

**2023 Wage Enhancement Grant (WEG) & Home Child Care Enhancement Grant (HCCEG)
Questions and Answers (Q&As) for Service Providers
Released: December 19, 2022**

These Q&As assist you in understanding the WEG and HCCEG between January 1 to December 31, 2023 and do replace the 2023 WEG/HCCEG guideline and agreement.

GENERAL

1. Am I required to apply for 2023 WEG/HCCEG funding?

No, your initial approval for the 2023 WEG/HCCEG is based on your pre-populated 2022 WEG/HCCEG position information to ensure continuous payment in January 2023.

You will receive a notification to accept and submit confirmation of your 2023 WEG/HCCEG funding in GovGrants. You must accept and submit your confirmation by **December 23, 2022**.

The videos at the following links can support you in accepting and submitting your WEG application:

[WEG Application Link](#)

[HCCEG Application Link](#)

2. What happens if I do not accept/submit my initial 2023 WEG/HCCEG funding on time?

If you do not accept and submit your initial 2023 WEG/HCCEG funding by December 23, 2022, your WEG/HCCEG payment will be delayed. You will have to wait until fall 2023 to apply for 2023 WEG/HCCEG.

3. Can I make position information changes to my approved 2023 WEG/HCCEG funding?

No, you must accept and submit your initial 2023 WEG/HCCEG funding back to us without adjustments by the deadline. If you submit your application by December 23, 2022, you will be able to adjust your position information in the spring 2023.

4. When will I receive my 2023 WEG/HCCEG funding?

You will receive your first 2023 WEG/HCCEG payment in early January 2023. You can continue issuing 2023 WEG/HCCEG payments to all eligible staff/providers on each pay cheque/payment based on the actual hours/days worked in 2023.

5. What happens if my 2023 WEG/HCCEG initial amount is not enough to cover WEG requirements in 2023?

At this time, changes cannot be made to position information in your initial 2023 WEG/HCCEG approval. You will be able to adjust your 2022 position information to reflect your WEG requirements in spring 2023.

If you require more funding to cover WEG requirements before spring 2023, contact your Early Years Specialist.

6. When can new sites apply for 2023 WEG/HCCEG funding?

If you open a new site in 2023, you will be able to apply for WEG/HCCEG in fall 2023. You will receive a notification announcement through GovGrants to apply once available. Approval is subject to funding availability.

If you do not have a GovGrants Technology account set up, please contact us at zzgeyccsgovgrantsadmin@peelregion.ca to request a login.

7. If a service provider has opted-in to CWELCC for 2023, do they need to apply for WEG/HCCEG?

Yes, in order for your staff to be eligible for the CWELCC Compensation Enhancement you must apply for the WEG. You will apply through the GovGrants technology in fall 2023. This technology will be used for the completion of applications, allocations, contracts and if applicable, payments.

You will receive a notification announcement through GovGrants to apply once available. Approval is subject to funding availability.

8. When will the 2023 WEG/HCCEG application window open?

New and eligible service providers can apply for the second release of the 2023 WEG/HCCEG Applications in fall 2023.

9. If providers are required to wait on until spring to make adjustments to their 2022 position information, will Peel back date payment(s) to January 2023?

Yes. You will receive back payment funding on adjustments made to your 2022 position information from January 1 to December 31, 2023.

For example, if a new position is added into GovGrants that position would be funded for the hours worked from January 1 to December 31, 2023.

10. If a providers license was granted in December 2022, and they apply for WEG funding in 2023, will the provider receive back payment to the license date?

No. The funding window for 2022 WEG/HCCEG is closed and no additional WEG/HCCEG applications will be approved in 2022.

In 2023, you would be eligible to apply for hours needed to fund staff working in eligible positions from January 1 to December 31, 2023. If your license is granted after January 1, 2023, payments are back dated to the first day that your agency operated in 2023.

11. Are there any changes to WEG/HCCEG caps for 2023?

No. The caps have remained the same for this year:

- \$28.59 per hour for WEG;
- \$285.90 per day for full HCCEG to receive up to \$20 per day for full HCCEG; and
- \$171.54 per day to receive up to \$10 per day for partial HCCEG.

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

In addition to WEG/HCCEG funding, you will also receive a Supplemental Grant, which is based on your approved 2022 WEG application. This grant is calculated automatically to provide an additional amount of \$150 for each eligible centre-based full-time equivalent (FTE) or home visitor FTE, and \$50 for each eligible home child care provider.

For example, if your centre had 12 Full-Time Employees (FTEs) in the previous year, you would receive \$1800 (12 x \$150) as your Supplemental Grant.

This grant must be used to support staff, home visitors and providers' hourly/daily wage or benefits. You will have the flexibility to use this grant to cover salary shortfalls due to increased hours or staffing, and additional employer 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.

13. Are there changes to the Eligibility Criteria for Hours Worked?

Yes. The definition of eligible hours worked has changed so that WEG/HCCEG is applied consistently for all hours/days worked for eligible staff and to align to the [Workforce Innovation Funding](#) guideline.

In 2023, you can use WEG/HCCEG to cover paid hours/days worked in program, paid professional learning time, paid planning time and paid time spent participating in meetings mandated by your organization.

Refer to Appendix 1 in the guideline for details about positions eligible for these new hours.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

14. Which child care staff are eligible for the 2023 Wage Enhancement Grant?

To be eligible to receive the Wage Enhancement Grant in 2023, staff must be:

- Employed in a licensed child care centre or home child care agency;
- Earn less than \$28.59 per hour as a base wage, including; any historical wage grants (i.e. former Historical Wage Subsidy and Pay Equity) but excluding prior year's WEG; and
- Be 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/HCCEG. Please refer to the Staff Positions and Eligibility Chart of the guideline for more information.

15. Are supervisors eligible for wage enhancement?

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.

A Supervisor position for the purpose of this funding is as defined under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (CCEYA).

16. Are assistant supervisors eligible for wage enhancement?

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.

17. Are Enhanced Program Supports (EPS) staff eligible to receive WEG?

No, EPS staff hired by service providers using EPS funding are not eligible for WEG. These positions cannot be counted towards ratio for supervision under the CCEYA to access WEG. EPS hours cannot be used to meet ratios for supervision under the CCEYA.

If you have used EPS funding to extend the hours of existing program staff, only the hours the staff supported ratio under the CCEYA can be eligible for WEG. One staff person cannot fill both ratio and EPS hours at the same time however one staff persons hours of work in a day can comprise of both EPS hours & ratio hours.

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

Payment of WEG/HCCEG is paid to the staff/providers working in eligible positions/homes for hours/days worked in 2023.

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

Yes, casual staff, supply staff and part-time employees are eligible for wage enhancement provided they meet the other eligibility requirements (and are not employed by a third-party) and can be counted towards ratio in the program. The staff/provider working in the eligible position would access the grant for hours/days worked. Absent staff would be funded for time away from the program from the benefit budget provided the time meets the eligibility requirements outlined.

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

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.

For example, if a cook is supporting ratios 2 hours per day and works 8 hours per day, you may apply and fund those 2 hours per day the \$2.00 per hour WEG increase.

21. Is it the position that is eligible, or the staff?

Applications are calculated based on eligible positions worked in 2023 and are paid to staff working those eligible positions in 2023. Payment is for hours/days worked from January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023.

22. 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 \$28.59. 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.

DISTRIBUTION/PAYMENTS

23. When do providers need to pay staff/providers 2023 WEG/HCCEG?

You must 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 2023 WEG/HCCEG.

WEG/HCCEG payments are to be labelled as follows:

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

24. 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 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.

25. I have a shortfall in WEG/HCCEG Funding. Am I obligated to cover this shortfall?

No. You are not obligated to cover any shortfalls in WEG/HCCEG once funding is exhausted for the year.

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 2022 and allocated for hours/days worked in 2023 until such time the funding runs out.

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

You 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 development, additional employer benefits, or new staff/home care providers.

Unused salary allocation cannot be used to support benefits.

27. My agency has already committed to salary/pay increases for staff in 2023. 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.

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

Yes, your approved budget for 2023 is to pay any employees that filled those positions anytime from January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023 at a rate of a maximum of up to \$2.00 per hour.

29. If a home provider or home child care visitor worked only 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 on a separate cheque. Be sure to keep track of your payment for reconciliation.

30. 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 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 2023 (i.e. agency “A” was licensed in 1995 and agency “B” in 1975 the agency “B” will pay the provider).

31. 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

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

All unused funds will be returned to Peel following reconciliation.

33. How do I report/reconcile my 2023 WEG/HCCEG?

You will be required to report/reconcile your 2023 WEG/HCCEG in the first quarter of 2024.

We will communicate the reporting packages and deadlines to Providers.

34. How do I have to report my payments?

You will be 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/days worked from January to December 2024 will be required for Reconciliation.

35. Where do I send recovery payments?

Once your reconciliation report is completed, we will review your submission. You will receive communication from Peel indicating the confirmed funding amount required for recovery.

CONTACT/SUPPORT

36. Who 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 of Peel takes public inquiries about the Wage Enhancement Grant. Examples of the type of inquiries that may be directed to Peel

include:

- The process to apply for WEG/HCCEG for new providers/licensed child care sites;
- How child care professionals can know if their operator has been allocated WEG/HCCEG funding; and,
- How child care professionals can report a provider's misuse of funding.

For inquiries regarding WEG/HCCEG, please email Peel at EarlyYearsSystemDivision@peelregion.ca with the subject line “[Name of Agency] – WEG/HCCEG inquiry.”

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

Administration funding is being consolidated where possible to streamline reporting and reconciliation. How you receive this funding will depend on the service agreements that you have with Peel:

- If you have both a CWELCC Funding Agreement and an EYCCS Fee Subsidy Agreement (FSA), your administration funding for WEG/HCCEG will be provided through your CWELCC Transition Operating Grant (TOG). Note: More information on the TOG will be shared in January 2023.
- If you are not enrolled in the Region's CWELCC program, but you have an FSA with us, you will receive administration funding for WEG/HCCEG through your GOF Agreement.
- If you are not enrolled in the Region's CWELCC program and do not have an FSA with the Region, you will continue to receive your WEG administration funding amount through your WEG/HCCEG Agreement.