

Please reference the NC Medicaid [Direct Care Worker One-Time Bonus and Wage Increase Initiative webpage](#) for resources and materials including provider bulletins, FAQs, links and webinar materials to support providers in the submission process.

NC Medicaid appreciates the attention providers have given to the HCBS direct care worker initiatives. Providers should consider this document as NC Medicaid's second batch of formal responses to provider frequently asked questions (FAQs) regarding the one-time bonus. NC Medicaid is continuing to address FAQs and will update this sheet with new FAQs and responses as frequently as necessary.

Providers should use the [DCW Provider NPI Primary Location Code List](#) on the [NC Medicaid website](#) to lookup their NPI and location coded for portal registration. Registration FAQs are Topic 4 below.

Submitting new FAQs: NC Medicaid requests that providers review the published FAQ responses prior to submitting any new inquiries. For the most timely response, providers should submit all new inquiries to Medicaid.DCW.HelpDesk@dhhs.nc.gov with the following direct care worker initiative identification tags in the **subject line** of their email:

- For Bonus: [DCWBONUS]
- For ICF-IID Wage Increase: [DCWICFIID]
- For HCBS Wage Increase: [DCWHCBS]
- For portal registration: [DCWPORTAL]

Direct Care Worker One-Time Bonus FAQs:

Topic 1: Provider Eligibility:

Q1: Does the one-time bonus process change for providers who were purchased by another corporate entity within the last three months?

A: There are no process changes. Providers who transfer ownership that retain their NPI, or providers that have changed NPI will remain potentially eligible. NC Medicaid will review these providers on a case-by-case basis.

Q2: Does the one-time bonus apply to employer of record? Example: under agency of choice, parents typically cannot provide services. This has been waived due to COVID-19. Are these parents eligible for the bonus?

A: No, parents are not considered an eligible provider per legislation. To be eligible, the direct care worker must have been employed by an NC Medicaid or NC Health Choice-enrolled provider.

Q3: Are Facilities which are no longer open or in business eligible for the DCW one-time bonus?

A: No

Q4: Has the deadline for providers to submit eligibility forms been extended?

A: Yes. Providers now have until Feb. 11, 2022, to submit final eligibility determinations. Providers who submit determinations on the initial Jan 31, 2022, deadline will have bonus payments generated March 1, 2022. Providers who submit determinations by the new extension deadline Feb. 11, 2022, should expect a bonus payout date of March 31, 2022.

Q5: What if my Provider NPI is not on the NPI and location code lookup list?

A: Providers who believe themselves to be eligible and do not see their NPIs included on the NPI/location code look-up PDF should email the Medicaid.DCW.HelpDesk@dhhs.nc.gov with their NPI and the subject line [PORTAL]. Please be patient as the help desk is addressing a high volume of inquiries

Topic 2: Direct Care Worker & Support Staff Eligibility:

Q6: Is an employee eligible if they worked 1,000 hours from March 10, 2020 to July 31, 2021, but quit and was not employed by the provider on Aug. 1, 2021?

A: Employee is not eligible. Employees must have worked for the same employer(s) since March 10, 2020, through August 1, 2021, and meet the 1000-hour requirement.

Q7: Is an employee eligible if they worked 900 hours for employer A from March 10, 2020 to Aug. 1, 2021, and 100 hours for Employer B during the same period?

A: Employee is not eligible. Employees must have worked for the same employer(s) since March 10, 2020, through August 1, 2021, and meet the 1000-hour requirement.

Clarifications:

- Employees who work for multiple NPIs under the **same** eligible employer/entity are eligible and submitted under only one NPI
- Employees who meet the 1,000-hour requirement for multiple NPIs under the **same** eligible employer/entity are eligible and should be submitted under only one NPI
- Employees who work for the **same** provider NPI at multiple locations are eligible and should be submitted under only one NPI location
- Employees who meet the 1,000-hour requirement across multiple locations for the **same** NPI are eligible and should be submitted under only one NPI location

Q8: Is an employee eligible if they began work after March 10, 2020, but managed to work 1,000 hours before August 1, 2021?

A: Employee is not eligible. Employees must have worked for the same employer(s) since March 10, 2020, through Aug. 1, 2021, and meet the 1000-hour requirement.

Q9: What if a direct care worker worked 1,000 hours but split between different payer sources like VA/Private Pay?

A: Direct care worker eligibility is not determined by beneficiary pay type, therefore, if the employee met other eligibility requirements, they would be eligible.

Q10: Is the March 10, 2020, through Aug. 1, 2021, time-period a payroll period or service date period?

A: It does not matter; the legislative verbiage, "since March 10, 2021, through August 1, 2021" is the employment eligibility period.

Q11: Should providers report employees who are eligible for the one-time bonus, but no longer work at the same facility?

A: Employers are not obligated to report or locate employees who meet the eligibility requirements but are no longer employed by the organization (provider). If the employer does report an employee and cannot locate the direct care worker or support staff to distribute the bonus, the remaining funds go to the escheat fund.

Q12: What happens when an employee is eligible for two different providers, but is only currently employed by one of the providers?

A: Employers are not obligated to report or locate employees who meet the eligibility requirements but are no longer employed by the organization (provider). If the employer does report an employee and cannot locate the Direct Care Worker or support staff to distribute the bonus, the remaining funds go to the escheat fund.

Q13: I have a worker who has never missed a day, but they have not worked the 1000-hour requirement. They deserve a bonus as well. Is there any way this is possible?

A: Employee is not eligible. Employees must have worked for the same employer (s) since March 10, 2020, through August 1, 2021, and meet the 1000-hour requirement.

Q14: What are reasons a that direct care worker or support staff member would not be qualified for the bonus if they worked for the same employer (s) since March 10, 2020, through August 1, 2021, and meet the 1000-hour requirement?

A: If an employee worked for the same employer (s) since March 10, 2020, through August 1, 2021, meet the 1000-hour requirement, and are included in the NC Medicaid definition of direct care worker and support staff, they are eligible.

Q15: Is an employee eligible if they are a licensed worker occupying an unlicensed direct care worker role?

A: It is at the provider's discretion to employ and report licensed workers who occupy the eligible unlicensed positions/roles for the one-time bonus. All employees reported must meet the legislative eligibility requirements.

Q16: Are Research-Based Treatment for Autism-Based Spectrum Disorder technicians eligible for the one-time bonus?

A: Yes

Clarification: Providers can submit services which are not listed in the eligibility portal under the “Other (Pending Medicaid Review)” option. The following Behavioral Health services are also eligible for the one-time bonus:

- Mental Health Day Treatment
- FBCs
- ACTT
- PSR
- Intensive In-Home

Q17: Are PACE direct care workers, Adult Care Home, combination facility, and Hospice direct care workers eligible for the bonus?

A: Yes, if they meet the NC Medicaid definition and the legislation requirements.

Topic 3: Appeals Process:

Q18: Does the one-time bonus appeals process still apply to the initiative?

A: No, it does not. However, to ensure that all eligible direct care workers and support staff participate in the one-time bonus, NC Medicaid encourages participating providers to provide all direct care workers and support staff an avenue to discuss determination of eligibility or ineligibility.

Topic 4: Bonus Distribution:

Q19: The bulletin states up to \$2,000 bonus per worker. Is the employer responsible for the payroll taxes associated with the bonus, or does this come out of the amount prior to issuing a net bonus amount to the worker?

A: NC Medicaid will pay FICA (7.65%) in addition to the pre-determined bonus amount to the employer for each eligible employee to account for associated payroll costs. Providers can only use 7.65% of funds received to account for associated payroll costs.

Q20: Can the bonus be paid to an estate for eligible workers who have passed?

A: Estates and/or families of eligible employees who have perished can claim the funds.

Topic 4: Direct Care Worker Eligibility Portal:

Q21: Registration Clarification: The [DCW NPI Primary Location Code look-up PDF](#) has been updated to include the primary location code for each provider. Providers should use the NPI and location combinations on this form for portal registration codes. If multiple locations are assigned to an NPI, they will appear for selection on the One-Time bonus eligibility form.

- Providers submitting for multiple NPIs eligible for the one-time bonus have the following registration options:
 1. Identify one authorized user for each NPI. These individual users will register using the NPI and location code look-up file to complete the one-time bonus submission form.
 2. One authorized user may submit for all NPIs if that user registers for each NPI using separate business email addresses.
- Providers submitting for a single service location under one NPI, or for multiple service locations under one NPI should continue to register using the NPI and location code combinations found in the [DCW Provider Eligibility List](#); example: 123456789-001.

The current [DCW Provider NPI and Location Code List](#) will remain available for Provider inquiry into which locations are eligible under each NPI.

Q22: How do authorized users access the portal?

A: [DCW Eligibility Portal with registration link](#). Registration button is at the top right of the page.

Q23: What should authorized users do if they cannot register with the NPI and location code found on the [NC Medicaid website](#)?

A: Email Medicaid.DCW.HelpDesk@dhhs.nc.gov with the subject line [PORTAL].

Q24: What should authorized users do if they haven't received a portal username and password after registering?

A: If the authorized user cannot register using the correct NPI and location code combination, or a username and password did not appear in their inbox or spam/junk folders after registration, please email Medicaid.DCW.HelpDesk@dhhs.nc.gov and include the subject line header [PORTAL].

Q25: Do providers register for the DCW initiative using the CARES Act reporting and reimbursement portal; is this related to CARES ACT funding?

A: No. The Direct Care Worker and support staff portal is *not* to be confused with the [CARES Act Testing and Financial Reimbursement portal](#) used for COVID-19 SNF Testing inquiries or information.