
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 6860

AN ACT EXTENDING CONNECTICUT PREMIUM PAY TO CERTAIN ESSENTIAL WORKERS.

SUMMARY

This bill expands eligibility for benefits from the Connecticut Premium Pay Program to include certain employees recommended for a COVID-19 vaccine in phase 1c by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices as of February 20, 2021. These include, among others, certain employees in the following workforce categories: transportation and logistics, food service, energy, shelter and housing, IT and communication, news media, public safety, public health, finance, and legal. The bill also extends the deadline for the program to stop paying benefits from June 30, 2024, to June 30, 2025.

As with other workers eligible for the program's benefits, these "1c applicants" under the bill must also be private sector employees who (1) worked during the entire period from March 10, 2020, through May 7, 2022; (2) were employed in a capacity where they did not and could not work from home; and (3) have an individual income less than \$150,000.

The bill allows the 1c applicants to apply for benefits by submitting a claim to the program's administrator by December 1, 2023, in a way the administrator sets. The claim must include (1) proof of employment as an eligible (presumably, 1c) applicant from March 10, 2020, to May 7, 2022, as determined by their proof of earnings, and (2) any additional information the administrator requires. The proof of employment may include official payroll records or other proof like a letter from an employer stating their dates of work or a declaration from someone with personal knowledge about the applicant's employment.

The bill makes a 1c applicant eligible for the same level of benefits

provided to the program's other eligible applicants. These benefits depend on an applicant's income range, as shown in the table below.

Table: Income Ranges and Premium Payments for Eligible Applicants

<i>Income Range</i>	<i>Payment</i>
Less than \$50,000	\$1,000
\$50,000 to < \$60,000	800
\$60,000 to < \$70,000	750
\$70,000 to < \$80,000	500
\$80,000 to < \$90,000	250
\$90,000 to < \$100,000	200
\$100,000 to < \$150,000	100

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2023

BACKGROUND

Premium Pay Program

PA 22-118 created the Connecticut Premium Pay Program to recognize and compensate certain private sector "essential workers" (i.e., those eligible for a vaccination in phase 1a or 1b of the CDC's COVID vaccination program) who worked in-person throughout the COVID-19 emergency. These eligible applicants had to apply for program benefits by October 1, 2022.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Labor and Public Employees Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 8 Nay 4 (03/21/2023)