

Wage Enhancement/Home Child Care Enhancement Grant

2024 Program Eligibility and Funding Conditions

Program goals

Wage Enhancement grant supports the increase in wages up to \$2 per hour, plus 17.5 percent benefits for Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs), other child care program staff working in licensed child care centres and home visitors working for licensed Home Child Care Agencies.

Home Child Care Enhancement Grant (HCCEG) supports an increase of up to \$20 per day for licensed home child care providers contracted with a licensed home child care agency who are not eligible for the Wage Enhancement grant.

Wage Enhancement administration funding helps to offset administration expenses associated with distributing Wage Enhancement funding. The 2024 Wage Enhancement administration allocation is calculated at 7% of the Wage Enhancement budget to a maximum of \$5,625 per owner, regardless of the number of corporation companies.

Note: Licensed Child Care Operators are required to pay staff minimum wage, according to [Ontario Employment Standards Act](#) prior to providing Wage Enhancement funding.

Eligibility requirements for centre-based programs

Licensed child care centres or home child care agencies are eligible to apply.

To be eligible to receive the 2024 Wage Enhancement, RECEs, home visitors and other child care program staff, including supply staff, must be working in a licensed child care position.

Eligibility requirements are as follows:

- Staff is categorized as a child care supervisor, RECE, non-RECE, home visitor or can be otherwise counted toward adult to child ratios under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)
- Staff has an associated wage (excluding prior year's Wage Enhancement) of \$28.59 or less per hour to receive the full \$2 per hour entitlement
- Where a staff member has an associated wage that is between \$28.60 and \$30.58 per hour, (excluding prior year's Wage Enhancement), the position is eligible for partial Wage Enhancement. The partial Wage Enhancement will increase the wage of the qualifying position up to \$30.59 per hour
- Supplementary program staff positions that are in place to maintain lower adult-child ratios than required under the Act are also eligible for Wage Enhancement

- Budget allocations will be determined based on the application which collects actual hours worked in program by eligible positions during the previous year. Payments to eligible staff will be based on actual hours worked in the current year
- For new licensed programs that open in the current year, estimated hours to be worked can be used for the application
- Non-program staff, cooks and custodial positions are not eligible for Wage Enhancement unless the non-program position is used to support ratio requirement for at least 25% of their daily hours, in which case the staff would be eligible for Wage Enhancement for the ratio hours only

Eligibility requirements for home-based programs

To be eligible to receive the full HCCEG (\$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 (six hours or more a day)
- Receive \$285.90 or less per day (excluding prior year's HCCEG)

To be eligible to receive partial HCCEG (\$10 per day), home child care providers must:

- Hold a contract with a licensed home child care agency
- Provide part time services on average (less than six hours a day)
- Receive \$173.54 or less per day (excluding prior year's HCCEG)

Supplemental Grant

The supplemental grant provides operators and agencies with the flexibility to cover salary shortfalls (due to increased hours in program or new staff/providers) and additional benefits, (such as vacation days, sick days, Professional Development days and/or other benefits) once mandatory benefits are covered.

The funding must be used to support staff, home visitors' and providers' hourly/daily Wage Enhancement or benefits. Any unused funding will be recovered.

The supplemental grant is automatically calculated through the application form at \$150 for each eligible centre-based full-time equivalent (FTE) or home visitor FTE and \$50 for each eligible home child care provider.

Administration Funding

Wage Enhancement administration funding is a limited budget to help offset administration expenses associated with distributing Wage Enhancement funding. The 2024 Wage Enhancement administration allocation is calculated at 7% of the Wage Enhancement budget to a maximum of \$5,625 per owner, regardless of the number of corporation companies.

Funding Conditions

1. Operators must include Wage Enhancement or HCCEG payments in each pay cheque or payment made

2. Operators must notify staff or home child care providers of the amount provided to them through this initiative on pay cheques/home child care provider fee transfers or through a separate letter, labelled as follows
 - Provincial child care Wage Enhancement
 - Provincial home child care enhancement grant
3. Wage Enhancement must be reported as employment income on T4 statements in the same calendar year
4. The final Wage Enhancement payment must be paid prior to the last day of the calendar year. For example, 2024 funding must be paid in 2024 only and cannot be transferred into 2025
5. Operators **cannot decrease base salaries**; Wage Enhancement is to increase staff salaries
6. Operators are required to submit the annual Wage Enhancement and/or HCCEG Application form that is posted on The Regional Municipality of York's (York Region) website and submit it electronically no later than the due date identified on the [website](#)
7. The Region shall pay Wage Enhancement Funding to the Operator in an amount not to exceed the total budget for the budget period set out in the Child Care Services Agreement: Schedule H
8. 100% of Wage Enhancement/HCCEG funding is to be provided directly to eligible child care staff, home child care visitors or home child care providers
9. Operators must submit the annual reconciliation in the format requested by York Region by the due date
10. Operators must provide data and documentation as required to York Region, for the purposes of reporting to the Ministry of Education and/or to verify funding distribution to staff of approved
11. For non-CWELCC sites: all funding, including Child Care Fee Subsidy, Special Purpose, General Operating, Wage Enhancement, Rate Incentives, Licensed Home Child Care Base Funding, Pay Equity Union Settlement, and Resources for Inclusion Support in Early Learning Setting (R.I.S.E.) funding will be added together to determine the type of audit required
12. Meet all contractual and funding requirements as indicated in the Child Care Services Agreement

Audit Requirements (for sites not participating in CWELCC)

All child care operators receiving regional funding are required to submit financial statements annually, within 120 days of the operator's year end.

Operators in receipt of Regional Funding of **\$249,999.99 or less** must provide:

- Funding Declaration Form
- Board of Directors' Reviewed or Corporation Officers Reviewed Financial Statement

Operators in receipt of Regional Funding of **\$250,000.00 or up to \$499,999.99** must provide:

- Funding Declaration Form
- Board of Directors' Reviewed or Corporation Officers' Reviewed Financial Statement with a completed Review Engagement

Operators in receipt of Regional Funding of **\$500,000.00 or more** must provide:

- Funding Declaration Form
- Audited Financial Statement

Audit Requirements (for sites participating in CWELCC)

CWELCC enrolled operators are required to submit an audited financial statement and funding declaration form. For more information, visit York.ca/canadawidechildcare.