

Frequently Asked Questions: Step Wage Increase

Step Wage Increases

Homecare workers (HCWs), personal support workers (PSWs), and personal care attendants (PCAs) now receive a higher wage for every 2,000 hours worked. This is an exciting change that was negotiated during collective bargaining for 2023-2025. Instead of one base wage rate, providers are placed on a step that matches the number of hours worked by counting hours going back to January 1, 2023. Each step equals a different wage rate.

This starts on **June 30, 2024**, for HCWs and PCAs and **July 1, 2024**, for PSWs.

*HCWs and PCAs who qualify for an increase will see it when their check or direct deposit payment is received for the June 30-July 13 pay period (July 29, 2024, processing date). PSWs who qualify for an increase will see it reflected for services worked July 1 – July 15 (July 30, 2024, processing date).

What are the steps?

Appendix A of the [2023-2025 Collective Bargaining Agreement](#) has a table that shows the steps.

Step	Hours worked and accumulated since January 1, 2023	July 1, 2024 Hourly Rate	Jan. 1, 2025 Hourly Rate
1	0 and less than 2000	\$19.50	\$20.00
2	2000 and less than 4000	\$20.50	\$21.00

3	4000 and less than 6000	\$21.50	\$22.00
4	6000 and less than 8000	\$22.50	\$23.00
5	8000+	\$23.50	\$24.00

Do steps include differentials?

The table above shows the base wage rate for each step. In addition to the base wage, providers will receive differentials they’ve earned through the Oregon Home Care Commission. For example, the base wage rate for step 1 is \$19.50 per hour starting July 1, 2024. If a provider has the Professional Development Certification (PDC), their hourly wage rate is \$20.25 per hour.

What hours count toward steps?

Every 2,000 regular hours worked count toward each step increase. Overtime hours do not count. Historical time entries submitted after the look back period also do not count.

What is a look back period?

Wages are adjusted based on the number of regular hours worked going back to Jan. 1, 2023. We call this a look back period. The look back periods are:

- Jan.1, 2023 through June 30, 2024
- Jan. 1, 2023, through Dec. 31, 2024

The hours worked during each lookback period are added together to determine the step placement for July 2024 and January 2025. It’s important to know the last day of the look back period to make sure hours worked count. Remember, historical time entries made after the last day of the look back period will not be counted until the next look back period.

Where will an HCW or PCA see what step they are on and how many hours they've worked?

HCWs and PCAs will see this information on their remittance advices. This is the document they receive when they are paid that shows for whom they worked, how many hours they worked during the pay period, their hourly wage rate, how taxes were withheld, etc.

This is an example of the message HCWs and PCAs will see under the "Voucher Message Codes" section of the remittance advice:

944 – You are currently at Step 03 which became effective for service periods starting on or after June 30, 2024. Your hours paid as of the last lookback date were 4,032.04.

Where will a PSW see what step they are on and how many hours they've worked?

PSWs will see the information on the eXPRS desktop home page in a new section called "My Step." More information will be added to the eXPRS Help Menu in the near future.

This is an example of what a PSW will see:

Step	Base Rate	Rate Effective Date	Rate End Date	Hours Worked From	Hours Worked To	PSW Steps Calculation Date	Calculated Hours	Implemented Hours	Notes	Status
3	\$21.50	7/11/2024	12/31/9999	1/1/2023	6/30/2024	7/18/2024 11:15 AM PDT	109.748	4000	Legacy Step Integration	Accepted

- A) **Step:** The step from the PSW Pay Scale for the row, or the acronym "RCR" to indicate a Red Circle Rate for a Legacy PSW

- B) **Base Rate:** The rate associated with that row's step on the PSW Pay Scale.
- C) **Rate Effective Date:** The first day of the pay period that the rate is effective.
- D) **Rate End Date:** The last day of the pay period that the rate is effective.
- E) **Hours Worked From:** The first day of the lookback period used to determine the PSWs step.
- F) **Hours Worked To:** The last day of the lookback period used to determine the PSWs step.
- G) **PSW Steps Calculation Date:** The day and time that the lookback occurred, and the step was assigned.
- H) **Calculated Hours:** The total hours worked during the lookback period, rounded to the nearest thousandth.
- I) **Implemented Hours (Legacy PSWs Only):** When a Legacy PSW is assigned to a step, the minimum hours associated with the assigned step display in this field.
- J) **Notes:** Any notes associated with the rate. Common notes include:
- Legacy Step Integration: A note indicating that the step was assigned as the result of integrating a Legacy PSWs rate into the Step Scale.
 - Red Circle Rate: A note indicating that the Legacy PSW's current rate is higher than the PSW Step Scale, and no step was assigned.
- K) **Status:** A status showing either "Accepted" or "Voided" for the row.

What if someone works as more than one provider type (HCW, PSW, PCA)?

If a provider works across programs, they will receive the highest wage based on the regular hours worked going back to Jan. 1, 2023. For instance, if someone is an HCW and they worked 1,900 hours going back to Jan 1, but as a PSW, they worked 2,020, they would be placed on step 2. The hours are not added together.

How are legacy PSWs placed on a step?

Legacy PSWs will be placed on a step that matches or exceeds their current base rate. If their current base rate exceeds the highest step rate, they will keep their current base rate. This is called a "Red Circle Rate" or

RCR. If their current base rate matches a step on the pay scale eXPRS will put them on that step. If their current base rate is between steps, it will be rounded up to the next step.

At the time of the lookback, if their total hours are 2000 or more, they will be moved up one more step on the pay scale in Appendix A.

What happens when a provider has a lapse in their credential?

Providers whose credentials lapse and then re-enroll within 24 months will be placed on the same step they were on before their credential lapsed. A lapsed credential is not the same as when someone loses their provider number because of termination.

What does a provider do if they disagree with the step they've been assigned?

Providers who disagree with where they've been placed on the steps scale can reach out to the SEIU Member Assistance Center at 1-844-503-7348 to file a complaint or grievance.

Resources

Oregon Home Care Commission Customer Relations Unit

Phone: 1-877-624-6080

Email: OHCC.CustomerRelations@odhsoha.oregon.gov

Customer Relations Request Form:

<https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/providers-partners/homecare-workforce/Pages/default.aspx>

SEIU Member Assistance Center

Phone: 1-844-503-7348

Email: contact@seiu503.org