

Ontario Government Announces Temporary Pandemic Pay to Support Frontline Workers Fighting COVID-19

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The Ontario government has announced that it will be providing frontline workers with temporary pandemic pay, in recognition of their dedication, long hours and increased risk of working to contain the COVID-19 outbreak.

Eligible frontline workers will see an increase of \$4.00/hour to their existing regular wages for a 16-week period from April 24, 2020 until August 13, 2020. A lump sum payment of \$250 per month will also be available for the next four months to eligible frontline workers who work over 100 hours per month. As a result, \$3,560 in additional compensation would be available to eligible employees working an average of 40 hours a week.

Who is Eligible

The increase in compensation will be available to staff providing frontline clinical services, as well as support services such as cleaning and meal preparation, in the health care and long-term care sectors, the social services sector and the correctional sector. It is important to note that the temporary pandemic pay is not applicable to management employees.

Some of the eligible workplaces include the following:

- Hospitals;
- Long-term care homes;
- Licensed retirement homes;
- Home and community care;
- Certain shelters, including those for survivors of gender-based violence and human trafficking, as well as emergency shelters;
- Certain residential facilities and sites; including intervenor residential sites and licenced children's residential sites;
- Supportive housing facilities;
- Respite/drop-in centres; and
- Adult correctional facilities and youth justice facilities.

Although the eligibility of a particular category of worker listed below depends on the particular

sector in which they work, some of the eligible workers include the following:

- Personal support workers;
- Registered nurses;
- Registered practical nurses;
- Nurse practitioners;
- Attendant care workers;
- Auxiliary staff, including porters, cooks, custodians, housekeeping, laundry facilities and other key workers;
- Developmental services workers;
- Mental health and addictions workers;
- Respiratory therapists in hospitals and in the home and community care sector;
- Paramedics;
- Public health nurses;
- Direct support workers;
- Clinical staff;
- Correctional officers and youth services officers;
- Social workers; and
- Chaplains

For a complete list of eligible workplaces and associated eligible workers, click [here](#).

In Our View

As the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic continues, frontline workers are working hard to support sick and vulnerable citizens. The pandemic pay recognizes this important sacrifice and contribution by supporting over 350,000 frontline workers. As noted by the government, the pandemic pay increase will also support employers by enabling facilities to attract more staff during these unprecedented times.

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