my family, and if my spouse can benefit from education to support our family, why is he/she not eligible ?

No, the tuition voucher cannot be transferred to a spouse. Financial, employment and retraining supports are available for workers directly affected by the closing of a plant or mine. If a household has more than one individual laid off from one or more of the affected plants or mines, both individuals may be eligible for supports.

15. I already draw on my CPP, and, am still working and earning salary. So, how exactly is my 75% calculated (for bridge to employment) ?

Please contact Service Canada with questions about the EI program.

For Bridge to Reemployment, the combination of EI benefits and relief grant make up the 75 per cent of a worker's previous weekly earnings. The relief grant will be calculated using the weekly earnings from annual base salary or hourly salary and annual hours (overtime and benefits are not included) while employed at the affected plant or mine.

16. I am advised of my layoff, and want to start an education course/program. I was told that I can't start and have the course paid for until after I receive my ROE and leave the company – why ? I want to be proactive, not reactive.

A worker who has received a formal notification of a lay-off can be assessed for and use the Coal and Electricity Transition Tuition (CETT) voucher prior to the actual layoff date. Workers who have been laid off and subsequently become employed may still use their CETT voucher for future post-secondary studies within five years of the date of the original lay-off.

17. Claw-backs – what if during my bridge to employment, my EI amounts change (are lowered) – how will the government portion adjust to keep my payments at 75% ?

Please contact Service Canada with questions about the EI program.

The Bridge to Reemployment relief grant is calculated based on previous weekly earnings and the amount of the first EI benefit. A workers relief grant when combined with EI benefits will provide 75 percent of a workers previous weekly earnings. If your EI amount changes or is lowered, the relief grant amount will not be adjusted.

18. If I am on bridge-to-employment, do I still have to report every two weeks what I am doing to find a new job, and fill out forms, call-in ?

Please contact Service Canada with questions about the EI program.

The Bridge to Reemployment stream does not require reporting every two weeks. For reporting in relation to the EI benefits, please refer to the appropriate federal government guidelines.

However, if an applicant finds full-time employment or no longer actively searches for employment, the applicant must notify the Government of Alberta as soon as possible by submitting a Change of Circumstance form.

Applicants that no longer actively search for employment must notify the Government of Alberta to cease relief grant payments and avoid over or under payment. Applicants will be required to payback any overpayment.

19. If at the end of the year, my yearly income is too much, is EI clawed-back ? is the provincial part (up to 75%) clawed-back ?

The amount of relief payment received will not result in a decrease to a worker's weekly Employment Insurance benefit amount. The Bridge to Reemployment relief grant will be calculated based on previous weekly earnings and the amount of the first EI benefit. The relief grant amount will not be adjusted if the applicant declares additional earnings.

Relief grant payments received through this program are taxable and not subject to EI claw-back.

20. Bridge to re-employment ... details on how the 'pause works', maximum time off, and then return into program

- Eg. if I am recalled for a weekend, do I have to pause ?
- Eg. If I am recalled for 10weeks, how does it work ?
- Eg. If I am recalled after 8 months, work for a few months, and then am laid off again – how much do I get for bridge-to-employment ?

If the worker has full-time employment (35 hours or more per week), the relief grant payment can be paused and restarted, within a 52 week period. The recall status is not the criteria for which relief grant payments will be paused and/or ceased, rather it is based on the weekly hours of work.

An applicant that finds full time-employment can pause and restart the relief grant a number of times, within a 52 week period. This means that after 52 weeks from the relief grant start date, an application can no longer be paused.

If the Bridge to Re-Employment relief grant is paused at 52 week point then the relief grant file will close and cannot be reopened. Relief grant payments can be made past 52 weeks as long as the grant file is active and less than 45 weeks of relief grant payments issued to-date. (This scenario would occur where the worker applied for the relief grant

then paused it (possibly on multiple occasions) but reactivated and is in receipt of a grant payments on week 52).

21. If an employee bumps another employee, then they get a layoff/bump option from the new position and they bump another employee, is the second bumped employee eligible?

A bumping situation occurs when a worker from one of the listed plants or mines who is about to be laid off but as a result of seniority bumps a worker at a thermal plant or mine (not listed in the application guidelines). The bumped worker in this case may be eligible to receive supports if they meet all the relief grant criteria. Bumped workers must be working in Alberta and require their employer to provide a written letter confirming they were bumped as a result of layoffs at one of the listed coal plants or mines.

22. If someone receiving the bridge to re-employment support and finds part-time work (less than 35 hours/week) do they need to submit a change of circumstances form?

An applicant does not need to complete the Change of Circumstance form for part-time work as it does not affect their relief grant amount. Applicants working full time, 35 hours or more per week, must notify the Government of Alberta as soon as possible by submitting a Change of Circumstance form to pause their relief grant.

23. What happens when a person is working? How will the Relief income be calculated for the top up, will he continue to receive top up?

If an applicant finds full-time employment (35 hours or more per week) the relief grant will be paused. The relief grant can be restarted once the applicant's full-time employment ends. The relief grant amount, when restarted, will be the same as originally calculated.

An applicant can pause and restart the relief grant within a 52 week period. After 52 weeks from the relief grant start date, an application can no longer be paused.

Applicants must submit a Change of Circumstance form both to notify the Government of Alberta to pause, as well as to restart the relief grant.

24. The worker must report full time employment (35 hours/week) on the change of circumstances form, however, the form does not have a comments section for workers to indicate hours of work and the New Employment Information section does not have a spot for specific information such as whether the worker is working full time or part time.

The Change of Circumstance form is currently being updated to include number of hours worked (for new employment) and will be posted to the website.

25. When would they complete the change of circumstances - after they have received their first pay? The form just has a start work date.

An applicant would complete and submit a Change of Circumstance form as soon as they have new full-time (35 hours or more per week) employment so the Government of Alberta can pause the relief grant and avoid overpayment. Applicants will be required to payback any overpayment.

26. Do I receive the full benefit if my re-employment status is :

full-time ?
part-time ?
term ?
contract ?
on-call ?

If the worker has full-time employment (35 hours or more per week), the relief grant payment can be paused and restarted, but only within a 52 week period. This means that after 52 weeks from the relief grant start date, an application can no longer be paused. The reemployment status is not the criteria for which relief grant payments will be paused and/or ceased, rather it is based on the weekly hours of work.

27. What expenses are eligible under Relocation Assistance?

- Moving company
- Utilities hook-up/take-down
- Travel costs – plane, train, car
- New home set-up costs – insurance

Examples of eligible and ineligible relocation costs are included below, which can be found in the Application Guidelines:

Examples of **eligible** relocation costs include, but are not limited to:

- moving household goods and effects
- transportation expenses
- utility hook-ups and disconnections
- lease cancellation fees
- real estate/legal expenses

Examples of **ineligible** relocation costs include, but are not limited to:

- house-hunting trip expenses
- hotel, car rentals, meal and per diem expenses while relocating
- storage of household goods
- gas receipts, as mileage will be calculated
- airfare
- quotes for moving costs

Applicants must keep full, accurate and complete financial records of all relocation expenditures for a period of two years.

28. If a Transalta employee does not use the tuition voucher are they able to transfer the voucher to their spouse?

No, the tuition voucher cannot be transferred to a spouse. Financial, employment and retraining supports are available for workers directly affected by the closing of a plant or mine. If a household has more than one individual laid off from one or more of the affected plants or mines, both individuals may be eligible for supports.

29. Background: There seems to be a process at Transalta whereby some employees are verbally advised of the layoff and then provided with formal written notice once a date is confirmed. At what point is someone eligible to apply for the Tuition voucher?

A worker who receives a formal written notification of a layoff can be assessed and use the CETT voucher prior to the actual layoff date. Workers who have been laid off and subsequently become employed may still use their CETT voucher for future post-secondary studies within five years of the date of the original layoff.

30. Does a Transalta employee need to wait until they have received a formal notification of layoff to access the training voucher (for example challenging an apprenticeship exam) ?

A worker who receives a written formal notification of a layoff can be assessed and use the CETT voucher prior to the actual layoff date. Workers who have been laid off and subsequently become employed may still use their CETT voucher for future post-secondary studies within five years of the date of the original layoff.

31. Requests for B Pressure Welding course and Testing ,which is a typical non credit training and requires test fee(not covered under any other CEC programs).

AE has developed an exception process where non-credit programming such as B pressure welding training can be considered. Workers must submit the Exception Request to have non-credit programming considered. The CETT voucher does not cover standalone test fees.

32. The GoA rep had said on the call yesterday that an employee who had been laid off and rehired as a contractor (who had been back at the mine for over a year) would be eligible for the 75% bridge to re-employment but the guidelines say I am not eligible. Can you explain how I would be eligible for this.

Workers who were in contract positions are not eligible to receive the relief grant.

33. Can I get the funding for a 'challenge exam' for a new ticket ? (An exam, not a course)

A worker can use the tuition voucher to cover the cost of apprenticeship fees, which include the costs of the trades qualifier exams or prior learning assessments. The worker

should email CETTvoucher@gov.ab.ca with information on their intent to challenge an apprenticeship exam or receive credit for prior learning. A representative from Advanced Education will be able to provide direction on how the voucher can be used in this manner.

35. To complete my apprenticeship, I need to go to school, and, work/practice and have my hours signed-off - What support does the tuition voucher give to help me get a job to earn my hours, and get sign-off ?

The tuition voucher can be used to cover the tuition costs of your technical training or for other apprenticeship fees paid to Advanced Education (such as the registration or Prior Learning Assessment fees). Workers will still need to find an employer willing to employ them as an apprentice to gain the necessary on-the-job experience. Workers should email CETTvoucher@gov.ab.ca with information on what they would like to do in order to receive confirmation and direction from Advanced Education.

34. Requests for Class 3 for First Aid, WHIMIS, Fall arrest

The CETT voucher can only be used for training at post-secondary institutions (a list of the 26 publicly-funded PSIs is [here](#) and the five First Nations Colleges is [here](#)). While all training that leads to a post-secondary credential is eligible, these types of course are not, unless they are both offered by an approved institution and the worker can demonstrate the training supplements existing skills and leads to increased employability.

Instead, these types of exposure courses for classes under two weeks in duration can be approved by CSS through their career counsellors.

For any questions pertaining to the Government of Alberta supports :

Please call the Alberta Supports Contact Centre at 1-877-644-9992, and visit the Alberta Support for Coal Workers website: <https://www.alberta.ca/support-for-coal-workers.aspx>.

You can ask specific questions about the Tuition Voucher by emailing: CETTvoucher@gov.ab.ca.