



Guy Bourgouin

MPP, Mushkegowuk - James Bay | Député, Mushkegowuk - Baie James

Kapuskasing, July 21st, 2020

Hon. Monte McNaughton,
Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development
14th Floor, 400 University Ave.
Toronto, ON M7A 1T7

RE: Trades and Apprenticeships Coursework and Examinations

Minister McNaughton,

I am writing today to demand you to take immediate action to address the trades course and examination backlog caused in part by the COVID-19 pandemic and which is affecting apprentices and workers in the province.

In an effort to abide by the Public Health Guidelines, in-person coursework, completion examinations and licenses were postponed, rescheduled or cancelled – and rightly so. However, as the proposed provincial reopening stages unfold, young students, workers and apprentices are desperately waiting for concrete solutions that will enable them to partake in the economic recovery of Ontario.

My office has heard of apprentices simply not knowing when they will be able to complete in-person coursework; of apprentices being unable to write an examination to obtain their licenses; of college students seeing exam registrations being postponed, re-scheduled or unavailable in their region; of apprentices desperate to complete certifications in order to take up work contracts; or of independent training centres having to delay training and thereby facing the risk of going out of business.

No matter what post-pandemic economic recovery efforts are envisioned, they are certainly not enough if young workers are unable to join the workforce. Our province simply cannot take the liberty of leaving high-skilled workers waiting any longer. Ontario was already facing a shortage of tradespeople prior to the pandemic and this examination and apprenticeship backlog will simply exacerbate this fact.

The time to take action to help young apprentices and tradespeople is now. And the clock is ticking.

Thank you very much for your time. I anxiously await your response.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Guy Bourgouin".

Guy Bourgouin
MPP/député, Mushkegowuk-James Bay/Baie James
Opposition Critic for Training, Trades and Apprenticeships

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CC: MPP Jamie West, Opposition Critic for Labour Relations Act
MPP Wayne Gates, Opposition Critic for Workplace Health and Safety