

WORK CENTRAL AB

Wage Subsidies & Grants

Funding to Offset Training and Hiring Costs

A Career Resource from Work Central AB

Wage Subsidies & Grants for Alberta Employers

A range of federal and provincial programs can help offset the cost of training current staff, hiring students, and supporting new employees. This guide covers the major programs relevant to Central Alberta employers - always confirm current details directly through the program's official page before applying, since funding levels and eligibility do change.

1. Training Grants for Current Employees

- **Canada-Alberta Productivity Grant (CAPG)** - Alberta's cost-sharing training grant, which replaced the former Canada-Alberta Job Grant; it reimburses eligible employers for a portion of third-party training costs for current or new employees, generally up to a set amount per employee and per employer per fiscal year.
- Eligible costs typically include tuition, mandatory fees, examination fees, textbooks, and required software - employee wages during training are generally not eligible.
- Applications must be submitted and approved before training begins; retroactive claims are not accepted.

2. Wage Subsidies for Hiring Students

- **Student Work Placement Program (SWPP)** - a federal program delivered through designated partner organizations, offering wage subsidies (commonly up to around 50% of wages, with higher amounts for under-represented students such as those in first year, women in STEM, Indigenous students, newcomers, and persons with disabilities).
- SWPP covers a range of work-integrated learning placements, including co-ops, internships, and practicums, and spans most fields of study, not just STEM.
- Employers generally need a candidate identified before applying, and funding must be approved before the placement starts.

3. Other Federal Wage Subsidy and Skills Programs

Additional Programs to Explore

Youth Employment and Skills Strategy - supports hiring youth facing employment barriers, with funding toward wages for eligible placements.

Sectoral Workforce Solutions Program - funds sector-specific training and workforce initiatives through industry partner organizations.

Union Training and Innovation Program - supports apprenticeship training in Red Seal trades delivered through union partners.

Apprenticeship Job Creation Tax Credit - a federal tax credit for employers who hire eligible apprentices in designated trades.

4. How to Apply Successfully

- Apply before training starts or before a placement begins - nearly all programs reject retroactive claims.
- Keep detailed records of training costs, wages paid, and hours worked, since most programs require documentation before reimbursement.
- Confirm whether programs can be "stacked" - some training grants and wage subsidies can be combined, while others cannot; check current program rules before assuming you can combine funding sources.
- Watch application deadlines closely, since many programs operate on a first-come, first-served basis with limited annual funding.

5. Getting Help Navigating Programs

Given how often eligibility and funding levels change, many employers work with a government funding specialist or consult directly with program delivery partners to confirm current details before applying. Alberta Supports and regional economic development offices can also help direct you to current programs relevant to your business.

6. Frequently Asked Questions

Common Questions

Can we apply for a grant after training has already started? No - nearly all programs, including CAPG, require approval before training or a placement begins; retroactive claims are rejected.

Do these programs cover employee wages during training? Generally, training grants like CAPG cover course-related costs, not wages, while separate wage subsidy programs like SWPP specifically cover a portion of wages.

How competitive is funding? Many programs operate on limited annual budgets and a first-come, first-served basis, so applying early in your fiscal year can improve your chances.

Wage Subsidies & Grants Checklist

- ✓ Identified training or hiring plans that could qualify for funding
- ✓ Confirmed current program details directly through official sources before applying
- ✓ Applied before training or placements began
- ✓ Kept documentation ready for reimbursement claims
- ✓ Checked whether multiple programs can be stacked for your situation

Build Your Team With Work Central AB

See our Internship Programs and Apprenticeships resources for more on building a subsidized talent pipeline. Visit **workcentralab.ca/employers**.