

Additional Health and Safety Excellence program benefits for smaller businesses

Introduction

The WSIB is providing additional benefits to smaller businesses (1-99 employees) through the Health and Safety Excellence program to help support them with their post-pandemic recovery.

Starting May 5, 2022, eligible businesses will receive double the Health and Safety Excellence program rebates and \$1,000 towards their program provider fees until December 31, 2022.

Providers and WSIB staff can use the frequently asked questions to help support prospective and current members learn about the new benefits.

Please direct any additional questions to your [Program Management Consultant](#).

Frequently asked questions

What is changing for smaller businesses?

Starting May 5, 2022, eligible businesses will receive double the Health and Safety Excellence program rebates and \$1,000 off their program provider fees until December 31, 2022.

Rebates previously issued can also be doubled retroactively dating back to March 2020, if members have an approved action plan they are working on in 2022. Any business without an approved plan can work with their provider to create one.

Some validation requirements will also be simplified and businesses will not need to provide rationale for selecting topics.

Is there still a minimum and maximum rebate?

The minimum rebate per topic remains \$1,000. However, rebates can now be 100 per cent of the member's prior year's reported premiums. This change will remain in place beyond December 31, 2022.

Do topics on action plans approved in 2022 need to be completed in 2022 to receive the double rebate?

Yes, topics must be validated as complete in 2022 for a member to receive double the rebates.

How can providers confirm a member's full-time employee numbers?

Providers can verify a member's full time employee numbers (size band) by reviewing the

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businesses table in the digital tool under the Admin tab and filtering for their size band.

Any member with micro, small or medium size bands is eligible. For additional support, reach out to your [Program Management Consultant](#).

Why are businesses with more than 99 employees not eligible for the additional financial support?

We know the pandemic has been particularly hard on smaller businesses and providing additional financial support will help with their post-pandemic recovery while creating safer workplaces.

Why is this additional support being launched now? Will members have time to implement topics before December 31, 2022?

The additional Health and Safety Excellence program benefits are being introduced now to assist smaller businesses with their post-pandemic recovery.

Additional member support is available to help businesses implement their topics, including a simple validation template and tailored validation requirements. We've also outlined [suggested topics](#) that members may wish to select to help them succeed in the program.

When will rebates for topics completed in 2022 be paid?

In most cases, rebates are paid annually to eligible members. A member may receive multiple rebates in a year in some circumstances. Members that earn rebates will receive their payment on the next quarterly payment cycle following the completion of their action plan.

When do topics need to be submitted for validation to receive a double rebate and when will rebates for topics submitted at the end of the year be paid?

All topics must be submitted for validation by December 2, 2022, with additional evidence submitted by December 16, 2022, to provide enough time for validation by December 31, 2022 to qualify for the double rebate. Rebates for topics validated before December 31, 2022 will be paid in January 2023.

Will this additional support be available in 2023?

The additional financial support for smaller businesses is only available until December 31, 2022. We will continue to evaluate the program to determine if additional financial support will be provided in future years.

I'm a program provider, and I need more help to support my increased membership. What should I do?

Reach out to your dedicated [Program Management Consultant](#) to discuss your options.

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We want a presentation on this, whom can we contact?

Please contact your [Program Management Consultant](#) to arrange a presentation.

\$1000 financial support payment for smaller businesses

Who is eligible for the \$1000 financial support payment?

Any program member with 1-99 employees with an approved 2022 action plan is eligible, except businesses participating in the WSIB's small business study. Members in the small business study are eligible for the retroactive [rebate increase](#).

Why are small business study participants ineligible for the \$1000 financial support?

The financial support is intended to offset the costs of provider fees and services through the Health and Safety Excellence program. Participants in the small business study receive program enrollment at no cost and additional free support valued at over \$3000.

Are members using the newly developed COR process eligible?

Yes, provided they meet all other eligibility criteria.

Does a member need to enroll with a specific program provider to receive the \$1000 financial support?

No, members are encouraged to select the program provider that best fits their needs.

Are there any provisions/restrictions on what a provider can offer for support under this initiative?

No, providers are encouraged to discuss how to best support smaller businesses through the existing process.

Are businesses required to select specific topics as part of their action plan to receive financial support?

No, but the following topics are recommended to help providers simplify new enrollments and focus on entry-level topics:

Leadership and commitment

1. Health and safety responsibilities
2. Health and safety communication
3. Health and safety participation
4. Injury, illness and reporting
5. Incident investigation and analysis
6. Control of hazards
7. Return to work roles and responsibilities
8. Return to work program requirements, forms and tools

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9. Accommodation and return to work plans
10. Networking and peer learning

Will the topic selection be reviewed at validation as selection rationale is not required?

No, the topic selection will not be reviewed at validation. Providers will ensure members select appropriate topics to address their health and safety gaps and business needs during action plan development.

Do members still need to identify under which category topics were selected?

No, however the categories may serve as a guideline in selecting topics.

Will the WSIB consider removing topic selection rationale requirements for all members?

Topic selection rationale requirements have been removed for smaller businesses (1-99 employees) until December 31, 2022, and we are currently assessing other opportunities to simplify this process for all members.

Will the WSIB recall the \$1,000 financial support if the member does not complete any topics on their action plan?

No. The financial support is intended to offset the costs of program provider services and fees. One of the program's many benefits is its flexibility, including the ability to defer topics or withdraw from the program. Providers are encouraged to ensure their members' success in completing the program.

Will members who enroll in the program with a scoped action plan be eligible for the financial support?

Yes, but it is unlikely a smaller business will require scoping as part of their action plan, given their operating scale.

Will the WSIB recall the \$1,000 from a member if they withdraw from the program before completing any topics?

No. Members can withdraw from the program at any time, however, if they withdraw before submitting any topics for validation they won't receive a rebate and their member badge will be removed from the digital tool.

How will the financial support be paid to members?

The financial support will be applied against any outstanding balance on a member's WSIB account. Members will receive a cheque if they have no outstanding balance on their account.

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When will the financial support be paid to members?

The WSIB will issue the \$1000 payment at the next quarterly payment cycle following the provider's approval of the member's action plan.

Retroactive rebate for eligible members and removal of the 75 per cent maximum rebate cap

Is the change to a 100 per cent maximum rebate retroactive?

Yes, the change is retroactive to March 2020.

Who is eligible for a retroactive rebate increase?

Any smaller business (1-99 employees) with a Health and Safety Excellence program action plan in 2022 who previously received a rebate capped at 75 per cent of their reported premiums will receive a top-up to the minimum rebate of \$1,000, or up to 100 per cent of reported premiums.

Will the double rebates be applied retroactively for previously completed topics?

Yes. First, we'll top up any member whose rebate was capped at 75 per cent of their total reported premiums to 100 per cent based on a minimum rebate of \$1,000 per topic. We'll then multiply the rebate by two, less any amounts previously paid.

See the chart below for examples.

Premiums	Number of previously completed topics	Has an approved action plan?	Previous rebate	New rebate amount
\$750	One	Yes	\$562.50	\$1,500 with \$937.50 payable 100% of annual premiums = \$750 Multiplied by two = \$1500 Less \$562.50 previously paid = \$937.50
\$1,000	Two	Yes	\$750	\$2,000, with \$1,250 payable 100% of reported premiums = \$1,000

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Premiums	Number of previously completed topics	Has an approved action plan?	Previous rebate	New rebate amount
				Multiplied by two =\$2,000 Less \$750 previously paid = \$1,250
\$7,500	Five	Yes	\$5,000	\$10,000 with \$5,000 payable \$1,000 minimum rebate x 5 topics =\$5,000 Multiplied by two =\$10,000 Less \$5,000 previously paid =\$5,000
\$7,000	Two	No	\$2,000	Not eligible for retroactive payment as they have not re-enrolled with an action plan

*It is assumed that businesses in the above examples have less than 20 per cent predictability ratings.

Is interest included in the retroactive rebate?

No.

When will eligible members receive their retroactive rebates?

We're reviewing all previous member rebates to determine eligibility for the retroactive increase and anticipate that all eligible members will receive their retroactive rebates by August 1, 2022.

If a member only completed one topic before 2022, will they receive an increased rebate? Yes, if they have since re-enrolled in the program with an approved action plan in 2022.

Topics must be completed by December 31, 2022.

Does this deadline include WSIB validation?

Yes.

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What happens if a member cannot complete any topics on their action plan before December 31, 2022?

There is no change to the existing process if a member cannot complete any topics on their action plan. They can defer and will not receive any rebates until all topics have final validation status and the action plan is closed. However, the double rebate is currently only available for action plans closed in 2022.

If a member scoped their action plan to less than 100 per cent of their business, are they eligible for the increased rebate?

No. The increased rebate is payable for fully implementing at least one topic. Businesses that scoped their action plan remain eligible for the typical rebate for scoped action plans outlined in the program guidelines.

Simplified program requirements for smaller businesses

What's new?

A simplified evidence story and supporting evidence template are available for smaller businesses. Members can choose to demonstrate topic completion by using the new template or continue to use the existing process. Members need to work with their providers to determine what process works for them.

Additionally, members no longer need to provide a rationale when selecting topics on their action plan.

We've provided a selection of [recommended topics](#) to help simplify the topic selection process and support providers in grouping members based on common topics. Members should continue to work with their providers to select appropriate topics.

Validation

How will the WSIB validate topics through this initiative?

Our validators will continue to apply a small business lens when validating topics. We'll also support members through the validation process to increase their chances of success.

We've developed a tip sheet and a validation template to simplify the validation process for members.

How quickly can a member submit a topic for the WSIB to validate?

Members can submit evidence when they have fully implemented a topic and are confident that it is living and breathing in their business. It is important not to rush the implementation

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of a topic to ensure that it has been fully embedded into the business's everyday work activities.

Has there been any change to the Additional Evidence Required (AER) process?

No. The 60-calendar day submission period will still be available if additional evidence is required. However, the provider, member, and WSIB validator should work together to ensure a complete initial submission and timely completion (E.g. our validators will be connecting with members to minimize AERs).

Any additional evidence will need to be submitted by December 16, 2022, to be eligible for the double rebate.

Has WSIB removed onsite validations as part of the initiative?

No, the onsite validation process has not been removed.

Exceptional circumstances

What happens if a member enrolls with an approved action plan but leaves the program without completing any topics?

Our goal is to retain members in the program, however, we understand that people may at some point wish to exit the program. Any member who meets eligibility requirements and has an approved action plan in 2022 would be entitled to the \$1,000 financial support towards provider fees and services.

What if a member's full-time employees vary throughout the year?

We'll look at the average number of employees a member has over the last three years to determine their eligibility. You can contact your [Program Management Consultant](#) if a member's full-time employees vary throughout the year.

What happens if a member experiences a work-related traumatic fatality?

A business experiencing an allowed traumatic fatality from the date their action plan was approved to the date the rebate is issued will be disqualified from earning a rebate. A business waiting on a decision regarding a workplace fatality is ineligible for any rebate compensation until a decision regarding the fatality is determined.

Rebates already issued to members, including the \$1,000 financial support for enrolling in the program, may also be reversed. We'll consider appropriate actions on a case-by-case basis. The WSIB reserves the right to remove, disqualify, reverse, or alter a member's rebate for any reason it deems necessary.

What if a member doesn't have or is rated with a 0 per cent predictability.

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Their rebate will be 1.4 per cent per completed topic of an annualized estimated premium amount, multiplied by two.