

CLEARING A PATH: HELPING DISPLACED ALBERTANS RE-ENTER THE WORKFORCE

Recommendations to tackle long-term
unemployment in Alberta

THE CHALLENGE

Years of persistent high unemployment have left many Albertans disengaged from the workforce, and this challenge has only been magnified by the pandemic. In 2021, 50,000 Albertans were still long-term unemployed. Without action, the consequences for Albertans—and their livelihoods—and businesses could be quite severe.



THE SOLUTION

Addressing long-term unemployment requires a suite of solutions and a **people-centred, coordinated approach**. BCA's Task Force on Long-Term Unemployment & Workforce Transition proposes a series of recommendations for **governments, businesses, and post-secondary institutions** to help Albertans find work in the current labour market and prepare for the future of work.



OUTCOMES

- Displaced or disengaged Albertans have a pathway to meaningful work.
- Alberta's workforce is resilient and adaptable.
- Businesses find it easy to hire and train workers according to the skills they need.
- Alberta's workforce is a magnet for business attraction and new investment.

THREE KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Reform the federal **Employment Insurance (EI) program** to support **individual-led training** programs for those experiencing unemployment and focus on individuals who use their period of unemployment to upgrade their skills.

2 Increase federal contributions to the **Workforce Development Agreement by \$30 million**, allocating 50% towards training for unemployed Albertans under the Canada-Alberta Job Grant and the other 50% to support employees facing termination to access training support.

3 Transition the **Alberta Jobs Now program to permanent**, as a wage subsidy program, focusing on supporting the long-term unemployed and those who face additional, systemic barriers to employment re-enter the workforce more easily.

The world is changing—and so is the nature of work. All Albertans deserve access to meaningful employment that enables them to live a life they aspire to, and to be equipped and ready for whatever transitions or challenges that come their way.

