

Temporary Retention Incentive for Nurses

Briefing
March 2022

- On March 7, the Ontario government announced an investment of \$763 million to provide Ontario's nurses with a lump sum retention incentive of up to \$5,000 per person.
- This payment will help to retain nurses across the health sector and stabilize the current nursing workforce during this critical time to ensure patients continue to access the health care they need and deserve.
- Since the announcement, the Ontario government has been working through various implementation considerations, identifying eligible employers, confirming cost estimates, developing program guidelines and resources to help employers implement this program, and meeting with stakeholders to help identify potential ways to streamline and best deliver this initiative.
- As a result of this work, the purpose of today's meeting is to present to you additional program details and consider any other implementation considerations that have not yet been addressed.

Agenda

Purpose:

To provide an overview of how the Temporary Retention Incentive for Nurses will be implemented across the health sector and confirm eligible workplaces and workers in the health sector

Welcome and Introductions

Guiding Principles for Program, Program Eligibility and Overview

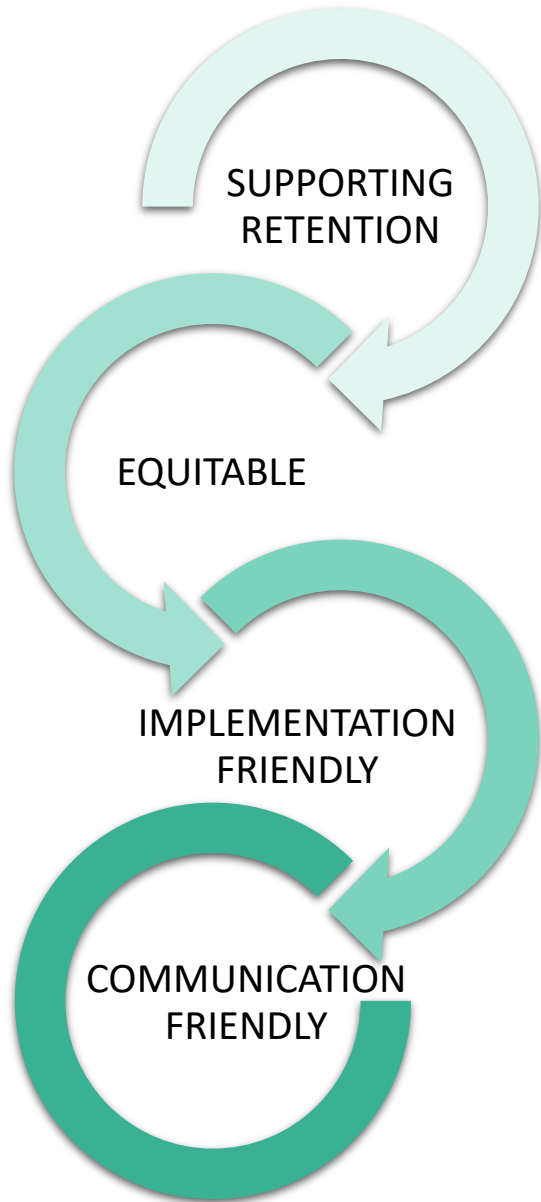
Payment Details (General and Specific Circumstances)

Implementation, Reporting and Timelines

Next Steps

Guiding Principles, Eligibility and Program Overview





SUPPORTS RETENTION

- Ontario needs all nurses in every sector, everywhere! - All sectors within the system continue to support broader health care delivery during this exceptional period
- Aimed at the largest possible number of nurses - working in the system today

EQUITABLE ACCESS for NURSES

- If you work in nursing, you will qualify for the incentive regardless of the sector you work in and the work you do (with very few exceptions)
- Whether you work full time or full-time hours or part-time casual, you'll get fair and equitable access to the incentive

IMPLEMENTATION FRIENDLY

- As simple as possible to ensure that both payments are made as soon as possible
- As simple as possible for employers to implement for full-time, part-time or casual staff.
- Simpler for nurses who have more than one employer

COMMUNICATION FRIENDLY

- All partners (nurses, nurse representatives, employers) must have:
 - Clear understanding of what's being offered
 - Clear understanding of who it's being offered to
 - Clear timelines for when it's happening

- **Full-time** nurses will receive payment of \$5,000 (two payments of \$2,500)
- **Part-time and Casual Nurses** receive two pro-rated payments of up to \$2,500 for a total of up to \$5,000
- Relating to the period of February 13 to April 22, 2022 (i.e., 10 weeks)

	Full Time Staff	Part Time/Casual Staff	Details
First Payment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relates to period between February 13 and March 19, 2022 	\$2,500	Up to \$2,500 Applied to hours worked, up to a total of 187.5 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Payment in early Spring 2022 (April/May) ○ Must be in employment as a practicing nurse on March 31, 2022 to be eligible for payment
Second Payment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relates to the period between March 20 to April 22, 2022 	\$2,500	Up to \$2,500 Hourly rate will be applied to hours worked, up to a total of 187.5 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Payment in September 2022 ○ Must be in employment as a practicing nurse on Sept. 1, 2022 to be eligible for payment

- Each employer responsible for paying the rate for the hours worked by their employee. (e.g., a nurse with two or more employers may receive pay for hours worked with each employer)
- Nurses on parental leave and other forms of leave or otherwise dealing with individual life events will not be disadvantaged in the implementation of the program.



- All practising nurses (RNs, RPNs, NPs) will be eligible for the incentive as set out above except:
 - Those in private duty nursing
 - Those employed by schools / school boards
 - Those employed by postsecondary institutions
 - Nursing executives (e.g., Chief Nursing Executives at a hospital)
 - **NOTE: Any nurse in a management or supervisory role who was redeployed** to a direct patient care role or who otherwise provided direct patient/resident care during the eligibility period **are** eligible.
- In addition:
 - Hours worked in any of the “excluded” areas are not eligible
 - Hours worked for Temporary Staffing Agencies are not eligible.
 - Nurses are not eligible to receive any payment if they retire or leave employment prior to **March 31, 2022**.
 - Nurses are only eligible to receive one payment if they retire or leave employment as a nurse prior to **September 1, 2022**.



For greater clarity

- Nurses in all publicly funded services such as, hospitals, home and community care, long-term care, public health, other community services, corrections, labs / diagnostics, telehealth/tele advisory are eligible.
- Nurses employed in registered retirement homes are eligible
- **Any nurse in a management or supervisory role who was redeployed** to a direct patient care role or who otherwise provided direct patient/resident care during the eligibility period are eligible



Payment Details
(General Details/Specific
Circumstances)



Full-Time Employees

- Relates to the period February 13 to April 22, 2022
- Full-time workers in eligible settings will receive the full \$5000 payment, as follows:
 - First payment: employees will receive the full payment of \$2500 provided they continue to be in employment as of March 31, 2022.
 - Second payment: employees will receive the full payment of \$2500, for a total of \$5000 provided they continue to be in employment as of September 1, 2022.

- The incentive will be applied as a supplementary hourly rate of \$13.56 per hour, for all hours worked to a maximum of 375 hours from February 13 to April 22
- First payment:
 - Employees will receive a payment of up to \$2500 provided they continue to be in employment as of March 31, 2022.
 - The payment period will relate to the hours worked between February 13, 2022, and March 19, 2022, to a maximum of 187.5 hours.
- Second Payment:
 - Employees will receive a payment of up to \$2500 provided they continue to be in employment as of September 1, 2022.
 - The payment period will relate to the hours worked between March 20 and April 22, to a maximum of 187.5 hours.
- Proration will not apply to hours worked in excluded areas.
- This method of proration will allow for multiple employers of a single nurse to calculate and pay out the incentive to nurses more easily.

Employer Supported Leave

- Full-time workers who are on employer supported leaves such as pregnancy / maternity / parental / sick / bereavement leaves or other protected leaves under the Employment Standards Act, 2000 and have a planned return date are eligible.
- For part-time and casual workers, who are on employer supported leaves such as pregnancy / maternity / parental / sick / bereavement leaves or other protected leaves under the Employment Standards Act, 2000. How the incentive is applied will depend on the entitlement under the collective bargaining agreement and how other bonuses may be treated.

Other types of paid leave (e.g., suspension on full pay etc.)

- Depending on the leave and how the employee is categorized when on the leave in question.

Involuntary/Unpaid Leave (e.g., disciplinary leave, self-funded leave, long-term disability leave)

- A nurse non-voluntary or unpaid leave :
 - May not be ineligible to receive the incentive if the nurse did not work during the eligibility period or for any reason was not considered an employee on the eligibility dates (March 31 and September 1)
 - May be eligible for the incentive (prorated or otherwise) if the nurse worked a part of the eligibility period and was considered employed on the applicable eligibility dates

Payments to Nurses for Assigned Shifts Unable to be Worked

- If a nurse was scheduled to work during the eligibility period could not fulfill the scheduled shift (i.e., life events, illness or contracting COVID-19).
- **Full-time Nurses** are entitled to the full payment provided that they remain employed as of the required payment dates and was operating in accordance with any policies or the collective agreement.
- **Part-time and casual staff,**
 - Shifts missed for reasons such as illness, isolation requirements, caregiving responsibilities or other life events that are employer supported reasons, **can** be included as part of any prorated payment.
 - Refused shifts, shifts offered but not confirmed etc. **cannot** be included as part of any prorated payment.

Payments to Nurses Under New Employment

- If a nurse continues to be employed as a nurse they will continue to be eligible for the payments.
- In these cases, the nurse would be paid by the employer with which the hours were worked, facilitated by a proof of employment provided by the secondary employer to the first employer.

Example:

- *If a nurse worked for a registered retirement home during the period of February 13 – March 19, but started a new role at a hospital prior to March 31:*
 - *the registered retirement home would pay them out for the hours*
 - *individual confirms their continued eligibility status with the new employer through an acknowledgement letter, email, or other documentation that otherwise confirms their continued employment as a nurse in the broader public sector.*

When an Eligible Worker delivers services with multiple employers (eligible workplaces), the nurse should:

- claim the eligible hours through each employer/organization for which they were working when they delivered a given service; and
- Provide an attestation to employers/organizations to whom they delivered services as Eligible Workers in Eligible Workplaces setting out the number of hours worked and for which they intend to claim the incentive
- Hours should not exceed the 187.5 hours in either period

Payments to Retired Nurses

- A nurse that retires or leaves the workforce **prior to March 31, 2022**, cannot receive a payment through the Temporary Retention Incentive for Nurses, as a nurse must be in employment at the at time to receive the first of the two payments.
- A nurse that retires or leaves the workforce **prior to September 1, 2022**, can only receive one payment through the incentive as a nurse must be in employment at that time to receive the second of the two payments.
- This applies regardless of whether the nurse in question worked any part of the period between February 13 and April 22, 2022

Implementation and Reporting



- **Hospitals/Mental Health/Home and Community Care:** Funding will flow through usual transfer payment relationships between the Ministry of Health, Ontario Health, Home and Community Care Support Services, and other providers. Hospitals Branch, the Home and Community Care Branch and the Mental Health and Addiction Programs Branch will be points of contact for these sectors, respectively.
- **Public Health Sector:** Funding will flow directly to public health sector employers, including Boards of Health for Public Health Units, through existing Transfer Payment Agreements and processes. The Accountability and Liaison Branch will be point of contact.
- **Primary Health Care** – Funding Process In Development. Primary Health Care Branch will be point of contact.
- **IHF**s – Funding Process In Development. Health Insurance Branch will be point of contact
- **ADP:** Funding will flow through the usual transfer payment relationship between the Ministry of Health and the ADP-registered vendors for home oxygen therapy who employ Registered Nurses and/or Registered Practical Nurses.
- **Long-Term Care:** Funding will flow directly to long-term care home licensees through existing Direct Funding Agreements and processes. The Strategic Initiatives Branch, Ministry of Long-Term Care will be the point of contact.
- 18 • **Others:** Funding will flow through transfer payment agreements or agreed upon processes with applicable organizations.

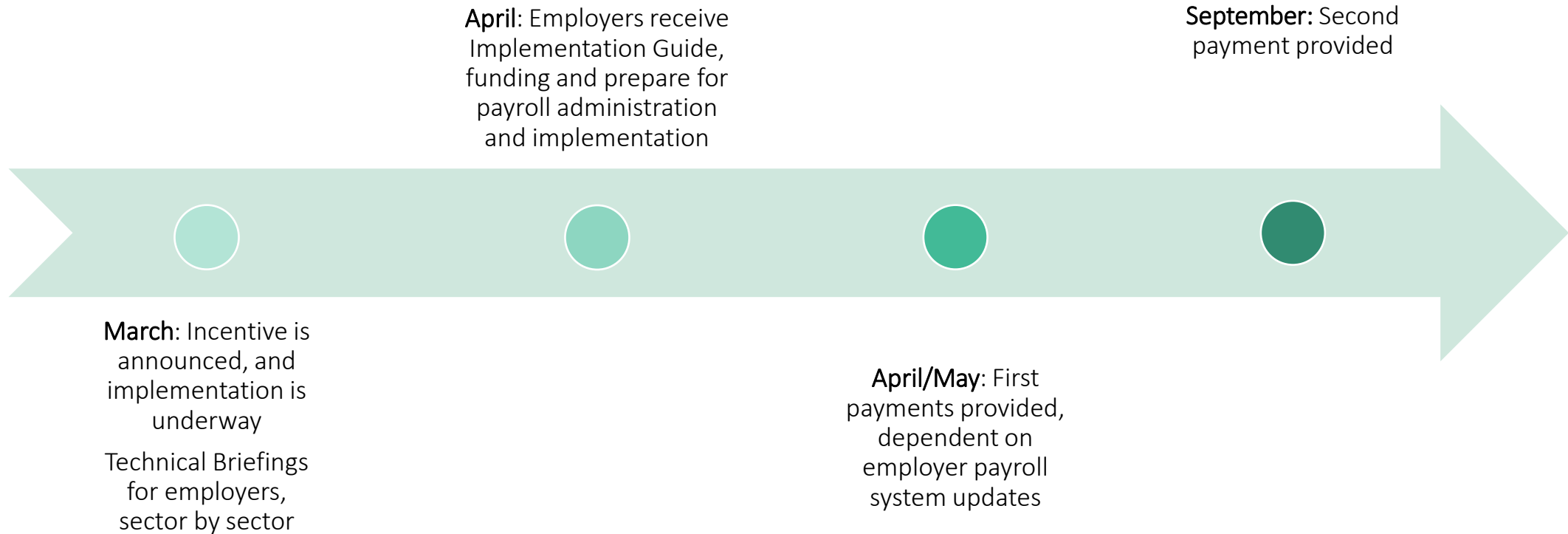
Reporting

- Employers will be required to monitor the number of full-time employees receiving the incentive, as well as the number of eligible part-time / casual hours. Key reporting timelines are as follows:
 - **June 1, 2022:** status update on progress of first payments to be provided to the administering ministry
 - **October 3, 2022:** status update on progress of second payments to be provided to the administering ministry
- Reporting requirements will include:
 - Total number of Eligible Workers that received the pay including full-time and part-time workers
 - Total number of eligible work hours
 - Paid Out

Settlements (Reconciliations)

- Further information will be made available in the weeks ahead and through the Transfer Payment Agreement or other funding processes.

APPROXIMATE TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE TEMPORARY NURSING RETENTION INCENTIVE



Next Steps

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1. Government program partners are working to develop mechanisms to facilitate the transfer for payments to employers.
2. Employers and collective bargaining agents are both being provided implementation updates this week.
3. Resources including a program guideline and FAQs have been finalized and will be distributed to employers.
4. Following internal accounting and financial review, funding letters will then be provided in the coming weeks to employers, who will then proceed to put processes in place to update payroll systems and begin administering payments.

The following contacts can assist you with sector specific inquiries as we move through the implementation process:

Sector	Contact	Responsible Director
Hospitals	justine.walker@ontario.ca	tara.l.wilson@ontario.ca
Mental Health	mary.mannella@ontario.ca	mary.mannella@ontario.ca
Home and Community Care	Joshua.Lovell@ontario.ca	Ann.Schrager@ontario.ca
Primary Health Care	Fernando.Tavares@ontario.ca	Nadia.Surani@ontario.ca
Integrated Health Facilities	Owen.McMorris@ontario.ca	Pauline.Ryan@ontario.ca
Long-Term Care	cheryl.clarke@ontario.ca	Rupinder.Johal@ontario.ca
Assistive Devices	Emily.Szeto@ontario.ca	David.Schachow@ontario.ca
Public Health	Brent.Feeney@ontario.ca	Elizabeth.Walker@ontario.ca