

Forest Sector Safety Measures Fund (FSSMF) Program Guidelines

Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

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Forest Sector Safety Measures Fund (FSSMF)

These Program Guidelines are to be used by applicants to submit an eligible claim under the Forest Sector Safety Measures Fund (FSSMF).

1.0 Overview

The FSSMF is intended to help small to medium size forest sector companies overcome the economic challenges they face due to extra costs for the implementation of COVID-19 safety measures, thus supporting vital jobs in communities across the country and maintaining critical forest management infrastructure. Funding for this program is being provided by the federal government through Natural Resources Canada and will be delivered to Ontario companies through the government of Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.

2.0 Program objectives

The FSSMF supports the implementation of health and safety measures by Ontario's small and medium-sized forest sector companies in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding will assist small and medium-sized forest sector companies with the additional costs of keeping workers and local communities safe.

3.0 Program eligibility

3.1 Eligible applicants:

To be eligible to participate in the program (an "**Eligible applicant**"), applicants must meet all of the following eligibility requirements:

- for-profit forestry company as defined under the following North American Industry Classifications:
 - 1131 (Timber Tract Operations)
 - 1133 (Logging)
 - 1153 (Support Activities for Forestry, excluding Reforestation Services*)

- 321 (Wood Product Manufacturing) and 322 (Pulp Manufacturing). (see Appendix A)
- be a small to medium sized enterprise as defined in Appendix B
- operate workplace(s) in Ontario
- has and/or will incur a minimum of \$1,000 in eligible COVID-19 health and safety costs (as defined under the program below) at their Ontario workplace(s) between April 1, 2020 and February 12, 2021

* Note: Ontario, through the COVID-19 Forestry Futures Trust Incremental Silviculture Cost Program, is already providing support to reforestation services (e.g. tree planting and silvicultural operations) for COVID-19 safety measures costs incurred in the 2020 tree plant season.

3.2 Eligible costs

Recognizing that COVID-19 health and safety measures can vary across types of operations, the following guiding principles outline eligibility of costs. Eligible costs must be:

- incurred between April 1, 2020 and February 12, 2021
- incurred by an Eligible Applicant as outlined in section 3.1 above
- **incremental expenses directly related to the implementation of COVID-19 health and safety measures**, such as
 - personal protective equipment
 - installation of plexiglass
 - handwashing stations
 - extra vehicles and accommodations in work camps
 - additional cleaning and sanitation costs
 - facilities for self-isolation in work camps, building renovations to enable physical distancing
 - worker training on COVID safety protocols
 - signage
- incremental, discrete, and distinguishable from other regular operating costs or changes in revenues or productivity (e.g., lost revenues from reduced sales effectiveness or reductions in productivity are not eligible)
- incurred at places of work or work camp location (i.e., personal COVID-related costs such as the cost of employees isolating at home is not eligible).
- incurred at a workplace or workplaces in Ontario

Expenses determined to be eligible using the principles above will fall within the following categories:

- salaries and benefits, and worker training and development

- management, professional and technical services
- printing, production, publication and distribution and other media services
- contractors
- materials and supplies
- transportation rental, operation and maintenance
- rental, upgrading or expansion of facilities
- machinery and equipment
- travel expenses including accommodation, and venue expenses
- GST, PST or HST, net of any tax rebate to which the recipient is entitled

If you have questions about the eligibility of costs, please contact the program by phone or email at [1-844-573-9017](tel:1-844-573-9017) or FSSMF@ontario.ca.

3.3 Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible for funding under the program:

- any cost that is not incremental, distinct and directly attributable to the implementation of COVID-19 health and safety measures
- expenses to address usual business or operating practices, expansion or any other non-COVID-19 related objectives
- costs related to lost revenue or production
- expenses and costs associated with activities supported under other federal programs, such as the Low Carbon Economy Fund
- costs incurred for workers isolating at home
- in-kind contributions
- financing charges, loan and lease interest payments, bank fees and charges as well as debt restructuring
- the refundable or rebateable portion of any expense for which the business receives or is eligible to receive a refund or rebate
- costs incurred in preparing an application to the program

4.0 Funding

4.1 Funding types and amounts available under the program

Grants:

- eligible applicants who submit a fully completed application may qualify for funding up to a maximum of \$75,000 equal to the lesser of the following:
 - actual costs incurred between April 1, 2020 and February 12, 2021
 - \$500 per Full Time Equivalent Employee*
- in the case that the program is oversubscribed (claims requested and verified exceed the maximum funding allocation), payments will be pro-rated

* Note: See Appendix B for definition of Full-Time Equivalent Employee.

4.2 Stacking with other government funding

- Companies that have already received funding under other Ontario or federal programs for COVID-19 related costs incurred at Ontario workplace(s) will not be eligible for funding under the FSSMF.

5.0 application process:

5.1 Overview of the application process

The program will have only one intake period. Deadline for receipt of applications is February 12, 2021 at 4 pm eastern standard time. Funding will be disbursed once the funding has been approved and provided by Canada to Ontario for disbursement to approved companies (targeting for spring 2021). Ontario will conduct audits to validate and confirm the claims being made under the program.

5.2 FSSMF application

- Applicants will be required to certify the accuracy of all information provided in their application form, including eligible COVID-19 health and safety costs incurred and number of employees.
- Applicants will be required to register their business with Transfer Payment Ontario (if they haven't previously done so).
- Applicants must agree that MNRF retains the right to conduct an audit and/or request additional documentation (as required in the sole opinion of Ontario) to support the claim. Such documentation could include, but is not limited to, invoices and proof of payment for eligible costs incurred, payroll/employee documentation, company financial statements, etc.

- Applicants must keep proper and accurate books, accounts, and records of supporting documentation and materials relevant to this program, including records of eligible expenses incurred and paid for (for which a claim is being made under this program) and employee levels for a period of three years following receipt of payment under the program.
- Application forms will contain additional terms and conditions regarding funding disbursement.

6.0 Confidentiality and public reporting

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry is subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. F.31 (the "Act"). The Act provides every person with a right of access to information in the custody or under the control of the Province, subject to a limited set of exemptions. Section 17 of the Act provides a limited exemption for third party information that reveals a trade secret, or scientific, commercial, technical, financial or labour relations information supplied in confidence where disclosure of the information could reasonably be expected to result in certain harms. Any trade secret or any scientific, commercial, technical, financial or labour relations information submitted to the Province in confidence should be clearly marked.

The Province will notify you before granting access to a record that might contain information referred to in Section 17 so that you may make representations to the Province concerning disclosure.

Approved projects will be the subject of public announcements.

Ministries must publicly report annually on the status of business support programs and strategic investments, including:

1. Project description and project investment commitment
2. Amount of government support
3. Results achieved to date

Appendix A: Eligible companies

Eligible Forest Sector Companies under the FSSMF are defined as Small to Medium Sized Enterprises whose primary business activities are listed under one of the following North American Industry Classification Systems (NAICS) codes: 1131, 1133, 1153 (*excluding Reforestation Services*), 321 or 322.

Companies providing goods or services to the forest sector but whose primary activities are not listed under the aforementioned NAICS codes (1131, 1133, 1153, 321, 322), such as transportation, housing or equipment, are not eligible ultimate recipients.

113/115: Forestry and logging / Support activities for agriculture and forestry sectors

Industry group	Industries	Canadian industries
1131 - Timber tract operations	11311 - Timber tract operations	113110 - Timber tract operations
1133 - Logging	11331 - Logging	113311 - Logging (except contract)
1133 - Logging	11331 - Logging	113312 - Contract logging
1153 - Support activities for forestry <i>Excluding reforestation services.</i>	11531 - Support activities for forestry	115310 - Support activities for forestry

321: Wood product manufacturing

Industry group	Industries	Canadian industries
3211 - Sawmills and wood preservation	32111 - Sawmills and wood preservation	321111 - Sawmills (except shingle and shake mills)
3211 - Sawmills and wood preservation	32111 - Sawmills and wood preservation	321112 - Shingle and shake mills
3211 - Sawmills and wood preservation	32111 - Sawmills and wood preservation	321114 - Wood preservation
3212 - Veneer, plywood and engineered wood product manufacturing	32121 - Veneer, plywood and engineered wood product manufacturing	321211 - Hardwood veneer and plywood mills
3212 - Veneer, plywood and engineered wood product manufacturing	32121 - Veneer, plywood and engineered wood product manufacturing	321212 - Softwood veneer and plywood mills

Industry group	Industries	Canadian industries
3212 - Veneer, plywood and engineered wood product manufacturing	32121 - Veneer, plywood and engineered wood product manufacturing	321215 - Structural wood product manufacturing
3212 - Veneer, plywood and engineered wood product manufacturing	32121 - Veneer, plywood and engineered wood product manufacturing	321216 - Particle board and fibreboard mills
3212 - Veneer, plywood and engineered wood product manufacturing	32121 - Veneer, plywood and engineered wood product manufacturing	321217 - Wafer board mills
3219 - Other wood product manufacturing	32191 - Millwork	321911 - Wood window and door manufacturing
3219 - Other wood product manufacturing	32191 - Millwork	321919 - Other millwork
3219 - Other wood product manufacturing	32192 - Wood container and pallet manufacturing	321920 - Wood container and pallet manufacturing
3219 - Other wood product manufacturing	32199 - All other wood product manufacturing	321991 - Manufactured (mobile) home manufacturing
3219 - Other wood product manufacturing	32199 - All other wood product manufacturing	321992 - Prefabricated wood building manufacturing
3219 - Other wood product manufacturing	32199 - All other wood product manufacturing	321999 - All other miscellaneous wood product manufacturing

322: Paper manufacturing

Industry group	Industries	Canadian industries
3221 - Pulp, paper and paperboard mills	32211 - Pulp mills	322111 - Mechanical pulp mills
3221 - Pulp, paper and paperboard mills	32211 - Pulp mills	322112 - Chemical pulp mills
3221 - Pulp, paper and paperboard mills	32212 - Paper mills	322121 - Paper (except newsprint) mills
3221 - Pulp, paper and paperboard mills	32212 - Paper mills	322122 - Newsprint mills
3221 - Pulp, paper and paperboard mills	32213 - Paperboard mills	322130 - Paperboard mills
3222 - Converted paper product manufacturing	32221 - Paperboard container manufacturing	322211 - Corrugated and solid fibre box manufacturing

Industry group	Industries	Canadian industries
3222 - Converted paper product manufacturing	32221 - Paperboard container manufacturing	322212 - Folding paperboard box manufacturing
3222 - Converted paper product manufacturing	32221 - Paperboard container manufacturing	322219 - Other paperboard container manufacturing
3222 - Converted paper product manufacturing	32222 - Paper bag and coated and treated paper manufacturing	322220 - Paper bag and coated and treated paper manufacturing
3222 - Converted paper product manufacturing	32223 - Stationery product manufacturing	322230 - Stationery product manufacturing
3222 - Converted paper product manufacturing	N/A	322291 - Sanitary paper product manufacturing
3222 - Converted paper product manufacturing	32229 - Other converted paper product manufacturing	322299 - All other converted paper product manufacturing

Appendix B: Definitions

"Small to medium sized enterprise" means:

A for profit company that employs fewer than 500 full-time and part-time Active Employees on average over a 12-month period. The average employee count is calculated by taking the average of the monthly peak number of Active Employees on the payroll over the last 12 months. The 12-month period should be the most recent possible, while reflecting regular operations.

"Active employee" means:

An employee (or Agency Contract Employee) of the applicant who is actively employed and actively paid. For greater certainty, (i) a person on layoff is not considered to be "actively employed" and does not qualify as an "Active Employee" and (ii) an employee on a voluntary leave of absence, including parental leave, shall continue to be considered an "Active Employee" but his/her replacement during such absence shall not be considered as an additional Active Employee.

"Agency Contract Employee" means:

Individuals employed by an independent third-party supplier of contract workers (such supplier being approved by the applicant), and who are on an assignment performing work at the Ontario workplace(s) of an Eligible applicant for at least 80% of the time.

"Full Time Equivalent Employee (FTE)" means:

- **hourly employees:** An active employee who accounts for at least 2000 hours per year or a combination of part-time employees, who together account for at least 2000 hours per year. For example, two part time employees each working 1000 hours per year would count as one FTE
- **salaried employees:** Full-time job of a salaried active employee of the applicant during one entire fiscal year