

Ministry of Long-Term Care

Ontario Supporting Frontline Heroes of COVID-19 with Pandemic Pay Long-Term Care Eligibility Questions and Answers

May 4, 2020

1. Which long-term care home employees will be eligible to receive pandemic pay?

There are about 100,000 full-time, part-time, casual, clinical, and support staff working on site at long-term care homes who are eligible for this premium.

This includes personal support workers, activity assistants, health care aides, nurses, nurse practitioners, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, social workers, and restorative aides, among other clinical staff. In addition, all support staff will be eligible. Support staff includes janitorial, meal prep staff and other support staff who may not work directly with residents but are essential for a long-term care home to function.

Note that 56,000 was a number previously shared, which represents the number of clinical 'full-time equivalents,' however the pandemic premium is available to and spread amongst the about 100,000 full and part-time employees mentioned above.

2. Will this also apply to agency staff that come into a long-term care home?

Yes, agency staff that come to work in a long-term care home to provide services such as nursing, personal support, occupational therapy and physiotherapy, will be eligible for the same pay increase as employees of long-term care homes.

3. Will management be able to receive pandemic pay?

No, management will not be entitled to receive pandemic pay. We have heard and appreciate the concerns expressed by the sector.

4. How long will pandemic pay last?

The funding for temporary pandemic pay will be available for an anticipated 16-week period effective April 24, 2020 until August 13, 2020.

The government recognizes this is a rapidly-evolving and dynamic situation and will continually monitor and consult on the best approaches to supporting all Ontarians, including frontline workers.

5. Is there a minimum length of time an employee has to work to receive the hourly pandemic pay? How about the lump sum payment?

An employee can work any length of time within the 16-week period and be eligible for pandemic pay. They will receive temporary pandemic pay of \$4/hour worked on top of their regular wages.

An employee who works at least 100 hours in a four-week period will receive an additional lump sum of \$250 per each four-week period worked to a maximum of \$1000 during the 16-week period.

6. How will staff receive their hourly pandemic pay?

Staff will receive their hourly pandemic pay directly from their employer. The government will work with the employers of long-term care operators and eligible agencies to provide funding to ensure all eligible staff are receiving their pay.

7. How will staff receive their lump sum payment?

The government will provide more detail shortly.

8. How will the employer's share of mandatory contributions (e.g., employment insurance, Canada Pension Plan) be paid?

The funding provided to LTC homes from the government will include the employer's share of mandatory contributions.

9. Would pandemic pay be pensionable?

No, both the hourly pandemic pay and lump sum payments are temporary and have no impact on pension, benefits or base salaries.

10. Is Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO) staff eligible for the pandemic pay?

Yes, BSO staff providing services in LTC homes during this period are eligible.