**NYS Health Care Worker Bonus (HWB) Program FAQs**

***Last Updated 10/17/2022 - Updates are highlighted***

**Education Sector Employers**

**Q. Does "Other Direct Care Staff" includes aides and assistants in schools?**

**A.** No. The Mental Hygiene titles listed in the statute at SOS § 367-w(2)(a)(ii) are taken from the title series in the Consolidated Fiscal Reporting and Claiming Manual (CFR), which includes additional descriptions of the referenced titles. The relevant description for titles under the CFR can be found here in [Appendix R](https://www.oms.nysed.gov/rsu/Manuals_Forms/Manuals/CFRManual/home.html).

**Q. Are employees in educational settings that serve in roles that align with titles under “All Other Health Care Support Workers" (like a front office building attendant or custodian) eligible?**

**A.** No. Such workers must support patient-facing care provided within a patient care unit of a hospital or nursing home in support of treating and caring for patients.

**Q. Titles used in educational settings are different from those used in traditional healthcare settings. If the title does not match exactly, is the worker ineligible?**

**A.** The titles listed in the statute describe the role the worker served. If the role served by the employee in an educational setting is consistent with the definition of the job title, the employee may be eligible assuming all other requirements are met.

The definition of each [BLS job title](https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/) is available on [O\*Net Online](https://www.onetonline.org/). See ***“Q. Is there a definition for each job title?”*** under section [Eligibility (Employees)](https://health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/providers/hwb_program/hwb_program_faq.htm#employee_eligibility).

Employers will be required to identify which eligible title the employee qualifies under when submitting the employee in the HWB Portal. Employers should document and retain information justifying their determination that the employee qualified under the specified title for purposes of audits, investigations, and reviews of employers submitting claims for the HWB Program.

**Q. Is there any guidance that compares school district job titles against those outlined in SOS Section 367-w(2)(a)(iii)?**

**A.** The intent of HWB Program is to provide for the payment of bonuses to recruit, retain, and reward health care and mental hygiene workers. Educational institutions were included as an eligible employer because some employ health care and mental hygiene workers that are patient-facing and provide clinical care. The titles in SOS §367-w(2)(a)(i)-(iii) should therefore either be consistent with eligible employees in educational institutions or very closely align with the definitions of those job titles.

**Q. Will there be any specific guidance/training for school districts?**

**A.** All program guidance included on this website is consistent for all eligible employer types.

**Q. If a district claims money, will there be a listing of which positions were approved so they will know who they can pay the funds out to?**

**A.** Yes, employers will receive remittance advice when they receive payment. See ***“Q. Will employers be notified when payments will be made out of SFS and eMedNY and will a remittance be provided?”*** under section [Payment Issuance](https://health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/providers/hwb_program/hwb_program_faq.htm#payment).

**Q. Can educational employers submit their eligible employees from vesting period 1 during submission period 2?**

**A.** Yes. See the prior FAQ regarding the administrative flexibility offered for the Vesting Period 1 and 2 submissions. This applies to all employers, including the education sector.

**Q. I am a qualified employer within the education sector, looking to submit claims for eligible employees. How do I register for the HWB Program Portal?**

**A.** School districts, charter schools, nonpublic schools, approved preschool programs for students with disabilities, BOCES, and private institutions of higher education, should register for the HWB Portal utilizing a Statewide Financial System (SFS) ID.

School districts, charter schools, nonpublic schools, approved preschool programs for students with disabilities and BOCES that do have an SFS ID should contact SED at ChiefFinancialOfficer@nysed.gov.

Private institutions of higher education that do have an SFS ID will receive information regarding enrollment soon.

**Q. I am a qualified employer within the education sector, what vesting period should I begin submitting employee claims?**

**A.** Education Sector employers may begin submitting claims in vesting period 2. The Department acknowledges some Providers may not be able to complete vesting period 2 claims by the close of the second vesting period (October 31, 2022). Where this is the case, they may submit for claims when vesting period 3 opens on April 1st, 2023.

**Q. I am a qualified employer submitting claims for a school district’s eligible salaried employees. Are 10-month employees considered continuously employed during a vesting period that overlaps with their 2-months off?**

**A.** Yes. For purposes of the HWB Program, qualified salaried employees of a school district will be considered continuously employed for 12 months regardless of how their salary is paid (over 10 months or over 12 months). Districts do not need to pro rate average hours worked for salaried employees.

**Q. Will the state be providing an updated qualified list for this program?**

**A.** No. The titles in SOS §367-w(2)(a)(i)-(iii) should therefore either be consistent with eligible employees in educational institutions or very closely align with the definitions of those job titles.

**Q. Is the word "patient" inter-changeable with "student"?**

**A.** No.

**Q. Do schools need to have a licensed medical facility to qualify?**

**A.** No. Per SOS §367-w(2)(c), the definition of employer also includes a public and non public school, a BOCES program, an approved preschool program for student with disabilities, and an institution of higher education.

**Q. Do we have to bill Medicaid directly to qualify?**

**A.** No. If you do not have an MMIS ID, meaning you are not enrolled in the NYS Medicaid system, you will need to verify that you have a Statewide Financial System (SFS) ID.

The agencies with providers who may not be in NYS Medicaid (eMedNY) system may include: Office of Mental Health, Office for People With Developmental Disabilities, Office of Children and Family Services, Office of Addiction Services and Supports and the New York State Education Department.

Once you have confirmed that you are actively enrolled or your SFS ID is active, you can prepare information for submission of reimbursement for eligible employees. More details, including a Technical User Guide, can be found within the [HWB Program Portal](http://www.nysworkerbonus.com/).

**Q. Is there a modified version of the attestation for a school district?**

**A.** No. The Employer and Employee attestation is consistent across all qualified employers.