

August 23, 2019

Re: Your request for access to information under Part II of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015* [Our File #: AESL/060/2019]

On August 20, 2019 the Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour received your request for access to the following records/information:

"July 2019 information note titled "Student Financial Services Division Request for Overtime.""

I am pleased to inform you that your request for access to this information has been granted and the requested record is attached.

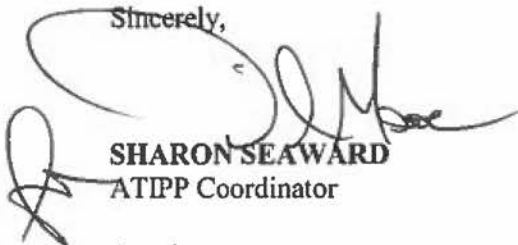
However, please note that the briefing note you requested is a draft note that was never finalized. After the July 2019 note (pages 1-3) was last edited, additional positions were filled and a lesser amount of overtime was requested and approved. For your convenience, I have attached the final briefing note (pages 4-6) which was approved on August 16, 2019.

The Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015 (act) requires us to provide an advisory response within 10 days of receiving the request. As this request has been completed prior to day 10, this letter also serves as our Advisory Response.

Please be advised that responsive records will be published following a 72 hour period after the response is sent electronically to you or five business days in the case where records are mailed to you. It is the goal to have the responsive records posted to the Completed Access to Information Requests website within one business day following the applicable period of time.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact the undersigned at (709) 729-4276 or SharonSeaward@gov.nl.ca.

Sincerely,



SHARON SEAWARD
ATIPP Coordinator

Attachments

Information Note
Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour

Title: Student Financial Services Division Request for Overtime

Issue: Obtain approval for additional resources to use for overtime during peak processing at the Student Financial Services Division.

Background and Current Status:

- The Student Financial Services Division (SFSD) generally processes the bulk of applications each year during the period from June 1 through to September 30.
- Over 6,400 full-time applications were submitted in 2018-19.
- Annually, SFSD will hire short-term temporary staff to assist the regular staff complement in completing the required work during the peak period.
- The usage of overtime is a normal aspect of operational expenditures for SFSD when attempting to meet established service standards. SFSD overtime for 2018-19 was \$5,314.
- A previous submission has been approved for 2019-20 for requested overtime expenditures for approximately \$6,000.
- The initial submission was made based on the assumption that all five temporary staffing positions would be filled.
- While every reasonable effort was made to acquire the necessary temporary staff to accommodate the increased demand during peak processing, delays in the hiring process has resulted in only one of the five temporary positions being filled and a second scheduled to start on July 22, 2019. No further hiring is anticipated.
- As a result, additional overtime expenditures will be required to ensure applications are processed in time for the September disbursements.
- Annex A contains a summary of this second request totaling an additional \$18,000.
- Annex A also contains the CG Level, hourly overtime rate by position, approximate number of hours by position (rounded) and a notional budget by position (rounded).
- Request for Overtime Performance Forms as per the Human Resource Secretariat are required to be signed by the Deputy Minister and held on file if requested in the future, are submitted separately in TRIM, and are to accompany this note.

Analysis:

- When delays occur in assessing applications, the volume of enquiries (email; phone; in-person) also increases resulting in delays in addressing enquiries within service standards.
- Without the use of overtime, the volume of activity will exceed the capacity of a regular workday.

- For 2019-20, hiring has been delayed which will add pressure on the Division's ability to meet service standards. If demand requires increased expenditures, additional requests will be submitted.
- SFSD was approved to hire five temporary staff for a period of 15 weeks or a total of 75 weeks of pay or 2,250 hours (30 hours per week).
- SFSD has only been able to secure two temporary staff for a total of 23 weeks or 690 hours leaving a deficit of three temporary staff or 1,560 hours.
- A previous submission for overtime has been approved for a total of 140 hours.
- This submission requests an additional 390 hours for an overall total of 530 hours, which remains below the deficit of 1,560 created by not being able to successfully hire the full complement of temporary staff.
- Without the use of overtime, applications will not be processed within published service standards and many students will be without needed financial assistance at the start of classes in September.
- While well below the deficit calculation, the 530 hours added to the normal work day of staff will maximize staff capacity levels, which still may become unsustainable even with approved overtime.
- Overtime requests are meant to help avoid increases in complaints and delays in processing and to help maintain service standards.
- The majority of the total overtime budget, if approved, is expected to be utilized between July 29 and August 2, 2019, as this is considered the critical period of the overall peak-processing season.
- In 2015-16 a similar event occurred where hiring of temporary staff was unsuccessful and approximately \$22,000 was expended in over time.

Prepared/Approved By: R. Feaver/ C. Ennis-Williams
Deputy Minister Approval:

July 11, 2019

**Annex A
Overtime Summary**

**Request for Overtime Usage
2019-20**

Position	CG-Scale	OT Rate	Hourly	Total Hours*	Projected OT \$
Assessment Officer I (6 positions)	CG-27	\$ 41.94		150	\$ 6,000.00
Assessment Officer II (3 positions)	CG-28	\$ 48.09		120	\$ 6,000.00
Information Officer (6 positions)	CG-28	\$ 48.09		120	\$ 6,000.00
				390	\$ 18,000.00

* During the peak summer period (June 1 - Oct. 31, 2019), usage will vary each week based on application demand.

Information Note
Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour

Title: Student Financial Services Division Request for Overtime

Issue: Obtain approval for additional resources to use for overtime during peak processing at the Student Financial Services Division.

Background and Current Status:

- The Student Financial Services Division (SFSD) generally processes the bulk of applications each year during the period from June 1 through to September 30.
- Over 6,400 full-time applications were submitted in 2018-19.
- Annually, SFSD will hire short-term temporary staff to assist the regular staff complement in completing the required work during the peak period.
- The usage of overtime is a normal aspect of operational expenditures for SFSD when attempting to meet established service standards. SFSD overtime for 2018-19 was \$5,314.
- A previous submission has been approved for 2019-20 for requested overtime expenditures for approximately \$6,000.
- The initial submission was made based on the assumption that all five temporary staffing positions would be filled by the target date of June 17, 2019.
- While every reasonable effort was made to acquire the necessary temporary staff to accommodate the increased demand during peak processing, delays in the hiring process has resulted in securing four of the five positions:
 - One of two Information Officer temporary positions was filled as of April 29 to back fill for an absence of a permanent position;
 - Two of three Assessment Officer temporary positions was filled on July 22;
 - The second Information Officer temporary position was filled on July 22.
- The budget allocation for the five temporary positions (June 17 – September 30) was \$68,000 plus an additional notional allocation of \$5,000 for overtime for a total of \$73,000.
- As a result of delays in hiring, the Division expects to utilize \$45,600 in salary for the temporary positions resulting in an estimated surplus balance of \$27,400.
- Taking into account the initial approval of \$6,000 for overtime expenditures, the projected unallocated surplus balance, as of the current date, is \$21,400.
- A further approval of \$8,000 is now requested and as indicated above, would continue to allow the Division to remain within budget.
- Annex A contains a summary of this additional request totaling \$8,000, the CG Level, hourly overtime rate by position, approximate number of hours by position (rounded) and a notional budget by position (rounded).

A

- Request for Overtime Performance Forms as per the Human Resource Secretariat are required to be signed by the Deputy Minister and held on file if requested in the future, submitted separately in TRIM, and accompany this note.

Analysis:

- Two of the original three approved overtime requests (\$2,000 for Assessment Office I and \$2,000 for Assessment Officer II) have been fully expended. The Information Officer allocation of \$2,000 remains sufficient at this time.
- The use of overtime was required due to delays in hiring as described above, which is adding pressure on the Division's ability to meet service standards.
- When delays occur in assessing applications, the volume of enquiries (email; phone; in-person) also increases resulting in delays in addressing enquiries within service standards.
- Without the use of overtime, the volume of activity will exceed the capacity of a regular workday.
- Without the use of overtime, applications will not be processed within published service standards and many students will be without needed financial assistance at the start of classes in September.
- Overtime requests are meant to help avoid increases in complaints and delays in processing and to help maintain service standards.
- This request of \$8,000 plus the initial request of \$6,000 is projected to meet the operational needs of the Division and will allow the Division to remain within budget.
- In 2015-16 a similar event occurred where hiring of temporary staff was unsuccessful and approximately \$22,000 was expended in overtime.

Prepared/Approved By: R. Feaver/ C. Ennis-Williams

Deputy Minister Approval:

J. Sawyer

August 16, 2019

**Annex A
Overtime Summary**

**Request for Overtime Usage
2019-20**

Position	CG-Scale	OT Rate	Hourly	Total Hours*	Projected OT \$
Assessment Officer I (6 positions)	CG-27	\$ 41.94		50	\$ 2,000.00
Assessment Officer II (3 positions)	CG-28	\$ 48.09		120	\$ 6,000.00
				170	\$ 8,000.00

* During the peak summer period (June 1 - Oct. 31, 2019), usage will vary each week based on application demand.