

## **2017 WAGE ENHANCEMENT and HOME CHILD CARE ENHANCEMENT GRANT INFORMATION**

### **CENTRE BASED AND HOME VISITORS:**

All licensed child care centres and home child care agencies that opened before January 1, 2017 are eligible to apply for wage enhancement funding.

The 2017 wage enhancement grant will continue to support an increase of up to \$2 per hour, plus 17.5% benefits for eligible centre-based staff and home visitors.

Please note that you are receiving monthly Wage Enhancement payments in 2017, based on your 2016 allocation, to enable you to continue to flow funding to staff in 2017.

**NEW:** To align with adjustments to the salary and wages of the school based ECE grid stated in the 3-year central labour agreements, the current salary cap of \$26.27 will be increased in 2017 by approximately 1.5% to **\$26.68**. If child care staff exceed the cap at any time during the year, excluding wage enhancement, they will no longer be eligible to receive the increase.

To be eligible to receive the full 2017 wage enhancement of \$2 per hour plus 17.5% in benefits, staff must:

- be employed in a licensed child care centre or agency;
- have an associated base wage excluding prior year's wage enhancement of less than \$24.68 per hour (i.e. \$2 below the wage cap of \$26.68); and
- be in a position categorized as a child care supervisor, RECE, home child care visitor, or otherwise counted toward adult to child ratios under the Child Care Early Years Act.

Where an eligible centre-based or home visitor position has an associated base wage rate excluding prior year's wage enhancement between \$24.69 and \$26.68 per hour, the position is eligible for a partial wage enhancement. The partial wage enhancement will increase the wage of the qualifying position to \$26.68 per hour without exceeding the cap. (e.g. if an RECE position has a base wage rate, excluding the previous year's wage enhancement, of \$25.50 per hour, the position would be eligible for wage enhancement of \$1.18 per hour).

Special Needs Resourcing teachers/consultants and supplemental staff are ineligible for wage enhancement. Also ineligible are non-program staff positions including cooks, custodial and other non-program staff positions. The only exception is if the position spends at least 25% of their time to support ratio requirements, in which case the staff would be eligible for wage enhancement for the hours worked in the eligible position supporting ratio. Staff hired through a third party (i.e. temp agency) are not eligible for wage enhancement.

For each eligible position, total hours worked in 2016, including overtime, will be gathered on application forms and used to determine funding entitlement for 2017. The “base” hourly wage rate entered in the application form should include the General Operating Grant and Pay Equity but exclude previous wage enhancement received.

Payments should be provided to eligible positions for each hour worked in 2017. Operators have the flexibility to fund their current year’s eligible positions, even if the position did not exist in 2016. Priority for the distribution of funds should be to staff who were eligible in 2016 and continue to be eligible in 2017.

Operators must include wage enhancement payments in each pay cheque. In addition, operators must notify staff of the amount provided to them through this initiative on pay cheques or through a separate letter. The notification must be labeled “*Provincial Child Care Wage Enhancement*”.

Benefits funding of 17.5% support operators in meeting their statutory benefit requirements. Once all statutory benefits requirements are met (including up to 2 weeks of vacation and 9 statutory days), any remaining funding within the 17.5% can be used to fund other benefit expenses paid by the employer on behalf of the employee. Any residual benefits funding can be used to support wage enhancement salaries but please note this is one-way funding flexibility only, that is, salary funding cannot be used for benefits.

The ministry will continue to provide a supplemental grant of \$150 for each eligible centre based or home visitor FTE in 2017. The supplemental grant must be used to support staff and home visitors’ hourly wage or benefits. It provides operators with the flexibility to cover salary shortfalls (due to increased hours in program or new staff) and additional benefits, (e.g. vacation days above the minimum of up to 2 weeks, sick days, PA days and/or other benefits) once mandatory benefits are covered.

Operators will also continue to receive an administration allocation to support implementing wage enhancement.

The year-end reconciliation will include, separately, the collection of salary and benefit payments (including supplemental grant funding) and full time equivalent data under the categories of fully and partially eligible RECEs, Supervisors, Non-RECE/Other Program Staff and Home Visitors. The number of ineligible staff due to exceeding the cap will also be collected.

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Wage Enhancement application forms are available on The County of Hastings website at: <http://www.hastingscounty.com/services/social-services/childrens-services>

Application forms are due no later than March 31, 2017. Failure to submit an application by the deadline will result in ineligibility to receive wage enhancement funding in 2017.

Please direct questions to Donna Hobson, Child Care Co-ordinator via e-mail at: [hobsond@hastingscounty.com](mailto:hobsond@hastingscounty.com)

## **HOME CHILD CARE PROVIDERS:**

All licensed home child care agencies that opened before January 1, 2017 are eligible to apply for the Home Child Care Enhancement Grant (HCCEG) funding.

The 2017 Home Child Care Enhancement Grant continues to support an increase of up to \$20 per day for home child care providers.

Please note that you continue to receive your 2016 funding allocation for the Home Child Care Enhancement Grant monthly to enable you to continue to flow funding to home child care providers in 2017.

**NEW:** To align with adjustments to the salary and wages of the school based ECE grid stated in the 3-year central labour agreements, the base daily fees cap for the Home Child Care Enhancement Grant will increase in 2017 from \$262.70 to **\$266.80, \$160.08** for partial HCCEG. If home child care providers exceed the cap at any time during the year, excluding the HCCEG, they will no longer be eligible to receive the increase.

To be eligible to receive the full 2017 Home Child Care Enhancement Grant of \$20 per day home child care providers must:

- hold a contract with a licensed home child care agency;
- provide services to one child or more (including privately placed children\*; excluding the provider's own children);
- provide full time services on average (6 hours or more a day); and
- receive base daily fees, excluding prior year's HCCEG, of less than \$246.80 (i.e. \$20 below the cap of \$266.80).

To be eligible to receive the partial 2017 Home Child Care Enhancement Grant of \$10 per day home child care providers must:

- hold a contract with a licensed home child care agency;
- provide services to one child or more (including privately placed children\*; excluding the provider's own children);
- provide part time services on average (less than 6 hours a day); and
- receive base daily fees, excluding prior year's HCCEG, of less than \$150.08 (i.e. \$10 below the cap of \$160.08).

\*Please note: Information on privately placed children must be considered when determining eligibility and payments for the HCCEG.

For each eligible home child care provider, total days worked in 2016 will be gathered on application forms and used to determine funding entitlement for 2017. The "base" home child care provider fee entered in the application form should include the General Operating Grant but exclude previous home child care enhancement grant monies received.

Payments should be provided to eligible providers for each day worked in 2017. The compensation rate (partial or full) will be based on their 2017 services. Operators have the flexibility to fund their current year's providers, even if they were not under contract in 2016. Priority for the distribution of funds should be to providers who were eligible in 2016 and continue to be eligible in 2017.

If at any point a home child care provider stops serving children, the home child care agency must terminate the transfer of HCCEG funds to the provider.

Operators must include home child care enhancement grant payments in each payment. In addition, operators must notify providers of the amount provided to them through this initiative on payments or through a separate letter. The notification must be labeled "*Provincial Home Child Care Enhancement Grant*".

The ministry will continue to provide a supplemental grant of \$50 for each eligible home child care provider in 2017. The supplemental grant must be used to support home child care providers' daily wage. It provides agencies with the flexibility to cover shortfalls due to increased hours and/or new home child care providers.

Operators will also continue to receive an administration allocation to support implementing the Home Child Care Enhancement Grant.

The year-end reconciliation will include the collection of HCCEG payments (including supplemental grant funding) under the categories of fully and partially eligible home child care providers. In addition, the number of ineligible providers due to exceeding the cap will also be collected.

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Home Child Care Enhancement Grant application forms are available on The County of Hastings website at: <http://www.hastingscounty.com/services/social-services/childrens-services>

Application forms are due no later than March 31, 2017. Failure to submit an application by the deadline will result in ineligibility to receive wage enhancement funding in 2017.

Please direct questions to Donna Hobson, Child Care Co-ordinator via e-mail at: [hobsond@hastingscounty.com](mailto:hobsond@hastingscounty.com)