

## Island Employment Agreement Termination – Background Information

Employment services in Nova Scotia are provided through a network of 16 provincial service providers under the umbrella of Nova Scotia Works. The Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration (LSI) contracts independent, community-based organizations to deliver employment services. Part of government’s role is to hold service providers to a certain standard as they receive funding from the province to provide services.

Because of our regular monitoring of service providers, along with the findings of a recent investigation by the Office of the Ombudsman, the department has ended its agreement with Island Employment.

### THE SOLUTION

LSI is working to find new Nova Scotia Works service provider(s) in Cape Breton as quickly as possible to ensure the seamless continuation of employment services.

### SUPPORTING STAFF

The decision to end the funding agreement between LSI and Island Employment, although necessary, has been difficult on the employees of the organization. We appreciate and value the service Island Employment staff have provided and continue to provide to clients during the transition.

As an independent organization, Island Employment has a collective agreement with the NSGEU. While LSI is not the employer, the department will provide a funding contribution that will bridge employees to new employment opportunities. This support is outlined within the collective agreement and goes beyond what is required.

### MINIMIZING IMPACTS

To ensure both job seekers and employers can continue to access services during this transition period, interim services are being coordinated temporarily through the YMCA of Cape Breton Employment Services.

The YMCA of Cape Breton has identified the need for specific additional staffing and has posted several term positions for various locations. Staff of Island Employment are **not in any way prevented from applying for these jobs**. In fact, LSI encourages them to apply, and we have confirmed that the job requirements are the same as their current roles.

The termination of the service agreement with Island Employment has nothing to do with the services provided by Island Employment staff.

### Additional Information

- LSI Expression of Interest - <https://novascotia.ca/employmentnovascotia/community-organizations.asp>
- Ombudsman Annual Report - [https://ombudsman.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/documents/annual\\_reports/OmbudsAR-2020-2021.pdf](https://ombudsman.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/documents/annual_reports/OmbudsAR-2020-2021.pdf)
- Nova Scotia Works, YMCA Job Postings - <https://novascotiaworks.ca/nsdc/>

### TIMELINE

**June 29, 2021:** The Office of the Ombudsman released its 2020-21 Annual Report.

**September 22, 2021:** LSI notified Island Employment, a Nova Scotia Works service provider, that all agreements funded through LSI would be terminated upon not less than 60 days written notice.

**October 1:** LSI was notified that the Executive Director of Island Employment informed staff the organization would dissolve ‘Island Employment Association’. Staff would continue to meet with clients until the agreement concluded on November 21, and clients could contact 1-833-679-9622 to arrange for a new case manager.

**October 5:** LSI released an Expression of Interest to secure new, permanent replacement service provider(s). The closing date for the EOI is November 4. It is anticipated that new service provider(s) will be in place in early 2022. There are no service cutbacks occurring as part of this change in service providers.