



CO-OP SUPERVISOR HANDBOOK



Where ideas work

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The Handbook

If you are reviewing this handbook, chances are you have hired a co-op student. Congratulations!

The goal of this handbook is to ensure supervising a co-op employee is a straightforward process, providing you with everything you need in one location and to share information to help ensure that the co-op employee's time with the BC Public Service is a success through mentoring and adequate support.

As the supervisor of a co-op employee, you hold the most pivotal role in creating a positive experience for their work term with the BC Public Service. Ideally, the co-op employee's firsthand experience of working for the BC Public Service can set the stage for a successful future career, benefiting employer and employee alike. It is through your ability to provide clear direction and links between their contributions to the overall goals of the organization that can create a lasting impression of the BC Public Service as being an employer of choice and a place where ideas work.

The BC Public Service Agency can help you with services and tools to provide a successful work term for your co-op employee. If you require further clarification on something that is mentioned here, or have a suggestion for additions to this guide, please do not hesitate to contact coop@gov.bc.ca.

Onboarding & Orientation

After an employee number and IDIR is set up, there is a lot that needs to be done to prepare for your co-op employee's first day. For successful co-op employee onboarding, follow the step-by-step guide to onboarding and orientation available on [MyHR](#).

Review the following links for important onboarding tools for you and your new employee:

- [Instructions for New Employees](#)
- [Onboarding Handout for New Employees \(PDF, 76KB\)](#)
- [Virtual onboarding](#)
- [Supervisor Virtual Onboarding Checklist \(PDF, 240KB\)](#)
- [Sample Virtual Onboarding Schedule \(PDF, 130KB\)](#)
- [Manager Self-Service: Access from Work](#)

Additional tips for successful co-op onboarding experience:

During the onboarding process, it's key to discuss expectations for the term, and set goals that align with both the student's learning objectives and your organization's goals within the role. It's beneficial to the student's learning to understand how their role contributes to the organization's overall direction and vision.

At the beginning of the work term, the student will set learning objectives which we encourage the supervisor to establish together in order to set attainable but challenging goals. These goals are related to the job they have been hired for, and articulate what they hope to learn, personally and professionally, during the work term. Please review these goals with them within the first couple of weeks on the job to ensure that they are on the right track and have realistic expectations over the course of the term.

Co-op employees are auxiliary employees, and their terms and conditions are outlined in the BCGEU Collective agreement. Co-op employees are hired under a Special Employment Program classification (Article 34). Visit [BCGEU 19th Main Agreement](#), Article 34.2 for more information about Co-op Employment Program terms and conditions.

Here are few highlights:

- Co-op Employees are auxiliary employees; however, they do not have recall rights.
- Co-op Employees may be hired for one or more co-op work terms.
- Co-op work term must be minimum 420 hours.
- Co-op Employees receive pay in lieu of health and welfare benefits and vacation.
- Co-op Employees are eligible for 5 days of paid sick leave per year (ESAPII leave) after 90 days of employment.

Resources and Support for Co-op Employees

- Please speak with your co-op employee about the supports, services, and resources available to them through the corporate Employment Programs Resource Office. Ensure your new co-op employee reads the Co-op welcome email, and reviews list of events and activities hosted by the Employment Programs Resource Office (EPRO). Co-op employees receive an invitation to all events and workshops organized by the EPRO.

If you have not received a supervisor welcome email, and your employee haven't received co-op welcome email, please contact coop@gov.bc.ca.

- Ensure your co-op student bookmarks the [Co-op Connect Hub](#) and reads the [Co-op Employees Handbook](#).
- Ask your co-op employee to block time in their calendar to attend the virtual co-op employee orientation event and any other events and workshops they are interested in.
- Encourage them to join the [Student Employee Community MS Teams](#)

- Provide them with an overview of your ministry (vision, mission, scope, projects), an overview of the ministry structure, an overview of your division/branch/business unit, organizational chart(s)
- Review the co-op employee roles and responsibilities, discuss performance expectations, hours of work, sick days, check ins/ check outs, flexible work options, building access etc.
- Arrange a “buddy” for the new employee who can answer questions and help them meet other co-workers.
- Provide them with the information about the [Pacific Leaders Tuition Grants for Co-op Employees](#) program and encourage they attend the Information Session organized by EPRO. Co-op employees are eligible to apply for the co-op tuition grant (worth up to \$1,000) each work term. The grant is a taxable benefit. Questions about the Program can be sent to: PacificLeadersCo-opGrants@gov.bc.ca
- Ensure there is alignment between work accountabilities and the employee’s academic program and adjust the employee’s scope of work accordingly. The co-op employee will likely have work term goals to supplement their classroom learning. During the co-op work term, it is typical for a co-op advisor from the post-secondary institution to do a virtual site visit to check-in and discuss the work experience and academic alignment.

Managing a co-op employee

- Go over learning goals with the co-op employee early in the work term.
- Set up recurring check-ins with the co-op employee to discuss their goals and potential work projects.
- Check in with the co-op employee about work projects on a weekly basis.
- Mentor the student (or assign a mentor) and oversee their progress.
- Assess the student’s performance using an post-secondary school assessment tool as required.
- Prepare to evaluate the co-op employee midway of the work term. Post-secondary school co-op coordinator will arrange a site visit midway through the
- term to discuss the student’s progress.

- Work term submission: The student will complete a final report or other submission near the end of the work term, which a school co-op advisor evaluates.
- Complete end of term co-op evaluation on the post-secondary school website.

Employment Programs Resource Office

The Employment Programs Resource Office (EPRO) offers a variety of events and activities to enhance your co-op employee's work experience and provides a broader, more corporate view of working for the BC Public Service.

Our office will send regular communication to you and your co-op employee for upcoming events and activities. Information about our services and other useful resources may be found on [Co-op Connect Hub](#).

Take a moment to check out the helpful links to Resources, Awards, Stories and Events designed to help you and your co-op employee get the most out of this amazing experience and opportunity.

Pacific Leaders Tuition Grants for Co-op Employees

The [Pacific Leaders Tuition Grants for Co-op Employees](#) program supports the recruitment and retention priorities of the BC Public Service, by providing co-op employees with a reimbursement for their co-op work term tuition fee, up to a maximum of \$1,000. Co-op work term tuition is the only expense eligible for reimbursement – the grant does not cover any fees or other costs, including other course tuition fees, application fees, student membership costs, books, supplies (including software), exam fees (if separate from tuition), union dues or travel/accommodation expenses.

The Pacific Leaders Tuition Grant program for co-op employees is managed corporately by the Co-op Program and Resource Office. Each ministry funds the co-op tuition grants which are recorded under STOB 5220.

Co-op employees complete and submit an application to the Employment Programs Resource Office, where program staff will confirm their eligibility for the grant. If the co-op employee is completing multiple work terms, they will have to apply for a grant each co-op work term. To be eligible for the grant, the co-op employee must be registered in a recognized co-operative education program at a participating post-secondary institution, and be currently participating in the [Co-op Employment Program](#) with a BC Public Service.

If eligibility requirements are met, the Employment Programs Resource Office will provide both the co-op employee, and the supervisor with a confirmation email detailing the grant amount and the reimbursement process.

Extending the Co-op Employee's Work Term

Your co-op employee may have flexibility in their academic calendar, such that they can do co-op work terms back-to-back. If this option appeals to you, check with their post-secondary co-op coordinator to confirm their availability for another work term.

To extend the work term follow the process outlined below:

1. Open the [Auxiliary Extension Automated Form](#) (IDIR restricted)
2. Complete all the required fields and submit the form
3. Once submitted, you'll receive an emailed copy of the service request.

Co-op Employees & Paid Illness and Injury Leave

All employees who have been employed for at least 90 days shall be entitled to up to five instances of Employment Standards Act Paid Illness and Injury leave (ESAPII) in each calendar year.

Employees must request ESAPII leave when on an absence due to illness or injury. An ESAPII leave code is available in Time and Leave.

Please visit [MyHR](#) to learn more about paid illness and injury leave for auxiliary employees without benefits.

Co-op Employees & Statutory Holiday Pay

Eligible auxiliary employees may receive pro-rated statutory holiday pay based upon the hours worked in the 30 days prior to the holiday.

To be eligible for statutory holiday pay, auxiliary and statutory term employees must have worked:

- The day before and the day after the holiday, or
- Fifteen of the 30 days prior to the holiday, or
- At least 105 hours in the 30 days previous to the holiday

Additional Supervisor Resources

Check out the [Tools, Resources & Support for Supervisors](#)

Read the [Auxiliary Appointments Explained \(PDF, 189KB\)](#)

Join the [MS Teams – Co-op Supervisor Community of Practice](#) to share information, collaborate, and learn from fellow managers & supervisors.

Join the monthly [Co-op Supervisor Check-in meetings](#).