

Temporary Retention Incentive for Nurses

Program Guide for Broader Public Sector Organizations

Ministry of Health

Version 1.0 (Current Version)

March 2022

Purpose

This guide outlines considerations for implementing the Temporary Retention Incentive for Nurses (TRIN). Public sector employers are required to consider various factors, including those identified in this guide, to determine the appropriate implementation and eligibility of the program at their facilities.

Note: A key guiding principle of the program is to ensure its smooth implementation and that the incentive is in the hands of eligible nurses as soon as is possible. As such, some minor elements of implementation may vary from sector to sector. Employers should continue to work with ministry program leads to ensure that they have the latest available information.

Version

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Glossary of Terms

The full form or explanations provided below pertain to this document only. The terms used here may have other meanings in different contexts and documents.

Term	Full form or Explanation
Program / Initiative	Temporary Retention Incentive for Nurses
Nursing professional /nurses	Includes Registered Nurse Practitioner (NP), Registered Nurse (RN), or Registered Practical Nurse (RPN)
"The ministry"	Ministry of Health Ministry of Long-Term Care Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services Ministry of the Solicitor General
Employers	i.e. hospitals, long-term care homes, corrections, home care and community care organizations, licensed retirement homes, public health units, primary care employer, and others
Eligible Worker / eligible nurse	an individual that meets the eligibility requirements set out in this guideline
Eligible Workplace	Refers to one of the workplaces listed in this guideline
Eligibility period	Refers to the period of February 13, 2022 – April 22, 2022, for which the incentive is being applied

Full Time	Classified by an employer as a full-time worker under a given collective agreement or other contract/agreement
Part Time	Nurse designated as part-time or casual under a given collective agreement or is otherwise classified by the employer as part time or casual and/or who works less than the full-time hours as stated above under Payments to Full-Time Employees (e.g., less than an average of 37.5 hours per week and less than an average 7.5 hours within a 24-hour period).

Overview

Nurses are critical to the province's health workforce and its ongoing response to COVID-19. Across the province, nurses have demonstrated remarkable dedication, professionalism, and resilience.

Ontario has introduced a temporary financial incentive to support nursing retention and stabilize the current nursing workforce during this critical time.

Through the temporary retention payment for nurses, the government will provide a lump sum payment of up to \$5,000 for eligible full-time nurses and a prorated payment of up to \$5,000 for eligible part-time and casual nursing staff across the province. The payment will be paid by employers in two installments, further detailed in the Payments section.

Guiding Principles

The incentive has been introduced to reach as many nurses as possible and has been designed to be inclusive and equitable. The goal of the incentive is to help keep the nurses we have today, in the system today, by following these guiding principles:

1. Supports Retention

Ontario needs all nurses in all sectors to continue to support broader health care delivery during this exceptional period. The incentive is aimed at the largest possible number of nurses who are working in the system today.

2. Equitable Access for Nurses

Those who work in publicly funded nursing will qualify for the incentive regardless of the sector they work in and the work they do (with very few exceptions). Whether one works full-time hours or is part-time or casual, they will receive fair and equitable access to the incentive.

3. Effective Implementation

The program has been designed to be as simple as possible to ensure that employers have the information, they need to administer payments, and employees know what to expect and when to expect it.

4. Easy-to-Communicate

Resources have been developed to ensure all partners (nurses, nurse representatives, employers) have a clear understanding of what is being offered, a clear understanding of who it's being offered to, and clear timelines for when it's happening.

Eligibility

The eligibility for the program is as broad as possible, with very few exceptions. To be eligible for the incentive, nurses must have been employed /have worked hours within eligibility period, as well as continue to be employed at each of the two payment installment dates.

The incentive is open to all classification of nurses in Ontario (Nurse Practitioner, Registered Nurse, Registered Practical Nurse).

Eligibility Period

Thus, the eligibility period for the program is related to work performed between **February 13 to April 22, 2022**. All eligible nurses will receive the incentive in two installments.

To receive the first payment, nurses must be in employment as a practicing nurse on **March 31, 2022**.

To receive the second payment, nurses must be in employment as a practicing nurse on **September 1, 2022**.

Eligibility Criteria

- All those employed as practising nurses (RNs, RPNs, NPs) will be eligible for the incentive except for:
 - 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 **is** 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: Places where eligible nurses would work

- Nurses in all publicly funded services such as, hospitals, home and community care, long-term care, public health, mental health and addictions, other community services, corrections, labs / diagnostics, telehealth/tele advisory are eligible.
- Nurses employed in licensed retirement homes are eligible.

Payments

This section sets out how the incentive will be applied and paid to both full-time as well as part-time or casual employees.

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).

General Payment Details

Unless the ministry has set out another means for making the payments, the incentive payments are to be made by the nurse's employer.

Full-time nurses will receive payments for the full \$5,000 (two payments of \$2,500). Part-time and Casual Nurses can receive two pro-rated payments of up to \$2,500 for a total of up to \$5,000.

Nurses will receive the incentive as follows, relating to the period worked between February 13, 2022, and April 22, 2022:

First payment:

- Payment relates to the period worked from **February 13th to March 19.**
- Payment will be made in Spring 2022.
- All nurses must be in employment as a practicing nurse on **March 31** to be eligible for payment.

Second Payment:

- Payment relates to the period worked from **March 20th to April 22nd.**
- Payment will be made in September 2022.
- All nurses must be in employment as a practicing nurse on **September 1, 2022,** to be eligible for payment.

Payments to Full-Time Employees

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.

Payments to Part-Time and Casual Employees

For part-time and casual employers, 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 during the eligibility period of February 13 to April 22, 2022.

- 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**.
- This method of proration will allow for multiple employers of a nurse to calculate and pay out the incentive to nurses, to a maximum of 187.5 hours, more easily.
- Eligible workers should claim the eligible hours from each employer/organization for which they were working when they delivered a given service.
- Proration will not apply to any hours worked under areas as outlined under Exclusions on page 7.

Payments to Nurses on Leave

The follow sets out guidance on determining eligibility or payout related to leave. Employers will be responsible for ensuring consistency with payments associated with leaves.

Employer Supported Leave

- Full-time workers who are on employer supported leave 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 the payments.**
- For part-time and casual workers, who are on employer supported leave leaves such as pregnancy / maternity / parental / sick / bereavement leaves or other protected leaves under the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* **eligibility will depend on the entitlement under the collective bargaining agreement or employment contract and how other bonuses may be treated.**

Involuntary/Unpaid Leave

- A nurse on non-voluntary or unpaid leave, whether working full-time, part-time, or casual, (e.g., disciplinary leave, self-funded leave, long-term disability leave):
 - Is ineligible to receive the incentive where the leave resulted in the nurse not working during the eligibility period or not being employed as a nurse on the applicable eligibility date
 - May be eligible for the incentive (prorated or otherwise) at the discretion of the employer where the nurse has worked a part of the eligibility period and is considered employed on the applicable eligibility dates

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

- A nurse on other paid leave may receive the incentive at the discretion of the employer consistent with the applicable policies associated with the leave in question and or how other benefits associated with leave are treated.

Payments to Redeployed Nurses

- Full time nurses who are/were redeployed from one eligible employer to another eligible employer during the eligibility period, the employer who continues to administer their regular pay will be responsible for administering the incentive.
- Part-time and Casual nurses will:
 - Claim the eligible hours through the employer which has been administering their regular compensation while deployed, regardless of where they delivered a given service pursuant to arrangements made by the employers at the time of redeployment.
 - Hours should not exceed the maximum of 187.5 hours in either period.

Payments to Nurses Who do Union Work

- Payments to nurses who undertake work directly for the union will receive the incentive as follows:
 - Full-time nurses will receive the incentive provided all other eligibility criteria are met as set out above
 - Part-time and casual nurses will be able to count union work hours towards as part of proration

Payments to Nurses: Assigned Shifts Not Worked

There may be instances where a nurse who was scheduled to work during the eligibility period but was otherwise unable to fulfill the scheduled shift (i.e., life events, illness or contracting COVID-19).

- Full-time Nurses: are entitled to the full payment.
- Part-time and casual nurses:
 - Shifts that were missed as per agreement with the employers and/or were 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, or shifts otherwise not scheduled cannot be included as part of any prorated payment.

Payments to Retired Nurses

- A nurse that retires or leaves the workforce **prior to March 31, 2022**, cannot receive a payment through the Temporary Nursing Retention Incentive, 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.

Payments to Nurses with Multiple Employers

When an Eligible Worker delivers services in multiple Eligible Workplaces and reports to more than one employer / organization, the worker 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.
- Hours should not exceed the maximum of 187.5 hours in either period.

Payments to Nurses Under New Employment

There may be circumstances where a nurse works during the eligibility period but changes employment prior to the applicable pay periods.

- If a nurse continues to be employed as a nurse and utilizing the designation within an eligible workplace, they shall 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.
- *For example:*
 - *If a nurse worked for a licensed retirement home during the period of February 13 – March 19 but started a new role at a hospital prior to March 31, the licensed retirement home would pay them out for the hours, provided the individual is able to confirm their continued employment on March 31 via an acknowledgement letter, email, or other documentation.*

Accessing Funding

- Nurses and employers do not need to apply to receive payments.
- The Government of Ontario is implementing amendments to existing transfer payment agreements or payment systems as required, to provide payments to eligible employers either directly or through a third-party administrator. Approach from sector to sector may vary.
- Employers will then identify eligible recipients, update payroll cycles, calculate eligible part-time and casual hours, and begin to administer the incentive to nurses in two installments.

Program Reporting (Subject to Change)

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 scheduled to date 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

Please note these scheduled reporting timelines are subject to change. Further information will be provided when funds are flowed to employers for disbursement.

Reporting Requirements

Ministries / divisions providing funding to employers are required to report the following performance metrics along with a regular year-end report:

Implementation - Workforce Information

- Total allocation received through the Temporary Retention Incentive for Nurses
- Total amount of payments made including a breakdown of full-time, part-time, and casual workers.
- Total number of Eligible Workers that received pay including a breakdown of full-time, part-time, and casual workers.
- Total number of eligible work hours paid out including a breakdown of full-time, part-time, and casual workers.

Outcomes - Workforce Stability

- Total number of vacancies (full-time / part-time / casual) for eligible positions as of February 13, 2022
- Total number of vacancies (full-time / part-time / casual) for eligible positions as of September 1, 2022
 - For greater clarity, a vacancy here is defined as a position which is totally vacant and unfilled. Positions temporarily vacant which can be backfilled such as leaves are excluded.

Records Retention

Employers are required to create and maintain records of payments and records must include the following details for each Eligible Worker:

- Number of work hours eligible for pandemic hourly pay.
- Gross amount of paid out to Eligible Workers.
- Number of statutory contributions paid by employers because of providing pay to Eligible Workers (applicable to part-time / casual workers)
- Completed employee attestations

Program Implementation (Ministry Contacts by Sector)

Ontario ministries will be contacting eligible employers directly or indirectly through payment administrators as appropriate to receive funding to administer the program.

Sector	Contact	Responsible Director
Hospitals	justine.walker@ontario.ca	 tara.l.wilson@ontario.ca
Mental Health	Alicia.Joubert@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
Independent 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
Licensed Retirement Homes	Dianne.Persaud@ontario.ca	Kathleen.Henschel@ontario.ca
Corrections	Laural.Rueffer@ontario.ca	Curtis.Schultz@ontario.ca
Children, Community and Social Services	Tracy.McMurray@ontario.ca	Stacey.Weber@ontario.ca

Appendices: Implementation Resources

Appendix 1: Employee Attestation Form

INSTRUCTIONS

As part of the Government of Ontario's commitment to provide payments related to the Temporary Retention Incentive for Nurses to eligible workers, eligible workers with multiple employers must record hours worked during the following periods:

February 13, 2022 – March 19, 2022, applied to hours worked up to 187.5 hours

March 20, 2022 – April 22, 2022, applied to hours worked up to 187.5 hours

Full-time workers are not required to complete this attestation.

Where an individual works for multiple eligible employers for a combined total of 187.5 hours or less during the designated five-week periods above, they must demonstrate that they have not exceeded the hourly entitlements by completing this attestation to receive each of the two payment installments.

Individuals should complete this form, including all applicable hours worked and hours claims across multiple employers, and provide a copy to each employer with whom they are claiming hours.

A complete attestation may contain personal information. The employer and employee will keep copies of the attestations and may share them with the [Ministry and/or TBS] to verify eligibility for payments and to ensure the effectiveness of the Government of Ontario's initiative. If you have any questions about the [Ministry's] collection, use or disclosure of this information, please contact [contact details of individual]

Please review the attestation on the next page. To complete it, fill in your full legal name, complete the table, including business contact information for each eligible employer, and sign the attestation [with a witness, such as your manager]. Please return the completed attestation to [manager/Recipient].

ATTESTATION OF HOURS

- I, _____ [NURSE] _____, attest that I have worked with the employers listed in the table below for a combined total of 187.5 hours or less the five-week period outlined in the table below.
- I confirm that I have not submitted another attestation in respect of the same eligibility period through another employer.
- I consent to the employers listed below collecting, using, and disclosing the information contained in this attestation, including disclosing the attestation in full or in part to the [Ministry and/or TBS], for the purposes of verifying my eligibility for Temporary Retention Incentive for Nurses and monitoring the effectiveness and implementation of the Temporary Retention Incentive for Nurses.

Eligibility Period	Eligible Workplaces	Hours Worked	Hours Claimed	TOTAL Hours Claimed
February 13, 2022 – March 19, 2022				
March 20, 2022 – April 22, 2022				

Signature: _____

Witness Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____