

Wage Bridge Benefit – Frequently Asked Questions

Circular #: 2022-11

1. Is the Wage Bridge Benefit funded under a federal agreement?

Yes, the Wage Bridge Benefit is provided by the one-time funding from the Government of Canada to support Manitoba's ELCC workforce under the Canada-Manitoba ELCC Agreement.

For more information on the Canada-Manitoba ELCC Agreement visit:
<https://www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/pubs/canada-mb-2021-2025-elcc-agreement.pdf>

2. How was the calculation determined for the Wage Bridge Benefit and how much will my facility receive as a lump-sum payment to cover the benefit for eligible staff? Not all staff members work the same number of hours per week.

The Budget Statement submitted at March 2021 was used to determine which facilities had staff who were regularly earning less than the provincial averages.

The Wage Bridge Benefit was calculated based hourly wages reported in the Budget Statements and the number of staff at each facility, by classification and role earning less than the provincial average. The Wage Bridge Benefit is equitable, and is also based on the number of hours a staff member has worked and is expected to work between October 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022 not including overtime.

The amount disbursed as a lump sum payment to cover wages for eligible staff is unique to each facility and disbursed as a lump sum per each facility ID.

3. Is it up to the facility to determine the actual amount paid to eligible employees?

Yes. Only facilities have access to their current payroll information for staff and should use this information to calculate the amounts their eligible employees can receive under the Wage Bridge Benefit. Based on the positions and classifications covered by the benefit, staff earning less than the following wages are eligible:

- Trained CCA (completed 40-hour course), earning less than \$13.11 per hour
- ECE II – Under 2 years of experience, earning less than \$16.58 per hour
- ECE II – More than 2 year of experience, earning less than \$20.90 per hour
- ECE III earning less than \$22.29 per hour
- ECE's in supervisory and management positions earning less than \$23.32 per hour

ELCC does not maintain records of individual salary information, and as such the amount of funding provided to each facility was calculated using the most recent Budget Statement.

Facilities are not required to base their calculations on the Budget Statement. Facilities should pay employees based on current hourly wages and number of hours worked or expected to work between October 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022.

4. What if, after paying out the Wage Bridge Benefit our facility has remaining funds or were not provided with enough funds for all eligible staff?

Contact your Child Care Coordinator

If your facility is not provided with enough funding to increase wages for all eligible staff, contact your Child Care Coordinator with the classification, position and hourly wage for each eligible staff. If any benefit funding remains after all eligible staff have received their benefit, facilities can direct unused funds to support wages until such time as the funds are exhausted.

5. The circular says that the Wage Bridge Benefit includes benefits up to 10%, what if our facility pays more than 10% in benefits?

As each facility may use a different benefits provider, it is difficult to account for all variation in benefits. The focus of the Wage Bridge Benefit is on increased wages, and as such a standard of 10% for benefits was provided.

6. How should a Family/Group Child Care Home with multiple licenses disburse the Wage Bridge Benefit?

Disbursement of funding for the Wage Bridge Benefit can follow the existing business process already established by the facility to support wages.

7. What if a staff member was only employed at my facility for the last few months, are they still eligible for the Wage Bridge Benefit?

If they earned an hourly wage below the provincial average between October 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022, they are eligible to receive the Wage Bridge Benefit for the period they were employed.

8. What if a staff member that worked at my facility during the period of October 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022 recently left? Are they entitled to the Wage Bridge Benefit?

Staff who resigned and left the early learning and child care sector, are not eligible for the Wage Bridge Benefit.

However, if an eligible staff member left your facility and accepted employment another child care facility, they would remain eligible to receive the Wage Bridge Benefit for the period they were employed with you. Child care facilities are

encouraged to consider eligible staff who have moved to another facility between October 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022, and if contacted by that staff, should issue them their benefit for the period of eligibility. The amount they are owed can be confirmed on the Record of Employment with the former employee.

9. Is the Wage Bridge Benefit subject to deductions, such as Income Tax?

Yes. All earned income is subject to all relevant deductions, including federal Income Tax, Canada Pension Plan (CPP), and Employment Insurance (EI).

10. Does the Wage Bridge Benefit include overtime worked between October 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022?

The Wage Bridge Benefit is based on regular hours worked from October 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022, excluding overtime.

11. Does parental leave impact the Wage Bridge Benefit?

If an employee was actively working anytime during the period from October 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022, before going on parental leave and earned below the wages outlined in the circular, they are eligible to receive the Wage Bridge Benefit.

12. My staff earn higher wages and will not be eligible for the Wage Bridge Benefit. Will there be other initiatives to support an increase to workforce funding?

The Wage Bridge Benefit supports increases in wages for eligible staff that support the lowest-paid workers in the sector. Under the new Canada-Manitoba Canada Wide Agreement, Manitoba has made a further commitment to establish a wage grid to promote fair, equitable and consistent wages across the sector. More information will be available in the coming weeks.

13. What communications can I provide to eligible staff receiving the Wage Bridge Benefit?

The following information can be shared with staff eligible to receive the Wage Bridge Benefit:

- Based on your hourly wage, you are eligible to receive the Wage Bridge Benefit outlined under the 2021/22 Canada-Manitoba ELCC Agreement.
- The Wage Bridge Benefit provides a pay increase for Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) and Child Care Assistants (CCAs) from October 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022, based on provincial averages.
- The Wage Bridge Benefit is a pay increase for staff earning less than the provincial average wage as follows:

- Trained CCA (completed 40-hour course), earning less than \$13.11 per hour
- ECE II – Under 2 years of experience, earning less than \$16.58 per hour
- ECE II – More than 2 year of experience, earning less than \$20.90 per hour
- ECE III earning less than \$22.29 per hour
- ECE's in supervisory and management positions earning less than \$23.32 per hour

For more information on the Canada-Manitoba ELCC Agreement visit:

<https://www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/pubs/canada-mb-2021-2025-elcc-agreement.pdf>

14. Who can I contact for more information?

For additional inquiries, please contact your Child Care Coordinator or email cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca or call Child Care Information Services at 204-945-0776 or toll-free: 1-888-213-4754.