Pandemic Pay for BC Public Service Employees FAQs
Update October 16, 2020

1. Who is eligible for the temporary pandemic pay?
To receive temporary pandemic pay, an employee must:
• Be working in an eligible position and in an eligible workplace.
• Have been working straight-time and overtime hours at any point during the 16-week period from March 15, 2020 to July 4, 2020, at the height of the Province’s response to the pandemic.

Excluded management staff, fee-for-service providers or employees on leave are not eligible. For a list of eligible sectors, workplaces and roles please visit www.gov.bc.ca/pandemicpay.

2. How did the provincial government decide who qualifies for this benefit?
The government is focused on doing everything we can to support B.C.’s frontline workers throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Temporary pandemic pay recognizes the frontline workers providing critical public services in health, social services and corrections to those most vulnerable during the pandemic. This is vital work where maintaining physical distancing is difficult if not impossible.

3. How long will workers receive the top up and will earnings be backdated to the beginning of this crisis? What if the pandemic continues longer?
Employees are eligible to receive lump-sum temporary pandemic pay for straight-time and overtime hours worked during the 16-week period, starting on March 15th and ending the beginning of July. This is not a wage increase. It will not be extended beyond the 16 weeks.

4. I am an Auxiliary employee. Am I still eligible for the top up?
Yes, auxiliary employees are eligible if they are in an eligible workplace and eligible role.

5. I am an excluded manager. Am I eligible for the top up?
No. Doctors along with executive and excluded management level employees are not eligible for the payments.

6. I am on temporary assignment. My base position would be eligible for the top up but, my TA position is not. Do I still qualify to receive this payment?
No. If you are on a temporary assignment in an ineligible position, please speak to your supervisor about your options.

7. Are overtime hours worked eligible for pandemic pay?
Yes, overtime hours worked during the eligibility period are eligible for pandemic pay. Overtime hours worked will receive the same $4/hour premium as straight-time hours worked. For example,
if you worked two hours of overtime, you will receive two hours worked at $4. The payment of overtime hours will be paid out at a later date. An update will be provided soon of when this will be paid out.

8. What deductions will be taken for the pandemic pay lump sum payment?
The appropriate statutory deductions which include Canadian Income Tax, Employment Insurance (EI) and Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and union dues will be deducted from the pandemic pay lump sum payment. Because this is a temporary, lump sum payment, this payment is not pensionable so there will be no deductions taken for the Public Service Pension Plan.

9. How does pandemic pay affect other benefits?
Pandemic pay is not part of an employee’s base salary, it is not ongoing, and it is not a general wage increase, therefore it has no impact on benefits paid by the employer.

10. What happens if I take a sick day or am on short-term or long-term leave? Will the pandemic pay be deducted or prorated?
Yes. The pandemic pay only applies to hours worked. If you were not working full-time during this 16-week period due to leave, then the temporary pandemic pay will be prorated. For example, any statutory holidays or vacation within the eligibility period are not included in the hours used for calculating pandemic pay.

11. I have left the BC Public Service but prior to my departure, my position would have been eligible to receive pandemic pay. Will I receive payment to recognize my time in my former position?
Employees who worked straight-time or overtime hours between March 15 and July 4, 2020 but who have subsequently left the BC Public Service will receive payment for the hours they worked prior to leaving.

12. How will pandemic pay be paid out to eligible employees?
Eligible frontline workers can expect to receive a lump-sum payment of $4 per hour for straight time and overtime hours worked added to their regular pay. The payment will be paid out in two phases. Phase 1 will be payout of all straight-time hours worked in either the pay period of October 16 or 30. Phase 2 will be the payout of all overtime hours worked. This will be paid at a later date. An update will be provided soon on that date.

13. Where can I view that my pandemic pay has been paid?
You may review the amount of your payment on your pay advice through Employee Self Service. The pandemic payment will show up on your pay advice as PANPAY.

1. Access Employee Self Service from work.
2. Access Employee Self Service from home.

14. I’m concerned about paying too much income tax on my lump sum payout as it is included on a regular pay cycle. Can I request a separate cheque for my payout?
No. Payroll does not issue separate paycheques for adds-to-pay (overtime, substitution pay, premiums, etc.) or retroactive lump sum adjustments such as pandemic pay.

The software used to calculate payroll and taxation uses taxation methods and formulas approved by the Canada Revenue Agency. These formulas cover federal income tax, provincial income tax, contributions to the Canada Pension Plan and premiums for the Employment Insurance program. Neither the Employer nor Payroll alters these formulas in any way. When you file your taxes next year, your earnings from all sources are reviewed by the Canada Revenue Agency and adjustments are made as necessary.

15. Who do I contact if I have questions about my pandemic pay?

Please send in an AskMyHR Service Request using the category Myself > Pay > Other Pay Issues & Inquiries. If there is a discrepancy, please provide the details in your service request.