



## **NEW PROGRAM PRIORITIZES 1<sup>ST</sup> YEAR APPRENTICESHIP IN 39 RED SEAL TRADES Funding compensates BC construction employers, fueling hiring and registration**

**Victoria, BC (August 24, 2022)** – The BC Construction Association (BCCA) has received over \$21M in funding from the Government of Canada’s Apprenticeship Service to enable small and medium sized employers in BC’s construction industry to hire and register first-year apprentices.

An employer with fewer than 500 employees in BC’s construction industry can receive financial incentives for hiring new employees or registering existing ones as first-year apprentices in 39 Red Seal Trades.

Participating employers will receive \$5,000 for hiring or registering any worker. An additional \$5,000 will be received if the worker self-reports as a woman, new Canadian, LGBTQ+, Indigenous, a person with a disability, or a visible minority, which contributes to much-needed workforce diversity. Employers can receive payments for up to two first-year apprenticeship positions per year during the two years of the drive, for a maximum of \$40,000 per employer.

“BC’s construction industry is in a vice grip right now, and it’s tightening,” says Chris Atchison, BCCA President. “Employers are dealing with rising costs, material shortages, increased taxes, mandatory sick pay, labour shortages, and late payments. It can be costly to hire and train new apprentices, and especially in this climate, \$40,000 can go a good distance to alleviating some of that cost burden.”

Employers can spend the financial incentives at their discretion. For example: hiring bonuses, gear and work apparel, childcare costs, offsetting business taxes, offsetting costs of mandatory sick leave, training and mentoring, raises for field or office staff, safety equipment, or new technology. As part of the service to employers, BCCA will provide culture training via its Builders Code program, and mentorship support through its new Building Builders initiative.

BC’s construction industry is approximately 95 per cent male and continues to face a skilled workforce shortage during a time of high demand for construction services. Most employers are small, with 90 per cent employing 20 workers or less.

“We need more skilled trades workers in British Columbia, and across Canada,” said Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion. “That’s why we’re working with employers to create tens of thousands of new apprenticeships. It’s why we’re doubling incentives for employers who hire women, persons with disabilities, and other traditionally marginalized groups – to make sure that everyone who wants to pursue a skilled trade, has the chance to.”

“The skilled trades offer many exciting and rewarding career opportunities, and they are in high demand,” said Kamal Khara, Minister of Seniors. “The Apprenticeship Service will help Canadians get valuable work experience in the skilled trades, particularly equity-deserving groups such as women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous people and racialized people. Today’s announcement will also support small and medium-sized enterprises that are providing these key job opportunities to first-year apprentices.”

In addition to the financial incentives, the BCCA will conduct a major promotional campaign to attract new talent to the industry.

“We know that construction employers are already doing their best to find and hire workers” says Atchison. “So, in addition to the financial incentives, we’re going to mount a compelling acquisition campaign to bring new talent to employers who list their jobs with us. We’ll be working with a digital recruitment agency, as well as a marketing and communications agency. We’re pulling out all the stops.”

**About the British Columbia Construction Association**

The British Columbia Construction Association (BCCA) works with four Regional Construction Associations (NRCA, SICA, VICA and VRCA) to serve more than 10,000 employers in the province’s industrial, commercial, institutional (ICI) construction industry. BCCA advocates on behalf of all employers to ensure British Columbia’s construction sector remains productive and resilient.

For more information about BCCA, please visit: <http://bccassn.com/>

If you’re a BC construction employer interested in this initiative, please visit: <https://bccassn.com/apprenticeship-services/>

View the Government of Canada’s funding announcement news release [here](#)

- 30 -

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