

## Temporary wage increase for direct support workers

**Host:** Val Baravi, DSO Communications Specialist

**Guest:** Domenic Pisante, PassportONE Trainer for Family Service Toronto.

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**Val:** Hello and welcome to Developmental Services Ontario's webcast. Today we're going to talk about the Temporary Wage Increase for Direct Support Workers and How It Will Impact Passport Recipients. I'm Val Baravi, Communications Specialist for DSO, and I'll be your host this evening.

Before we begin, let's go over a few housekeeping items.

We will be having a Q&A at the end of the webcast, so feel free to type any comments or questions into the chat box at any time. We will try to answer all of your questions at the end.

Below the chat box are two tabs. The Resources Tab lists other resources and links you may find helpful. There is also a Feedback Tab that links to a very short evaluation. We'd love your feedback on tonight's webcast so please click on the link and fill out the form and voice your opinions.

If you experience any technical issues during the webcast, try to quit and relaunch your browser; this seems to solve most issues. If that doesn't work, there is a Tech Help Tab you can click on for more tips

Now, we're ready to begin! In the studio with me today is Domenic Pisante, who is the PassportONE Trainer for Family Service Toronto. Welcome and thank you for joining us, Domenic.

**Domenic:** Thank you.

**Val:** Domenic, tell us about this temporary wage increase for direct support workers.

**Domenic:** Sure, Val. On October 1, 2020, the Government of Ontario announced a temporary wage increase for personal support workers and direct support workers in home and community care, long-term care, and social services. The wage increase is in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. For the purposes of the folks on this Webcast tonight who are Passport Funding recipients, this means that they can pay their Support Workers an additional \$3 per hour.

**Val:** So what does this mean for Passport Funding recipients?

**Domenic:** Passport Funding recipients can submit invoices for the wage enhancement by using their purchase of service Invoice form starting January 18, 2021. Because the wage increase went into effect on October 1<sup>st</sup> of 2020, recipients can also submit claims for the wage enhancement retroactively.

**Val:** Will there be an increase to the Passport Funding recipient's budget to cover the wage increase?

**Domenic:** No, the wage increase will not be provided through an increase to the Passport Funding receipts budget. For all claims submitted moving forward (and any claims submitted on or after January 18, 2021), \$3 for each hour worked will be processed from a separate funding source. The invoices that are eligible are the services labelled as Support Worker Hours - Service Type 1, 2, or 3.

**Val:** Can you give us a few examples of how the wage increase will be provided to the Passport Funding recipients?

**Domenic:** Absolutely. First example, let's say you submit a claim for the period of January 1 to January 31, 2021 at \$25 per hour for 30 hours worked. The total is \$750. You'd be reimbursed \$750 by PassportONE. But only \$22 an hour would be processed from your Passport Funding budget. The \$3 and hour wage increase is reimbursed from a separate funding source. So, on this \$750 claim, only \$660 would be subtracted from the your Passport budget and \$90 would be processed from the wage increase budget. If you already submitted Support Worker hour claims with a service period of October 1, 2020 to January 18, 2021, your budget would be automatically credited at a rate of \$3 per hour worked.

For example, if you submitted a claim with a service period of October 1 to 31, 2020 which was already processed by PassportONE and included support worker hours (Service Type 1, 2, and 3), your budget will be automatically updated. If the October 1 to 31, 2020 submission included 40 hours worked at \$25 per hour, \$3 per hour will be credited back to your budget. In this example, your remaining balance will increase by \$120 (\$3 per hour multiplied by 40 hours = \$120). The same calculation would be applied for all support worker hours that took place between October 1, 2020 and January 17, 2021.

**Val:** What if the recipient has already submitted a claim but not for the wage increase?

**Domenic:** That's a good question. So say you already submitted a claim for October 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020, a second claim can be submitted to claim the wage increase portion only. You can claim the Wage Enhancement portion only by submitting Page 1 and Page 2 of your Purchase of Service Invoice form to PassportONE. On Page 2 (Support Worker Hours and Mileage), you will add \$3 per hour multiplied by the number of hours you worked. If the October 2020 invoice was submitted for 30 hours, when submitting for the Wage Enhancement, Page 2 of the Purchase of Service Invoice form will show 30 hours X \$3 per hour (for a total of \$90). This money needs to be provided to the support worker who completed those hours.

**Val:** What if a recipient has not submitted a claim yet for the period of October 1st to January 17th?

**Domenic:** Sure, if you have not submitted Support Worker hour claims with a service period of

October 1, 2020 to January 17, 2020, \$3 per hour worked will be automatically processed as a wage enhancement and will not be subtracted from your Passport Funding budget. You can submit your Social Worker hours, as you would use Page 1 and 2 of your Purchase of Service Invoice form. For example, let's say you submitted a claim for October 1, 2020 to October 31, 2020, which includes 40 hours worked at \$25 per hour for a total of \$1000, you will be reimbursed the full amount of \$1000, however, only \$880 will be subtracted from your Passport Funding budget. The additional \$120 will be processed from the separate Wage Enhancement funding source. **You will receive one payment of \$1000.** For all future claims while the Wage Increase is available, \$3 per hour for all support worker hour claims will be automatically processed from the Wage Increase funding source and not from your Passport Funding budget. This also applies to all invoices with Service Type 1, 2 or 3, moving forward until March 31, 2021.

**Val:** What if I have already been paying my Support Worker an extra \$3 per hour since October 1, 2020?

**Domenic:** Your budget has been automatically updated as of January 18, 2021 and you can continue paying the Support Worker an additional \$3 per hour until March 31, 2021.

**Val:** How can I find out my remaining balance?

**Domenic:** You can confirm your current remaining balance, including all of the automatic credits, by contacting your local Passport agency.

**Val:** How long is the wage increase going to be in place for?

**Domenic:** The wage increase is effective from October 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021.

**Val:** When is the last day to submit my invoices for March 2021?

**Domenic:** Invoices must be submitted by March 22, 2021, even if the support worker works until March 31, 2021. I know this is different than other months and years where you were asked not to submit support worker hours before the service takes place. This is being asked because the folks who process the claims at PassportONE need to make sure that the invoices are processed on March 31, 2021 as that is the last day the increase is available.

**Val:** Which methods can be used to submit this?

**Domenic:** You can submit invoices through Email, Fax, Mail, eClaim, My Direct Plan... all of those methods are good.

**Val:** Thank you, Domenic. For complete information about the temporary wage increase for direct support workers, please visit the Ministry's page, which you can access by visiting [dsontario.ca](https://www.dsonario.ca). Once there, click on the **Passport program** section and then click on **Important information for Passport Recipients**. Thank you for watching!