

Provincial Home Child Care Enhancement Grant Questions and Answers (2018)

Q1. What is the provincial wage enhancement initiative?

The Ontario government has made an ongoing funding commitment to support a wage enhancement for eligible child care professionals working in licensed child care settings. The wage enhancement/HCCEG will help retain RECEs, and support access to stable, high-quality child care programs for children in Ontario. The wage enhancement will also help to close the wage gap between registered early childhood educators (RECEs) working in full-day kindergarten (FDK) programs and RECEs/other child care program staff working in licensed child care settings.

The Home Child Care Enhancement Grant (HCCEG) supports an increase of up to \$20 per day for home child care providers contracted with a licensed home child care agency.

Q2. How much is the HCCEG?

In 2018, HCCEG funding will support an increase of up to \$20 per day for home child care providers.

Q3. What is the supplemental grant and what can it be used for?

In addition to HCCEG funding, in 2018 the ministry will provide a supplemental grant for operators, equal to \$50 for each eligible home child care provider. This grant will be automatically calculated on the application forms, based on the information provided by operators.

The supplemental grant must be used to support providers' daily wage, and provides operators with the flexibility to cover shortfalls. Any funding that is not used for these purposes will be recovered.

Q4. What are the HCCEG eligibility requirements for home child care providers?

In order to be eligible to receive HCCEG, home child care providers must:

- Hold a contract with a licensed home child care agency; and

- Provide services to one child or more (excluding provider's own children).

To be eligible to receive the **full HCCEG of \$20 per day**, home child care providers must:

- Provide on average **full-time services** (6 hours or more hours);
 - Private children must be included in the count of children; and
- Receive base daily fees excluding prior year's HCCEG of less than \$250.70 (i.e. \$20 below the cap of \$270.70).

Home child care providers are eligible for a partial HCCEG of \$10 per day if on average they provide **part-time services** (less than 6 hours) and receive less than \$152.42 (\$10 below the cap of \$162.42) per day in base fees excluding year one's HCCEG. As with full-time services, private children must be included in the count.

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

Q5. Can a child care operator provide HCCEG to current eligible providers or can it only be provided to eligible providers that existed last year?

Operators have the flexibility to pay HCCEG to current eligible providers for their days worked in 2017.

Q6. Why is the 2017 HCCEG based on the hours worked in 2017 positions?

As with previous years of the HCCEG initiative, the entitlement for operators is based on eligible home child care provider's time in program (part time or full time) and days worked in 2017. This funding is then used to make payments to eligible home child care providers for their time in program in 2018.

Basing the 2017 funding on the days worked in the previous year will help get the HCCEG funding to eligible child care professionals sooner.

Q7. Is funding available to operators to support administration costs associated with implementing the HCCEG initiative?

Yes, funding will be available to operators to support administrative costs in the form of an Administration Grant. This grant will be based on the number of

providers in the HCCEG application. Operators do not need to apply separately for this grant. The grant will be flowed to operators with the first wage HCCEG payments.

Q8. Do I need to re-apply for funding every year?

Yes, the HCCEG funding entitlement is allocated to operators based on the days worked by qualifying providers for the prior year. This means that operators will be required to apply for funding every year to update this information.

Q9. I missed the application deadline. Can I request an extension?

Unfortunately, there are no extensions for the provision of HCCEG funding in 2017. However, you can apply for funding in 2018.

Q10. Can the operator/agency decide when to give HCCEG funding to the eligible providers, for example once a year or quarterly like the old wage subsidy?

Operators must provide the HCCEG on each regular pay in 2017.

Operators must clearly indicate on staff paycheques and home child care provider fee transfers the portion of funding that is being provided through the wage enhancement labeled as follows:

- Provincial home child care enhancement grant.

Q11. Applying for Provincial HCCEG will be complex and time consuming for operators. What support will be available?

Children's Services will provide a number of supports to operators to complete their wage enhancement applications, including:

- Individual support, set up by appointment;
- Support documents including Questions and Answers, guidelines and instructions on how to complete the application; and
- A dedicated email address (CHSFunding@regionofwaterloo.ca) to send questions.

More information regarding support for operators will be sent out with the HCCEG application.

Q12. If a provider leaves an agency in 2018 (between January and when first HCCEG payment is made), is the provider eligible for HCCEG for the period that they worked in 2018?

Yes. If the former provider was deemed eligible for HCCEG funding then he/she would be eligible to receive a funding allocation from January 1, 2018 to the date of separation. Every attempt would need to be made to contact/locate the former employee.

Q13. How do I handle shared providers in the HCCEG application?

A shared provider is one that is currently contracted with both a Wee Watch agency and the Region of Waterloo Home Child Care program. In this circumstance, the Region of Waterloo will apply for and administer the HCCEG for the shared provider.

To support the Region of Waterloo to complete the HCCEG application, agencies with a shared provider will submit to the Region of Waterloo the following information:

- If the provider serves one child or more (excluding the providers own children);
- Whether the provider is full time (provides 6 hours or more of care per day, on average) or part time (providers less than 6 hours of care per day, on average); and
- Total fees received between January 1, 2017 and December 31, 2017 (excluding prior year's HCCEG).

To facilitate the calculation of HCCEG payments, agencies with a shared provider will submit to the Region of Waterloo the following information:

- A calendar indicating specific days worked in the specified time period for each shared provider.

The Region may also request other information or data to support the application or allocation process, as needed.