

## **Mid-South Canterbury & North Otago –**

### **Regional Apprenticeship Initiative (RAI) FAQ's**

#### 1. What is RAI?

- The RAI is a Government funded initiative to support the apprentices all over New Zealand. In October 2020, within Mid & South Canterbury and North Otago, we were funded to provide for up to 100 apprentices across the priority sectors being the construction, primary, manufacturing, engineering, and wood processing industries. In May 2023 this initiative was extended, enabling us to reallocate unutilised funding to a small number of additional new apprentices.

#### 2. Who is eligible:

- an apprentice who is employed within either of the construction, primary, manufacturing and engineering, or wood processing sectors, having commenced their apprenticeship on or after 1 April 2023; and
- an apprentice who is enrolled, and participating, in the New Zealand Apprenticeship scheme or other Level Four industry training qualification similar to an apprenticeship with a minimum 120 credits and being one of the RAI

#### 3. Who will be given priority?

- Māori and Pasifika, including existing employees who want to transition into an apprenticeship
- People who have undertaken pre-trade training and have been unable to progress into an apprenticeship
- Any other vulnerable person who would benefit from undertaking an apprenticeship

#### 4. What is not covered under Regional Apprenticeship Initiative?

- Pre-trades training, Level Two and Three qualifications, Level Four qualifications that are not equivalent to an apprenticeship
- Existing apprentices
- Employers based in Auckland, Wellington, or Christchurch,
- Apprentices employed under Group Training Schemes
- Apprentices on work visas (those on resident visas are approved)
- Apprentices for which the employer is already receiving Apprenticeship Boost support.

#### 5. What is funded?

- a wage subsidy of up to \$16,000 for the first year of training and up to \$8,000 for the second year - payable quarterly and aligned to the date the apprentice commences their apprenticeship training,
- up to \$2,000 per apprentice to reimburse the employer for approved gear, equipment, and tools they purchase for the apprentice.
- up to \$12,500 to assist with the cost of professional advice, pastoral care, training and business support (not being funded by any other source including government agencies and initiatives) to support the employer and the apprentice to be successful in sustaining and completing the apprenticeship.

6. What is pastoral care and how can my business get this funding?

This is ongoing support for the apprentice to ensure their apprenticeship is successfully completed, and it can include:

- Access to counselling, addiction services
- Assistance for the apprentice to get their driver licence
- Literacy and numeracy support
- working with family members or other social services/ networks to support the apprentice
- pay for staff providing one-on-one mentoring to the apprentice
- pay for a professional provider to provide pastoral support

7. What are some examples of items not included in pastoral care?

- Movie tickets
- Concerts
- Social activities

8. What does business support include?

- Professional advice
- Te Pukenga (previously Independent Training Organisation - ITO) Annual and Block Course Fees.
- Training workshops or seminars or any other formal support that is directly related to the employer maintaining the apprentice through to the completion, and beyond, of their apprenticeship.

9. What is meant by training or upskilling of other employees?

- Training for employees so that they can support any new apprentices i.e. supervisory, staff management etc.
- Training for the employer to learn new skills to support the apprentice

10. What is covered in equipment / tools?

- Any tools required to undertake the job that will support the apprentice – eg nail gun, hard boots, hard hat
- Equipment and tools are owned by the employer until apprentice completes their apprenticeship

11. Does the employer/ provider have to refund funding provided for equipment & tools if the apprentice leaves or withdraws from their apprenticeship prior to the end of their apprenticeship?

- Yes. If the apprentice leaves or withdraws from their apprenticeship, the employer must refund any funding used to buy equipment/tools.

12. When can a business NOT ACCESS the RAI funding?

- If they are unable to meet the eligibility criteria nor commit to the terms and conditions contained in the Apprenticeship Support Agreement
- Venture Timaru (the funder) will not apply any RAI funding in respect of an apprentice where funds, support or subsidies have been provided from any other source (including the Ministry of Social Development, TEC and from MBIE in respect of any other programme) to

the Employer for the employment or training of the same apprentice for the same period of employment or training

13. Do employers need to top up their funding?

- Yes. Employers must employ the apprentice for a minimum of 30 hours per week for 52 weeks and ensure apprentices are being paid at least the relevant minimum wage or training wage.

14. What happens if the apprentice ceases their apprenticeship or employment with the employer?

- The employer must advise Venture Timaru immediately and refund any funds used to buy equipment/tools for the apprentice.

15. How is the wage subsidy paid?

- The wage subsidy will be paid quarterly in arrears based on the date the apprentice commences their apprenticeship course.

16. Does it matter what age they are?

- No

17. Is an individual still eligible if they have done another apprenticeship in a different trade?

- Yes

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS ASSOCIATED WITH**

**ACCESSING RAI FUNDING PLEASE REFER TO THE APPRENTICESHIP SUPPORT AGREEMENT.**