

Rockingham County COVID-19 Premium Pay Policy



Overview

This policy shall govern the issuance of premium pay (hereafter also referred to as bonus pay) to employees due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The following rules shall apply to all bonus pay issued under this policy.

- All bonuses are one-time payments.
- Employees must be actively employed in a permanent position with the County at the time of issuance.
- All employees must have been employed in a permanent position with the County for the period covered by the bonus.
- Eligible County employees are those either directly or indirectly under the supervision of the County Manager, the Sheriff, or the Register of Deeds.
- The County Manager is the final determining authority for any eligibility questions.

Records Retention - All financial records and supporting documents related to premium pay must be retained for a period of five years after all ARPA funds have been disbursed or returned to Treasury, whichever is later. At the adoption of this policy, it is anticipated that records will be retained through December 31, 2031.

EMS Additional Shift Bonus

Funding Source(s): American Rescue Plan (ARP) Funds

Date Approved by the Board of County Commissioners: September 20, 2021

To incentivize existing employees to take on additional unscheduled shifts due to a shortage in EMS staffing, the County will offer a temporary bonus in the amount of **\$141** per additional unscheduled shift worked to qualified EMS staff who voluntarily agree to work a shift deemed necessary for the basic operation of the EMS service. Basic operation of the EMS service is defined as staffing of Medics 1-9 and Medic 11. A shift will be for a minimum of four hours, and any additional hours worked less than this threshold will not qualify for the bonus. Qualified EMS staff include all permanent full-time EMS employees who possess the appropriate certifications to staff an ambulance and provide patient care. This bonus is authorized for up to 6 months; however, the County Manager may end this program early if he determines EMS to be adequately staffed.

COVID-19 Premium Pay

Funding Source(s): American Rescue Plan (ARP) Funds and County COVID-19 designated funds

Date Approved by the Board of County Commissioners: November 15, 2021

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many front-line Rockingham County employees placed their safety at risk to ensure critical County services such as COVID-19 testing, vaccinations, emergency medical treatment, and law enforcement were available to the citizens of Rockingham County. Additionally, with County offices never closing for all employees, staff that reported in-person each day bore an increased risk to maintain continuity of County government services when compared to those who worked from home. In recognition of these efforts, the County will provide premium pay in the form of a one-time bonus for eligible employees. While each tier of these bonuses has specific eligibility criteria, the following broad criteria shall cover all COVID-19 premium pay:

Overall Criteria

- Bonuses will be issued in December 2021 for departments that have submitted all required documentation.
- Employees must have worked at least 50 percent of regular time in-person during the eligibility period of July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021.

- Employees with annual earnings over \$75,000 during the eligibility period require additional written justification as set by the County Manager prior to consideration for a bonus.
- All employees in the front-line and highly impacted tiers must have experienced regular in-person interaction with patients, the public, or coworkers AND/OR regularly physically handled items that were handled by, or were to be handled by, patients, the public, or coworkers.
- Department heads and/or supervisors must attest to the level of bonus requested for each of their employees. Any attestation found to be false may lead to disciplinary action for the supervisor and/or employee.
- The County Manager is the final determining authority for all employee tier assignments and may grant exemptions from any criteria on a case-by-case basis due to extenuating circumstances.

Below are the premium pay bonus tiers and a description of each.

Front-Line Workers (\$1,200 one-time bonus)

Employees in this tier are those deemed to have been at the highest risk for exposure to COVID-19 due to the nature of their job. Employees in this tier have duties which include substantial face-to-face interaction with the public for extended periods, providing in-home services, and providing COVID-19 patient care and testing. These employees led the County’s COVID-19 response in the areas of treatment, administering vaccinations, testing, emergency medical services, and support of similar pandemic efforts. Eligible employees may include those working in the following positions: *(this list is for example purposes and does not include all eligible positions. Likewise, all employees in the following positions may not be eligible for this tier of bonus based on their duties)*

- Public Health Nurses
- EMTs and Paramedics
- Sheriff Deputies
- Detention Officers
- Foster Care and Child Welfare Social Services staff

Highly Impacted (\$800 one-time bonus)

Employees in this tier experienced a moderate risk of exposure to COVID-19 as a part of their duties and/or significantly contributed to the County’s COVID-19 response. These employee’s exposure and/or efforts may not have been as extensive as those in the front-line tier, but were significant and/or outside the scope of their normal duties. This may include the following:

- Employees who significantly assisted with the planning, organizing, setting up, cleaning, and supporting functions of the County’s vaccination clinics.
- Employees who had regular face-to-face interaction with the public but normally for shorter periods.
- Employees who significantly assisted with cleaning and sanitizing workspaces in a preventative manner, as well as after a possible exposure.
- Employees whose job duties were significantly altered to support the County’s COVID-19 response.

Low/Moderate Impact (\$500 one-time bonus)

This tier of bonus is to recognize that the County deemed all employees essential at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and that nearly all employees contributed in some way to the County’s response to COVID-19. Those eligible for this bonus meet all the overall bonus criteria described previously but not the specific criteria for the front-line or highly impacted tiers.