



Work and Employment



Jobseekers' access to quality jobs, workers' ability to make a living wage, and employers' ability to match jobs available with employees' skills are essential to a growing Niagara

What's Emerging

- Attention is being paid to ensuring all individuals in Niagara have meaningful opportunities to contribute, through equitable access to decent work (inclusive of fair wages, secure work arrangements, and meaningful career advancement).
- A new Workforce Coalition is being formed, to integrate workforce planning and development efforts across the Niagara region. Members include Workforce Collective, local municipalities (including economic development teams), community services, industry associates, and education providers. The intent is to enable decent work, share information and data, and engage in proactive and strategic workforce-related activities.
- Awareness is rising that an unprecedented level of demand is being experienced by Niagara's community services agencies. Several compounding factors are affecting agencies in varying ways: worker burnout, labour shortages, volunteer numbers slow to rebound post-pandemic, and inflation affecting charitable donations.

Suggested Community Action Steps

- Strengthen synergies between settlement service providers and other social service agencies, to ensure that newcomers to Niagara are able to equitably access the supports they need, as well as the employment opportunities that are available.
- Emphasize the importance of intentional multi-disciplinary collaborative actions to advance the success of both Niagara's workforce and employers.
- Acknowledge that hybrid work models help to maximize opportunities for all those who want to participate in the workforce. Having the option to work remotely can remove barriers to workforce participation, and create opportunities to have an inclusive workforce.
- Recognize the contribution that nonprofit organizations make to Niagara's economy, the value they bring as employers, and the essential role their workforce plays in sustaining community well-being.

Indicators

- Employment Services in Niagara
- Jobs in Niagara
- Labour Force in Niagara
- Niagara-wide Coordination and Planning
- Workplace Injuries and Workplace Psychological Health and Safety



Happening Now

- The 2023 Living Wage Calculation for the Niagara region is \$20.35/hour, a 2.8% increase from \$19.80/hour in 2022. The estimated 2021 Cost of Living in Niagara for a reference household of 4 (2 parents, 2 children) totalled \$74,984. For 2023, the Living Wage Calculation provides expenses for three household types (Family of four; Single adult; Single parent).
- In November, 2023, there were 91 Living Wage Employers across Niagara, among a total of 628 in Ontario. Results of a survey of Certified Living Wage Employers in Niagara and their employees show that the Living Wage program has positively impacted workplace culture and staff relationships.
- The Workforce Collective 2023-24 Labour Market Report highlights employment and local job demand trends, including:
 - As of June, 2023 there were about 13,397 businesses with employees (including non-profits and registered charities). Of these, about 98% have fewer than 100 employees. There were also 28,748 self-employed individuals.
 - As of 2021, 83,005 immigrants lived in Niagara. In 2022, net international migration was the main source of population growth, a trend expected to continue over the next 5 years.
 - The proportion of youth (aged 15-24) in Niagara fell by 2.5% between 2016 and 2021. Workforce strategies such as job creation are critical to retain and attract young people.
 - The Conference Board of Canada expects that, by 2025, as spending increases in the services and tourism sector in Niagara, it should help employment recovery.
 - Strategies to support workers and employers in the caring economy (childcare, non-profits in health care, education and social assistance); and in immigrant employment will help to strengthen employment outcomes for Niagara.
- Crisis-level labour shortages and staff burnout are being experienced in Niagara's non-profit sector, according to a 2023 Workforce Collective brief. Non-profit and charitable organizations employ more than 1 in 5 people in Niagara. Nationally, the sector contributes about 8.4% of Canada's GDP.

