Bridging Employment Program (BEP)

Policy and Procedures Manual
For MEIA Staff

Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance
Employment Initiatives Branch

July 4, 2006

INTRODUCTION

About this Manual

The Bridging Employment Program (BEP) Policy and Procedures Manual is a resource for the Ministry Employment and Income Assistance (MEIA) staff to use in administering the BEP Program.

Hyper-links to electronic resources can be found in the manual. These direct users to the most appropriate source of information in an effort to limit duplication of policies, and to provide accurate and consistent information.

You will find a Glossary at the end of this document. It contains definitions for key terms and acronyms used in the manual.

Manual Amendments

Manual amendments for the BEP Policy and Procedures Manual are prepared and posted electronically on the BEP Intranet site as required

Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance – Mission, Vision, Guiding Principles

Our Mission - MEIA provides services that move people towards sustainable employment and assist individuals and families in need.

Our Vision - MEIA envisions a province in which those British Columbians in need are assisted to achieve their social and economic potential.

Guiding Principles:

- personal responsibility
- active participation
- innovative partnerships
- citizen confidence
- fairness and transparency
- clear outcomes
- accountability for results

PROGRAM PROFILE

Goals and Objectives

The overall goal of the BEP is to assist survivors of violence and abuse to overcome employment barriers that prevent them from making successful transitions to sustainable employment. The program will assist individuals to deal with issues of violence and abuse and their consequences, such as financial dependency and low self-esteem, in order to enable them to move toward independence and self-reliance and eventually to reduce their dependence on BCEA or funding under Youth Agreements through the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Program Description

The BEP is focused on skill building and support intended to help Participants improve their opportunities for sustained employment.

The BEP will be provided through three components:

1. **Community Bridging -** provides Bridging Employment Programs to women in receipt of Income Assistance, normally not participating in any other Ministry-funded program, and who have experienced violence and/or abuse.

2. **Special Bridging -** provides Bridging Employment Programs to women who meet the criteria described above for the Community Bridging category and who also face additional barriers to employment due to language, immigration or culture. This category provides specific language or cultural training related to a designated group which may include, but are not limited to, aboriginal women or immigrant women.

3. **Former Sex Trade Participants -** provides Bridging Employment Programs to former sex-trade workers who are in receipt of BCEA or funding assistance provided under Youth Agreements by the Ministry for Children and Family Development, who are normally not participating in any other Ministry-funded program, and who have experienced violence and/or abuse. Clients under this program may be either women or men leaving the sex trade.

The Community Bridging, Special Bridging and Former Sex Trade Worker components will all provide the following services to Participants:

a) Educational assistance - classroom and one-to-one assistance, based on skill building, that assists clients in making healthier choices and increase self-esteem. This could also include communication skills, time management, accountability and parenting skills.

b) Employment focused programming – designed to assist the client to move into sustained employment, which could include career planning, work skills training, job search preparation or other activities.

c) Parenting and counselling support - parenting skills will be incorporated where the predominant Participant group to be served consists of parents. Personal counselling services may also be provided as appropriate.

d) Referral to other appropriate community agencies whose services could assist Participants should issues arise during the Program that require assistance beyond the scope of the services offered by the Program.

e) Financial assistance as deemed necessary for the Participants to participate and complete the Program. These supports could include but may not be limited to transportation assistance, childcare support above the subsidy amount, special clothing requirements, etc.

Special Bridging program contracts will provide also services to the Participants that are in keeping with the requirements of the Participants to be served. For example, a Program targeted at immigrant woman will provide English language training, or a Program targeted at aboriginal women will provide a cultural component.

Former Sex Trade Worker program contracts will provide additional services, such as specialized counselling, that are in keeping with the requirements of the Participants in this category.

The ultimate goal of the program is to assist participants to move into sustainable employment. However, participants may not reach this goal immediately upon completing the program. It is anticipated that immediate client outcomes will include:

- participation in another Ministry program, such as the BC Employment Program (BCEP) and/or Employment Programs for Persons with Disabilities (but not pre-employment programs such as CAP)
- enrollment in secondary education or high school equivalency programs
- enrollment in post-secondary education.
- placement in part or full-time employment

Target Client Group

Most participants in the BEP will be BCEA clients, although a portion of clients in the Former Sex Trade Worker component may be youth aged 16 to 19 who receive funding from the Ministry of Children and Family Development under Youth Agreements.

BEP clients who are on BCEA may or may not be expected to work under the BC Employment and Assistance Act – in fact it is anticipated that the majority of clients will be Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers.

Client Eligibility Criteria

Ministry staff will determine whether or not a client is eligible for participation in the BEP by reviewing documentation submitted by the Service Provider, the Employability Screen, MIS records and/or other tools.

1) (a) Client is in receipt of Income Assistance under the *Employment and Assistance Act*, and screened employable with longer-term interventions (clients scoring 15 or greater on the Employability Screen; or

   (b) Client is in receipt of Income Assistance under the *Employment and Assistance Act*, screened immediately employable/employable with short-term interventions (Clients scoring up to and including 14 on the Employability Screen) and has been referred but not accepted into BCEP; or

   (c) Client is in receipt of Income Assistance under the *Employment and Assistance Act*, screened as immediately employable/employable with short-term interventions, but is defined in section 29(4) of the Employment and Assistance Regulation due to leaving a violent relationship and/or has children under 3; or

   (d) Client is in receipt of Income Assistance under *the Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act;* or

   (e) Client is in receipt of Income Assistance under *the Employment and Assistance Act* and classified as a Person with a Persistent Multiple Barrier; or

   (f) Client is in receipt of funding assistance provided under a Youth Agreement with the Ministry of Children and Family Development and is being considered for eligibility in BEP; and

2) Client is not normally participating in any other Ministry-funded program; and

3) Client has experienced violence and/or abuse.

Program Delivery Structure

Performance Based Service Delivery Agreements:

The BEP, like other ministry employment programs, is delivered through performance based agreements, meaning that:

- The ministry develops program goals, objectives and framework

- Contracted Service Providers are responsible for developing and delivering specific session content

- Ministry payments to Service Providers are based on the results Service Providers achieve. In the case of BEP, payments are based on the number of clients who:

    * participate in the program

    * complete the program and

* achieve one of four desired outcomes – part or full-time employment; enrollment in a recognized post-secondary program; enrollment in a secondary school program or high school equivalency program; or acceptance into another Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance employment program such as the BCEP, or the Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities.

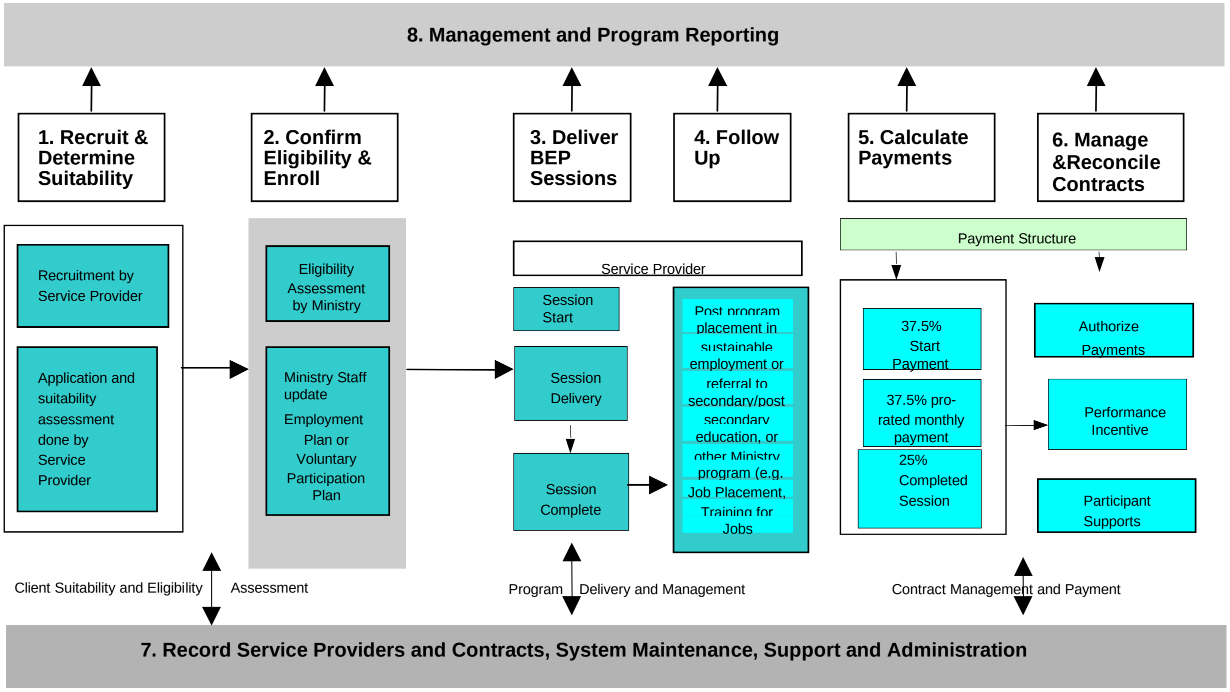
Open, Fair and Accountable Procurement

In accordance with ministry and government policies, service delivery contracts for BEP are procured through open, accountable and transparent processes. In April, 2003 the ministry issued a Request for Proposals on BC Bid. The RFP resulted in the award of 15 contracts to 14 Service Providers throughout the province:

- 11 Contracts in the Community Bridging Category; and
- 2 Contracts in each of the Special Bridging and Former Sex Trade Worker categories.

The maximum value of all 15 agreements is around $5.0 million per year.

For a list of the Service Providers, click here: (Appendix 3 Click Here



Summary of Service Delivery contract terms:

Each Service Provider will offer fixed intake sessions of around 16 – 26 weeks in length. In general, 12-20 participants will participate in each session. Each Service Provider will provide at least 2, and not more than 6, of these sessions per year. It is anticipated that approximately 400-600 clients will participate in the BEP annually.

Bridging Employment Contracts commenced on September 1, 2003. The contract term will be two years with three one-year options to renew at the sole discretion of the ministry. No Contract renewals will be granted without a satisfactory annual Service Provider performance review.

Service Provider performance reviews will be based on a combination of ongoing performance measures, periodic evaluations/audits and Service Provider reporting.

Business Model:

Diagram 1, below, illustrates the high level functions that comprise the Bridging Employment Program.

Each function is summarized discussed in greater detail in the sections that follow.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Overview

This section provides a general description of the roles and responsibilities of MEIA staff and contracted Service Providers in supporting the effective implementation and administration of the BEP.

Guiding principles for the roles and responsibilities of MEIA staff and Service Providers are:

- Regional management of Service Provider contracts;
- A teamwork approach that facilitates information sharing and seamless service delivery; and
- Program management and accountability practices that contribute to program efficiency and effectiveness.

Key Players

Key players involved in administration of the BEP are:

- Regional Services Division - Case Managers/Regional Liaisons
- Regional Services Division - Contract Managers (Regional office staff)
- Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) Social Workers (Former Sex Trade Worker Agreements only)
- Employment Initiatives Branch (EIB) staff
- 14 contracted Service Providers

In general terms,

EIB has overall responsibility for:

- Program design and policy development
- Procurement of service delivery contracts
- Managing province-wide program implementation, operations and budgets
- Development, maintenance and administration of the BEP System, including assigning user access
- Province-wide program reporting and evaluation
- Province-wide program communications and issues management
- Systems development, maintenance and coordination

and

Regional Services Division staff have joint responsibility for program implementation, and:

- Develop and manage service delivery contracts, including service provider payments

- Manage regional program budget allocations
- Develop, implement and manage client eligibility and tracking processes in collaboration with Service Providers
- Manage ongoing communications regarding operations with Service Providers and EIB
- Implement of field training
- Manage issues at a regional level

Regions will determine how the specific roles and responsibilities are assigned and ensure that EIB is advised of the appropriate regional contacts.

Meetings with Service Providers, Regional Contract Managers, Regional Case Managers/Liaisons and/or EIB staff will be held as required.

Detailed Roles and Responsibilities:

Regional Services Division - Case Managers:

The Case Manager will confirm eligibility of BEP clients as requested by Service Providers, and will manage the clients' BEP and MIS files as the client progresses through the program.

1. Confirming Client Eligibility:

- Confirm client eligibility for the BEP using ministry program criteria.
- Eligibility confirmation will involve reviewing information on the Suitability Checklist form submitted by the Service Provider, the Employability Screen, MIS records and/or other tools.
- The main emphasis for eligibility confirmation is to confirm that the client is in receipt of BCEA (excluding "hardship pending other income") or Youth Agreement funding through MCFD (Former Sex Trade Worker Agreements only) and that the client is not currently participating in another ministry program, such as BCEP.
- Notify Service Provider of client's eligibility or non-eligibility within 48 hours of receipt of the Service Provider's request. (except for MCFD clients funded under a Youth Agreement, in which case 7 days are allowed)

2. Tracking Client Progress:

- Confer with client and create/amend Employment Plan and Voluntary Participation Plans as required. Ensure Employment Plans and Voluntary Participation Plans include activity expectations and monitoring methods as applicable.

- Ensure that information on MIS/BEP systems is accurate and complete (correct dates, accurate codes, method of monitoring, date that Service Provider confirms that the client was enrolled into program, etc). This may require prompting the Service Provider to update records.
- Track client participation and document program activity and outcome results (e.g. accepted into the program, completed all components, became employed, etc.)
- Ensure time limits exclusion code is entered and removed as appropriate on each client's file.
- Assisting the Regional Contract Manager in verifying outcome pending information as requested.
- Update and consult with MCFD staff on non-compliance issues or successful outcomes for clients funded under Youth Agreements.

3. Compliance:

As applicable:

- Explain to client their responsibility to attend and complete the BEP as specified in their Employment Plan in relation to their continued eligibility for BCEA.
- Follow-up and confer with clients who have withdrawn or been dismissed from the program prior to completion upon notification from the Service Provider via the BEP System and 4-Mail.
- Document compliance/non-compliance on the MIS Employment Plan Review Screen and take other appropriate steps for expected-to-work clients who are in non-compliance with their BCEA obligations.
- Ensure data exceptions are corrected in a timely manner.

Regional Services Division - Regional Liaison:

The Regional Contract Liaison will assist Regional Case Managers and the Regional Contract Manager in program delivery. The Regional Liaison may or may not also be a Case Manager.

- Liaison between Case Managers, Service Provider, and/or the Contract Manager.
- Ensures information on BEP Program is available for all case managers in advance of

program start dates (indicating Service Provider names, location, telephone number, location, start and end dates, program summary).

- Ensures that Service Providers are provided with the local process and staff contact (name, location, phone, fax and e-mail) information that they require to request eligibility determinations well in advance of the first BEP session start date.
- Ensure integrity of BEP data in MIS and BEP System (accurate data entry/trouble shoot when required).
- Expert resource on client file management policies and procedures for Case Managers and Service Providers.
- Conduct or participate in the development and delivery of staff training for the BEP Program.

Regional Services Division - Regional Contract Manager

The Regional Contract Manager develops and manages Service Provider contracts, and is the primary contact for any related issues or questions.

1. Procurement/Contract Development:

- Assist EIB with strategic development of the program by advising on issues of regional importance.
- Participate in the procurement of service delivery contracts.
- Negotiate and write agreements with Service Providers based on standard templates provided by EIB.

2. Contract Monitoring and Management

- Process all service provider payments.
- Verify the clients have reached one of the four eligible outcomes prior to authorizing Part 2 bonus incentive payments for Service Providers.
- Develop and implement regional contract monitoring strategy in accordance with province-wide program standards.
- Ensure Service Provider understands reporting requirements and the requirements to submit electronic records on the BEP system with acceptance and completion information, and manual reporting for other requirements.
- Conduct annual post-audits of participant support payments made by Service Providers.
- Evaluate Service Provider performance and recommend extension/termination of agreements as appropriate.

- Forecast and report actual expenditures against regional program allocations. Take steps as required to ensure that expenditures do not exceed annual regional allocations.

3. Issues Management

- Liaison between Case Managers/Liaisons, Regional Management, Service Provider and EIB. Acts as primary program policy and procedure expert in the region.
- Ensures key regional staff (i.e. Case Manager, Regional Management, financial and support staff) are knowledgeable on BEP Program, policy and procedures.
- Works with Regional Management, Regional Liaison, Service Provider and others to resolve local service delivery issues as quickly as possible.
- Assists Regional Management and EIB in the management of public issues related to the program.
- Report out Regional program status and outcomes to EIB.

Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) Social Workers (Former Sex Trade Worker Agreements only)

MCFD Social Workers manage Youth Agreements with youth clients who have been sexually exploited and who are participating in the BEP. MCFD Social Workers will assist in confirming client eligibility at the request of MEIA Case Managers/Liaisons; monitor client progress through the program, and follow-up as required with Youth Agreement clients who have withdrawn, been dismissed or completed the BEP. Specifically, MCFD Social Workers will:

- Advise Regional Liaisons if potential BEP clients are in receipt of, or eligible for, funding under a youth Agreement with MCFD within 5 business days of the Regional Liaison's request
- Update MCFD records as required to reflect a Youth Agreement client's participation in BEP
- Follow-up and confer with clients who have withdrawn, been dismissed from or completed the BEP program as required under MCFD legislation, policies and procedures upon notification of a change in the client's program status by the Regional Liaison or the Service Provider

Employment Initiatives Branch (EIB)

EIB is responsible for the overall development, implementation, management and evaluation of the BEP.

1. Program Design and Development

- Develop program framework, including the business model, business requirements, and operational policy, procedures, and guidelines, In consultation with the Regional Services Division.

- Undertake procurement processes for BEP service delivery contracts, (including developing/posting Request for Proposals, evaluating proposals, selecting Service Providers) in collaboration with Regional Services Division, the ministry's Financial Management Group, and Procurement and Supply Service Division of the Ministry of Management Services);

- In consultation with legal counsel, develop standard service delivery agreement templates for use by Regional Services Division

2. Program/Contract Management:

- Allocate program funds to each region on an annual basis
- Monitor and manage province-wide program budgets
- Develop and maintain a ministry BEP policy and procedures manual
- Provide ministry staff and Service Providers with program updates
- Ensure adherence to ministry and program policies and procedures
- Identify issues and develop policies, procedures, training etc. to address during program implementation
- Report out provincial program status and outcomes
- Integrate and co-ordinate cross-functional activities to ensure the successful implementation and delivery of BEP

3. Issues Management:

- Liaise with Regional Liaisons, Regional Contract Managers, Regional Management, ministry Executive and Service Providers
- Ensure ministry staff is knowledgeable on BEP Program, related legislation, policy and procedures
- Liaise with other MEIA branches/divisions as necessary (e.g. Social Policy Branch, Economic Analysis Branch, Information and Privacy and Record Services Branch, Information Management Branch, Financial and Administrative Services Branch, etc.); and

4. Communications

- Liaise with the Public Affairs Bureau and ministry Executive, including the ADMs of the Employment Division and the Regional Services Division
- Develop and implement program communications plan;
- Provide public communications guidelines to Service Providers and Regional Services Division Staff as required
- Develop and maintain communication materials (e.g. web-site information, Fact Sheets, Q's and A's);
- Coordinate conference calls with regions/Service Providers as required;
- Respond to telephone and written inquiries from regions/Service Providers; and
- Ensure communications concerning BEP Program are consistent.

5. Training:

- Design, develop, and deliver initial training workshops/materials for Regional staff;
- Conduct Service Providers program orientation and systems training session;
- Consult with regional staff, Learning Services, and Service Providers as to ongoing training needs; and
- Address ongoing training needs.

6. Systems:

- Design and develop of the BEP system;
- Work with the Information Management Branch to maintain and operate the BEP system;
- Monitor data quality and system reports;
- Follow-up on systems issues;
- Respond to field requests for system enhancements; and
- Provide systems training support.

7. Evaluation:

- Develop program evaluation framework;
- Direct the implementation of the program evaluation of BEP; and
- Report out on evaluation results.

Service Provider

The following are the primary roles and responsibilities of Service Providers. Specific deliverables are detailed in each Service Provider's contract with the Ministry. Under the terms of the contract, Service Providers must also comply with the terms and intent of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPP) Act* in all of their interactions with Ministry Clients.

1. Client Recruitment and Suitability Review

- Recruits potential BEP clients using means such as community meetings, advertising, and other activities at the Service Provider's discretion (ministry staff may, but are not obligated to refer potential clients to the Service Provider)
- Meets with client; collaboratively determines if the BEP program meets the client's needs and if the client meets Service Provider's screening criteria.
- Complete the "Suitability Checklist" form (EIA2987) for all clients who may benefit from the program and fax the form to the designated regional case manager for an eligibility review, providing all relevant supporting details.
- Refers clients who are not suitable for, or able to participate in, the BEP program to other programs and services that better meet the client's needs.
- Establishes, maintains, closes and ensures the security of electronic and paper files for each client for whom an eligibility review has been requested, in accordance with Legislated and Information Management standards and policies and ministry records management standards and policies.

2. Confirm Enrollment

- Advises the ministry, via the BEP system, of clients who have:
  - started the session and are in attendance on the 14th calendar day after the session start date
  - "withdrawn" – either by failing to return to the Service Provider after and eligibility review was conducted or by having left/been dismissed from the program prior to the 14th calendar day after the session start date

3. BEP Session Delivery

- Deliver BEP session workshops, one-on-one counselling and other services/supports, as per negotiated contract.

- Follow-up with clients who have not attended sessions as required.

- Report on number of participants and completion results via the BEP system and other means as requested by the ministry.

- Ensure ministry (and MCFD, in the case of Former Sex Trade Worker agreements) is informed of those participants who did meeting the attendance or progress requirements as specified in the negotiated contract.

4. <u>Community Linkages and Services</u>

- Refer clients to appropriate community supports and services, as required to assist in obtaining and maintaining employment.
- Liaison with other community service providers to address and determine client needs.

5. <u>Client Completion and Follow-up</u>

- Meet with each client at the end of each session to discuss and document the client's next steps in an Action Plan.
- Assist clients, where applicable, to apply for ministry programs such as BCEP or post-secondary education or to secure sustainable employment that enables the client to become independent of BCEA or funding under a MCFD Youth Agreement.
- Report outcome results for each client via the BEP system.

6. <u>Service Provider Invoices</u>

- Invoices the ministry for Part 1 Service payments and Part 2 Outcome Incentive payments via the BEP system, and participant support funds through manual processes as specified in the negotiated agreement;
- Review Billing Advisory Reports to ensure correct billing and report discrepancies to the Regional Contract Manager

7. <u>Communications</u>

- Ensures that Regional Liaisons and Regional Contract Managers are aware of office location, hours of operation, contact information and assessment process, and
- Ensures that Regional Liaisons are aware of BEP session start and dates, and any changes to these dates, well in advance of the session start date.
- Ongoing liaison with regional staff regarding program implementation and Client eligibility assessment issues.

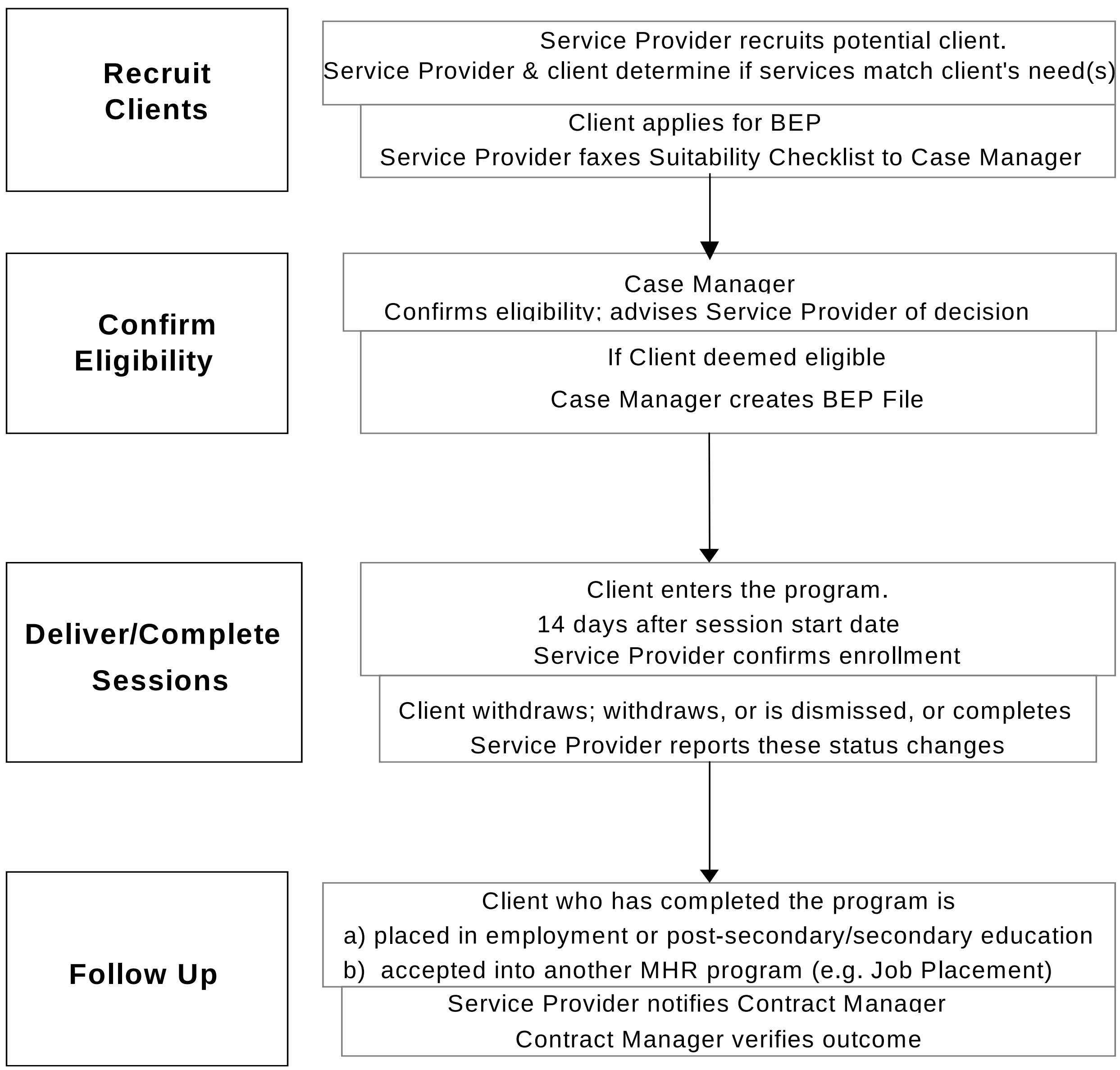
8. Program Evaluation

- Participate in program evaluations and audits as requested by the ministry

CLIENT FLOW

Overview:

The purpose of this section is to provide a schematic overview of the steps a client takes as he or she progresses through BEP. This diagram highlights the various points at which MEIA, MCFD and/or Service Provider action steps must be taken to ensure that clients are tracked accurately throughout the program (and therefore that Service Provider invoices are being accurately submitted and paid, and program results are being appropriately reported and measured).



CLIENT RECRUITMENT/SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT

Overview:

This section outlines the actions that a Service Provider must undertake while recruiting clients, assessing their suitability for BEP, and requesting eligibility reviews by the ministry.

Responsibilities:

Service Providers are responsible for recruiting potential clients, assessing their suitability for BEP and referring clients to the ministry for confirmation of eligibility. Service providers must also create, maintain and close client files according to ministry standards.

Regional Liaisons are responsible for ensuring that Service Providers are provided with the local process and staff contact (name, location, phone, fax and e-mail) information that they require to request eligibility determinations well in advance of the first BEP session start date.

Policies:

a) Source of potential clients:

- Service Providers must not rely on the ministry to refer clients for BEP sessions. The ministry may, but is not obligated to, refer clients to Service Providers.

b) Requests for eligibility reviews:

- Service Providers must request that the ministry confirm eligibility for each client individually in writing no later than 11:00 p.m. on the 10^{th} calendar days after the session start date (no later than the 5^{th} calendar days after the session start date for Former Sex Trade Worker agreements).
- Service Providers may request eligibility assessments for an unlimited amount of potential clients, in order to maximize opportunity for running full sessions.

c) Records management:

- Service providers must create, maintain and close a paper file for each potential client for whom an eligibility review is requested. Paper files must be maintained according to ministry standards as outlined in Appendix 2 - Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Guidelines and Procedures:

Service Providers:

1. Meet with client and assess client suitability for BEP by considering factors including:
   * the client's motivation and needs
   * Service Provider screening criteria
   * likelihood that the client will meet the ministry's client eligibility criteria (insert link to eligibility criteria- page 7)
2. Complete the Suitability Checklist (EIA 2987) with the client and then fax the completed form to the ministry Case Manager/Liaison as applicable no later than 11:00 p.m. on the 10th calendar day after the start date of each session (no later than the 5th calendar day for Former Sex Trade Worker agreements).
3. Completed Suitability Checklists must include the name, start date and end date of the session in which the potential client will enroll.
4. Ensure that youth applying for Former Sex Trade Worker programs sign Section 3 – Consent to Release Information (all other clients are not required to sign the Suitability Checklist)
5. Establish a paper file for each client for whom a ministry eligibility review is requested. Paper files must conform with ministry records management standards (see Appendix 2)

Systems Instructions:

N/A

Forms and Template Letters:

Suitability Checklist (EIA2987) – used by Service Providers to request that the ministry conduct an eligibility review for a potential client. Also provides consent from youth applying for the Former Sex Trade Worker category for sharing of information between MEIA, MCFD and the Service Provider.

ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

Overview:

This section outlines the policies and steps a Case Manager/Regional Liaison must following when conducting an eligibility review for a potential BEP client, and when informing the requesting Service Provider of the results.

Responsibilities:

Case Managers are responsible for confirming whether or not a client is eligible for the BEP program by reviewing the Ministry's eligibility criteria and other factors. The Case Manager is also responsible for creating BEP files in MIS and developing/amending Employment Plans/ Voluntary Participation Plans for all eligible clients.

Regional Liaisons are responsible for ensuring that Service Providers are informed of the outcome of each eligibility review with the time frames set out in this section, and for liaising with MCFD Social Workers to verify eligibility for potential clients in receipt of funding through Youth Agreements.

Policies:

a) Focus of Review:

- The main focus of the eligibility review is to confirm that the client is in receipt of BCEA (excluding hardship pending other income) or Youth Agreement funding and is not currently participating in another ministry funded program such as BCEP. Unless extraordinary circumstances exist, the Case Manager will not normally challenge the Service Provider's assessment of client needs and suitability.

b) Consultation with MCFD (Former Sex Trade Worker agreements only)

- In cases where youth ages 16 -19 are applying for the program, Case Managers/Liaisons must consult with an MCFD Social Worker to verify that the youth is receiving, or likely to qualify for, funding under a Youth Agreement with MCFD. A consent to release information, signed by the youth, must be obtained prior to any consultation with MCFD.

c) Service standards for advising Service Providers of results of eligibility review:

- Case Managers/Liaisons will normally advise Service Providers of the outcome of the eligibility determination within 48 hours of receiving a request from the Service Provider (7 calendar days in the case of Former Sex Trade Worker Agreements). Service Providers must be advised no later than 11:00 p.m. on the 12^{th} calendar day after the session start date.

d) No restriction on number of eligible clients who can be deemed eligible for any one session

- The Case Managers may deem an unlimited number of clients eligible for any one session. This will enable the Service Provider to fill sessions to capacity by creating a large pool of clients who can start the session on day one or be substitutes for other participants who failed to start, withdrawn or their own accord or been dismissed by the Service Provider prior to the 14th calendar day after the session start date.

- A client's "eligible" status will expire on the 15th calendar day after the session start date if the Service Provider has <u>not</u> confirmed that the client has been enrolled. If a client wishes to apply for another BEP session in future with the same or different Service Provider, the client's eligibility must be re-assessed at that time.

e) Eligibility considerations for clients who have withdrawn/been dismissed from previous BEP sessions:

- Clients may be deemed eligible and enroll in more than one BEP session <u>if</u> they have not completed a BEP session in the past. This policy applies to situation where the client wishes to re-enroll with the same Service Provider or with a different Service Provider.

Guidelines and Procedures:

Case Managers

1. Confirm eligibility by reviewing client records on MIS, Suitability Checklist, and other sources to verify that client:

   - meets ministry program criteria (insert link to criteria-page 7)
   - is between 15 and 64 years of age
   - has no health or safety alert on file
   - is not currently receiving 'Hardship Pending Other Income'
   - is not currently enrolled in another ministry program (e.g. BCEP, Community Assistance Program, Employment Programs for Persons with Disabilities)

   If a client is enrolled in another program, the Case Manager or Liaison must contact the contractor to whom the client is attached as soon as possible to determine if that contractor is willing to release the client.

   If the contractor agrees to release the client, the Case Manager must update the client's MIS files, and proceed with the BEP eligibility review

   If the contractor is unwilling to release the client, and is entitled to retain an attachment with the client under the terms of their negotiated contract with the Ministry, the Case Manager or Liaison must advise the BEP Service Provider that the client is not eligible for BEP as quickly as possible.

Case Manager or Regional Liaison

2. *(For youth applying for Former Sex Trade Worker programs only)*

   - Verify that client has signed the consent to release information section of the Suitability Checklist (EIA2987)
   - Contact MCFD to verify if client is in, or likely to qualify for, funding under a Youth Agreement

Case Manager or Regional Liaison	3. Advise Service Provider of outcome of eligibility review by • Creating a BEP file through MIS **for eligible clients** (information will transferred nightly to BEP System). Note: each client must have his or her own BEP File ID number; spouses and dependants are not to be added to a BEP file • Faxing the Suitability Checklist Form (EIA2987) with all ministry sections, including a decision rationale, back to the Service Provider for **ineligible clients**
Case Managers	4. If a client has been deemed ineligible, record the rationale for this decision on the 'comments' section of the client's MIS file
Case Managers	5. Create/amend Employment Plans/Voluntary Participation Plans for all clients deemed eligible for BEP (consistent with legislated requirements and ministry policy for Employment Plans/Voluntary Participation Plans). The clients' BEP file number must be included in the Employment Plan/Voluntary Participation Plan Note: BEP eligibility can be confirmed and the BEP file opened prior to the Employment Plan/Voluntary Participation Plan being completed. There is no "hard edit" within MIS to ensure an Employment Plan/Voluntary Participation Plan is in place prior to opening a BEP file.

Systems Instructions:

See the BEP Systems User Guide- https://gww.gov.bc.ca/bvprd/bc/or/ep/programView.do

Forms and Template Letters:

Suitability Checklist (EIA2987) – used by Service Providers to request that the ministry conduct an eligibility review for a potential client. Also provides consent from youth applying for Former Sex Trade Worker agreements for sharing of information between the Ministry, MCFD and the Service Provider.

CLIENT CONFIRMATION AND ENROLLMENT

Overview:

This section outlines the policies and steps

- Service Providers must follow when advising the ministry which eligible clients have been enrolled in a BEP session.
- Case Managers must follow once the Service Provider has notified the ministry, including updating the Time Limit Information (TL Exclusion Code, Start and End Month) on the MIS files of all enrolled clients.

Responsibilities:

Service Providers will, using the BEP System, confirm which eligible clients have been formally enrolled in a BEP Session and which have been withdrawn within the deadlines established in this section.

Case Managers will update the MIS files of all clients deemed eligible for the current BEP session and follow-up with eligible clients who have not been formally enrolled to verify compliance with BCEA requirements (as applicable).

Policies:

a) Enrollment deadlines:

- Service Providers must confirm client enrollment via the BEP System no later than 11:00 p.m. on the 14th calendar day after the session start date.
- No additional clients may be started in, deemed eligible for, or enrolled in a session after this deadline has passed.

b) Participant substitutions are allowed up until 11:00 p.m. on Day 14

- Service providers may, without any consultation with the ministry, start new participants in a session to “replace” original participants who have withdrawn/been dismissed prior to the 14th calendar day after the session start date.
- No such participant substitutions may be made after 11:00 on the 14th calendar day after the session start date.

c) Only a certain number of clients may be enrolled:

- There are limits on the number of clients that Service Providers may formally enrol in each session and/or in all sessions they will provide. Limitations are specified in the negotiated agreement between the ministry and the Service Provider.

d) Changes in session start dates

- Service Providers must have the prior approval of the Regional Contract Manager if they wish to change the start date of a session after a client has been deemed eligible.

- Session start dates can not be changed if the Service Provider has already confirmed enrolment for any client in that session.

e) Enrolled clients will be excluded from Time Limits while participating in a BEP session.

- Case Managers must manually enter the BEP Time Limit Exclusion code on the MIS record of each once the Service Provider has confirmed enrolment.
- The months assistance is received are excluded from time limits from the month the client's enrollment is confirmed until the month in which the client is withdrawn or completes the session, whichever comes first.

Guidelines and Procedures:

Service Providers	1. Maintain a list of eligible clients and invite a designated number to begin the session on the designated start date 2. Follow-up with clients who do not show up on the scheduled start date, or who withdraw shortly after, to try and resolve any issues that may hamper the client's ability to participate in the session 3. If these issues can not be resolved, invite a new eligible participant to begin the session.

Service Providers

4. By 11:00 p.m. on Day 14, advise the ministry via the BEP System of the enrollment status of each eligible client by assigning:
   - **'confirmed'** status to each eligible client who is in, or very likely to still be in attendance on the 14th calendar day after the session start date
   - '**withdrawn'** status to each eligible client who has failed to show for the session or been withdrawn/dismissed prior to the 14th calendar day after the session start date

Note: if neither a 'confirmed' or 'withdrawn' status is assigned to an eligible client's BEP file within these timelines, the client's BEP file will automatically close.

Case Managers

1. Check the status of every client deemed eligible for a particular BEP session on or shortly after the 15th calendar day after the session start date by:
   - Checking MIS 4-Mail and/or
   - Running a "Class List" report from the BEP System
2. Manually update the BEP Time Limit Information (code (25) and the appropriate Start and End Months) on the MIS record of each client whose attendance has been confirmed.
3. Follow-up and confer with clients with a 'withdrawn' or 'file closed' status. Document any compliance issues on the MIS Employment Plan Review Screen and take other appropriate steps for expected-to-work clients who are in non-compliance with their BCEA obligations.
4. Update Employment Plans/Voluntary Participation Plans for each client as required.

Regional Liaisons

1. *(Former Sex Trade Worker Agreements only)* Where applicable, notify client's MCFD Social Worker to update on client's status. This must be done as soon as possible, particularly if the client's status is 'withdrawn' or 'file closed'.

Systems Instructions:

See the BEP Systems User Guide

Forms and Template Letters:

N/A

WITHDRAWAL OF CLIENTS

Overview:

This section outlines the policies and systems codes for withdrawal of a client from the BEP Program.

Responsibilities:

Service Providers are responsible for monitoring client attendance and progress during the BEP session and withdrawing clients who do not meet the attendance/progress requirements specified in the negotiated agreement between the ministry and the Service Provider.

Case Managers are responsible following up with each client that has been withdrawn by the Service Providers and to document any issues related to non-compliance with BCEA obligations. Case Managers are also responsible for updating the client's MIS records, including updating the Time Limit Information by either deleting the TL Exclusion Code or by replacing, as appropriate for the client's situation.

Policies:

- Clients who do not meet minimum attendance and/or progress requirements (as specified in the negotiated contract) must be withdrawn from the program prior to the session end date.
- Service Providers must advise the ministry via the BEP System each time that they withdraw a client from a session. The Service Provider must select one of the pre-determined 'withdrawal reason codes' during this process.
- Case Managers must update Time Limit Exclusion Code from the client's MIS records, by deleting or replacing with another as appropriate for the client's situation, as soon as they are advised that the client had been withdrawn.

Guidelines and Procedures:

Service Providers

1. Meet with client to attempt to resolve issues that are presenting a barrier to the client's continued participation in the session.
2. If issues can not be resolved and client's attendance/progress does not improve, withdraw the client by assigning a 'withdrawn' status to the client's BEP file. Note: the appropriate 'Withdrawn reason code" must be also be entered at this time.
3. Close the client's paper files as per the Guidelines for Contractor's Records.

Case Managers

1. Upon receiving notification of client withdrawal via the 4-Mail, follow-up to confer with client.
2. Document any compliance issues on the MIS Employment Plan Review Screen and take other appropriate steps for expected-to-work clients who are in non-compliance with their BCEA obligations.
3. Update the Time Limits Exclusion Code on the client's MIS file by either deleting it, or replacing with once as appropriate for the client's situation.
4. Update Employment Plans/Voluntary Participation Plans for the client as required.

Regional Liaisons

(Former Sex Trade Worker Agreements only) Where applicable, notify client's MCFD Social Worker to update on client's status. This must be done as soon as possible.

Systems Instructions:

See the BEP Systems User Guide

Forms and Template Letters:

N/A

SESSION DELIVERY AND COMPLETION

Overview:

This section outlines the policies and systems codes for session delivery and client completion of the program.

Responsibilities:

Service Providers: provide an integrated Program for clients as outlined in Schedule A of their individual contracts. Responsible for monitoring client attendance and progress and for advising the ministry on issues of noncompliance.

Case Managers: update ministry records and remove time limit exclusion codes once the service provider advises that the client has completed or has been withdrawn from the program.

BEP Liaisons: monitor BEP compliance and attendance and advise case managers of any withdrawals or completions so that the case manager may update time limits, EP/VPP.

Policies:

a) Attendance/Satisfactory Progress:

- Participants must maintain an attendance rate as specified in Schedule A of the agreement between the ministry and the Contractor (normally 85%), while in a Session. If a Participant fails to meet these attendance requirements, the Contractor must withdraw the client and advise the Ministry via the BEP system.

- If clients do not make satisfactory progress or voluntarily withdraw from the program the Service Provider must withdraw the client promptly using the BEP system.

b) Status of GA file:

- If a participant's GA file closes while in the BEP program, the participant will be able to continue in the program.

c) Completion Requirements:

- A Participant will have completed the session when the Participant has:

  - met the minimum attendance requirements
  - successfully completed the curriculum
  - successfully completed other course requirements as specified in Schedule A of the Service Provider's contract

d) Action Plans:

- Prior to the completion of the program, service providers will meet with the participants individually to discuss appropriate next steps and formulate an action plan. This Action Plan must be communicated to the ministry so that appropriate referrals and EP/VPP amendments can be made.

Guidelines and Procedures:

Service Provider

- If a client fails to successfully complete the program the client must be withdrawn promptly using the BEP system (see previous section 'Withdrawal of Clients').
- When a Participant has completed the Program, notify the ministry caseworker through the Session Completion Status data transfer. This notification will trigger the final 25% completion portion of the Part 1 payment.
- Confirm completion within 14 calendar days of the last day of the session via the 'completed' button on the BEP system. Otherwise the client's file will auto-close with a 'Withdrawn' status and appropriate reason code. For files with withdrawn status, no completion or bonus payments can be made.
- Create an Action Plan for each client which will help guide the client in continuing to move towards independence after they leave the program, and to advise case managers of client's intentions so that they can also help support the client. The ministry must be informed of this next step via one of the planned outcome codes on the BEP system. The ministry contact will then arrange for the appropriate referrals to be made, and amend the clients EP/VPP accordingly.

Case Managers:

At session completion:

1. Remove time limits exclusion code (25) from the client's MIS records.
2. Complete a review of the client's Employment/Voluntary Participation Plan.
3. Inform the MCFD social worker for clients in a Youth Agreement that the client has completed the program.
4. If the planned outcome is for the client to attend BCEP, open the appropriate file and amend the EP/VPP accordingly.

Systems Instructions:
See the BEP Systems User Guide

For referrals to BCEP please consult the appropriate Policy, Procedures and Guidelines Manual located at:

BCEP MANUAL ON THE OLR

Forms and Template Letters:

N/A

CLIENT OUTCOME REPORTING AND VERIFICATION

Overview:

This section outlines the policy for bonus incentive payments and the steps contract managers must take once a service provider reports a successful completion.

Responsibilities:

Service Provider: Track client progress for six months after they complete the program, supporting the client in achieving the goals set out in the Action Plan or other activities that move the client along the employment continuum. Also advise the ministry if the client achieves one of the four "bonus outcomes" as outlined in the policy below.

Contract Manager: Verify whether or not the client outcome reported by the Service Provider was actually achieved and authorizes bonus incentive payments to be made where appropriate.

BEP Liaison/Case Manager: Assist the Contract Manager in verifying the outcome by providing data from MIS/physical file or other sources.

Policies:

a) Outcomes Eligible for the Payment of Bonus Incentives:

A bonus will be paid to the Service Provider when a participant has completed the Program and has achieved one of the four following outcomes within six months of completion of the Bridging Employment Program:

- Acceptance into a ministry funded program, specifically BCEP, or Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities. Acceptance into the Community Assistance Program (CAP) is not eligible for a bonus incentive

- Enrollment in post-secondary education that reduces their dependence on Income Assistance (most likely because they qualify for student financial assistance)

- Enrollment in full time high school or high school equivalency program (applies only to Youth who are in receipt of funding assistance under Youth Agreements)

- Employment that reduces or eliminates their dependence on Income Assistance (i.e. the client's BCEA cheque is either reduced or eliminated for at least one month, because employment income earned by the client, not a family member, has been deducted from benefits or the GA file has closed because the client has become employed)

At session end, the Service Provider will indicate the planned outcome for each client. The achieved outcome need not be the same as the one originally planned in order for the Bonus Incentive Payment to be made.

b) Eligible Time Period for Bonus Incentive Payments:

- The six-month period in which the client may take steps that justify a Bonus Incentive Payment (i.e. Part 2 payment) to the Service Provider begins on the day the session was scheduled to end not on the day the client is assigned 'Completed' status.
- The Service Provider must inform the ministry of a successful outcome within 14 days of the 6-month milestone following completion of a session, to receive the Bonus Incentive Payment.
- Before the Bonus Incentive Payment can be made, the Regional Contract Manager must confirm the "Outcome Achieved". Service Providers can only claim the Bonus Incentive Payment for clients who have completed all session requirements (i.e. have "completed" status). For example, if a client obtains employment prior to the completion of a session, the Bonus Incentive Payment can only be made if the client completed all session requirements prior to leaving for employment.

c) Confirmation of Outcome:

- The case/contract manager must confirm "Outcome Pending" by using appropriate third party sources (e.g. a secondary school official in the case of verifying the "secondary school" outcome) to determine if an outcome reported by a service provider has in fact been achieved.
- No systems restrictions apply to the length of time staff have to verify "Outcome Pending" reports made by service providers. However, staff should make every effort to complete the verification process and advise service providers of the results as soon as possible.

Guidelines and Procedures:

Service Providers:

Prior to the completion of the Program, the contractor will meet with the Participants individually to discuss appropriate next steps. For each of the successful outcomes, the Service Provider should take action as follows:

- BCEP /EPPD referral:
  - contact ministry with this recommendation
  - contact appropriate service provider for a case management discussion related to the client's participation in their program
- Continued Education – Notify the ministry and also assist participant in:
  - Contacting institution
  - Gathering necessary information
  - Applying for a student loan if appropriate

- Part/Full Time Employment – pass specific information on the employment to the ministry on:
  - Employer name
  - Employment start date
  - Starting wage
  - Hours/week worked

Service providers must advise the ministry through the BEP system that a client has potentially reached one of the four eligible outcomes by 11:00 pm on the 14th calendar day following the session end date plus six months. Service Providers are also encouraged to phone ministry staff to ensure they are aware of the report made by the service provider.

Regional Contract/Case Managers/BEP Liaison:

Respond to the Service Provider's notification of 'Outcome Pending' clients as soon as possible by reviewing MIS or other sources to verify that the outcome has been achieved. The result is to be recorded on the BEP system as "Outcome Achieved" or "Outcome not Achieved".

Some examples of how outcome verification may be achieved are:

- Acceptance to BCEP and EPPD: As MIS will not permit two open Employment Program files, clients should be referred to the appropriate Service Provider and once the Service Provider agrees to accept the client, the BP file can be closed as 'Outcome Achieved' and the electronic file for BCEP or EPPD then opened. As this is a deviation from normal referral procedures to these programs, RCMs will have to establish local work around procedures.
- Post Secondary education: check MIS history or cheque information. A review of the physical file may show the client's letter of confirmation from the educational institution, or student loan records may be on file. If no records are in the physical file or on MIS, the client should be contacted to provide proof. If required to contact post secondary institutions for verification of outcomes, it should be noted that these institutions may require a client signed release of information prior to releasing information regarding the client's enrollment in their institution to a third party.
- Employment details must be recorded on MIS. If known, record employer name, start date and wage rate. A review of cheque history should be done to confirm that the client's dependence on IA has been reduced.
- High School or GED education for youth under Youth Agreements must be confirmed.
  Procedures:
  1. Obtain a signed release of information from the client.
  2. Call the institution to verify that the client is attending or completed
  3. Advise the MCFD Social Worker of the outcome

Systems Instructions:

See BEP Systems User Guide

Forms and template Letters:

N/A

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

Monitoring Standards

(Section under development)

Contract Evaluation Standards

(Section under development)

CONTRACT PAYMENT

Overview: This section outlines the payments associated with the Bridging Employment Program.

Responsibilities:

Service Provider: Ensure the BEP system is updated with accurate client status, entered in a timely manner, with relation to deadlines and milestones to ensure payment at each milestone.

Regional Contract Manager: Authorize all contract payments and reconcile any differences between the Billing Advisory Report (BAR) and other records.

Policies:

There are three types of payments in the BEP program each associated with a milestone payment:

1. **"Part 1 payments"** are the service fee charged by the service provider for delivering the core session components based on client participation in the session and subdivided into three components:

    - Part 1 a) associated with enrollment in the session (37.5% of the service price/participant)
    - Part 1 b) two monthly payments paid during the 2nd and 3rd month for each enrolled client whether the client is still attending or not (each being 18.75% of the service price/participant)
    - Part 1 c) paid when a client successfully completes the session (25% of the service price/participant)

2. **"Part 2 payments"** are bonuses paid to a service provider if a client achieves one of the four outcomes that indicate that the client has moved along the employment continuum towards sustainable employment within six-months of completing the session.

3. **"Participant support payments"** made to clients by Service Providers during the session and reimbursed by the Ministry. These payments are provided to cover the cost of supports required by individual participants in order to complete the program. Examples of these payments may include:

    - Work clothing for job interviews, practicum placement or employment

- Child care subsidy (above the Ministry's allowable amount)
- Haircuts
- Transportation costs to and from the sessions or to job interviews

Guidelines and Procedures:

The preferred outcome for all Ministry employment programs is independence for the client from Income Assistance through employment. However, the Ministry recognizes that for many of its clients, independence is a goal that will take some time to achieve. Some employment programs, including the Bridging Employment Program, are intended to assist Clients along the continuum toward independence. Consequently, the payment structure for the Program includes incentives and techniques intended to help Service Providers fulfil that objective with their clients.

Payment Authorization and Reconciliation:

Regional Contract Managers are responsible for authorizing all contract payments and for dealing with issues brought forward by Service Providers.

Every month the BEP System calculates the payments due on a Billing Advisory Report (BAR). (i.e. the BAR is the Service Provider's invoice) The BAR lists all details of all recommended Part 1 and 2 payments for all contracts that have had financial activity in the past month.

Contract Managers will:

- Request the BAR report from the BEP system for each contract for which they are responsible. The bar reports are normally available as of the 1st day of the month for the preceding month.
- Check the BAR against class lists and own records and note any changes/corrections.
- Fax the BAR report to respective Service Provider for verification.
- Pay the Service Provider once both parties agree.

Payments are made via CAS Oracle. Details on financial payment may be found at: http://icw.eia.gov.bc.ca/fin_admin/index.htm

Payments issued will be adjusted later if the Ministry, as a result of an audit or reconciliation of payments previously made, finds an additional amount payable or finds that an overpayment has occurred.

Bonus Incentive Payments:

The payment amount for Incentive Payments varies from contract to contract and is detailed in Schedule B of the Service Provider's contract. The Ministry will only make one Bonus Incentive Payment for an individual Participant under this Agreement (e.g. client is accepted to BCEP and the Incentive Payment is made, then 90 days later has not found work so the client is referred to Training for Jobs and accepted). A second Incentive Payment will not be made for the second outcome.

Participant support payments:

The amount and type of supports is determined by the Service Provider as submitted in their Proposal. The Ministry has incorporated the amount and types of supports requested by the Service Provider in each contract.

Service Provider:

At least 14 calendar days before the start date of each Session the Contractor will provide the Ministry with a written estimate of the total amount of Participant Support Payments that will be required for a Session. There is no limit on the amount of supports per client, but the service Provider must manage participant support costs within the total contracted amount.

The Service Provider will submit a statement of the actual amount expended on Participant Support Payments to the Ministry by no later than 14 calendar days after the end date of each Session. The statement must include supporting details on the amounts and types of supports paid by the Contractor to each Participant during the Session. Support payments made to or on behalf of the client are considered a training allowance, not income, and therefore do not need to be declared by the client (see *BCEA /EAPWD Regulation 1*- definition of unearned income and Policy Manual Section 7.9)

Contract Manager:

At session start, approve the Participant Support Payment request and pay an advance to the Contractor.
On completion of the session, reconcile Participant Support Payments submitted against payment advances. Any reconciliation required, as a result of over or under payments will be provided for in the payments made in subsequent months. For further details on Ministry and Government policies and procedures for processing accountable advances please see:
http://www.fin.gov.bc.ca/ocg/fmb/manuals/FAPRO/FAPROtoc.htm

Systems Instructions:

See BEP Systems User Guide

Forms and Template Letters:

N/A

PROGRAM REPORTING

Regular reports are not required. Ad hoc reports may be requested on an as required basis.

COMMUNICATIONS

Policy and Business Questions

SYSTEMS QUESTIONS:

Step 1 - determine if question/issue is a “how-to” question or a “It’s broken” issue.

“How-to” questions:

First Contact: System User Guide
Second contact: Regional Liaison or Regional Contract Manager
Third contact:

- Program Coordinator -Barry Doucette (250) 356-6673

“It’s broken” issues:

First contact: Regional Liaison or Contract Manager (to verify it’s a technical problem)

Second contact:

- MEIA Support (EIAHDSUP@gov.bc.ca)
- cc Program Coordinator (Barry Doucette)
- Specify whether problem is MIS or BEP

Note: Help Desk can NOT address “how-to” questions

Policy or Business Questions

Point of contact:

- Regional Liaison and/or Regional Contract Manager
- BEP Policies and Procedures Manual

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS BY SERVICE PROVIDERS AND ISSUES MANAGEMENT

Overview: This section outlines procedures to follow for public announcements from the service providers, as well as procedures for dealing with issues related to the Bridging Employment Program.

Responsibilities:

- **Service Providers** will ensure that all public announcements and communications regarding the program are in accordance with the Public Announcements and Use of Provincial Logo section (section 5.00) of their contract
- **Regional Contract Managers** will ensure that Service Providers are aware of their contractual obligations and will liaise where necessary with EIB and PAB staff so that the ministry is aware of and has the opportunity to concur with public communications made about the program.

Policies:

a) Service Provider Responsibilities:

- Cooperate with the province in making public announcements regarding the Bridging Employment Program.
- Acknowledge the Province's contribution by prominently displaying the Provincial logo in any materials produced and distributed by the contractor promoting BEP
- Post signage acknowledging the Province's contribution to the Services
- Not use the Provincial logo in any other capacity or for any other purpose
- Provide 72-hour advance notice to the Province (Contract Manager) of any planned communication, advertising or media interviews in relation to the Program;
- not use the name, photograph or any personal information of any Participant (as defined in Schedule "A" of the Contract) in any promotional Materials without submission of the written consent of the Participant to the Province;
- Inform the Province of media interviews, news releases, feature stories regarding the Services provided under this agreement.
- For issues that arise, service providers should first contact the Regional Liaison or Regional Contract Manager via phone or email to resolve. If unable to resolve the matter at the regional level, the service provider should contact the Program Manager at Employment Initiatives Branch. If this process fails to resolve the issue, then the more formal steps outlined in the Dispute Resolution section (section 16.00) of the contract apply.

b) Contract Manager:

- Resolve service delivery issues in collaboration with service providers and other ministry staff.
- Advise EIB and the Regional Operations Branch of any media or public issues involving the service provider as soon as they become known.
- Assist EIB and other ministry staff in resolving issues as soon as possible.

Guidelines and Procedures:

- Regional contract managers or regional liaisons are to ensure that service providers are aware that the Provincial logo is located at the following website: http://www.eia.gov.bc.ca/wordmark/index06.htm
- Notice of planned communication is to be forwarded from Regional Contract Managers to Employment Initiatives Branch
- Regional contract managers are expected to deal with issues that arise directly with service providers. Where an issue arises that may come to the attention of an MLA or the press, the issue, with supporting background information, must be passed to EIB so that appropriate individuals within the ministry can be informed.

Systems Instructions:

N/A

Forms and Template Letters:

N/A

BRIDGING EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (BEP) SYSTEM

Overview

The Bridging Employment Program System is a computer application (program), which is used to keep track of information recorded in the BEP Program. There are two versions of the BEP System, one for MEIA staff and one for BEP Service Providers. Ministry staff and Service Providers are responsible for using the BEP Information System to accurately manage client information. Detailed information can be found in the user guide, which can be accessed at Resources for Staff in the BEP Online Resource.

The BEP System is a client tracking system that uses both MIS and Internet technology. It provides ministry staff with real-time information about clients who have been referred to the BEP Program from the MIS system.

Authorized ministry staff can access the BEP system on the ~~MHR~~ MEIA Applications web site. All of the core data in the BEP system resides in a single database. This means the information stored in the ministry database is always up-to-date and there is only one version of it. There is also a BEP Intranet site that staff can use to check the current status of any BEP file, run queries and generate ad hoc reports.

Service Providers and the BEP System

Service Providers can access real-time information on the system through a secure web site. Each Service Provider has been provided with User IDs and passwords. These allow them to access only the BEP system. They have no access to other government systems on the BEP system and they can only access data relating to their own Clients.

Some Service Providers have created their own database systems for internal administrative purposes. The ministry has agreed to provide them with a nightly file transfer to update their systems. It is important for ministry staff to keep in mind that these Service Providers will not receive BEP system updates until the following day.

Relationship between BEP System and MIS

The MIS System and the BEP system do not communicate with each other in real-time. Instead, they update each other every night via a file transfer. It is important for staff to keep this communication delay in mind when considering deadlines.

BEP System User Guide

A systems user guide for BEP has been developed and is available at Resources for Staff in the BEP Online Resource.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – GLOSSARY OF TERMS

For the purposes of the BEP, the following descriptions apply:

(a) “Bridging Employment Program” or "Program" or "BEP" means the Bridging Employment Program as defined by the requirements in this document.

(b) “Case Manager” means the MEIA staff person (Employment and Assistance Worker, Employment Consultant (EC) or Rehabilitation Worker) who is responsible for managing a client’s individual file including those components of the client’s file that reside on the MIS and/or BEP System.

(c) “Client” means an individual receiving Income Assistance or funding from the Ministry of Children and Family Development under a Youth Agreement.

(d) “Community” means a City, District Municipality, or Town. It is the location where the program will be offered.

(e) "Community Bridging Category" means the category of the Bridging Employment Program that is targeted for women in receipt of Income Assistance who are normally not participating in any other ministry-funded program, and who have experienced violence and/or abuse.

(f) “Course” and “Contract” both refer to a program offered by a specific Service Provider in a specific community within one of the Bridging categories. A course or contract may have several associated sessions.

(g) "Employability Screen" means the form set out in Schedule E of the *Employment and Assistance Act,* used by ministry staff that begins the process of determining client employability for Income Assistance. The screen assists staff in identifying clients who are:

   (i) immediately employable/employable with short-term interventions (clients scoring up to and including 14); or

   (ii) employable with longer-term interventions (clients scoring 15 or greater).

(h) “Employment Plan” means a plan that is required under Section 9 of the *Employment and Assistance Act* and the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act.* The Employment Plan outlines the conditions, employment activities, expectations for applicants, recipients or dependent youth to participate in specific employment related programs that will assist them to find employment or become more employable.

(i) "Employment Programs for Persons with Disabilities" or "EPPD" means a full spectrum of programs, services interventions and supports required to address the varying needs of persons with disabilities and funded by the ministry.

(j) "Enrollment" or "Enrolled" describes when a client has been approved for participation in the Program by the ministry at the request of the Service Provider and attends 14 calendar days of the session held by that Service Provider.

(k) "Former Sex Trade Category" means the category of the Bridging Employment Program that is targeted at former sex trade workers who are in receipt of Income Assistance or funding assistance provided under Youth Agreements by the Ministry for Children and Family Development, who are normally not participating in any other ministry-funded program, and who have experienced violence and/or abuse.

(l) "Income Assistance" means support and shelter allowance provided under the British Columbia *Employment and Assistance Act* and the British Columbia *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*. Income Assistance does not include Canada Pension Plan Adjustments.

(m) "MEIA" means the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance.

(n) "Part 1 Fee" means the basic fee for service paid to a Service Provider as a participant is accepted into, and progresses through, the BEP. Part 1 Fees will be paid on the following basis a) an initial payment of 37.5% of the total Part 1 cost when a client has been confirmed in the program, b) another 37.5% of the total Part 1 cost, in equal monthly instalments, over a period of two months (i.e. the same number of instalments for all Service Provider / sessions regardless of differing actual session lengths): and 25% of the Part 1 payment upon the participant's successful completion of the program.

(o) "Part 2 Payment" means an incentive payment paid to the Service Provider when a participant who has completed the Program and achieved an outcome specified in the Service Provider's contract within six months of completion of the Bridging Employment Program.

(p) "Participant Support Payment" means: supplemental funds paid by the Service Provider to a participant to help cover the cost of childcare, transportation, food, and any other reasonable costs directly related to the Participant's ability to participate in the Program. The Service Provider is reimbursed by the ministry for these participant support payments, provided these payments have been authorized during the contract negotiation or re-negotiation process.

(q) "Participant" means a client that has been approved by the ministry for participation in the Bridging Employment Program and who has also been accepted into the program by the Service Provider.

(r) "Person with a Persistent Multiple Barrier" means an individual who is unable to achieve financial independence because of specific personal barriers to employment that are beyond their control and not remediable even with long-term interventions, as defined in section 2 of the Employment and Assistance Regulation.

(s) "Service Provider" is an organization contracted by MEIA to deliver the BEP in at least one Community in the province.

(t) “Session” identifies one occurrence of a course with a specific start date and end date. Thus, for example, a Service Provider may offer courses tailored to Spanish speaking participants, in three 15-week sessions per year.

(u) “Session Duration” means the stated length of time required for a participant to complete one Session.

(v) "Special Bridging Category" means the category of the Bridging Employment Program that is targeted for women in receipt of Income Assistance who are normally not participating in any other ministry-funded program, and who have experienced violence and/or abuse and who face additional barriers to employment due to language or culture.

(w) "Voluntary Participation Plan" means a plan designed by the ministry and used to outline the activities intended to result in employment or increased employability for clients with no statutory employment-related obligations.

(x) "Youth Agreements" means a legal agreement between a youth between the age of 16 and 19 and the Ministry for Children and Family Development.

APPENDIX 2 - FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY GUIDELINES FOR MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME ASSISTANCE STAFF

FOIPP Act

The BC *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA) covers all public bodies within the province. The Act was developed for the following reasons:

- to ensure that public bodies are more accountable to the public;
- establishes the rights of access to records that are in the custody or under the control of public bodies and places certain specific limitations on that right of access;
- to protect privacy, and
- to provide for an independent review of decisions made under the Act.

Click on the following link to access the *FOIPP Act*:

http://www.oipcbc.org/legislation/FOI-ACT.pdf

General Guidelines

Regional Offices will assist anyone interested in obtaining access to information and records that are under the custody and control of the regions. Under the Act, ministry staff have a duty to assist people requesting information, and at all times staff will comply with the spirit of the legislation and act with integrity and fairness.

Staff will also protect personal information from disclosure and ensure that such information is used only for the purposes for which it was collected. (Section 30 of the Act places an obligation on the ministry, and therefore on staff at all levels, to protect personal information from such risks as unauthorized access, collection, use, disclosure or disposition).

Resources

For more information about this topic and helpful guidelines, see the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for BC at this site: http://www.oipcbc.org/ or see the Ministry of Management Services Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy site at: http://www.mser.gov.bc.ca/foi_pop/.

As well, the ministry's Information, Privacy and Records Services is available to quickly respond and provide advice and guidance whenever you have questions on matters concerning privacy and/or information access.

APPENDIX 3 – BEP SERVICE PROVIDERS

MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME ASSISTANCE BRIDGING EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM SERVICE PROVIDERS

Community Bridging Category

Organization	Community Served
Vancouver Eastside Educational Enrichment Society	Vancouver
ELLE Consulting	Kamloops
Newton Advocacy Group	Surrey
Prince George and District Elizabeth Fry Society	Prince George
Bridging Society of Women	Victoria
Northwest Training LTD	Terrace
Okanagan University College	Kelowna
Cowichan Women Against Violence Society	Duncan
Mennonite Central Committee	Abbottsford, Chilliwack, Hope, Agassiz, Mission
Community Futures Development Corporation of the North Okanagan	Vernon

Former Sex Trade Workers Category

Organization	Community Served
PEERS Vancouver	Vancouver
PEERS Victoria	Victoria

Special Bridging Category

Organization	Community Served
Immigrant Services Society	Vancouver - Immigrant women
Metropolitan Community College	Mission - Aboriginal women