

BCEP

BULLETS . . .

Bullet #6

June 14, 2007

BCEP 'Pause' for Seasonal Employment

To: MEIA Regional Services /BCEP Contractors

Purpose:

To address a need for seasonal, short-term employees, particularly in the agriculture sector, BCEP policy has been amended to allow 'pauses' for clients who acquire seasonal employment.

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MEIA and its clients have played a key role in BC's seasonal labour market, particularly in the agricultural sector. Strong partnerships were forged between employers and the ministry in communities dependent upon agri-business. Examples include the spring daffodil pick on southern Vancouver Island and orchard work in the Okanagan.

While the need for seasonal employees still exists, changes within the ministry's policies and programs as well as a declining 'employable' client caseload limit MEIA's ability to provide a reliable source of potential employees for seasonal employers. The ministry is still committed to referring new applicants for BCEA to seasonal employers during the three-week mandatory work search. Where necessary and appropriate the ministry will provide clients who acquire employment with clothing and tools.

BCEP is the primary employment program for those who are expected to work. Due in part to Program expectations, most clients who might otherwise be available to work short-term jobs, are typically routed into BCEP. Those who are not immediately referred and accepted into BCEP might be suitable candidates for seasonal employment. However, once employment has ended these clients may not be immediately referred to BCEP which could leave a potential void in employment programming for a number of clients. For those clients who are accepted into BCEP, there are currently no mechanisms or policies within the Program to allow clients to temporarily leave BCEP for seasonal, short-term employment. As such, if a client acquires a seasonal job the BCEP file would be closed jeopardizing future employment program opportunities for the client.

Policy:

To satisfy communities' needs for seasonal employees and to ensure a continuum of employment services for MEIA clients who are expected to work, BCEP policy has been amended to allow 'pauses' for clients who acquire short-term, seasonal employment, no less than fourteen days and not expected to exceed ninety days, similar to the 'pauses' for those who are determined to have a short term medical condition.

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In addition, for those who are 'paused' for short-term, seasonal employment, and require essential supports to facilitate employment (e.g. work clothing, lunch box / cooler, etc), the BCEP Contractor may issue funds for the purchase of items.

Procedures:

Client 'Pause' During DWS or ISS

Clients who are determined to have a short term medical condition (e.g. a broken arm) while participating in the BC Employment Program (BCEP) may be "paused" for up to a maximum of three months during the services period. The same policy will apply for Clients who acquire short-term, seasonal employment (e.g. fruit picking) may be "paused" for up to a maximum of three months during the services period. Contractors must request ministry approval before a Pause may begin. A Pause cannot be less than fourteen days or longer than three months (if longer than three months, the Client is returned to the ministry). The service period for the Client will be extended by the length of the approved Pause.

There is a maximum of one approved Pause during a Client's participation in both Directed Work Search and Individualized Services and Supports, with a maximum of two Pauses for a Client during the overall BCEP period. Any additional Pauses must be approved by the ministry on a case-by-case basis.

Procedures for MEIA staff and BCEP contractors will not change. The On-Line Resource (OLR) link to client 'Pause' procedures for MEIA staff is https://qww.eia.gov.bc.ca/bvprd/bc/or/ep/programView.do?programPage=/or/programBody.jsp&progView=items&channelId=-536896574&programId=536887008&pageTypeId=536882546&crumb=B.C.+Home*&crumburl=%2Fhome.do*%2Ffor%2Fep%2FprogramView.do#Client%20'Pause'%20during%20DWS%20or%20ISS%20Participation