

The Manitoba Adult Literacy Strategy and The Manitoba Adult Literacy Program

The Adult Literacy Act

The government of Manitoba is committed to providing Manitobans with opportunities to increase their levels of education, obtain meaningful employment, and improve the quality of their lives through various priorities and initiatives. One of these priorities is to address the adult literacy challenge in the province.

Improved literacy skills enable adults to better understand and use printed information in their daily activities at work, in their community, and in their family life. Improved literacy skills also provide adults with the foundation for further education and training.

In order to stimulate renewed action in adult literacy, the Government passed *The Adult Literacy Act*, effective January 1, 2009. *The Adult Literacy Act* requires the development of a provincial adult literacy strategy.

The Provincial Adult Literacy Strategy

The Adult Learning and Literacy (ALL) Branch of Manitoba Advanced Education and Literacy is leading the development, implementation, and evaluation of an adult literacy strategy for Manitoba. This is being done in collaboration with other ministers and government agencies, literacy practitioners, immigrant organizations, aboriginal organizations and communities, and other non-government organizations.

The Manitoba Adult Literacy Program MALP

The Adult Literacy Act establishes the Manitoba Adult Literacy Program (MALP) as a component of the provincial adult literacy strategy.

MALP is the Government's commitment to providing ongoing support for agencies that offer programs for adults seeking to improve their literacy skills.

Agencies proposing to offer a literacy program funded wholly or in part by the Manitoba Adult Literacy Program (MALP), administered by Manitoba Advanced Education and Literacy (MAEL), must meet the requirements of *The Adult Literacy Act*, the Adult Literacy Regulation, and the policies and procedures established by the Adult Learning and Literacy (ALL) Branch.

MALP Funding Criteria

ALL has created criteria for receiving MALP funding. These criteria incorporate input from consultations:

- on funding criteria with stakeholders in January 2008 and
- on adult literacy in Manitoba from April to August 2008.

Beginning with the 2009-10 program year, agencies applying for funding under the MALP must meet the prescribed criteria.

ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING UNDER THE MANITOBA ADULT LITERACY PROGRAM

An applicant for MALP funding must meet the following criteria:

1. Mandate

The agency offers community based programming for adults seeking to improve their literacy skills. Adult learning principles provide the foundation for the programming.

- The agency has a clearly defined mandate for literacy programming.
- Adults whose needs fall outside the scope of this mandate are to be referred to other programming and/or agencies.

2. Organizational Structure and Administration of the Agency

The agency must demonstrate the ability to fully discharge the responsibilities of operating and managing the adult literacy program in a manner that maintains and enhances public trust. The following factors will be considered:

- The agency is governed by a Board of Directors which actively represents the community to be served.
- The agency may delegate the responsibilities for administering the literacy program to a sub-committee
- The agency ensures a minimum of 4 meetings are held per program year to address the administration and operation of the literacy program
- The agency has policies and procedures that address board governance, administration, finances, personnel, educational programming, information management and succession planning
- Personnel records and learner files are complete and securely stored

3. Program Plan

A detailed program plan is required to ensure that literacy programming is relevant to the community it serves, and that funding is used strategically. The program plan shall include:

- Rationale to demonstrate the need and demand for the program
- Rationale for the hours of operation and overall schedule
- Demographics of the target learner group
- Clearly defined scope of the literacy program
- Description of the program model
- Plan for development, implementation and evaluation of the educational program
- Staffing requirements and qualifications
- Evidence that programming is needed in the identified location and does not compromise literacy programming offered by other agencies
- Detailed financial plan

4. Community Connection

The agency is expected to make the literacy program visible and active within the community. This includes:

- Offering literacy programming that is appropriate to the community
- Actively communicating what the literacy program has to offer
- Maintaining awareness of community issues and emerging trends
- Demonstrating its community connection through its relationships and/or partnerships
- Making and receiving referrals

5. Learner Assessment

Thorough learner assessment is to

- determine the eligibility of learners for the program
- identify the level of programming required
- measure the progress of learners
- determine the level of learners upon completion

Assessment is expected to be conducted in the context of the Manitoba Stages curriculum framework and the Essential Skills. It is to include:

- A clearly defined intake process which includes an initial interview and assessment
- The use of flexible, learner-centred assessment procedures and tools
- Establishing learner goals, reviewing them on a regular basis and revising them as required
- Documenting each assessment, to form part of that learner's file
- Developing individualized learning plans based on initial assessment and learner goals
- Measuring learner progress and achievement

6. Instruction

Instruction is to be delivered in the context of the Manitoba Stages curriculum framework and incorporates the Essential Skills. Instruction must attend to adult learning principles and relate to learner goals. It will incorporate

- Models of delivery appropriate to the needs of the community of learners
- Opportunities for individual and group instruction
- Clear curriculum and learning outcomes
- The ability to accommodate multiple levels of literacy
- Materials that are current, diverse, adult appropriate, authentic and relevant to learner goals

7. Learner files

Files are established for each learner to provide a record of their participation, assessment and achievement. The program is to make files available

- To learners for review
- To other agencies upon request by the learner

8. Financial Management

The agency is responsible for all financial matters in the operation of the literacy program. This includes

- Adherence to Canadian Generally Accepted Auditing Practices (GAAP)
- Clear lines of authority and responsibility for financial matters with internal control processes
- Adherence to the approved budget
- Timely and accurate financial reporting

9. Human Resource Management

The agency follows effective processes for the recruitment, professional development and evaluation of paid and unpaid staff in the literacy program.

- Staffing appropriate to program plan
- Ensuring that all paid and unpaid staff have the levels of knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to fulfill their duties and responsibilities
- Compensation commensurate with duties and responsibilities of position

10. Facilities, Equipment, and Technology

The facilities, equipment and technology for the literacy program enable successful delivery of the educational program and meet the needs of the target learner group. The facilities are to be safe, comfortable and equipped to meet administrative, instructional and program support needs. This includes

- Consistent space that is visible and accessible
- Adequate instructional space to accommodate the number of learners based on the program model
- Space capable of accommodating individual and group instruction
- Secure storage of materials and equipment
- Appropriate signage
- Information technology capable of providing relevant and timely information and enhancing the learning experience. Technology is required for
 - administrative tasks and communication
 - access to web-based instructional strategies and resources
 - integration of computers into instruction