

**2018 Wage Enhancement Grant (WEG)
& Home Child Care Enhancement Grant (HCCEG)**

QUESTION & ANSWER

GENERAL INFORMATION

Q1. When can I apply for WEG/HCCEG funding?

- A. WEG/HCCEG applications will be released on **January 15, 2018**. Providers must submit their completed applications by **March 16, 2018** to the Region of Peel through the [Early Years and Child Care Funds Management Technology System](#). The Region will notify providers of their 2018 approved WEG/HCCEG amount in the second quarter of 2018.

Q2. I missed the application deadline. Can I request an extension?

- A. Unfortunately, there are no extensions for the provision of WEG and HCCEG funding in 2018 per provincial policy. However you can apply for funding in 2019. *Exception: Agencies/centres newly licensed after March 16, 2018 may apply after this date.*

Q3. Are there any changes to WEG/HCCEG requirements for 2018?

- A. Yes, the three key changes to WEG/HCCEG for 2018 are as follows:
- 1) Providers who are licensed in 2018 are eligible to access funding for 2018 WEG/HCCEG in the year the program begins operation;
 - 2) Wage cap to receive up to \$2.00 per hour has increased to \$27.07 per hour;
 - 3) Wage cap to receive up to \$20.00 per day for full HCCEG has increased to \$270.70 per day in daily fees and \$162.42 in daily fees for partial HCCEG of \$10.00 per day.

Q4. What is the Supplemental Grant and what can it be used for?

- A. In addition to WEG/HCCEG funding, the Ministry will provide a Supplemental Grant to providers equal to \$150 for each eligible centre-based full-time equivalent (FTE) or home visitor FTE and \$50 for each eligible home child care provider. This grant will be automatically calculated on the application forms, based on the information provided by providers.

For example, if a centre had 12 FTEs in the previous year they would receive \$1800 (12 x \$150) for their budget for the Supplemental Grant.

The Supplemental Grant must be used to support staff, home visitors and providers' hourly/daily wage or benefits. The Grant offers providers the flexibility to cover salary shortfalls due to increased hours or staffing, and additional benefits (e.g. additional time in program, new staff or providers, vacation days, sick days or Professional Development days and/or other benefits) once mandatory benefits are covered. Any funding that is not used for these purposes will be recovered.

ELIGIBILITY

Q5. Which child care staff are eligible for the 2018 Wage Enhancement Grant?

- A. To be eligible to receive the Wage Enhancement Grant in 2018, staff must be:
- Employed in a licensed child care centre or home child care agency;
 - Earn less than \$25.07 per hour as a base salary, including; any historical wage grants (i.e. former Historical Wage Subsidy and Pay Equity) but excluding prior year's WEG; and
 - Categorized as a Supervisor, RECE, home child care visitor, or otherwise counted to child ratios under the Child Care and Early Years Act 2014 (CCEYA).

Supplementary program staff positions that are in place to maintain lower adult-child ratios than required under the CCEYA are also eligible for WEG/HCCCEG.

Q6. Are supervisors eligible for wage enhancement?

- A. Yes, supervisors are eligible for wage enhancement. Supervisors who qualify are eligible to receive wage enhancement for 100% of the time they are working in a licensed child care setting, regardless of the amount of time they are working directly with children.

Q7. Are assistant supervisors eligible for wage enhancement?

- A. Assistant supervisors are eligible for wage enhancement if they are in a position that can be counted towards ratio for at least 25% of the day and meet the other eligibility criteria. However, they can only receive wage enhancement for the time spent in program and not the time in administrative or other positions.

Q8. Can a child care operator provide wage enhancement to current eligible positions or can it only be to eligible positions that existed last year?

- A. Providers have the flexibility to pay wage enhancement to current eligible positions and to providers for hours/days worked in 2018.

Q9. If my program opened after January 1, 2017 will my staff still receive wage enhancement for the full 2018 year?

A. Yes, the 2018 application takes into account the centres and home child care agencies that opened after January 1, 2017. Providers are asked to estimate hours worked by eligible positions for the full year.

Q10. Are casual staff, supply staff and/or part-time employees eligible for wage enhancement?

A. Yes, casual staff, supply staff and part-time employees are eligible for wage enhancement provided they meet the other eligibility requirements and can be counted towards ratio in the program.

Q11. Are non-program staff (e.g. cook, custodial staff, and administrators) eligible for wage enhancement?

A. Non-Program staff positions may be eligible for wage enhancement funding where at least 25 per cent of the non-program staff position is used to support CCEYA ratio requirements. In these instances, the enhancement will be provided for the time in the program.

Q12. Is it the position that is eligible or the staff?

A. Applications are calculated based on eligible positions worked in 2017 and are paid to staff working in those eligible positions in 2018.

Q13. Are owners of a centre or home child care agency eligible for Wage Enhancement?

A. Owners who are identified as the “approved supervisor” for the purpose of the CCEYA are eligible to apply for wage enhancement if their hourly salary is less than \$27.07. If the owner is not the Supervisor as per CCEYA, they can still be eligible for the wage enhancement provided they spend at least 25% of their day in a position that can be counted towards ratio.

Q14. Do I need to re-apply for funding every year?

A. Yes, wage enhancement funding is calculated annually based on the hours worked in qualifying positions from the prior year. This means providers are required to update their application every year.

DISTRIBUTION AND PAYMENTS

Q15. When do providers need to pay staff/providers 2018 WEG/HCCEG?

- A. Providers no longer have the flexibility on the frequency to pay staff/providers. Operators are to issue payments to staff/providers on each pay cheque/fee transfer.

Payment to staff/providers must be indicated:

- On staff pay cheques and home child care fee transfers; or
- Through a separate letter signed by each staff and child care provider that shows the portion of funding that is being provided to them through the 2018 WEG/HCCEG. At a minimum this letter is to be provided once annually by December 31, 2018.

WEG/HCCEG payments are to be labelled as follows:

- Provincial Child Care Wage Enhancement Grant; or
- Provincial Home Child Care Enhancement Grant

Q16 Can the supplemental grant be paid out in a flat lump sum to all eligible staff/providers at the end of the year?

- A. The Supplemental Grant must be used to support staff, home visitors and provider's hourly/daily wage or benefits and provides the operator with the flexibility to cover salary shortfalls due to increased hours or staffing and additional benefits.

The Supplemental Grant, like the salary/benefit components, must be paid out on hours worked or a benefit percentage calculated for each eligible position. It cannot be paid out as a flat rate lump sum without basing the payment on a calculation.

Q17. I have a shortfall in Wage Enhancement funding. Am I obligated to cover this shortfall?

- A. Both the Supplemental Grant and any residual benefits funding can be used to offset any potential shortfalls. There may be situations such as expansion or other unforeseen circumstances where an operator will run out of funding before the end of the year.

In this scenario priority is given to the positions that existed in 2017 and allocated for hours worked until such time the funding runs out.

Providers are not obligated to cover any shortfalls in Wage Enhancement once funding is exhausted for the year.

Q18. My agency provides benefits at a rate that is higher than 17.5%. Is there additional funding to support this cost?

- A. Providers are provided with a Supplemental Grant to support shortfalls related to Wage Enhancement. This funding can be used to support additional sick time, vacation days, professional days and/or additional benefits.

Unused salary allocation cannot be used to support benefits.

Q19. My agency has already committed to salary/pay increases for staff in 2018. Can the WEG/HCCEG be used to address this commitment?

- A. No, WEG/HCCEG cannot be used to address salary/pay increases committed by your agency. The funding is paid over and above any regular or planned pay entitlement.

Q20. Are providers required to pay employees who have resigned part way through the year?

- A. Yes, your approved budget for 2018 is to pay any employees that filled those positions anytime from January to December in 2018 at a rate of a maximum of up to \$2.00 per hour. This includes employees who have left in 2018.

Q21. If a home provider or home child care visitor only worked only one month this year and then quit, would I still pay out that provider/home child care visitor for the one month?

- A. Yes, you need to pay them up until their last day and send on a separate cheque. Be sure to keep track of your payment for reconciliation.

Q22. What do I do if a home child care provider works for more than one licensed home child care agency?

- A. Home child care agencies must work together to determine how payments would be made to home child care providers that are contracted with more than one agency. In the event the provider works for two agencies the agency with the higher service level will pay the provider.

In the event two agencies are both eligible to pay the provider with equal service levels the agency with the earlier license date will pay the provider in 2018 (i.e. agency "A" was licensed in 1995 and agency "B" in 1975 the agency "B" will pay the provider).

Q23. If a home child care provider is contracted with an agency, but currently does not have any agency placed children does this mean they are no longer eligible for the HCCEG?

- A. Privately placed children are counted in the calculation of HCCEG. The provider must be contracted with a home child care agency to receive payments.

RECONCILIATION AND REPORTING

Q24. What happens if I have unused funding at the end of the year?

- A. All unused funds will be returned to the Region of Peel following reconciliation in 2019.

Q25. How do I report /reconcile my 2018 WEG/HCCEG?

- A. 2018 WEG/HCCEG will be reconciled early in 2019. Operators will receive communication to log into the [Early Years and Child Care Funds Management Technology System](#) and will be required to enter the funding used according to reporting requirement breakdowns.

Providers are required to document benefits paid associated with the \$2.00 per hour pay increase. Please ensure your payment records allow for this reporting expectation.

Q26. How do I have to report my payments?

- A. Providers are required to report payments for Salary and Benefits to staff by category breakdowns as follows (including supplemental grant):
- Fully Eligible RECE, Non-RECE, Supervisor, Home Visitor
 - Partially Eligible RECE, NON-RECE, Supervisor, Home Visitor
 - Provider payments based on number of days worked

Note: Tracking the number of hours worked from January to December 2018 is required for reconciliation.

Q26. Where do I send recovery payments?

- A. Once your reconciliation report is completed the Region will review your submission. Providers will receive communication from the Region indicating the confirmed funding amount required for recovery.

For further payment information email us at: EarlyYearsSystemDivision@peelregion.ca

SUPPORT

Q27. Who do I contact if I have concerns about this funding such as how it is being used?

- A. As the service system manager for child care, municipalities will manage public inquiries related to the Wage Enhancement. Contact information for inquiries related to the Wage Enhancement is available on our [Region of Peel](#) website.

Examples of the type of inquiries that may be directed to the Region include:

- The process for applying for the Wage Enhancement Grant;
- How child care professionals can determine if their operator has applied for funding; and,
- How child care professionals can report a provider's misuse of funding (e.g. if they have not received their increase).

For inquiries regarding WEG/HCCEG email us at:

EarlyYearsSystemDivision@peelregion.ca or call 905 791-7800 extension 8522.

Q28. Is funding available to operators to support administration costs associated with implementing the wage enhancement initiative?

- A. The Province is providing child care service system managers with funding for administration in 2018. Providers may use this funding to support administration such as upgrading payment systems, internal payment processes, training for staff related to this initiative and internal processes to track data and expenditures. The administration dollars provided is intended for administrative use and must be used in accordance with the guideline. Funding will be allocated once 2018 applications are approved.