

# Post-Pandemic Recovery Planning Report Summary: Accommodations and Food & Beverage Services

Detailed findings and recommendations for local stakeholders reported in the Post-Pandemic Workforce & Economic Recovery in Sarnia Lambton are available at [www.slwdb.org/pandemic-recovery](http://www.slwdb.org/pandemic-recovery).



## Highlight on Local Impacts

- A tale of two extremes for Summer 2020 tourism: Lambton Shores experienced great financial successes while the remaining areas of Lambton County struggled
- Many hotels closed temporarily at the onset of the pandemic and continue to struggle due to the absence of travelers typically visiting the County due to sporting events, tournaments, professional meetings or conferences, and skilled labour projects being post-poned or cancelled during the pandemic
- Food services and drinking places suffered an out sized drop in employment which remained 20% below pre-pandemic levels as of December 2020
- Restaurants have been required to adapt to cycling levels of restrictions in order to remain sustainable; not all have survived and many are likely to fail before the crisis is over. These adaptations have included:
  - online menus, curbside pickup or takeout delivery options
  - reducing hours of operations, and thus reducing staff hours and/or size

## Highlights on Labour and Skills Shortages

- Employers list soft skills as their most in demand skills in short supply
  - customer service, communication skills, strong work ethic
- Successful candidates have multifaceted, translatable skill sets adaptable to job position many responsibilities
- Top local in-demand occupations (June 1 2020 - March 1 2021) were food preparation and handling for food and beverage services



Job posting data source:

**WISL**  
WORK IN SARNIA LAMTON

Food counter attendants, kitchen helpers and support occupations

**178**

Chefs and Cooks

**122**

Restaurant and food services managers

**55**

Food and Beverage Servers

**55**



## Recommendations for Strengthening our Local Workforce

- Enhanced financial supports for the food services industry and continued economic support for the tourism sector, including accommodations services
- Capital for changes in workforce needs such as physical health and safety requirements, pivoting to virtual services including e-commerce, etc.
- Continued support for local dining and accommodations
- Skills development and training opportunities for identified skills gaps that are accessible to employers and their staff as well as job seekers
- Programs to support development and best practices for workforce mental health and well being