

## Questions and Answers

### Saskatchewan Temporary Wage Supplement Program (STWSP)

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#### 1. What is the Saskatchewan Wage Supplement Program (STWSP)?

The Saskatchewan Temporary Wage Supplement Program (STWSP) is a federally cost-shared program established to provide financial assistance to eligible workers employed by an approved essential care facility.

Under the program, a temporary wage supplement of \$400 for each 4-week period will be provided to all eligible full-time, part-time and casual workers, including care workers, cooks, housekeepers, janitors, administrative staff, and any persons who are employees of the facility.

#### 2. What was included in the expansion to the STWSP?

In June, the STWSP expansion included workers at unlicensed assisted living facilities and the owner/operator of an approved private-service home or unlicensed family child care home. It was also expanded to remove the low income criteria for those working at licensed personal care homes and designated special-care homes.

The wage supplement will be provided to only one eligible owner/operator of an approved private-service home or unlicensed family child care home.

The expansion announced on **July 30<sup>th</sup>** removed the income criteria for those working at integrated health care facilities. Applications will be accepted until September 1, 2020.

#### 3. How is the payment determined?

The wage supplement benefit is a flat \$400 per 4-week period, provided for 16 weeks (from March 15 to July 4).

#### 4. What are the eligibility criteria?

To qualify for the benefit the applicant must be employed by an “**essential care facility**”, have a gross salary from all sources that is less than \$2,500 per month **and** earn less than \$24.00 per hour. This includes income from other facilities and other employment.

Note: With the expansions to the STWSP, workers employed by a licensed personal care home, designated special-care home, or integrated health care facilities are not subject to the income criteria. The owner/operator of an approved private-service home or family child care home is also not subject to the income criteria.

#### 5. What employees are eligible for the STWSP?

Eligible workers include unionized and non-unionized people employed by the owner or operator of an essential care facility, including full-time, part-time and casual positions. Only one owner/operator is eligible for an approved private-service home or licensed or unlicensed family child care home which were added in the June expansion to the STWSP.

Persons who provide services on a fee for service or contractual basis to an essential care facility are not eligible.

## 6. What is an essential care facility?

To be eligible, the essential care facility must carry on business or operate in Saskatchewan providing a health care or support service.

Eligible essential care facilities under **Wage Supplement Program Form A** include:

- Unlicensed private assisted living facilities, where residents are provided with direct assistance or supervision of daily living activities.
- Community-based group
- Licensed childcare facilities
- Emergency shelters
- Transition shelters - short stay/emergency transition housing
- Home care workers providing care to seniors in their own home

Eligible essential care facilities under **Wage Supplement Program Form B** include:

- Personal care home licensed pursuant to *The Personal Care Homes Act*
- Special-care home designated pursuant to *The Provincial Health Authority Act*
- Approved-private service home as defined in *The Residential Services Act*
- Licensed or unlicensed family child care home as defined in *The Child Care Act*
- Integrated health care facility

Acute care facilities such as hospitals which provide access to acute short term care services such as emergency, ambulatory care, diagnostic services, inpatient and outpatient care, critical care, and surgical care operated by the Provincial Health Authority or its affiliates as defined in *The Provincial Health Authority Act*, are not eligible facilities.

## 7. How soon can I apply? How soon can I expect to receive my payment?

Applications will be accepted starting Friday, May 15, 2020 and will be processed on a first come first serve basis. Completed applications with all required information will be given priority.

Providing direct deposit bank information on the application form will allow for faster payment. The turn around time on payments will be determined once the application process is in place, however the goal is to process your application within 5 business days. Payments through direct deposit take 2-3 business days to arrive and payments through cheque can take up to 3 weeks. The application deadline has been extended to September 1, 2020.

## 8. Where can I go for more information?

A program overview is available on the Government of Saskatchewan COVID-19 Support for Businesses website.

[www.saskatchewan.ca/wage-supplement-program](http://www.saskatchewan.ca/wage-supplement-program)

## 9. How do I apply and what information do I need to provide?

Applicants must complete and submit the appropriate online application form available at: [www.saskatchewan.ca/wage-supplement-program](http://www.saskatchewan.ca/wage-supplement-program)

Applicants will be required to verify their total gross monthly employment income from all sources and will be required to:

- Include banking information for automatic deposit;
- Upload copies of supporting pay information and direct deposit information
- Attest to eligibility criteria;
- Declare application to be true and accurate;
- Consent to information being used to confirm eligibility

## 10. What if I work at more than one job?

Eligibility under **Wage Supplement Program Form A** is determined based on your combined gross monthly income from all sources, including, but not limited to the essential care facilities at which you are employed. Applicants with more than one place of employment must identify each of their employers, provide required information for each, and attest that their combined income is less than the maximums allowable (\$2500 per month and \$24.00 per hour).

## 11. What is the authority to make these payments?

Authority for implementing the program is assigned to the Minister of Finance pursuant to *The Executive Government Administration Act* and *The Economic and Co-operative Development Act*.

## 12. How much does this program cost? What's Canada's share and what's Saskatchewan's share?

The total program cost is estimated to be \$56 million. Through the federal government's formula the federal contribution will be \$53.2 million and the provincial contribution would be \$2.8 million.

## 13. What if I do not have a copy of my pay stubs?

Applicants will need to obtain this information from their employer(s) as it is required in order to apply. Applications under **Wage Supplement Program Form A** will not be accepted without this information.

## 14. What if I was recently hired in an eligible facility? Will I still receive payment back to March 15?

The payments are for each 4-week period commencing March 15, 2020, or commencing with the employee's start date in the eligible facility, whichever is later. If the employee starts their job sometime within the period they would be eligible for that period.

**15. I can't find the facility on the application form. Who should I contact?**

If you believe you work at an eligible essential care facility (as defined in question 6) and your facility does not appear on the application form, contact the Ministry of Finance by using the information shown below:

Telephone: Toll Free 1-800-667-6102  
Regina 306-787-6645

Email: [stwsp@gov.sk.ca](mailto:stwsp@gov.sk.ca)

Upon contacting the Ministry of Finance you need to provide your contact information, and information regarding your employer, including their name, address, and type of facility. The information provided will be reviewed, and a decision as to eligibility will be provided as quickly as possible.

**16. I am employed by a licensed personal care home or designated special-care home. My original application was denied due to my gross salary exceeding \$24/hour or \$2500/month. With the income criteria now removed for these facilities, should I reapply?**

You are not required to reapply. These applications will be reviewed again under the updated criteria for these facilities.

**17. I operate an approved private-service home. What do I submit for proof of income during the application period?**

Please submit remittance advice (statement of payment), or your contract pertaining to the application period, to validate that you were operating during this period.

**18. I operate a licensed or unlicensed family child care home. What do I submit for proof of income during the application period?**

Please submit copies of receipts or bank statements that identify the payer and amounts paid for the application period, to validate that you were operating during this period.

**19. I am employed by an integrated health care facility. My original application was denied due to my gross salary exceeding \$24/hour or \$2500/month. With the income criteria now removed for these facilities, should I reapply?**

Employees at these facilities who applied and were denied due to the previous income criteria are not required to reapply for any application periods already submitted. These applications will be reviewed again under the updated criteria for these facilities. Applications must be submitted for any periods that have not been applied for already.