



County of Simcoe
Social Services
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MINUTES

MEETING DATE: September 27, 2012

MEETING TIME: 9:00 a.m - 11:30 a.m., County of Simcoe Administration Centre

ATTENDANCE: Cuthbertson, R. (Welcome Centre – Newmarket); Desbiens, M. (College Boreal); Douglas, L. (LIP, recording secretary); Laycock, S. (SMWDB); Low, K. (Northern Lights); Newell, D. (Northern Lights); Pacheco, D. (Tracks); Skybin, Y. (YMCA Newcomer Services); Terrance, M. (Social Enterprise for Canada); Wahl, M. (Midland Employment Services); Whittington, P. (Georgian College; Chair); Wisken, R. (LIP); Woodrow, L. (Barrie Career Centre); Zeng, M. (Barrie Chinese Association)
Regrets: Gavarre, N. (City of Barrie); Hie, H. (Georgian College); Scott, K. (County of Simcoe); Skybin, Y. (YMCA Newcomer Services)

SUBJECT: Employment Sub-Council

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed members, and members introduced themselves.

2. Review of Notes of Meeting of June 28, 2012

Page 3 – reference client test cases. The Chair provided a follow-up on the doctor who was working in a factory. It was determined that the person was not a suitable candidate for various reasons. The employer also had other obligations over summer. If interest remains, other client test cases could be considered. D. Newell mentioned a client that is currently doing an apprenticeship who might be suitable candidate.

3. Roundtable Update

R. Wisken, LIP

The Community Settlement Strategy Launch is taking place on the 17th of October at the Mady Centre for Performing Arts. All attendees acknowledged receiving an invitation to this event.

FOCUS hosted a career fair in Angus this week. Copies of *Hiring Immigrants makes Good Business Sen\$e* were delivered to be available at the fair.

Donna Newell, Northern Lights

Barrie Service Providers are hosting a job fair at the Holiday Inn on October 1. Advertising for the event is underway, with good crowds expected.

Copies of *Hiring Immigrants makes Good Business Sen\$e* could be made available at the job fair. Limited copies can be obtained from the Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development Board.

The *Digging Deeper Report* is now available electronically, and hard copies were circulated to the Sub-council. The link to the report follows:

<http://www.northernlightscanada.ca/news/employer-services/2012/digging-deeper-survey-digs-up-local-employer-challenges>

A link will also be available on the SMWDB website.

Martina Wahl, Midland Employment Services

- Employer Breakfast is being held in Midland on November 22.
- Copies of *Hiring Immigrants* could be made available there as well.

Marc Terrance, Welcome Centre Immigrant Services

- Conversation Circle started last month at the Common Roof in Orillia.
- SEC is providing 2 workshops at the IEP Conference: workshop on accreditation in the afternoon; and a workshop for employers in the morning

Rachel Cuthbertson, Welcome Centre Immigrant Services

- Conversation circle starting in Collingwood – exact date TBD
- Static service now offered at Tracks Employment in Collingwood

Manon Desbiens, Collège Boréal

Transition to Work Program introduced for Francophone youth for 15-29 years of age → 22 week program – fully funded. Next program begins in January.

4. Updates on Working Groups:

Establishing an IEC – R. Wisken reported that the group has not met during the summer. Funding alternatives are being explored as Allies has closed their funding opportunities.

Employer Education – M. Desbiens reported that this group has met twice and established the following priorities: reduce turnover; credentials assessment; how to connect with newcomers; and cultural competency. Action:

- Develop an information brochure that would incorporate a checklist, more user-friendly, tear out section for interviews
- Hold an information session presented as a business case study.

Feedback included:

Audience:

- Target audience for business session → determine who is target → small or medium → Business case might be developed differently for small vs. large.

Funding

- How would these activities be funded?
- YMCA is offering employer workshops now in Midland – could plug into these (M. Wahl). 5-10 employers usually attend.
- Georgian had funding as well on newcomer friendly hiring. P. Whittington will check funding sources.

Brochure

- practical idea
- make user friendly

Further feedback can be directed to members of the working group before their next meeting on October 18.

Professional Development – P. Whittington reported that this enthusiastic group met once and established the following action items:

- Consult with newcomer services in other parts of province on translation software (identified as common barrier)
- Research and develop a cheat sheet – key questions or statements that make newcomer feel welcome (i.e. questions on status in Canada, experience – phrased appropriately).
- Establish a welcome letter in different languages
- Conduct research on what other organizations are doing for cultural competency → #1 requirement
- Include local cultural groups on the committee to hear their voice.

Feedback was welcomed:

Settlementservices.ca provides translations for different government forms

Georgian submitted proposals to CIC to offer conversation circles and mentoring programs to youth and internationally-trained professionals.

Newcomer Education - P. Whittington reported on this working group on behalf of H. Hie.

One priority is to address the issue of newcomers not accessing employment services enough.

Action items: develop an inventory of workshops directed at newcomers from service providers

- Use draft of the Employment service component of directory.
- IEP Conference – hope service providers will send staff
- Lunch 'n Learn session for service provider agencies

The next meeting is scheduled on October 8.

5. Immigrant Resource Directory – Employment Section (Welcoming Communities Sub-council)

R. Wisken provided an update on the Employment Section of the Immigrant Resource Directory:

- The working group has met 3 times with one more meeting planned to develop content
- The group developed a list of what should be included in the directory & then gathered the information
- Last meeting centred on language to reflect programs in the area
- 211 will provide the contact portion to match the information in the directory
- Redirect people to employment service component
- Coordination of staff in preparation for release of the directory – could be part of the professional development piece
- Take back to the community – take local responsibility to distribute
- Circulate draft to Employment Sub-council for feedback.
- S. Laycock acknowledged the hard work of the working groups and their strong knowledge base.

There was a brief discussion on how the directory will be distributed: online, libraries, service providers.

P. Whittington thanked everyone for freeing up staff to participate in these working groups.

6. Portal

R. Wisken provided a brief update on the development of LIP's community-driven website housed on the Ontario Immigration website. Hiring is underway for the 2 positions. Five Community Information Sessions will take place at the end of October and early November.

7. Citizenship Categories

In absence of a guest speaker from CIC, a self study and group sharing will be undertaken at today's meeting on the various citizenship categories. Questions will be directed to CIC for further explanation.

Discussion ensued on the following categories:

Terminology – What is the difference between a permanent resident and landed immigrant? Permanent resident/landed immigrant are the same.

Visiting Canada

- Can check process on Website

Work and stay visa – 6 months to 1 year term (for countries that do not need a visa)

Question: What are the parameters, eligibility, and process of the work and stay visa?

Studying in Canada –

- International students
- Eligible to work on campus
- Change in study permits – eligibility in private schools, public remains same
- Students have to be in good standing
- Can apply for post graduate work permit for 3 years – language proficiency required.
- Should be assisted by educational institution if person is looking for work outside post graduation.

No questions for CIC in this category.

Working temporarily in Canada

- Some jobs who do not require a work permit, i.e. health care
- Category includes live-in caregivers

Question: Do you need a work permit to volunteer?

Question: Can an applicant apply directly without agency/consultant assistance?

- Requirements to apply for an open work permit after 24 months
- Could be eligible for other programs in community – settlement services
- Question: How to apply?
- Spouses of those with business temporary work permits can apply for open work permit.
- Business – those who are working specifically for an employer. When job finished, the worker is expected to leave the country.
- Could persons be referred to newcomer services such as the YMCA to answer questions? It was suggested that service workers only work with persons who have an open work permit.

Immigrating in Canada

- Skilled workers and professionals (closed temporarily due to backlog)
- Raised the bar, experience, spousal experience
- Revised skilled worker program unveiled in August 2012.
- Elimination of family sponsorship program

Refugees

- All suffer from post traumatic stress disorder
- Have a year to apply on humanitarian grounds. Protected person status = permanent resident status.
- Convention refugees get a loan which must be repaid in 6 month. (usually from refugee camps)
- Claimants are permitted to work during the period until the claim is approved
- Ask client their status and papers – more helpful in long run.

- Ask the client directly if they are eligible to work in Canada

Other

- Guidance needed on photocopying work permits.
- Document what was on work permit
- Members encouraged to review the categories with staff
- Chair thanked Y. Skybin for her valuable input

8. The Gateway IEP Conference

The Gateway IEP Conference is scheduled for October 23 in Richmond Hill. Along with a Keynote speaker, there will be 5 workshops in the morning with an employer focus and 5 in the afternoon with an IEP focus. The Welcome Centre is hoping to have buses available to take clients to the conference.

9. Other Business

There was no further business at this time.

10. Next Meetings

Fall: October 25; November 22

The next meeting is scheduled for October 25. Agenda items will include the following: answers to CIC questions; updates from working groups; and feedback on the IEP Conference.

The November meeting is set for the 22nd at 9:00 a.m., at the County of Simcoe Administration Centre.