

2019 Wage Enhancement Grant (WEG) & Home Child Care Enhancement Grant (HCCEG)

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS

GENERAL

1. When can I apply for 2019 WEG/HCCEG funding?

The application window for the 2019 WEG/HCCEG applications will open on **July 10, 2019** and close **July 31, 2019**. Service Providers must submit their completed applications to the Region of Peel through the [Early Years and Child Care Funds Management Technology System](#).

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

No extensions for the 2019 WEG/HCCEG funding will be granted.

Exception: If your agency/centre is newly licensed after July 31, 2019, you may apply after this date. Please note that the approval of funds will be subject to available 2019 WEG/HCCEG funding.

3. Are there any changes to WEG/HCCEG funding for 2019?

Yes, changes to WEG/HCCEG for 2019 are as follows:

- 1) Wage cap to receive up to \$2.00 per hour has increased to \$27.47 per hour;
- 2) Wage cap to receive up to \$20.00 per day for full HCCEG has increased to \$274.70 per day in daily fees; and
- 3) Wage cap to receive up to \$10.00 per day for partial HCCEG has increased to \$164.82 in daily fees.

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

In addition to WEG/HCCEG funding, Service Providers will be provided with a Supplemental Grant to 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 the Service Providers.

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

The Supplemental Grant must be used to support staff, home visitors' and providers' hourly/daily wages or benefits. The grant offers Service 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 REQUIREMENTS

5. Which child care staff are eligible for the 2019 Wage Enhancement Grant?

To be eligible to receive the full Wage Enhancement Grant in 2019, staff must be:

- Employed in a licensed child care centre or home child care agency;
- Earn less than \$25.47 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/HCCCG. Please refer to Appendix 1 of the guideline for the Staff Position and Eligibility Chart.

6. Are Supervisors eligible for Wage Enhancement?

Yes, Supervisors may be eligible to receive WEG for time working in a licensed child care program. Staff working in the Supervisor position must have Director's approval and meet licensing requirements outlined by the Ministry of Education. Service Providers must be able to demonstrate eligible hours worked in an eligible program position.

7. Are Assistant Supervisors eligible for Wage Enhancement?

Assistant Supervisors may be eligible for Wage Enhancement if they are in a position that can be counted towards supporting ratios for at least 25% of the time 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.

8. Can a Service Provider provide Wage Enhancement to current eligible positions or can it only be to eligible positions that existed last year?

Providers have the flexibility to pay Wage Enhancement to current eligible positions and to providers for hours/days worked in 2019. Staff/providers on existing approvals must be prioritized. For example, a WEG budget for a toddler staff approved on your application can not be reduced to cover a new position that was not approved in 2019. You have the option to use the Supplemental Grant or unused benefit budgets to fund new positions if budget permits.

9. Are casual staff, supply staff and/or part-time employees eligible for Wage Enhancement?

Yes, casual staff, supply staff and part-time employees may be eligible for Wage

Enhancement provided they meet the other eligibility requirements and can be counted towards supporting ratios in the program. The staff working the position that day would be paid the WEG for hours worked in program.

10. Are non-program staff (e.g. cook, custodial staff, and administrators/owners) eligible for Wage Enhancement?

Non-program staff positions may be eligible for Wage Enhancement funding if the position spends at least 25% of the time supporting ratio requirements under the CCEYA, then this position is eligible for WEG/HCCEG for the number of hours that the position supports ratios.

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

Applications are calculated based on eligible positions worked in 2019 and are paid to staff working those eligible positions in 2019. Payment is for hours/days worked from January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019.

12. Are owners of a centre or home child care agency eligible for wage enhancement?

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 \$27.47. 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 time in a position that can be counted towards ratio. Owners would need to demonstrate they were working in an eligible position and provide documentation to support those hours if requested.

DISTRIBUTION/PAYMENTS

13. When do Service Providers need to pay staff/providers 2019 WEG/HCCEG?

Service Providers are required to issue WEG or HCCEG payments to staff/providers on each pay cheque/payment. Once funds are deposited into bank accounts, payments are to be issued by the next payroll/payment date.

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 2019 WEG/HCCEG.

WEG/HCCEG payments are to be labelled as follows:

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

14. Can the Supplemental Grant be paid out in a flat lump sum to all eligible staff/providers at the end of the year?

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.

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

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 a Service Provider will run out of funding before the end of the year.

In this scenario priority is given to the positions that existed in 2018 and allocated for hours worked in 2019 until such time the funding runs out.

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

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

Service Providers receive the Supplemental Grant to support shortfalls related to Wage Enhancement. This grant can be used to support additional sick time, vacation days, professional days and/or additional benefits associated with payments for WEG.

Unused salary allocation cannot be used to support benefits.

17. My agency has already committed to salary/pay increases for staff in 2019. Can the WEG/HCCEG be used to address this commitment?

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.

18. Are Service Providers required to pay employees who have resigned part way through the year?

Yes, your approved budget for 2019 is to pay any employees that filled those positions for the hours they worked in the position during January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019 at a rate of a maximum of up to \$2.00 per hour.

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

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

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

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 HCCEG payment eligibility 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 licence date will pay the provider in 2019 (i.e. agency "A" was licensed in 1995 and agency "B" in 1975 the agency "B" will pay the provider).

21. 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?

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/REPORTING

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

All unused funds will be returned to the Region of Peel following reconciliation in 2020.

23. How do I report /reconcile my 2019 WEG/HCCEG?

In the first quarter of 2020, a 2019 WEG/HCCEG Reporting and Reconciliation package will be released by the Region. Service Providers are required to complete and submit this package to the Region using the Early Years and Child Care Funds Management Technology System. All Service Providers will receive communication to log into the [Early Years and Child Care Funds Management Technology System](#) and are required to enter the funding used according to reporting requirement breakdowns.

Service Providers are required to ensure they document benefits paid associated with the WEG/HCCEG. Please ensure your payment records allow for this reporting expectation.

24. How do I have to report my payments?

Service 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 2019 is required for

reconciliation.

25. Where do I send recovery payments?

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

CONTACT/SUPPORT

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

As the service system manager for child care, the Region will manage public inquiries related to WEG/HCCEG. Examples of the type of inquiries that may be directed to the Region include:

- The process for applying for WEG/HCCEG;
- How child care professionals can determine if their Service Provider has applied for funding; and
- How child care professionals can report a Service Provider's misuse of funding (e.g. if they have not received their increase).

For inquiries regarding WEG/HCCEG email EarlyYearsSystemDivision@peelregion.ca.

27. Is funding available to Service Providers to support administration costs associated with implementing Wage Enhancement?

Yes, administration funding from the Province will be provided to support the cost of administering the 2019 WEG/HCCEG. Service 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 2019 applications are approved in fall of 2019.