



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 460

January Session, 2023

Substitute House Bill No. 6860

House of Representatives, April 5, 2023

The Committee on Labor and Public Employees reported through REP. SANCHEZ, E. of the 24th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT EXTENDING CONNECTICUT PREMIUM PAY TO CERTAIN ESSENTIAL WORKERS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsections (a) and (b) of section 31-901 of the general
2 statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
3 (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

4 (a) As used in this section:

5 (1) "Eligible applicant" means any person who (A) (i) worked during
6 the entire period of the public health and civil preparedness emergency
7 declared by the Governor on March 10, 2020, or any extension of such
8 declaration, up until May 7, 2022, and (ii) was in a category
9 recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's
10 Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, as of February 20,
11 2021, to receive a COVID-19 vaccination in phase 1a, [or] 1b or 1c of the
12 COVID-19 vaccination program, (B) is not a federal, state or municipal

13 employee, (C) was not employed in a capacity where the employee
14 worked or could have worked from home, and (D) meets the income
15 criteria established in subsection (b) of this section;

16 (2) "Administrator" means an employee of the office of the
17 Comptroller, or a third-party administrator;

18 (3) "Full-time" means any eligible applicant who worked thirty hours
19 or more per week;

20 (4) "Part-time" means any eligible applicant who worked less than
21 thirty hours per week; [and]

22 (5) "Premium pay" means moneys payable by the Comptroller from
23 the Connecticut Premium Pay program, established pursuant to
24 subsection (b) of this section, to recognize and compensate eligible
25 applicants for their service pursuant to this section; and

26 (6) "1c applicant" means any person who (A) (i) worked during the
27 entire period of the public health and civil preparedness emergency
28 declared by the Governor on March 10, 2020, or any extension of such
29 declaration, up until May 7, 2022, and (ii) was in a category
30 recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's
31 Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, as of February 20,
32 2021, to receive a COVID-19 vaccination in phase 1c of the COVID-19
33 program, (B) is not a federal, state or municipal employee, (C) was not
34 employed in a capacity where the employee worked or could have
35 worked from home, and (D) meets the income criteria established in
36 subsection (b) of this section.

37 (b) (1) There is established the Connecticut Premium Pay program.
38 The program shall provide payment to each full-time eligible applicant
39 that applied prior to or on October 1, 2022, according to the following
40 formula: (A) One thousand dollars to each worker whose individual
41 income was less than fifty thousand dollars; (B) eight hundred dollars
42 to each worker whose individual income was greater than or equal to
43 fifty thousand dollars and less than sixty thousand dollars; (C) seven

44 hundred fifty dollars to each worker whose individual income was
45 greater than or equal to sixty thousand dollars and less than seventy
46 thousand dollars; (D) five hundred dollars to each worker whose
47 individual income was greater than or equal to seventy thousand
48 dollars and less than eighty thousand dollars; (E) two hundred fifty
49 dollars to each worker whose individual income was greater than or
50 equal to eighty thousand dollars and less than ninety thousand dollars;
51 (F) two hundred dollars to each worker whose individual income was
52 greater than or equal to ninety thousand dollars and less than one
53 hundred thousand dollars; and (G) one hundred dollars to each worker
54 whose individual income was greater than or equal to one hundred
55 thousand dollars and less than one hundred and fifty thousand dollars.
56 No payment shall be made to any full-time eligible applicant whose
57 income is one hundred fifty thousand dollars or more. The program
58 shall provide two hundred dollars to each part-time eligible applicant.
59 No assistance shall be paid to any eligible applicant after June 30, [2024]
60 2025. The program shall be administered by the office of the
61 Comptroller, or a third party under contract with said office to act as an
62 administrator.

63 (2) The administrator shall accept applications for assistance on and
64 after May 7, 2022. For the purposes of this section, the administrator
65 shall be authorized to: (A) Determine whether an eligible applicant
66 meets the requirements for eligibility for compensation under this
67 section; (B) summon and examine under oath such witnesses who may
68 provide information relevant to the eligibility of an eligible applicant;
69 (C) direct the production of, and examine or cause to be produced or
70 examined, such books, records, vouchers, memoranda, documents,
71 letters, contracts or other papers in relation to any matter at issue as the
72 administrator may find proper; and (D) take or cause to be taken
73 affidavits or depositions within or without the state.

74 Sec. 2. Section 31-901 of the general statutes is amended by adding
75 subsection (l) as follows (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

76 (NEW) (l) On and after July 1, 2023, a 1c applicant shall be deemed an

77 eligible applicant and may apply for compensation from the
 78 Connecticut Premium Pay program by submitting a claim to the
 79 administrator, in such form and manner as required by the
 80 administrator, not later than December 1, 2023. Any such claim shall
 81 include: (1) Proof of employment as an eligible applicant from March
 82 10, 2020, to May 7, 2022, as determined by the 1c applicant's proof of
 83 earnings; and (2) any additional information as requested or required
 84 by the administrator. A 1c applicant may submit, as proof of
 85 employment, official payroll records or another form of proof,
 86 including, but not limited to, a letter from an employer stating the 1c
 87 applicant's dates of work, or a declaration from an individual with
 88 personal knowledge of the 1c applicant's employment. Each 1c
 89 applicant shall be eligible for payment in accordance with the formula
 90 established for payment to eligible applicants in subsection (b) of this
 91 section.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2023	31-901(a) and (b)
Sec. 2	July 1, 2023	31-901(l)

LAB *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 25 \$
Comptroller	GF - Cost	40,000,000

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill expands eligibility to approximately 216,000 private sector workers to apply for Connecticut Premium Pay. This extension is estimated to cost the state \$40 million in payment awards and administrative costs¹. The estimate is based on the number of essential workers in group 1C to receive the COVID-19 vaccine nationally, and the total CT population (3,600,000). The eligible applicants will receive the same level of payments as previously established in the program.

The Out Years

This is a one-time payment award and will have no impact in the outyears.

Sources:

Office of the State Comptroller

¹ November Special 2022 Session Public Act No. 22-1 provided payment amounts to be awarded based on income levels.

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)