



# INTERNATIONAL CINEMATOGRAPHERS GUILD

## TRAINING PROGRAM FOR CAMERA TRAINEES

### What is a Camera Trainee?

A camera trainee in I.A.T.S.E. is a trainee member working on I.A.T.S.E. Local 667 signatory productions with professional film crews. The trainee will be enrolled in the I.A.T.S.E. Training Program. This program focuses on field training and provides an entry position into a motion picture career for those who aspire to be Camera Assistants and ultimately Cinematographers. Note: training is predominantly at the 2<sup>nd</sup> AC level, with exposure to the higher camera categories.

### What is the benefit of my joining I.A.T.S.E. as a Camera Trainee?

As a trainee enrolled in the I.A.T.S.E. 667 Training Program you will be working with and taught by some of the best film makers in the world and work on many large studio productions.

Trainees are assigned to different productions by the I.A.T.S.E. Local 667 Office. Through the Training Program, Camera Trainees are placed on signatory productions on a rotational basis and in a way that each Trainee will be exposed to and trained on a variety of motion picture cameras, and work with various camera crews. Throughout the training program, the participant will ideally train with ARRI, RED, Panavision, Panasonic and Sony camera systems.

Trainees are required to complete rotations on minimum 6 to a maximum of 10 productions in the Training program. This takes approximately one to two years (up to a three year maximum), which ensures that they are familiar with all professional camera systems and genres. Trainees will learn leading edge skills and develop professionalism through our training that is recognized throughout North America.

Once the training Program is completed, and upon successful upgrade to 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Cameraperson, you will be a freelance assistant and will be securing employment on your own merits and the contacts you have made as a Camera Trainee.

The I.A.T.S.E. 667 Camera Trainee is recognized in the Collective Agreement as part of the minimum crew requirements. The trainee rate is subject to the **provincial minimum wage** on all I.A.T.S.E. Local 667 Agreements. The trainee will receive overtime pay for all overtime work performed as per contract.

In addition to the trainee wage, **fringe benefits** will include:

1. **Vacation Pay**, remitted by producers when working under an I.A.T.S.E. Local 667 Collective Agreement. These funds will be paid directly to the member.
2. **Group Retirement Savings Plan (GRSP)** a benefit provided by the Producer under Collective Agreements which consists of a percentage of the member's gross wages plus vacation pay, remitted to the I.A.T.S.E. Local 667 Group RSP. Our Group RSP plan is with Great-West Life and all members must sign up with Great-West Life upon joining I.A.T.S.E. Local 667. An information booklet and application forms are provided with the membership application package.
3. **Health & Welfare Benefits** - a benefit provided by the Producer under Collective Agreements. A percentage of the member's gross wages plus vacation pay is remitted to the I.A.T.S.E. Local 667/669 Health & Welfare Trust Fund. All new members automatically qualify for the level 1 Benefits which consists of life insurance and access to confidential counselling provided by Shepell under the Member Assistance Program.

When you work under an I.A.T.S.E. Collective Agreement, the producer remits health & welfare benefits to the trust fund. At the end of the calendar year, these remittances are calculated for each individual member to determine their benefit level. We currently have four levels of benefits of varying cost and benefit eligibilities. The benefits may include dental, health care, vision care and short-term disability. You are also able to purchase into a higher benefit level, either 3 months after you become a member or in the first quarter of each year. For more information, please contact the Local 667 office.

### How to Apply to the I.A.T.S.E. Local 667 Training Program:

To apply for a camera trainee position in the training program, you are required to submit an application to the I.A.T.S.E. Local 667 office no later than **December 19<sup>th</sup>**. You must be a **Canadian Citizen** or have **Permanent Resident / Landed Immigrant Status**.

### Please include the following in your application:

- a. Cover letter of intent detailing why you have chosen to work in camera as a career option.
- b. Resume including:
  - i. Camera assistant, camera trainee and related film experience (not necessarily just camera .... any set/industry experience is an asset). Include number of days worked and state whether it was paid, volunteer or student position (see sample trainee resume on our website).
  - ii. Film, camera or media studies education (not mandatory)
  - iii. Specific skills that may apply to the camera or camera equipment (including electronic or digital production)
  - iv. Languages spoken, town/city of residence
- c. A copy of certification proving successful completion of/or enrolment in a film-related program eg. Sheridan College's Motion Picture Camera Assistant Workshop\*, CSC Camera Assistant Program, Maine Media Film & Television Workshops, or other College/ University film/television studies. Note: studies in motion film and digital media are NOT mandatory, but are strongly suggested.
- d. 3x letters of reference, particularly from camera crew members or film professionals with whom you have worked. A letter from a 667 member is recommended, but not required.

\* **Highly recommended:** In conjunction with Sheridan College (Oakville, Ontario), I.A.T.S.E. Local 667 members have been hired to formulate and teach the **Sheridan College Motion Picture Camera Assistant Workshop 1 and 2**. Please contact Sheridan College for additional information. See notes at end of outline.

**Please send your application to:** The Trainee Committee c/o I.A.T.S.E. Local 667  
229 Wallace Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M6H 1V5

Please only use a simple folder or paper clips when putting together the package: no fancy binders or staples.

The deadline for all applications is **December 19<sup>th</sup>**.

We date stamp all application packages when we receive them in our office and maintain a file throughout the year. In the event you submit your resume early in the year, you are encouraged to send in an update before **December 19<sup>th</sup>**. Updates will be attached to your initial resume.

### Selection Process:

The trainee committee, which oversees the training program for camera trainees, receives approximately 100 resumes each year from people interested in joining our training program. These resumes are retained until the committee meets to review each resume. Approximately 40% of all applicants will be selected for an interview. Selection is based on both education and practical work experience.

Interviews are usually held in spring of the new year. Of those interviewed, approximately 60% will be selected for the training program. This number is reviewed annually and is dependent upon projected industry needs.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Not everyone who applies can be accepted. The market demand forms the basis of our camera trainee requirements. Therefore, placement in our training Program is driven by industry conditions and crew requirements.

In the event you are not selected, we encourage you to continue to seek alternate employment in the film industry to build up your experience and contacts in order to re-apply at a later date.

### **Once You Are Selected:**

Once you have been selected by the Committee, you will be placed on a prioritized list as determined by the committee. As trainees upgrade to 2nd assistants, new trainees from the prioritized list are placed on the rotation schedule. Before being placed on the rotation schedule, you will be required to attend an orientation seminar at the Local 667 office and complete a membership application.

A membership application fee will be required along with annual dues. In addition, all trainees are required to purchase the Camera Assistant Manual.

We do not have permittees. All of our trainees are I.A.T.S.E. Local 667 trainee members.

### **As a Trainee:**

It is very important that once you have been selected to join the training program and become a member, you must remain in contact with the Local 667 office and **remain available** for work. As you have made camera a career decision, the training Program should be your **first priority**. We understand that financial needs etc. may require you to consider temporary work elsewhere during down times in your placement. We request that you **first** contact the Local 667 office regarding your availability. In the event you are repeatedly unavailable to work as a camera trainee, you will be required to relinquish your training spot for the next available applicant.

### **Working as a Trainee under the I.A.T.S.E. Local 667 Collective Agreement:**

Once accepted into the camera trainee program, you will be assigned to work with film crews and learn from professional camera assistants. You will learn how to work as a 2nd assistant cameraperson, meeting the needs of the camera department while working with the rest of the film crew. The following is a summarized list of responsibilities you will learn included in the training program:

- how to build various cameras in different working modes with all the accessories
- how to mark actors
- recording with digital media
- how to slate (single, multi and high speed cameras)
- how to keep accurate paperwork : camera reports, petty cash, equipment rentals and returns
- how to set up the monitors for video village
- equipment management and organization

As a camera trainee, you will be placed on "rotation" on a minimum of 6 to a maximum of 10 productions, for 4 to 8 weeks in length, each with a different camera crew when possible. At the end of each production, the camera crew will assess your performance then provide you and the I.A.T.S.E. Local 667 office with a progress report. These reports are a valuable tool to assist you in determining your strengths and weaknesses prior to your next "rotation" placement.

When working under an I.A.T.S.E. Local 667 contract, the camera trainee will work the same number of hours as the 2nd assistant cameraperson (approximately 40 to 70 hours per week). You will earn the provincial minimum wage for your position as camera trainee for the first 8 hours of each day. Work performed after eight working hours will be paid based on an overtime structure.

### **Upgrading to 2nd Assistant:**

After completing the minimum requirements of the training program, you will be asked to write a critique prior to upgrading to 2<sup>nd</sup> AC. 70% is considered a passing grade.

When trainees are qualified to apply to upgrade to 2nd assistant, they must submit an application to upgrade (within 2 weeks of their last placement) to the trainee committee. The application must be accompanied by 3x **signed** letters of recommendation from the **“A” Camera 1st and 2nd assistants** with whom they have trained. **Recommendation letters from the trainee's first show will not be accepted.** The **initialed** progress reports (which are sent to our office at the completion of each of our trainee's placements) will also be submitted to the trainee committee. It will be solely at the discretion of the Executive board, based on the Trainee Committee's recommendation, to approve upgrade applications.

### **Working as a 2nd AC under the I.A.T.S.E. Local 667 Collective Agreement:**

Once camera trainees upgrade to 2nd assistant camerapersons, they will be in the freelance world. It will be up to each individual to **secure their own work**. The Local 667 office provides each production company with the names of our members and their resumes/reels. We also provide all of our members with the contact names and addresses of upcoming and existing productions from which they can seek job opportunities. The Local 667 office is not the employer and is not involved in the decision-making process by the production company as to which I.A.T.S.E. Local 667 member will or will not be hired on a particular production.

Upon upgrading to a 2nd assistant, an initiation fee is required as well as 2nd assistant quarterly dues.

### **Things You Can Do In The Meanwhile:**

Because you eventually may work in the industry as a freelance cameraperson, the more industry related experience you can secure, the better off you will be. Not only will you become familiar with the various types of film work being done, but you will also be networking and meeting potential members and professionals who may hire you upon completion of the trainee program.

You should try and secure any type of work possible. This can include, but is not limited to, working as a production assistant, in craft service, in the production office, as a general labourer, etc. Camera experience is, of course, preferred. You may want to inquire about positions with Canadian production companies, commercial companies, music videos, Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto (LIFT), The Canadian Film Centre, local film co-ops etc.

### **Possible Employment Contacts:**

While you are waiting an interview or placement, you may want to contact various production companies in your area of residence for potential employment. We strongly advise that you deliver your resumes in person to some of these places.

For residents of Ontario: Please go to the [ontariocreates.ca](http://www.ontariocreates.ca) website for a listing of what is filming in Ontario or go to link: [http://www.ontariocreates.ca/film\\_and\\_tv/Ontario\\_Film\\_Commission/in\\_production.htm](http://www.ontariocreates.ca/film_and_tv/Ontario_Film_Commission/in_production.htm)

**Ontario Creates**, 175 Bloor Street East, North Tower, Suite 501, Toronto, ON, M4W 3R8 (416) 314-6858  
[reception@ontariocreates.ca](mailto:reception@ontariocreates.ca)

**PLEASE NOTE:** Ontario Creates is not a hiring hall, nor are they seeking employees. It is an agency of the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

Additionally, The Canadian Film Centre is often seeking volunteers to work on the films they produce.

**The Canadian Film Centre**

2489 Bayview Avenue  
North York, Ontario M2L 1A8  
(416) 445-1446

Periodically throughout the year, The Canadian Film Centre will produce short theatrical films. These films are crewed up on a volunteer basis. There is no payment involved.

In the Atlantic Region:

Atlantic Filmmakers Co-operative (AFCOOP) - Nova Scotia <http://afcoop.ca/>  
Newfoundland Independent Filmmakers Co-operative (NIFCO) – Newfoundland <http://nifco.org>

**Information on the Sheridan Motion Picture Camera Assistant Workshop:**

I.A.T.S.E. Local 667, in cooperation with Sheridan College, is offering a stand-alone program in advanced television and film. A degree/diploma from a film studies program is required, or 2-3 years of film work experience. The Program will be held two or three times a year in Sheridan's Sheridan Centre for Animation and Emerging Technologies (SCAET) facility. This building is located at their Oakville Campus on Trafalgar Road in Oakville Ontario.

The course entitled Motion Picture Camera Assistant Workshop 1 & 2 is taught by Local 667 members. It is available two times per year: it runs 8 hours/day for 2 x 5 or 6 day weeks. Exact dates vary from year to year depending on enrollment, classroom and equipment availability. The course is divided into two sections. The first week is called Workshop 1 and the second week is Workshop 2.

Although completion of these courses does not guarantee a spot in the I.A.T.S.E. Local 667 camera trainee program, approx. 50% of the recently accepted trainees have completed Sheridan's two week course.

The workshops cover the roles and responsibilities of the 1st and 2nd camera assistants and are intended to be taken as a combined unit. The workshops are taught on consecutive weeks with curriculum delivered in a variety of lectures, demonstrations, hands-on, in- studio, outdoor work and on-set visits. The Program fees include the I.A.T.S.E. Local 667 Camera Assistant Manual. Please note that each course has a maximum class size of 14 participants.

Our goal is to build a curriculum that will provide you with a thorough background in camera assisting as a career choice. It is aimed at providing you with the skills, knowledge and attitude that are crucial for the camera trainee program.

If you are interested in applying for this program, contact Sheridan College for additional information:

- Phone: Martina , the course coordinator 905-845-9430 Ext. 8741
- [https://caps.sheridancollege.ca/products/MEDA70011\\_MotionPictureCameraAssistantWorkshop1.aspx](https://caps.sheridancollege.ca/products/MEDA70011_MotionPictureCameraAssistantWorkshop1.aspx)
- Email: [iatse667@sheridanc.on.ca](mailto:iatse667@sheridanc.on.ca)