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Updated: June 8, 2023

## ***Frequently Asked Questions about the Impact of Premium Pay on Eligibility for Public Benefits***

### **1. What is the Premium Pay for Workforce Recruitment and Retention Grant program?**

It is extra money for people working in health care during the public health emergency so that they continue working with their employer. Employers applied for it through the State of Vermont to give to their employees. This extra pay is not counted the same as other income for some public benefit programs. Only some health care and human service employees can get it through their employer. They must agree to continue working for their employer for at least another three months. Their employer can choose to give them the money all at once or over a few pay checks.

### **2. I get Medicaid or financial help to buy health insurance. Will I lose it if I get this payment?**

Vermont did not stop anyone's Medicaid during the federal COVID-19 emergency. Now that the emergency is over, Vermont is again required to see who can renew health benefits. The renewal process includes an income check. Premium pay is a type of income. Vermont Health Connect has more information on the renewal process. You can call Vermont Health Connect at 1-855-899-9600. Or go to <https://dvha.vermont.gov/unwinding> on the internet. This web page also has information on what income levels qualify for benefits.

### **3. I get public benefits from the Department of Children and Families. Will I lose them if I get this extra pay?**

This premium pay will **not** make you lose:

- General Assistance
- Fuel Assistance
- Essential Person
- Reach Up (and Reach Up related programs – Reach First, Reach Ahead, and the Postsecondary Education Program)
- Child Care Financial Assistance Program

Do you get 3SquaresVT? Did you have to pass a resource test to get it? If you did, this extra pay counts as a resource the month you get it. What if you did **not** have to pass a resource test? Then the extra pay does not count as income for 3SquaresVT. You can call Vermont Legal Aid at **1-800-889-2047** if you have questions.

**4. I get public benefits. Will this extra pay change my public benefits?**

Call the Health Care Advocate at **1-800-917-7787**. They can answer questions about your health care benefits, including Medicaid. Call Vermont Legal Aid at **1-800-889-2047**. They can answer questions about other public benefits. **Or** go to [www.vtlawhelp.org](http://www.vtlawhelp.org) on the internet.

**5. What if I do not want to get this extra pay?**

Tell your employer you do not want it. You have the right to turn it down.