



Pandemic Pay for Frontline Workers

May 7, 2020

Background

On April 25, 2020, the Government of Ontario announced that it would be providing temporary wage increases for frontline workers in Healthcare, Social Services and Corrections. On May 7th, the government of Canada announced that it had reached an agreement with the Provinces and Territories on wage top-ups for essential workers. However, each province or territory will determine which workers would be eligible for support, and how much support they will receive. Yesterday the Government of Ontario made updates to the list of eligible workers and provided further details on when and how employers and subsequently employees would receive the wage top up.

It appears as though the Government of Ontario, at least at this point is offering the wage subsidy top up to employees who work for government funded public bodies i.e. healthcare, social services and corrections. The wage top-up does not appear to include any private sector employees or employers e.g. grocery store workers, gas station attendants at the time of writing. As we have seen these situations are often fluid and can change. The below is the latest information available from the government of Ontario website.

Key Points

- The temporary pandemic pay provides \$4/hour worked on top of their regular wages (hours must be worked, the top up does not apply to vacation time)
- In addition, the government will also be providing monthly lump sum payments of \$250 for four months to eligible frontline workers who work over 100 hours in the designated 4-week periods (specified below)
- There is no requirement to apply for either the temporary top up or the monthly lump-sum payments, eligible employees will automatically receive the benefits they are entitled to as specified
- Employers do not need to apply either, eligible employers will be contacted by their ministry



Eligible Workplaces and Workers

Health care

To be eligible for pandemic pay you must be an eligible worker who works in an eligible workplace providing publicly funded services.

Eligible workplaces

- All hospitals in the province, including small rural hospitals, post-acute hospitals, children's hospitals and psychiatric hospitals
- Home and community care

Eligible workers

- Personal support workers
- Registered nurses
- Registered practical nurses
- Nurse practitioners
- Attendant care workers
- Auxiliary staff, including:
 - porters
 - cooks
 - custodians
 - housekeeping
 - laundry
- Developmental services workers
- Mental health and addictions workers
- Respiratory therapists in hospitals and in the home and community care sector
- Paramedics
- Public health nurses

Long-Term Care

Eligible workplaces

- Long-term care homes (including private, municipal and not-for-profit homes)

Eligible workers

- All non-management publicly funded employees and workers in eligible workplaces (full-time, part-time and casual)

Retirement homes

Eligible workplaces

- Licensed retirement homes

Eligible workers

- All non-management employees working on site in licensed retirement homes (full-time, part-time and casual)



Social Services

Eligible workplaces

- Homes supporting people with developmental disabilities
- Intervenor residential sites
- Indigenous healing and wellness facilities and shelters
- Shelters for survivors of gender-based violence and human trafficking
- Youth justice residential facilities
- Licenced children's residential sites
- Directly operated residential facility – Child and Parent Resource Institute
- Emergency shelters
- Supportive housing facilities
- Respite and drop-in centres
- Temporary shelter facilities, such as re-purposed community centres or arenas
- Hotels and motels used for self-isolation and/or shelter overflow

Eligible workers

- Direct support workers (such as developmental service workers, staff in licenced children's residential sites, intake and outreach workers)
- Clinical staff
- Housekeeping staff
- Security staff
- Administration personnel
- Maintenance staff
- Food service workers
- Nursing staff

Corrections

Eligible workplaces

- Adult correctional facilities and youth justice facilities in Ontario

Eligible workers

- Correctional officers
- Youth services officers
- Nurses
- Healthcare staff
- Social workers
- Food service
- Maintenance staff
- Programming personnel
- Administration personnel
- Institutional liaison officers
- Native Institutional Liaison Officers
- TRILCOR personnel
- Chaplains



How Much Am I Entitled To?

How much you can get

There are two kinds of pandemic pay you may be eligible for:

- A temporary top-up based on your hourly wages.
- Monthly lump sum payments.

Pandemic pay on hourly wages

If you are eligible, you will receive \$4 per hour worked on top of your existing hourly wages, regardless of how much you already make.

All eligible workers will receive this amount automatically.

Monthly lump sum payments

If you work at least 100 hours in a designated 4-week period, you will also be eligible to receive an additional lump sum payment of \$250 for that period.

The designated 4-week periods are:

- April 24, 2020 to May 21, 2020.
- May 22, 2020 to June 18, 2020.
- June 19, 2020 to July 16, 2020.
- July 17, 2020 to August 13, 2020.

This means you may receive up to a total of \$1,000 in lump sum payments over these 16 weeks.

Eligible staff will also be paid retroactively for hours worked during this period.

