

## Early Learning and Child Care

### Wage Grid Supplement Increase to Operating Grant and 2023/24 Wage Grid

#### Frequently Asked Questions

Circular #: 2023-04

#### 1. Why is Manitoba increasing the Wage Grid and Wage Grid Supplement?

Wages for early learning and child care staff in Manitoba need to continue to increase to improve recruitment and retention of staff. Providing additional funding to facilities to support increasing wages for early learning and child care staff is critical for supporting the growth of the sector.

#### 2. What is changing in the 2023/24 Wage Grid and Wage Grid Supplement?

Effective July 1, 2023, Canada and Manitoba are providing additional funding totalling \$56.1M as a Wage Grid Supplement increase applied to operating grant funding for licensed and funded facilities in the 2023/24 fiscal year. This increased funding will support facilities to increase wages for staff.

The *Starting Point* wages on the Wage Grid are being increased to reflect new expectations for the minimum amount staff of each classification should be paid beginning on July 1, 2023.

#### 3. Who will receive the Wage Grid Supplement to support increasing wages?

All Manitoba licensed, not-for-profit child care centres, nursery schools, and funded family/group child care homes will receive the Wage Grid Supplement increase. In facilities that employ staff, the increase is to be used to enhance wages for staff. In child care homes that do not employ staff, it will increase the provider's income.

#### 4. Does the Wage Grid apply to private facilities or non-funded facilities?

No. The Wage Grid only applies to licensed and funded non-profit centres (including nursery schools) and funded child care homes.

Licensed for-profit child care centres and unfunded non-profit centres may wish to examine their current fee rates to see if increases are feasible in their current market, in order to increase their staff wages and stay competitive. For-profit facilities may also want to reach out to their Child Care Coordinator if they would like information about becoming a non-profit organization, or need assistance in doing a revenue comparison.

#### 5. Why is Manitoba increasing the existing Wage Grid?

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning has heard from stakeholders that the Wage Grid established in July 2022 has some shortcomings. The department takes this feedback seriously and will be hiring a consultant to do a comprehensive review of sector wages. This will include completing market research, consulting with sector stakeholders, and developing recommendations for a more comprehensive framework for wages in the sector. This in-depth review and implementation of a new framework will take some time to complete.

Recognizing the critical importance of continuing to improve recruitment and retention to the sector, the department has decided to move forward in the interim with an increase to the *Starting Point* on the existing ELCC Wage Grid.

## **6. Why did the government not use the Manitoba Child Care Association (MCCA) Market Competitive Salary Guidelines Scale?**

The goal of the ELCC Wage Grid is to develop a framework for wages in the sector that will ensure the sector staff are fairly compensated to help with recruitment and retention. There is a broad range of types and sizes of early learning and child care facilities across Manitoba, and the framework for wages needs to be equitable and feasible for all facilities. Manitoba's Wage Grid provides a foundation to build on and provides wage targets, rather than prescribed steps.

The MCCA Market Competitive Salary Guideline Scale provides a suggested wage scale that facilities can use if it works for their facility. Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning will ensure the consultant hired to review sector wages includes a review of MCCA's Market Competitive Salary Guideline Scale and consider its feasibility across Manitoba's early learning and child care sector.

## **7. How is the Wage Grid structured?**

The Wage Grid provides a *Starting Point* and a *Target* wage:

- The *Starting Point* provides the lowest wage an employee of that position/classification should receive in a funded facility.
- The *Target* provides average wages for each position/classification, which facilities should be working towards by July 2024. It does not represent a cap or maximum wage.

The Wage Grid is intended to support increases to the wages for each position/classification on a facility's salary scale. The levels and steps should not fall below the *Starting Point* wage and over the next year, should support their employees being paid on average, at or above the *Target* wage. This approach preserves the authority of boards while ensuring consistent and better wages are provided to the ELCC workforce.

## **8. Why is the Target Wage not increasing as well?**

When the Wage Grid was first introduced in July 2022, the *Target* wage was identified as the average wage facilities should be striving to achieve or exceed within two years. Increasing the *Starting Point* this year and providing supporting funding will assist facilities in meeting or exceeding the *Target* wage.

## **9. Does the Wage Grid establish mandatory wage rates for staff in early learning and child care facilities?**

No. Early learning and child care facilities are independent businesses who are responsible for establishing wages for employees. The Wage Grid Supplement is additional funding provided to facilities that must be used to increase wages to levels set by the facilities.

## **10. How is the Wage Grid implemented in unionized facilities?**

Unionized facilities who receive the Wage Grid Supplement are expected to use this funding to increase wages. Facilities will need to work with the unions, where applicable, to integrate wage increases into collective agreements.

### 11. How will the increase for the Wage Grid Supplement be calculated?

Facilities will receive an increase to the Wage Grid Supplement as additional funding included in the operating grant to increase wages as of July 1, 2023. The supplement is calculated by providing an increase to the overall revenue generated per space within the unit funding model.

### 12. What is the unit funding model?

Operating grant rates for centres are based on the unit funding model, which was designed to help centres generate equitable and sufficient revenue to cover operating costs, including salaries.

The model is based on the regulated child-to-staff ratios: a unit is 4 infant, 8 preschool, or 15 school age spaces. Each unit type generates the same daily revenue from combined parent fees/reduced parent fee revenue grant and operating grant funding.

The revenue generated per space within the unit funding model is increased in the July 1, 2023 Wage Grid Supplement.

### 13. What are the new operating grant rates for funded facilities?

<b>Maximum Annual Operating Grant Rates for Family/Group Child Care Homes Annual Amount per Approved Funded Space</b>			
<b>Space Type</b>	<b>Infant</b>	<b>Preschool</b>	<b>School Age</b>
<b>Effective July 1, 2023</b>	\$4,292	\$3,352	\$1,697
<b>Increase from July 1, 2022 Rates</b>	\$583	\$468	\$298

<b>Maximum Annual Operating Grant Rates for Centres and Nursery Schools Annual Amount per Approved Funded Space</b>					
<b>Space Type</b>	<b>Infant</b>	<b>Preschool</b>	<b>Nursery School (1 to 5 sessions per week)</b>	<b>Nursery School for each additional session up to 10 per week</b>	<b>School Age</b>
<b>Effective July 1, 2023</b>	\$14,997	\$5,991	\$1,753	\$351	\$2,629
<b>Increase from July 1, 2022 Rates</b>	\$1,321	\$660	\$258	\$52	\$352

### 14. How is the operating grant calculated for centres and nursery schools?

To calculate an annual operating grant, the number of funded spaces is multiplied by the grant rate for that space type. The grant amounts for each type of space are added together for the grant total for 12 months of operation. If a facility does not operate 12 months per year, divide the annual amount by 12 and multiply by the number of open months to calculate an estimated grant amount.

For a nursery school, the number of sessions offered per week affects the annual amount per approved funded space.

**15. How can I calculate the Wage Grid Supplement our facility will receive?**

To calculate the amount of the July 1, 2023 Wage Grid Supplement, subtract the amount your facility previously received (old) from the grant amount your facility will receive effective July 1 (new).

For example: If the previous amount was \$2,277 and the new amount is \$2,629, the additional 2023 wage grid supplement would be \$352

**16. If the *Starting Point* wage has increased, can all employees expect their wages to increase in July 2023?**

All facilities are expected to use the increase in funding to increase wages for staff. This does not necessarily mean that everyone will receive an increase to their wages. It may vary depending on what the current wages are. If the facilities budget allows, facilities can pay staff above the *Starting Point* and above the *Target* wage.

**17. Why are CCAs who have not yet completed the required 40-hours of ECE-related training not included on the Wage Grid and what do we pay them?**

Wages for a CCA **without** their 40-hour training is at the discretion of the board. Facilities may pay more than the provincial minimum wage if the operating budget permits.

**18. Can the board establish a wage level for a CCA actively pursuing education to become an ECE that is higher than the Wage Grid amounts for a CCA?**

Yes. Facilities can establish wages for any position or classification that are higher than the *Starting Point* or *Target* wages in the Wage Grid if the operating budget permits.

Facilities may want to include a “CCA-in-ECE Training” position/wage level between a CCA with the basic 40-hour training requirement and an entry level ECE for CCAs who are actively pursuing their ECE certification. This can encourage existing employees to pursue their ECE education.

For example, to support of a staff plan for a trained staff exemption request, the employee must be completing approximately six courses/18 credits per year in a recognized ECE program or be a participant in the ELCC Division ECE II Assessment Program (formerly called Competency Based Assessment/Prior Learning Assessment) to be considered a CCA-in-ECE Training. When reviewing trained staff exemption requests, the ELCC Division expects the centre to have a training contract with the employee, which outlines the start and end date of the training leading to their certification as an ECE II.

**19. Many CCAs are university students who meet the 40-hour course requirement and are hired full time under summer job grant programs. Should they be paid at the *Starting Point*?**

Staff hired under summer grant programs should be paid the wage rates that were indicated on the approved grant application. If a summer grant employee becomes a regular employee after the summer, they should be placed on your new salary scale. They would be eligible for retroactive pay as of the date when they become a regular employee, not while working under the summer grant program.

## **20. What is an Entry Level ECE on the Wage Grid?**

An entry level ECE on the Wage Grid is a person who has been issued a certificate as an ECE II under Categories of Certificates Section 3.1 of the child care regulation, with less than 2 years work experience as an ECE II.

## **21. Did the operating grant increase take into consideration the extra costs associated with payroll, such as Employment Insurance, Workers Compensation, Canada Pension Plan, health benefits?**

The increased operating funding may be used to support other salary-related costs that have increased due to higher wages, such as Employment Insurance, Canada Pension Plan, Workers Compensation and benefits.

The exception would be employers' pension plan contributions as these continue to be funded separately under the *Pension Plan Contribution: Reimbursement Application* program.

## **22. Can the Wage Grid Supplement be used for expenditures other than wages?**

All funded facilities receiving an operating grant are required to use the Wage Grid Supplement to increase staff wages.

All funded centres and nursery schools must ensure that the increased revenue from the Wage Grid Supplement to the operating grant and increased expenditures for staff wages are demonstrated in the annual operating budget submissions and annual financial statements.

The Wage Grid Supplement may be used to support other salary related costs that have increased due to higher wages, such as Employment Insurance, Canada Pension Plan, Workers Compensation and benefits.

## **23. When should new/revised salary scales based on the 2023/24 Wage Grid be implemented?**

Boards of directors may require time to review and implement the 2023/24 Wage Grid increase; however, the expectation is that pay increases will be provided to staff effective July 1, 2023 (retroactively, if additional time is required).

## **24. How can I learn more about the Wage Grid Supplement increase to the operating grant and 2023-24 Wage Grid?**

- **Attend a Webinar**
  - To provide additional support in understanding the Wage Grid Supplement and implementing the 2023/24 Wage Grid, the department is scheduling webinars for centre directors/board members and home providers.
  - An email invitation to register for a webinar has been sent separately.
  - Following the session, a copy of the webinar will be posted online at: [www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/childcare\\_news/current\\_circulars.html](http://www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/childcare_news/current_circulars.html).
- **Review the 2023/24 Wage Grid:** [www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/students\\_workforce/wage\\_grid.html](http://www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/students_workforce/wage_grid.html).
- **Review the Online Tool-Kit for Board of Directors – 2023/24 Wage Grid:** [www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/centres\\_homeproviders/centrebased\\_childcare/financial\\_management.html#toolkit](http://www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/centres_homeproviders/centrebased_childcare/financial_management.html#toolkit).

- Learn more about ELCC initiatives and Manitoba's Action Plans under the agreements with Canada at: [www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/actionplan.html](http://www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/actionplan.html).
- If you have any further questions regarding the information in this circular, please email Child Care Information Services at [cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca](mailto:cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca) with the subject line "Wage Grid" or call 204-945-0776 (toll free: 1-888-213-4754).