

Signing Bonus Policy

Revision Date: September 2015

Program Description:

A signing bonus is a bonus intended to improve recruitment by providing potential employees with a financial incentive to join an organization. Signing bonuses are available for selected health occupations, targeting difficult-to-fill positions, and tiered to address geographic considerations.

Please contact RHAs to determine the availability of signing bonuses.

Scope:

Signing bonuses are available for selected health occupations, targeting difficult-to-fill positions. A position is considered difficult-to-fill if it has been vacant and under active recruitment for more than two months with no suitable candidate identified. When such a position is identified, the employer may submit an application to the Health Workforce Planning Division, requesting that a signing bonus be attached to a particular difficult-to-fill position.

A list of health occupations that may have positions deemed difficult-to-fill and, therefore, eligible to receive a signing bonus is listed below:

Provincial:	Eastern Health, Central Health and Western Health Only:
Audiologist	Electroneurophysiology Technologist (EEG)
Combined LX Technologist	Nuclear Medicine Technologist
Dietitian (Clinical)	Orthopedic Technologist
Licensed Practical Nurse	
Medical Laboratory Technologist	
Medical Radiation Technologist	Eastern Health Only:
Nurse Practitioner	Orthopists
Occupational Therapist	Prosthetist/Orthotist Clinician
Personal Care Attendant	Medical Physicist
Pharmacist	Radiation Therapist
Psychologist (Clinical)	Dosimetrists
Physiotherapist	Cardiovascular Perfusionists
Recreation Development Specialist	Medical Flight Specialist (Happy Valley-Goose Bay)
Registered Nurse	
Social Worker	
Speech Language Pathologist	

Amounts and Conditions:

1. Signing bonus amounts are tiered to address geographic considerations as follows:

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Category	Difficult-to-fill Position by Location	One Year Service Agreement	Two Year Service Agreement
A	Positions in communities on Trans Canada Highway	\$3,000	\$6,000
B	Positions in communities not on Trans Canada Highway and excluding C and D	\$5,000	\$10,000
C	Positions in Labrador-Grenfell Health Authority excluding D	\$6,000	\$12,000
D	Positions on the coast of Labrador	\$8,000	\$16,000

2. A maximum of two signing bonuses may be provided to an individual with a required service obligation equaling two years (3,900 or 3,640 hours as applicable) with the signing bonus to be paid annually. Single-year signing bonuses are permitted with a service obligation of one year (1,950 or 1,820 hours as applicable).
3. RHAs cannot increase the amount of the signing bonus.
4. A one-year signing bonus will be paid at the start of employment.
5. A two-year signing bonus will be divided into one payment per year for two years and will be paid at the start of employment and on the one year anniversary of the recipients start date (after completion of 1,950 or 1,820 hours).
6. A signed service agreement is required for each individual receiving a signing bonus. Service agreements signed with a RHA are legally binding contracts.
7. Signing bonus service agreements must not take more than two years to complete.
8. Positions can be permanent full-time, temporary full-time, permanent part-time or temporary part-time depending on the approval. If a position is part-time, then the signing bonus amount will be prorated based on the hours per year. Casual positions are not eligible for a signing bonus.
9. Signing bonuses will not be provided to any individual holding a position in a health occupation currently deemed eligible for signing bonuses (section 2.9.3) with a RHA or any Government of NL Department, Agency, Board or Commission within the previous three months. The purpose of this provision is to stop any financial incentive to recipients by one body of government competing against another body of government for the same recipient.
10. To be eligible for a signing bonus, a position must be under active recruitment for a minimum of two months without a suitable candidate being identified, and evidence of significant recruitment activity must be provided by the RHA including copies of all recruitment materials.
11. Signing bonuses are subject to income taxation. The signing bonus will be recorded on the appropriate T4/T4A that is issued to each recipient for funds disbursed in each calendar year.

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12. Recipients of more than one incentive under the *Bursaries and Incentives Program* of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador with a service obligation to the same RHA to be employed in the same position will complete their service obligations concurrently.
13. Defaulted signing bonuses may be reoffered to another qualified recipient:
 - If less than one year of the service obligation is complete, the two-year or one-year signing bonus can be offered again to another recipient.
 - If more than one year of the service obligation is completed the second year of signing bonus can be offered to another recipient without seeking new approval or the RHA can apply to have a new two-year or one-year signing bonus approved with the two month wait time waived.
14. RHAs must inform the Department of Health and Community Services in writing once a default occurs.
15. When signing bonuses are re-offered, the RHA must inform the Department of Health and Community Services of the previously defaulted signing bonus.
16. Interest on the amount to be repaid by the recipient is calculated retroactively from the date the money was advanced to or on behalf of the Recipient, and will compound on the outstanding balance as of the end of the month. The interest rate is the Bank of Canada prime rate plus two percentage points.
17. The transfer of signing bonus service agreements from one position to another position within the RHA, and between RHAs, will be submitted by the RHA to the Health Workforce Planning Division to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Regional Health Authority Responsibilities:

The RHAs responsibilities include the following:

1. Requesting approval from the Health Workforce Planning Division for a signing bonus to support recruitment of a difficult-to-fill position, which includes providing a completed Request for Signing Bonus Approval and Evidence Form (Form 7.0) and other supporting documentation, as necessary, to the Health Workforce Planning Division.
2. If approved for a signing bonus, the job advertisement for that specific position may include the following statement only. The amount of the signing bonus **will not** be stated in the job advertisement:

“A signing bonus is available for this position. Please contact the Human Resources Department for more information.”
3. Recruiting an incumbent for the position.
4. Establishing a written service agreement with the recipients of signing bonuses.

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5. Submitting documentation to the Health Workforce Planning Division when the signing bonus has been awarded to a successful incumbent, which includes a Request for Signing Bonus Award (Form 7.1), a service agreement (Template 7.0), and proof of payment.
6. Preparing signing bonus cheques for recipients with appropriate deductions.
7. Requesting reimbursement of funds from the Health Workforce Planning Division with supporting documentation on a quarterly basis.
8. Tracking the fulfillment of service agreements for signing bonus recipients.
9. Notifying the Health Workforce Planning Division once a recipient has defaulted.
10. Enforcing collection of defaulted amounts for recipients as per the *Bursaries and Incentives Program Collection Policy – RHA Receivables*.
11. Notifying the Health Workforce Planning Division of collected amounts of defaulted signing bonuses on a quarterly basis.
12. Preparing the appropriate T4/T4A for signing bonus recipients annually.

Recipient Responsibilities:

The recipient's responsibilities include the following:

1. Reviewing and complying with the terms and conditions of the incentive and service agreement.
2. Notifying the RHA in writing if he/she is unable to fulfill the service agreement at least three (3) months prior to the termination date of the service agreement and arrange for repayment of the defaulted signing bonus amount in accordance with the service agreement and the *Bursaries and Incentives Program Collection Policy – RHA Receivables*.
3. Notifying the RHA of any change in contact information such as name, permanent or temporary address, and phone number provided at the time of signing the service agreement.

Procedure:

1. The RHA submits a Request for Signing Bonus Approval and Evidence Form (Form 7.0) to the Director of Health Workforce Planning for approval.
2. The Director of Health Workforce Planning will facilitate the approval process within the Department of Health and Community Services. All signing bonuses require approval and signature from the Minister of Health and Community Services. The Minister's signature will be obtained once the RHA has provided the completed the Request for Signing Bonus Approval and Evidence Form, and submitted to the Director of Health Workforce Planning.
3. If approved by the Minister or Deputy Minister, the Director of Health Workforce Planning will send a letter to the RHA informing them of the approval.

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4. Recipients contact an RHA to determine if a signing bonus is available for a position, or the RHA recruits an incumbent for the signing bonus.
5. The RHA facilitates the signing of a service agreement (Template 7.0) with the incumbent and issues the signing bonus cheque.
6. The RHA submits a Request for Signing Bonus Award (Form 7.2), service agreement (Template 7.0), and proof of payment to the Health Workforce Planning Division for reimbursement. The Health Workforce Planning Division will reimburse the RHA on a quarterly basis.