

**ALBERTA HUMAN RESOURCES AND EMPLOYMENT
PUBLIC REPORT
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**Canadian Language Benchmarks Working for Alberta
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Project Title: Canadian Language Benchmarks Working for Alberta

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The CCLB recognizes that for Alberta as elsewhere, access to employment is an increasingly significant aspect of the process of settlement for newcomers to Canada. Immigrants come to Canada with many skills to contribute to Canadian society, but may face unfair barriers in securing employment. This delays or prevents them from reaching their potential in contributing to Canadian society. These economic realities have led federal and provincial policymakers and decision-makers to explore new avenues to facilitate the entry of immigrants into the workforce.

The CCLB received funding from the Government of Alberta in order to increase the capacity of institutions and organizations within the Alberta labour market and post-secondary education system to effectively use the Canadian Language Benchmarks national standards for delivery of programs and services to adult newcomers. Four project activities were completed, with the following key outcomes.

1.0 Development of CLB Test Administration supports related to the workplace:

The CCLB carried out activities that increased access to the CLB employment related assessment tools CELBAN (Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for Nurses) and worked towards implementation of the WLA (Workplace Language Assessment).

For the WLA, the process of setting standard scores for sample test exemplars was completed, providing a broad range of test exemplars for:

- The WLA Assessment Guide
- The WLA webpages (password protected) for certified assessors
- WLA training
- WLA certification

Key Outcome:

- Validation of Workplace Language Assessment at key Alberta pilot sites

In order to address the demand for CELBAN assessment services by internationally-educated nurses in Calgary, the Government of Alberta provided funding for the establishment of a new test site. Use of the Edmonton site to serve Calgary residents was not proving to be an effective or economical long term solution. A Request for Qualifications was issued in Calgary

for institutions interested in becoming an official CELBAN Administration site. Applications were reviewed, and the Calgary Immigrant Aid Society was approved as the official CELBAN administration site in Calgary, following completion of training and certification requirements.

Key Outcomes:

- Establishment of new CELBAN test administration site in Calgary

2.0 National Assessment Framework:

The CCLB is committed to the establishment and maintenance of a comprehensive CLB national assessment system for use in adult ESL community, education, training and labour market, including a system of recognition of CLB assessors and assessment service providers. Stakeholders in Alberta and across Canada need clear information regarding the CLB-based national assessment system . To address this need the CCLB developed a communication tool in order to clearly present the overall national assessment system that supports current language training programs and links newcomers to further training, study or employment.

Knowledge and understanding of the national assessment framework will facilitate the movement of learners from language training to employment and benefit key Alberta stakeholders assisting:

- career counselors and ESL trainers to dialogue effectively with newcomers about language-learning progress and ongoing learning needs
- learners in identifying their language training needs and find appropriate and targeted training
- government to identify gaps and set priorities for further development of national assessment system

Key Outcome:

- Effective communication tool presenting the national CLB assessment systems relevant to all stakeholders.

3.0 Learner Outreach Resources:

The CCLB developed a new, online Learner Gateway to support adult ESL learners in setting and achieving their language learning goals. The specific goals of the Learner Gateway is to help ESL learners better understand the Canadian Language Benchmarks in order to:

- help understand their language proficiency level and what language levels are required to meet their goals for further training or employment
- help identify and describe their language training needs and find appropriate and targeted training
- help set language training goals best suited to occupational goals.

Key Outcome:

- Accessible and authentic learner resources to better support learners in setting and achieving language learning goals

CLB resources were also provided to support rural ESL program delivery, including:

- CLB Literacy Placement Tool
- Integrating CLB Assessment into the ESL Classroom
- CLB Posters
- CLB Can Do Checklists

Key Outcome:

- New resources provided to support rural ESL program delivery.