

## CALIFORNIA BEGINS ISSUING \$1 BILLION IN PAYMENTS TO HEALTH CARE WORKERS

*More than 832,000 individuals who worked at qualifying hospitals and skilled nursing facilities will receive a payment*

**SACRAMENTO** — The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) today began issuing \$1 billion in one-time worker retention payments to eligible workers who worked part- or full-time at qualifying hospitals and skilled nursing facilities during the COVID-19 public health emergency. These payments were included in Senate Bill 184 (Chapter 47, Statutes of 2022) to help stabilize and retain the state’s health care workforce while continuing to manage the COVID-19 pandemic.

“These past several years of the COVID-19 pandemic have brought many challenges and strains to our health care delivery system, particularly to our health care workforce,” said **California Health & Human Services Agency Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly**. “The tireless efforts and unwavering dedication of these individuals have been nothing short of heroic, as they have put their own health and safety on the line to care for others. We are able to honor these hardworking individuals who have given their all during a critical time of need and uncertainty, showing us the true meaning of compassion, courage, and resilience.”

“These payments are for health care workers who have been at the frontlines delivering care to the most acute patients during the COVID-19 pandemic,” said **DHCS Director Michelle Baass**. “We owe them a debt of gratitude for caring for the sickest and most vulnerable among us during the worst public health emergency of our lifetime.”

**WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT:** The payments recognize the invaluable contributions of California’s health care workforce during the pandemic, and will help hospitals and skilled nursing facilities stabilize and retain these essential workers.

### **WHAT HEALTH CARE WORKERS ARE SAYING:**

- **Gabriel Montoya, an emergency room technician at Kaiser Permanente:** “My colleagues and I risked so much during the pandemic, including our personal health and the health and safety of our families. Unfortunately, many didn’t make it, and even more have left the health care profession altogether. Being recognized with this bonus payment makes me feel like our sacrifices have been seen and acknowledged,” Montoya said. “I’m going to use my bonus to help pay some bills that my family got behind on when my spouse was laid off during 2020.”

- **Stacey C., a nurse at UC Davis Medical Center:** “Working directly with patients during the COVID surges made the pandemic even more real, unsettling, and heartbreaking. One positive aspect at the height of the pandemic was the teamwork and camaraderie shared between nurses and doctors, therapists and housekeepers, and technicians and students. We risked our lives and the lives of our loved ones when little was known about COVID-19. This retention payment is recognition to those like me who work in health care, who unselfishly answered the call to serve others during the unprecedented pandemic.”

**BACKGROUND:** More than 832,000 individuals who worked at qualifying hospitals and skilled nursing facilities will receive a payment from DHCS:

- The \$1 billion is being paid out to 3,424 hospitals and skilled nursing facilities that applied on behalf of 788,000 eligible workers, including independent physicians and physicians part of a physician group.
- In addition, 205 Covered Services Employers, who provide onsite services, such as clerical, dietary, environmental, laundry, security, engineering, facilities management, administrative, and billing, will receive a total of \$46 million for disbursement to 44,000 eligible workers.

**PAYMENT DETAILS:** Eligible full-time, non-physician workers may receive up to a maximum state payment of \$1,500, part-time non-physician workers may receive up to a maximum state payment of \$1,250, and eligible physicians will receive \$1,000.

For more information about Hospital and Skilled Nursing Facility COVID-19 Worker Retention Payments, visit the DHCS [website](#) or email DHCS at [wrp@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:wrp@dhcs.ca.gov).

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