

THREE-WEEK WORK SEARCH *(Updated November 29, 2010)*

The intent of the three-week work search is to emphasize that work is a better option than income assistance, which is a program of last resort. The three-week work search ensures that applicants pursue all employment opportunities before relying on income assistance.

During Stage 1 of the application process, applicants are assessed as to:

- whether they have already completed a satisfactory work search within the 30 days prior to application,
- if they need to complete a work search, or
- if they should be exempted from fulfilling the requirement.

STEP 1

Determine if an exemption is applicable

An applicant is exempt from the three-week work search if:

- any person in the family unit has an immediate need for food, shelter or urgent medical attention
 - Applicants with immediate needs also include:
 - those who have been ordered by the court to enter a supportive recovery home or an alcohol or drug facility, and the applicant's ability to enter the recovery home or facility depends on the applicant being in receipt of assistance
 - those who have been accepted into an alcohol or drug treatment or rehabilitation centre, and the applicant's ability to attend depends on being in receipt of assistance
 - pre-release prisoners (assessments for exemptions for pre-release prisoners are to be applied as per regional and provincial protocols)
- is fleeing an abusive spouse or relative
- is a sole applicant with a dependent child, or provides care to a child in the home of a relative, a foster child or a child in their care under an agreement referred to in sections 8 or 93 (1) (g) (ii) of the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* if the child has not reached 3 years of age
- has a physical or mental condition that, in the minister's opinion, **precludes** the applicant from completing a search for employment
- any person in the family unit is a person with disabilities (PWD)
- cannot legally work in Canada. If one of the adult applicants in a family unit is entitled to work in Canada, the three-week work search criteria must be met before the family is eligible to apply for assistance
- has reached 65 years of age
- is applying for Medical Services Only (MSO)
- is in a hospital or continuing care facility and receiving a comforts allowance and is applying for regular assistance because they are leaving the facility

Exemptions

- All applicants should be assessed to determine whether they meet one of the exemption criteria, as not all applicants will self-identify
- Clients who qualify for an exemption to the three-week work search will proceed directly to Stage 2 of the application process with an expedited eligibility review
- When none of the exemptions apply and a person is required to conduct the work search, their circumstances may change to warrant a reassessment
- If unable to determine if an applicant's mental or physical condition precludes a search for employment, request the applicant to provide documentation from a medical practitioner explaining the severity of the applicant's condition

Before proceeding to Stage 2 of the application process, applicants and spouses are required to provide proof they have conducted an active work search in the previous three-week period or in the 30 days prior to the Stage 1 application unless exempted.

STEP 2

Assessment of Work Search

Individual capabilities and local labour market conditions in communities should be considered when assessing the work search requirements; therefore some discretion may be applied.

General Guidelines for work search activities

- preparing a resume
- searching for job openings on the Internet
- telephone inquiries and face-to-face contact with potential employers
- submitting applications or resumes for jobs
- responding to newspaper advertisements
- information interviews establishing new contacts with potential employers
- attending temporary employment agencies, such as agencies providing federal Employment and Assistance Services, community based services, or private employment agencies
- attending job search sessions or job fairs
- attending relevant union halls to determine available employment
- networking with friends, relatives, neighbours, previous employers and others to generate and pursue job leads
- pursuing job shadowing opportunities
- researching and assessing availability of jobs in the local community
- assessing whether skills match available opportunities, investigating alternate occupations or alternate geographic locations
- attending workshops on employment searches
- employment interviews
- volunteer activities

General Guidelines for adequate work search

For most clients, adequate work search activities include:

- demonstrating regular and ongoing attempts to secure employment
- search efforts that are not restricted to a limited range of employment, employer or wage
- minimum of 25 hours of effort per week
- variety of work search activities
- minimum of 15 contacts per week

APPLICANTS COMPLETING THE WORK SEARCH PRIOR TO STAGE 1 APPLICATION

If applicants can demonstrate that they have completed an active work search lasting three weeks within the 30-day period prior to the date of the Stage 1 application, and provide information and verification of their search for employment, they may proceed to Stage 2 of the application process.

Assessment of work search activities

To assess an applicant's work search:

- **Open the "application" service request in ICM**
- Complete the Work Search Review (SD3116)
 - **Note:** As the decision on a reasonable work search may be appealed, make sure to record factual, objective, non-judgmental information on the SD3116.
- Record details of the interview on **the ICM service request**
- Sign the SD3116 and scan **and profile to the ICM service request** with the Work Search Activities Record (SD0077) or other relevant job search information / suitable record.

Verification of an adequate work search prior to Stage 2

As applicants may not be aware that documentation of work search activities are required, formal documentation may be provided at Stage 2:

- an up-to-date resume
- photocopies of application forms and cover letters submitted to employers
- a comprehensive list of work search activities similar to those listed on the Work Search Activities Record (SD0077) or a completed SD0077
- documents from Employment and Assistance Services programs
- training courses

Use of the Reasonable Work Search Activities Guidelines (SD3115) may assist in this process.

Work Search is adequate

The client may proceed to Stage 2 of the application process.

Work search is not adequate

Advise the applicant:

- what activities will need to be completed to meet the requirement
- that an application cannot proceed to Stage 2 until a reasonable work search has been completed
- advise that if circumstances change the applicant should contact the ministry for reassessment
- record details **on the appropriate service request in ICM**

APPLICANTS COMPLETING THE WORK SEARCH AFTER STAGE 1 APPLICATION

<p><i>Required to complete three-week work search</i></p>	<p>If the applicant is required to complete a three-week work search, inform the applicant of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three-week work search requirement • Acceptable work search activities • Expected amount of time devoted to work search activities <p>Provide applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Three-Week Work Search Activities Guidelines information sheet (SD3115) with a 14-day Work Search Review date ○ Work Search Activities Record (SD0077) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All applicants must complete this form and submit it prior to the application interview. Provide a hard copy to applicant. • Inform applicant of Independent Work Search Toolkit resource available online (provide a hard copy if requested) • Ensure the applicant has read and understood the Work Search Guidelines • Advise of requirement to review work search activities after 14 days
<p><i>14-Day Work Search Review (14-Day Touchback)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request orientation session confirmation number and date of completion • Review the Work Search Activities Record form to assist in determining a satisfactory work search • If the applicant has completed the required number of work search activities, give the applicant an eligibility interview appointment to take place after the three-week work search
<p><i>Assessment of work search</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open the "application" service request in ICM • Complete the Work Search Review form (SD3116) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Note: As the decision on a reasonable work search may be appealed, make sure to record factual, objective, non-judgmental information on the SD3116 • Ensure the applicant has completed the Declaration and Notification section of the SD0077 indicating the information provided is true and complete • Record details of the interview on the ICM service request • Sign SD3116 and scan and profile to the ICM service request with SD0077 or other suitable record
<p><i>Work Search is adequate</i></p>	<p>The applicant may proceed to Stage 2 after the remainder of the 21 day period.</p>
<p><i>Work Search is not adequate</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain to the applicant what additional activities are required to demonstrate reasonable efforts to obtain employment. Apply discretion to determine the number of additional days required to demonstrate a reasonable work search • Reiterate that an application cannot proceed to Stage 2 until a reasonable work search has been completed • If applicant still does not satisfy the work search requirement after additional days, repeat the process until a reasonable work search is completed or deny right to proceed to application and advise of right to request a reconsideration

Resource Links

OLR → Application → Three-Week Work Search

Policy:

Staff: https://qww.hsd.gov.bc.ca/intranet/meia/online_resource/application/threeweek/current/policy.html

Public: http://www.gov.bc.ca/meia/online_resource/application/threeweek/policy.html

Forms & Letters:

Staff: https://qww.hsd.gov.bc.ca/intranet/meia/online_resource/application/threeweek/current/forms.html

Public: http://www.gov.bc.ca/meia/online_resource/application/threeweek/forms.html

Resources For Clients:

Public: [Independent Work Search Tool Kit](#)

Work Search Resources for Clients:

WorkBC

http://www.workbc.ca/job_seekers/welcome.htm

WorkBC's [BC Labour Market Programs Inventory](#)