

December 9, 2020

Thank you for your email regarding eligibility for the new Caregiver Wage Support Program.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created challenges for all of us, but especially for the frontline workers providing care to vulnerable Manitobans. This is especially true in congregate care settings, such as long-term care facilities, group homes, and shelters.

Given that these facilities are residential, clients often remain there if they develop COVID-19 symptoms and/or test positive for the virus. Staff are responsible for continuing to care for residents who are ill and supporting residents as they self-isolate to limit the spread of the virus. As such, the Caregiver Wage Support Program's focus on congregate care settings is not a reflection of the value we place on particular types of caregiving, but rather of the critical needs this sector is facing.

The new Caregiver Wage Support Program is a targeted investment to support those working in congregate care settings who are most likely to be supporting Covid-positive individuals. The program will provide a \$5 per hour supplement for front-line workers who earn a regular wage of \$25 per hour or less in these sectors. The payment is available to full-time, part-time and casual staff, and is based on hours worked during the period of November 1, 2020 to January 10, 2021.

The full list of eligible positions and types of organizations, along with online application forms, are available at <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/programs/caregiver-wage-support.html>. If you have further questions related to eligibility after reviewing the information, you may wish to contact 204-945-3744 or 1-866-626-4862 (Toll-Free). You can also email mgi@gov.mb.ca with your questions.

Applications for the Caregiver Wage Support Program will be accepted from December 7 to 14, 2020 for the first intake period (for eligible hours worked November 1 through December 6, 2020), and from January 11 to 18, 2021 for the second period (for eligible hours worked December 7, 2020 through January 10, 2021). Payments will be made within five business days after the end of each application intake.

The Caregiver Wage Support Program complements historic investments the Manitoba government has made to support frontline workers throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, including:

- Over \$500 million in personal protective equipment (PPE) for frontline workers across our province, including masks, gowns, eye protection and other necessary PPE.
- \$120 million in the Manitoba Risk Recognition Pay Program, providing nearly 78,000 Manitobans with a \$1,377 one-time payment, including 9,500 Manitobans working in social services. You can find more information about this program right here: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/restartmb/mrrp.html>

- Over \$90 million in operating grants to the child care sector as well as \$2.4 million in the Covid-19 Response Grant to help child care centres with Covid-related costs and \$8.5 million in start-up grants administered by the Winnipeg and Manitoba Chambers of Commerce. You can read more about our support for the child care sector right here: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/protection/childcare.html>
- \$10 million for the Pandemic Staffing Support Benefit, providing disability, CFS, and child care agencies with funding for overtime, staff replacement and sick leave. You can access more information about this benefit, including how agencies can apply, right here: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/pandemic-staffing-support-benefit.html>
- A staffing recruitment initiative for staff in the disability sector, including support for the envoy app to help Manitobans to apply for work in the disability sector and the establishment of a training program for direct support workers through Red River College. Those interested in job opportunities in the disability sector can find those opportunities right here: <https://www.disabilityrecruitmentmb.ca/>

I understand that this is a difficult time for so many Manitobans, and I want to assure you that the Manitoba government will continue to support frontline workers as we fight the COVID-19 pandemic together.

Thank you for taking the time to contact the Manitoba government about these important issues. I hope you will never hesitate to contact us again any time you need to ask a question or share a concern.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Gerrard', written in a cursive style.

Kathryn Gerrard
Deputy Minister