



## Registered Nurse Locum Premium Policy

**Revision Date:** August 24, 2022

### **Program Description**

This Registered Nurse Locum Premium will provide an hourly premium for registered nurses (RNs) who are members of the Registered Nurses Union of Newfoundland and Labrador (RNUNL) and who agree to accept a short-term assignment in Labrador-Grenfell Health (LGH) as per the private agreement effective August 2, 2022.

### **Scope**

This program is a collaboration of the Registered Nurses Union of Newfoundland and Labrador (RNUNL) and LGH. An evaluation will occur to assess whether the desired outcomes of the program have been achieved by providing a qualitative and quantitative report of the pilot at the end of the 12 months.

Additional incentives are available to support the recruitment and retention of RNs in Newfoundland and Labrador; however, these programs are outside the scope of this policy. Additional information on nursing incentives is available on the Department website.

### **Definitions**

Appropriate Deductions: Statutory deductions from pay, including but not limited to income tax, Canadian Pension Plan and Employment Insurance.

Locum Premium: \$25 per hour premium above regular salary while on site.

Regional Health Authority (RHA): Corporations established under the *Regional Health Authorities Act* SNL 2006 cR-7.01 responsible for providing the delivery and administration of health and community services in the health regions in Newfoundland and Labrador. There are four (4) RHAs: Eastern Health, Central Health, Western Health and Labrador-Grenfell Health.

Full-Time Assignment: Thirty-seven and one half (37.5) hours per week.

Incentive: Financial assistance provided by Government or a Regional Health Authority (RHA) to a recipient, which can include a bursary, grant, signing bonus or relocation reimbursement, in return for the recipient's commitment to fulfill a service obligation. In this program, incentive only covers hourly premium.

### **Locum Premium Recipient Criteria**

An RN who agrees to work in LGH is eligible to receive the premium if they:

1. Are a current and active member of RNU and an RHA in NL.
2. Agree to the assignment with full time hours in LGH.
3. Have been given approval, where appropriate, from their home RHA to take the assignment; and
4. Agree to provide the full range of services appropriate to the locum position, reflective of the needs of the RHA.

### **Amount and Disbursement**

A premium of \$25 per hour above their regular wage will be paid to an eligible RN that accepts an assignment in LGH in accordance with the private agreement. Employees will be LGH employees for the duration of the assignment.

### **Taxation and Pension**

Premiums paid to the recipient will be subject to income taxation.

### **Procedure**

#### ***Application and Approval***

1. LGH will post a locum opportunity (two-week minimum block) within the four RHAs when internal staffing levels cannot provide adequate coverage.
2. Posting will include terms and conditions of employment, along with qualifications.
3. RNs from all RHAs who meet criteria of the posting (including skills, experience, satisfactory attendance, and performance) are eligible to apply, subject to #5, below.
4. Criteria used for assigning staff to deployments would include availability, skills, knowledge, experience, efficiency, costs, and other relevant attributes to the requirements.
5. Employees who revert to casual status after the effective date of the Agreement will not be eligible to apply for locum assignments.
6. Employees must be able to be released/backfilled within a reasonable period (maximum of two weeks or less, depending on circumstances) or in accordance with the employer's existing policy but also based on availability and without resulting in undue hardship for the sending unit/department.
7. Employees performing locum assignments will be employees of LGH.
8. Assignments shall be fulfilled on a full-time basis, unless mutually agreed between parties.

9. Employees will be paid an additional \$25 per hour through a separate pay code named "Locum Premium" applied independently of basic pay and normal overtime policies while working on site.
10. The locum premium will be applied to all worked hours on site.
11. As per normal travel-related policies, and the terms of the Agreement, travel costs and accommodations will be provided by the Employer.

It is the responsibility of LGH to post the locum opportunity to recruit the applicant.

The RHA will send an appointment letter to each successful applicant. The appointment letter must align with current RHA appointment letters and include facility of employment, hours of work, start date and finish date.

## **Responsibilities**

### ***Employee Responsibilities***

The recipient is responsible for the following:

1. Reviewing and complying with the terms and conditions of the locum premium policy.
2. Discussing locum opportunity with their manager before accepting the assignment.
3. Notifying the RHA in writing if he/she is unable to fulfill the assignment at earliest possible convenience.
4. Participating in all required orientation prior to and during assignment.
5. Notifying the RHA of any change in contact information such as name, permanent or temporary address, and phone number provided at the time of accepting the assignment.

### ***LGH Responsibilities***

LGH responsibilities include the following:

1. Posting and recruiting the locum opportunity and communicating to other RHAs.
2. Ensuring posting is only available to bargaining unit employees of the four RHAs.
3. Screening applicants based on experience, skills, availability, efficiency, costs, satisfactory attendance, and performance. Where two applicants are relatively equal in experience, skills, availability, efficiency, costs, satisfactory attendance and performance, a permanent RN will have priority over a casual RN.
4. Communicating awarding of assignments to employee and sending RHA with timeline of assignment.

5. Providing required orientation, both virtual and site-specific as required.
6. Ongoing communication with employee and other RHA, if not LGH, throughout the assignment.
7. Notifying the employer if employee cannot fulfill assignment.

***Other Regional Health Authority Responsibilities***

The other RHA responsibilities include the following:

1. Afford as much flexibility as possible in releasing employees to locum assignments, based on operational requirements.
2. Releasing employees at the earliest possible opportunity, based on operational requirements.

***Labrador-Grenfell Regional Staffing, Recruitment and Retention Working Group Responsibilities:***

1. Meet to review value and success of program at regularly scheduled monthly meetings.
2. Discuss and make recommendations as per next steps during the 10<sup>th</sup> month of pilot.