

Please reference the NC Medicaid [Direct Care Worker One-Time Bonus and Wage Increase Initiative webpage](#) for resources.

The NC Current Operations Appropriations Act of 2021 directed Medicaid to provide one-time bonuses of up to \$2,000 to eligible direct care workers (DCWs) and support staff. NC Medicaid distributed the bonuses, consistent with requirements in the legislation, subject to process requirements outlined in SPECIAL BULLETINS COVID-19 [#212](#), [#218](#), [#224](#), [#229](#), [#233](#) and [#241](#). NC Medicaid also explained the process requirements through several statewide webinars and provided additional, ongoing support through the [DCW initiatives webpage](#).

DHB has received multiple requests for information from DCWs & support staff. This FAQ document provides those employees with DHB responses and any applicable next steps employees could take.

Direct Care Worker One-Time Bonus FAQs

Q1: Who is eligible for the one-time bonus?

A: Consistent with legislation, NC Medicaid directed providers through a number of communications (as listed on the [Direct Care Worker Initiatives Webpage](#)) to use the following definition to determine which of their direct care workers and support staff were eligible for the bonus:

NC Medicaid defines direct care worker and support staff as “non-licensed employees of an eligible provider under S.L. 2021-180 section 39.21 who by virtue of employment either interact directly with patients or clients or provide direct care support services at a licensed health care facility.” Support staff are defined as “individuals who prepare and serve food, medication aides, staff who provide housekeeping or maintenance and individuals who provide social and recreational support.”

Providers were solely responsible for identifying and submitting eligible DCWs and support staff to NC Medicaid through the Eligibility Portal. The portal contained the means required by legislation to report all eligible positional descriptions and the number of workers who met those descriptions. NC Medicaid made final bonus payments to eligible providers for the eligible DCWs they submitted. Please contact your employer for more information.

Q2: Was I reported as an eligible worker?

A: Providers were solely responsible for identifying and reporting eligible DCWs and support staff to NC Medicaid and have all the information regarding which positional descriptions were reported and confirmed as eligible. Please contact your employer for this information.

Q3: I used to work for x employer, and I believe I am eligible. Will I receive a bonus?

A: Providers were instructed to submit requests for *only eligible employees*; since *only current employees* who met the date and hours of service criteria specified in the legislation were eligible for the bonuses, providers were not expected to submit bonus requests on behalf of former employees. Please contact your employer for more information.

Q4: Did my employer receive bonus funding?

A: As of May 4, 2022, NC Medicaid has distributed funds to 2,503 providers for payment of bonuses to 62,113 direct care workers and support staff. Distribution of bonus payments to providers began in early March, and NC Medicaid continues to work with providers to reconcile a small number of submissions that were submitted on time but have not yet been validated. Providers are aware of the status of their submissions. Please contact your employer for more information.

Q5: When will I receive my one-time bonus?

A: Employees who believe they are eligible for the one-time bonus should speak with their employer regarding bonus payment eligibility and payment details.

Q6: Who can I talk to if my employer is unable to assist me?

A: NC Medicaid's role does not include mediating or arbitrating disputes between providers and direct care workers or support staff. Employees should use their best judgment about consulting with legal counsel and following their employer's grievance process.

Additional Information Regarding the One-Time Bonus:

- [SPECIAL BULLETIN COVID-19 #246: Direct Care Worker One-Time Bonus Reminders & Expectations](#)
- [Direct Care Worker Initiatives Webpage](#) - Includes all provider communications released by NC Medicaid regarding the one-time bonus

HCBS and ICF/IID Rate Increases:

- The legislated rate increases were intended to assist providers in working **toward** raising employee hourly wages to \$15 per hour but did not guarantee any DCW a particular minimum hourly wage. All provider communications regarding the HCBS and ICF-IID rate increases can be found on the [Direct Care Worker Initiatives Webpage](#).