



Tourism Industry Association of **Manitoba**

TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA CALLS ON POLITICAL PARTIES TO COMMIT TO ADDRESS CRITICAL LABOUR SHORTAGES IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY DURING MANITOBA ELECTION 2023

Will your party commit to collaborating with the tourism industry on setting goals, implementing policies, and providing support to examine and implement Manitoba-made solutions to the tourism labour shortage, including:

- **A tourism housing strategy** to provide proven affordable options including support for the creation and operation of staff housing, managed, and funded with new tools.
- **Increasing investment in tourism and hospitality programs** in high schools as well as modernizing post-secondary tourism programs as recommended by Tourism HR Canada.
- **Supporting employer-offered supports for assistance** with costs related to transportation and childcare.
- **Prioritizing and creating targeted immigration recruitment missions** and outreach similar to ones recently completed for the healthcare industry.

The tourism industry was the hardest hit industry worldwide during the pandemic and without focused and strategic efforts, it will be the slowest industry to return to pre-pandemic levels.

The tourism labour market suffered significantly as a result of the on-again, off-again shutdowns and other restrictions during the pandemic. This led to a human resource and labour perception that the tourism industry is unpredictable and inconsistent. Many employees have left for other sectors or left the workforce altogether, and the industry is facing critical issues to attract and retain new workers, especially in rural and northern Manitoba.

Manitoba has the potential to rebound faster than many other jurisdictions of Canada with a return to 2019 tourism visitation levels by 2023 and a return to 2019 visitor spending levels by 2024. The quick recovery and future growth of the tourism industry depends on addressing labour shortages.

Across Canada, the tourism labour force lags 9.2% below 2019 levels. **According to Tourism HR Canada, employment in Manitoba in the lodging and restaurant sector is down 15% or 6,500 jobs, accounting for almost half of all lost jobs in Manitoba.** Addressing the labour shortage will restore pre-pandemic service levels and provide stability for operators and attractions who are ready to expand but need a workforce to do so.

This issue is multi-faceted and complex. For example, in high-density cottage areas, affordable housing is not readily available. In northern and rural Manitoba, the lack of public transportation prohibits workers from getting to and from their place of employment.

The Tourism Industry Association of Manitoba calls on political parties of Manitoba to commit to collaborating with the tourism industry on setting goals, implementing policies, and providing support to examine and implement Manitoba-made solutions to the tourism labour shortage, including:

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