

Wage Grid Supplement Increase to support the new 2023/24 Wage Grid (Centres)

Tuesday, May 16, 2023

-TRANSCRIPT-

00:36

Carmen Zubin

Hello everyone, my name is Carmen Zubin and I'm an acting policy analyst with the Early Learning and Child Care Division. Thank you for joining us for today's webinar on the Wage Grid Supplement to Operating Grant and the 2023/24 ELCC Wage grid, which was supported under the Canada Manitoba Canada Wide Early Learning and Childcare Agreement. Today's webinar will be presented by Jennifer Faulder, Executive Director of Policy and Planning Branch and Tanya Jakob, Director of Continuous Improvement and Engagement.

After the webinar, we will have some time for questions, and you'll see at the bottom of your screen there is a chat speech bubble. This is where you can submit your questions. We will try to answer as many questions as we can.

And we have ELCC staff on site to document all questions that are submitted for review in the event that we do not have time to answer all questions today.

If you have any questions specific to your facility, you can send them to child care information services.

A full copy of the PowerPoint slide deck and transcript will be available on our website and you will receive an email informing you when it is posted online.

And with that, I'm going to turn it over to Jennifer for our land acknowledgement.

02:40

Jennifer Faulder

Hello and thank you. Carmen? And everyone can hear me, okay. Great.

As mentioned, we want to start with a land acknowledgement. We recognize that Manitoba is on Treaties 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10 Territories and the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabe, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline, Ininiwak and Nehethowuk peoples. We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis. We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit. We respect the spirit and intent of Treaties and Treaty Making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation, and collaboration.

03:49

Jennifer Faulder

So just, we have an Agenda here to give you an overview of what we're going to be going through today so we have some background on the wage grid that was implemented in 2022-2023. Then we will go through the new wage grant that will be coming into effect on July 1, 2023.

We will describe in more detail what the wage grade supplement will look like to support increased wages. We have some common questions to go through, implementation resources and then we will have time for questions as mentioned at the end, and please feel free to include your questions in the chat as we go.

So for background, as you are likely familiar now, all provinces and territories have a partnership with the federal government. Under the multilateral early learning and child care framework to build a Canada-wide publicly funded early learning and child care system.

Under the Canada-Manitoba Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, Manitoba committed to improving quality and supporting the recruitment, retention and growth of the early learning and childcare sector workforce, including committing to the implementation of a wage grid for the non-profit, early learning and child care sector.

And we understand that a well compensated early learning and childcare workforce is essential to support the delivery of high quality early learning and child care services. It's essential for stabilizing and strengthening the sector, for addressing labor market shortages, for supporting the retention of current staff, and to support recruitment of new individuals to a career in early learning and childcare.

Manitoba, especially prior to the first wage grid in July, 2022 but still continuing today there is a fairly large disparity in wages across the sector, and this is in part, connected to the fact that our child care facilities are independent businesses that have a board of directors who are the legal entity that's responsible for establishing staff wages.

Operating Grant funding is the primary source of funding for salary related costs. That's in addition to the parent fees, the parent free revenue grant. And so the wage grid, as established in 2022 was intended to help to, provide some guidance to the sector to reduce that disparity in wages.

And it also established some wage targets and it was based on similar public sector Wages.

07:17

Jennifer Faulder

So the first, the initial wage, that was again implemented effective July 1, 2022 was intended as a first step in the development of a more comprehensive wage scale to help narrow the gap between the highest and lowest wages in across Manitoba and to generally try to increase wages where necessary. This provided funded facilities with guidance on wages for childcare assistance and early childhood educators. Again, to try and promote fair competitive and consistent wages while preserving the responsibility and authority of the board or the owner operator.

This was, supported through a wage grid supplement that was provided as additional funding through the operating grant based on the unit funding model. It identified a starting point for wages for each position or classification and a target wage for each position classification, the target being what the goal was to achieve the target wage as an average by 2024 for each position or classification.

In the fall of 2022, the Speech from the Throne committed to increasing wages in the sector in 2023 this is in part, this is in response to a number of factors and considerations, including that the minimum wage is increasing in 2023. Also looking at the lessons that we learned from the initial wage grid implementation including that more lead time was needed for implementation and that there was a need for clarification of terminology.

We are moving forward with hiring a consultant to support the development of a more comprehensive framework for wages in the sector that will be based on market research and consultation with the sector. However, we also recognize the importance of moving forward with increases to wages now.

Because we do really need to be actively working on recruiting and retaining staff in the sector.

09:55

Jennifer Faulder

So here we have a couple of charts that, demonstrate that disparity in the wages across our sector in Manitoba. So you can see this provides the hourly wages as they were in 2021, 2022. The blue bars show the minimum wages that were being paid for each of these types of classifications.

The red shows the maximum wages that were being paid and the green shows the mean of those. So you can see with a number of the positions that there is quite a vast discrepancy between the highest paid and the lowest paid staff in each of these classifications.

And again, this is the same chart, but for the year, 22/23. This would have been part way through the year that we implemented the initial wage grid. And we can see that there is, you know, the beginnings of an improvement. Of narrowing that gap.

But we do continue to see some, very, significant differences between. The highest in the lowest paid staff in each of these classifications. So the minister and the provincial and federal ministers recently announced that there's be an investment of 56.1 million dollars, \$3.3 million of which is provincial funding to increase the revenue generated per childcare space to support an increase to the starting point wages on the early learning and childcare wage grid.

And this is to come into effect on July first, 2023. The increase in the starting point wages will help sector employees get closer to the target wages on the 2022/23 range, so the target wages have not changed, just the starting point has.

And all Manitoba licensed not for profit childcare centers, nursery schools and funded family or group child care homes will receive, again, a wage grid supplement that will be increased this year on July 1, 2023 to support increasing wages.

The Wage grid provides. Sorry, I'm just noticing a comment that our screen is black. Hopefully most people can see the presentation. The wage grade provides a starting point and a target to reach. The

starting point, provides the lowest wage and employee of that position or classification should receive in a funded facility.

The target provides average wages for each position or classification that facilities should be trying to achieve as an average for that position by July, 2024.

The wage grid is intended to support increases to wages for position of classification on a facilities salary scale. The levels and steps on, facilities salary scale should not fall below the starting point wage and over the next year should support employees being paid on average at or above the target wage. So it's really important to emphasize that the wage grid does not in any way provide any maximum wages or amounts that should be paid.

Higher wages can be paid based on an employee's position in classification, and a facility salary scale as long as the facilities operating budget permits.

So again, the wage grid is just providing some guidance for boards to begin offering wage levels from a common baseline, to ensure greater consistency through the sector and ideally to. Increase wages generally. To assist with recruitment and retention.

14:44

Jennifer Faulder

So as mentioned, facilities will receive an increased wage grid supplement as additional funding included in the operating grant. The purpose of which is to increase wages and that you will be receiving that 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. The unit funding model is based on the regulated child to staff ratios. A unit being four for infant, eight for preschool, or 15 for school-age spaces, and each unit type generates the same daily revenue from combined parent fees and operating grant funding.

So here, this table was circulated as part of the circular that went out. So you have this, we will also be circulating this presentation. I'm not going to read all of the number, dollar values and you don't need to frantically try to scribble them down because you will have access to them, but this is just to show the amounts of the operating grants that will be effective July 1, 2023.

With the increased wage grid supplement included in the new amounts. So you can see the amounts here in the first line for each type of space. And then we've also provided what that means in terms of an increase per space for each of the space types.

Operating grant assessment updates. So for centers, current operating budget submissions will be reassessed in Child Care Online to adjust upcoming quarterly payments based on the new operating grant rates. The quarterly payment for July. For July to September will be issued on July 1, 2023.

For centers that have a June yearend, the extension operating grant payment for July to September quarter, will be issued on July 1, 2023.

The payment amount will be based on the facilities, 2023, sorry, 2022/23 operating budget submission, which was assessed using the previous operating grant rates, and adjustment to the extension

payment to reflect the new operating grant rates will be made once the facilities 23/24 operating budget has been received.

The new operating grant rates will be used to calculate grant payments for center operating budgets submitted on or after July 1, 2023.

For nursery schools. Current nursery school annual operating grant submissions will be re-assessed in child-care online reflecting the new operating grant rates. The quarterly payment for July to September will be issued July 1, 2023 for facilities that operate 12 months per year.

For nursery schools that are closed in July and August, the new operating grant rates will be used on their next grant installment or when they're 2023/24 budget submission is received.

So here we have the new wage grid. It shows the starting point, from the initial wage grid. In 2022 and then it provides the updated starting point for it will come into effect July 1, 2023 and as mentioned the target has not changed from the initial wage grid so you can see that we are getting a lot closer to achieving the target by increasing the starting point. And again, I won't go through each of these dollar values individually. This was in the circular and is available online.

I'm gonna pass it over to Tanya. Who will go through the common questions.

19:16

Tanya Jakob

Thank you, Jennifer. I'm just gonna review, just a series of some of the more common questions that, have come in and that you might have at this point in time.

So first one here, why is Manitoba increasing the existing wage grid? As Jennifer mentioned earlier, the Canada wide agreement, having made a commitment to introducing a wage grid within its first, 2 year action fund. And We have heard from stakeholders that the way you've been established last year does have some sort coming.

So we are in the process of hiring consultant to do more of a comprehensive review of those sector wages. And this will then include, completing more market research, consulting with our sector stakeholders as well as developing recommendations for that more in depth framework for wages in the sector. So we know that this is going to work, you know, requires some additional time and so it leaves that room for that consultation and hearing from our, our sector as well as responding to that feedback accordingly.

So recognizing, the critical importance of continuing to improve, our recruitment and retention to the sector, we will move forward with the grid in this iteration here with an increase to the starting point on the existing ELCC wage grid as you've seen.

Next question, can all employees expect their wages to increase in July of 2023? All facilities are expected to use the increase in funding to increase wages for staff. So, this doesn't necessarily mean that everyone is going to receive an increase to their wages. It very well may vary depending on what

the current wages are within the existing scales that or have developed for their centers. So if a facility's budget allows facilities can pay staff above that starting point and above the target rate.

How can I calculate the wage good supplement our facility will receive? To calculate the amount of the July 1, 2023 wage grid supplement, subtract the amount by your facility previously received so that old amount from the grant amount your facility will receive affected July 1. Just the Increases per space is included in the ground rates chart that was provided in the circular.

So for example, a school age space. If a wage per supplement amount was \$2,277 and the new amount is \$2,629, your wage good supplements would be \$352 per space.

Why are child care assistants not completed the required 40 h of ECE related training not included in the wage grid? So the starting wage for CCA without their 40 h training is at the discretion of the board. So in these cases, facilities may pay more than the provincial minimum wage again, if the operating, And again, as the discussion of the board within the scale that are developed, you can determine what.

Can the board establish a wage level for CCA actively pursuing education to become an ECE? That is higher than the wage for CCA. So yes, facilities can establish wages for any position or classification that are higher than the starting point or target wages in the grid if that operating budget permits. Facilities may want to include a CCA in ECD training position or wage level between the CCA with the basic boarding requirements. And an entry level ECE or CCAs who are actively pursuing their ECE certification.

So if your facility does not currently have an CCA and ECE training classification, it's something to consider, that you may wanna add this classification as it could encourage existing employees to pursue their ECE education.

How should a facility consider a CCA in the workplace ECE program on the way grid?

The ECE workplace program is an accelerated program that provides specialized training and credential needed to become an ECE 2. So workplace student could be placed on a CCA in ECE training position or wage level if the center has this level on their salary scale. As is the case with all positions and classifications as previously discussed decisions regarding the wages are at the board's discretion. So again, here you may pay higher wages that the budget allow, with considerations of factors attending the workplace program and years of experience.

24:40

Tanya Jakob

Why did the government not use the Manitoba Child Care Association's and CCA market competitive salary guidelines.

So the MCCA market, in the salary, government scale, provides a suggested wage scale that facilities can use if it works for their facility. So as mentioned earlier, further analysis right now is required to determine what is the most effective and equitable framework for wages so that work and looking at what the MCCA provides will go into the work that we're doing in terms of our consultation moving

forward and that more comprehensive framework that we're working towards. So the goal of the 23/24 wage grid is to ensure that all staff earn at least the starting point wage in each position and classification and our wage is a step towards that full comprehensive.

Is they're going to be an increase, the salaries supported by the inclusion support funding to support the ISP staffing grants will be based on the starting wage on the 23/24 or CCA with a 40 h course position classification, which will be \$17.04 cents on July 1, 2023.

For staff hired under this program, who earn less than the \$17.04, facilities are expected to submit a new ISP staffing grounds application to increase the wages to align with the 23/24 updated applications are required to meet financial and reporting requirements for the ISP program.

So again, here facilities may pay higher wages if their budget allows.

Is there going to be an increase to the salaries supported by the staff replacement grant? Here is per usual practice facilities should submit a staff replacement grant application before the fall term of the workplace, ECE Diploma program. Funding to support staff hired under the staff replacement route will be based on the 23/24 wage grid starting wage of \$17.04 cents for childcare assistant at the 40 h course, position and classification. Effective July 1, 2023 and again facilities they pay high their higher. Pass it back to Jennifer.

27:37

Jennifer Faulder

Thanks, Tanya. Financial reporting requirements, increased revenue from the operating grant and increased expenditures for staff wages must be demonstrated in your facilities next annual operating budget submission, and in your annual audited financial statements. These reports are required under the Canada-wide agreement and will ensure accountability of facilities receiving the increased funding, and will help to confirm that wage targets are being met.

As a condition of receiving operating grant funding within 5 months of a facility's fiscal year end, Centers are required to submit audited financial statements to confirm the use of public funds towards the intended purpose, including all operating costs and detailed wage information. Nursery schools are required to submit a complete set of financial statements prepared in accordance with the generally accepted accounting standards, but do not need to be audited or reviewed by an accountant as outlined in financial statements requirements for nursery schools.

As the employer, the board of directors is responsible for the development of the facility's salary scale for employees, from front line staff to directors.

So to implement the new wage grid, and again, this is included in the circular, but we'll go through it here, Boards of directors should review position descriptions, roles and responsibilities to account for and include positions not specified on the early learning and childcare wage grid such as administrative roles or the CCA in ECE training as we referenced earlier.

Boards should review and compare your current salary scale to the hourly wages listed in the wage grid. Both the starting point and the target. You should as the board review the increased wage grid

supplement being provided, to confirm the total increased amount of funding that will be provided and that is required to be applied to increasing wages in your facility.

Then adjust salary, salary scale accordingly. And adjust your budget to reflect the increased operating branch revenue as well as the increased cost for the increased staff wages. Boards will need to review and approve the revised salary scale and budget according to their facilities bylaws policies and procedures.

Provide payment to employees at your facilities, new salary levels effective July 1, 2023. And, we are hopeful that because we are communicating this much earlier this year than we were able to last year that by and large boards of directors will have the opportunity to complete these steps in advance of July 1.

However, if that is not possible, then the salaries still need to become effective July 1, so retroactive payments may need to be made. And again, that's because you will be receiving the increased wage grid supplement on July 1 and it is required that all of that wage grid supplement be provided to increase staff wages.

Some implementation resources operational guidance so you can find the circular and the FAQs that were circulated on our website. As a reminder, the Manitoba childcare association has board governance training that is available at no cost for boards and management of centers. So we encourage everyone to access that training if you have not already done so. The wage grid, the updated wage grid is available on our website. And there is an online toolkit for boards of directors and we have a link there. It is still just being updated with the new wage grid information, but it still has a lot of really helpful information that you can use in the meantime.

And now we will go to questions.

32:41

Carmen Zubin

We have a question about nursery school directors, and where nursery school directors would fall on the wage grid.

33:10

Jennifer Faulder

So the, the wage grid just provides positions and classifications based on whether an individual is a CCA or an ECE2 or an ECE 3, and then it provides the director or assistant director based on spaces. This wage grid is identical virtually to the wage grid that was released in July, 2022. And, so we have not, you know, made any specific mention of nursery directors as, you know, to differentiate from other types of directors. And again, I'll just emphasize that we recognize that the wage grid that we're providing is very basic and you know does not go into a lot of detail, it does not provide steps. It does not look at things

like you know length of service so this is to really just provide guidance to boards of directors in terms of looking at these types of positions and classifications.

And it establishes that again that expectation of what the minimum starting point wage should be for people in those levels. And then it's up to the boards of directors to establish a more comprehensive salary scale that meets the needs of your organization and that reflects the specific types of positions and classifications and looks at things like years of service and steps on a scale.

35:07

Carmen Zubin

Thank you. We have a question. That I think you may have already, but I do just want to mention for participants listening that the family child care specific presentation will be tomorrow. Today's presentation is specific to centers, and for the directors and home providers that employ staff.

Okay, I'm not sure what we heard there or not. So, just to clarify that today's presentation is for family child care home providers that employ staff, Centers and Board of Directors and the presentation tomorrow will be for family child care homes specifically.

Okay, so we'll get on to the next question from Chantelle. If everyone at our center is at the target wage is the supplement to increase the wages even more at this time or can it be kept for future increases?

36:50

Jennifer Faulder

So the supplement is required to be used to increase wages and again we are not setting any maximum. And so the, you know, board of directors should look at the total additional revenue that's being provided and develop an increase to staff wages that will enable that to be put towards that expense.

37:10

Carmen Zubin

Thank you. And next from Genevieve. Board members may be hesitant to implement wages without some form of guarantee that the staffing grant to offset these salaries will continue into the future. What sort of assurances can you provide to board members?

37:40

Jennifer Faulder

Well, I mean, we are, you know, they both the provincial minister and the federal minister made this announcement and this commitment to providing this supplement and it is required to be spent on increasing wages at all facilities. And you know it is the intention to continue to provide this going

forward. You know, there is never an iron clad guarantee. And we don't have a crystal ball to see into the future, however. You know at this point I can say that the commitment is to continue with this and that we are providing the funding on July 1 and it is a requirement that it be provided as an increase to staff wages.

38:25

Carmen Zubin

Thank you. Next from Sophia. If someone who has not yet done the 40 h course but is willing to do it, if they hire that person, what would the wage rate be until the course is done?

38:39

Jennifer Faulder

So that's up to, the facility to decide. So what we are saying with the wage grid is that our expectation is that once a CCA has completed the 40 h course that they should be paid no less than \$17.04 cents starting on July 1. And, so, obviously the minimum wage is the minimum that anyone can choose to pay. In terms of wages, you can certainly pay higher than that if that works within the facility operating budget.

39:14

Carmen Zubin

Thank you. We have 2 similar questions from David and Dana. How much of the increased operating grant has to go towards wage increases?

Can it also go into increased source deductions? That. Our as a result of increased wages. So that would be mandatory. Employee related costs.

39:34

Jennifer Faulder

Okay. The wage grade supplement. Does need to go to increasing wages. And it can also be used to cover those additional costs that are tied to increasing.

Wages, with the exception of pension costs.

40:10

Carmen Zubin

Thank you. Okay, and we have similar questions from Megan and Jennifer in regards to private or for-profit childcare centers. Does the wage grid, includes the salaries for non-profit centers or does it include for profit?

00:40:27

Jennifer Faulder

The wage grid, operating, sorry, the wait grid supplement is only provided to funded facilities and therefore the wage grid only applies to funded facilities.

40:49

Carmen Zubin

Thank you. So question from Tanya in regards to children with additional support. So Tanya indicates that Children with additional support often need considerations are often best supported by those in the field with the most training. Why not have this reflected in the wage grid to encourage those ECE two's and threes.

41:14

Jennifer Faulder

So again, we recognize that there's lots of shortcomings to the, wage grid as it is and that, It really is a fairly basic level of guidance around the starting point wages that should be provided to certain classifications. Each facility, you know, is responsible for establishing the actual wages and having a salary scale and can look at various incentives to recruit people with specific expertise.

And this is why we are wanting to move forward with hiring a consultant. To do a deeper dive into the, you know, complexities of our system and to do consultations with the field to really get a better understanding of what a more comprehensive framework for wages in the early learning and childcare sector in Manitoba should be.

42:28

Carmen Zubin

Thank you. A question from Lindsey in regards to utilization. So Lindsey is asking, for example, if a center is licensed for 12 preschool children, but only 10 children are enrolled. Will the center still receive the full allotment of this operating grant, or will it be less these 2 unfilled spots?

42:45

Jennifer Faulder

So the, the wage grid supplement is calculated based on the unit funding model so it's based on the number of funded spaces and the revenue generated per space. And at this time the, utilization requirements, that have previously been in place for operating grant funding. Those utilization requirements have been temporarily suspended and so at this time, the wage grade supplement is again based on the unit funding model and the revenue generated per space based on the funded spaces at the center.

43:39

Carmen Zubin

Thank you. Karen is asking for the implementation resources page to put be put up again. I don't know if we can go back to that one, but it, Karen, this will be posted online on the website shortly. Back to that one, but it Okay. Sure. Hey, next question is from Dana. Sorry, Donna. Can the operating, to increase vacation and or sick benefits?

44:07

Jennifer Faulder

No, the, wage grant supplement has to be used to increase wages. Again, so this is one of the, questions in the FAQ that was distributed with the circular and is posted on the website. So you can see in question number 22 in the FAQ. And so the funding has to be used for increasing wages and it can be used to support other salary related costs as well that are increasing due to increasing the wages.

So that would be things like employment insurance, Canada pension plan and workers compensation.

44:56

Carmen Zubin

Thank you. Okay, I'm going to pass the mic over to Carla, right away. She will answer a question, information not including. Group family childcare providers today. The grants available. From Sharon in regards to. Information. Okay, their the grounds available. So I'll pass that over to Carla.

45:22

Carla Kernested

Good evening. I'm Carla Kernested, senior policy analyst. So the question is around that I gave Grant notes and I think you're referring to the financial reporting. Or are we are we referring to the actual grant supplements? With family child care, operating grants, they are all, all submitted and received

after April 1. So for them, you will just receive your regular quarterly payment, July 1, it will be readjusted to the new rates. And in terms of the financial reporting piece, both centers, nursery schools are required to submit financial statements and that's not a requirement of family or group child care homes. Thank you.

46:26

Carmen Zubin

Thank you, Carla. We have a question from Sandra. Would substitute child care assistants be paid the same as regular staff that are CCAs.

46:34

Jennifer Faulder

So the wage grid provides guidance about what the starting point wage should be for any, position or classification, within your facility and it is guidance that is provided and boards need to make a decision about what the salaries scale will be but the expectation is that people should be paid at minimum the starting point wages on the wage.

47:14

Carmen Zubin

Thank you. This question is directed towards Tanya. Tanya, Chantelle is asking when the transcripts will be available online.

47:30

Tanya Jakob

Yeah, the transcripts usually just take a couple of days to complete and then as soon as they're posted as we mentioned both the webinar as well as the PowerPoint and transcripts will be posted live so everybody will be receiving an email once those gets posted.

47:49

Carmen Zubin

Hey, thank you. That is all we have for questions for this evening. So I'll turn it over to Jennifer for closing remarks.

48:01

Jennifer Faulder

Okay, thank you and thanks everyone for taking time out of your evening this evening to join us and, go through, this important information. We are capturing the chat and certainly if we did miss one of your questions. We will be reviewing everything and we'll do our best to update materials and ensure that we're getting you the answers that you need.

And again, if, if you don't get answers to the questions that you need, feel free to reach out to the CDInfo@gov.mb.ca address. Feel free to reach out to this email inbox and we will, do our best to answer. So thank you again and have a good night.