

MIX WORK AND TRAINING SCHEME

Guidelines for submission of applications

In the context of saving jobs and preparing for economic recovery, one of the measures developed under the Additional Stimulus Package, reemphasized in the Budget Speech 2009 and which is designed to protect employment is the **Mix of Work and Training Scheme**. The objective of the Scheme is to safeguard jobs in enterprises of the manufacturing and tourism sectors, which are the most affected by the global economic crisis and which are implementing cost cutting measures as an alternative to laying off their workers at shop floor level (rank and file plus first line supervisors). The scheme is implemented by the National Empowerment Foundation (NEF).

1. Eligibility

- 1.1. All enterprises in the Tourism and Manufacturing sectors which are facing difficulties and which forecast a reduction of 15% or more in their turnover as compared to the same period last year.
- 1.2. Enterprises in the manufacturing sector which are in serious difficulties and which have obtained approval of Enterprise Mauritius for assistance under MTSP;

2. Forms to be submitted

- 2.1. Applications should be submitted to NEF by filling in Forms MWT 1
- 2.2. For refund of Training Cost, please fill in Form MWT 2 and
- 2.3. For refund of Stipend, please fill in MWT 3

3. Purpose and Duration of Scheme

- 3.1 The purpose of the scheme is to encourage enterprises to send their employees on training to enable them to upgrade their skills for better performance at the enterprise level and also to acquire new skills which may be useful to them in their personal or professional life.
- 3.2 Duration of the scheme: 18 months as from 01 July 09.

4. Benefits of the Mix Work and Training and refund of costs

Enterprises are eligible to a refund of training costs by HRDC and to a refund by NEF of a stipend in respect for their employees sent on training for an average of one day or at most two working days per week.

5 Process and Parameters

5.1 Process for application to benefit from Mix of Work and Training Scheme

The standard process for submitting an application and obtaining approval is as follows:

- a. employers should seek the agreement of workers on the proposed measure of Mix of Work and of Training.
- b. an application has to be made to the NEF on the prescribed form (MWT 1). The application should include, inter alia,
 - information on the financial situation of the company, including the latest audited accounts available for the two years where applicable or a statement of income and expenditure for the same period. Enterprises which were not in operation in the previous year or previous two years should provide clear evidence of how the economic crisis has affected their performance.
 - cost-cutting measures already implemented and why this measure is deemed to be an alternative to laying off.
 - a training schedule,
 - the consent of workers for the training, and
 - MQA approval for the course.
 - Other additional relevant information as may be required by the Implementation Working Group (IWG) on Mix of Work and Training.
- c. the application would be considered by the IWG – Mix of Work and Training and in principle approved or rejected within 1 week provided the application is complete and all documents submitted. In case the application is rejected, the employer will be informed of the reasons thereof
- d. if approved, there should be a formal commitment from the employer to laying off any worker at least during the implementation of the measure and also to continue to release the employees once the training has started. A formal agreement has to be signed by the employer with NEF

- e. the application for refund of training costs has to be made to the HRDC on the prescribed form MWT 2.
- f. the application for refund of stipend has to be made to the NEF on the prescribed form MWT 3.

With regard to the category of enterprises having previously applied for support under Mechanism for Transitional Support to the Private Sector (MTSP), i.e. enterprises in serious difficulties in the Manufacturing sector, and now also willing to apply for support under the Mix of Work and Training, these enterprises should submit their application for the Mix of Work and Training to NEF, specifying that they have also applied for support under the MTSP. Enterprise Mauritius would then examine the accounts and other information provided by the enterprises and, within seven (7) days, indicate to NEF, whether the enterprise is eligible to be considered under the Mix of Work and Training Scheme.

5.2 Process and Parameters for refund of training costs by HRDC

- 5.2.1 For refund of Training Cost, please fill in Form MWT 2 and submit to HRDC after completion of the training course
- 5.2.2 The total amount of training costs to be refunded by HRDC in respect of each employee, for one or any number of courses followed by each employee, will not exceed the following limits: -
 - a. Rs. 15 000. - for an employee working in an enterprise of the tourism sector, and
 - b. Rs. 12 000. – for an employee working in a manufacturing enterprise.
- 5.2.3 Refund will be effected upon completion of training course by an employee and upon submission of claim for refund of training cost by employers.
- 5.2.4 Refund will be effected only for employees for whom approval has been obtained by the IWG – Committee for Mix of Work and Training Scheme within one (1) week of receipt of the form MWT 2, with all details and documents included

Documents to be submitted with form MWT 2 are as follows:

- List of participants with ID and NPS reference number
- Original of attendance sheet, which includes the name and initials of each participant for each day of attendance at training, or any other similar document attesting attendance to the course, and certified by the Training Institution (or in case the training is conducted in-house by the in-house Trainer) and endorsed by the Director of the enterprise,

- Receipt/s towards settlement of course fees.
- Authority from to pay directly to Training Centre (Applicable only if payment is to be made to the Training Centre)

6.3 Process and parameters for refund of Stipend by NEF

- 6.3.1 For refund of Stipend, please fill in MWT 3 and submit to NEF at the end of the each month.
- 6.3.2 Employers concerned will still be paid their basic salary by their employers for the one day or two days on which they will be undergoing training. Once the employer has embarked on the Scheme, he should ensure that the employees are allowed to continue to attend the training until its completion, even if the company's business has returned to normal.
- 6.3.3 The employer will be entitled to a total monthly refund for a maximum of one third of the workforce in the category eligible under this scheme (rank and file plus level one of supervisory staff).
- 6.3.4 The employer will be eligible to a refund of stipend equivalent to the actual basic salary for an average of 2 full days of training per week for each worker sent on training, up to a maximum of Rs 3000 per month.
- 6.3.5 The Stipend will be paid for an initial maximum period of 3 months depending on the duration of training. If the duration of training exceeds 3 months, the payment of stipend will be subject to review after the initial period of 3 months, with the possibility of renewal, depending on the financial situation of the company.
- 6.3.6 The employer after filling and sending his first claim for refund of stipend, should print the claim and forward the hard copy together with the attendance sheet to the NEF.
- 6.3.7 The employer can send claim for refund of Stipend only after the trainees have completed the first month of training. No partial refund will be effected for any employee who has dropped out of the training course
- 6.3.8 Refund will be calculated on the basis of either a half-day or full-day, defined as follows:
- One full-day should be of a minimum of 6 hours and a half-day of training should be of a minimum of 3 hours

6.3.9 Refund will be effected only in respect of employees who fall in the category of rank and file plus first line supervisors (shop floor workers)

Documents to be submitted are as follows:

- List of participants with ID and NPS reference number
- Copy of attendance certificate which includes the name and initials of each participant for each day of attendance at training, or any other similar document attesting attendance to the course, The attendance sheet should be certified by the Training Institution or by the In-house Trainer and Director of the enterprise, in case the training is conducted in-house or document attesting attendance to the course.

7. Training

7.1 Duration of Training

The duration of the training can vary, depending on the nature of the training course, but should not exceed a maximum period of 6 months.

7.2 Training Schedule and ceiling

The employer has to submit a training schedule / time-table for each training course when submitting with the application under the scheme. The employer may submit different training courses for the same employees or for different employees, provided that the total period of training does not exceed 6 months and the total training costs to be refunded by HRDC, in respect of each employee on training, are within the limits defined at 3.1.1 above.

7.3 Types of training

Employers may opt for both technical / vocational training and generic training e.g. life skills, literacy & numeracy, IT, language, etc. The employer should ensure that the employees have not followed the same course during the past 12 months, prior to joining the Mix of Work and Training Scheme.

7.4 Approval of Training Course

The training institution / the In-house training facility, the training course and the trainers must be MQA approved. Approval of courses by MQA will be done within two (2) days subject to submission of all requested documents. The choice of the training and of the training organisation will rest primarily with the employer and in-house training may also be organized. **The agreement of the workers on the training course must be sought by the employer.**