



Dear Colleague

## £500 COVID PAYMENT

1. On 30 November this year, the First Minister Nicola Sturgeon announced a £500 one off payment for all health and care staff as a thank you for helping Scotland cope with COVID-19. The Scottish Government, Employers and Staff Side have since worked in partnership through the Scottish Terms and Conditions Committee to agree the fairest way of allocating this payment to NHS Scotland staff.
2. This circular authorises the service to make this payment to NHS staff and sets out the parameters which have been agreed. A Q&A which addresses likely questions is attached at Annex A.
3. The one off pro-rata non-consolidated £500 will be payable to all directly employed NHS staff, as well as bank workers and locums paid through NHS Payrolls who have had at least one month's continuous service in the NHS Scotland between 17 March and 30 November 2020.
4. The payment is also payable to contractor staff covered by the Two Tier Agreement, and staff working on honorary contracts with the same qualifying criteria as directly employed staff.
5. The payment is capped at £500 and will not exceed this amount, in total, in situations where staff do hours beyond full time or have multiple contracts.
6. For both substantive staff and bank workers, the payment will be based on average hours over the qualifying period, or over the time in service during the qualifying period, capped at a maximum of £500. Staff working full time during the whole qualifying period will therefore automatically receive the £500 and part time staff who worked excess hours or on the bank will also have this reflected, subject to the £500 cap.

23 December 2020

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### Addressees

#### For action

Chief Executives,  
Directors of Finance,  
Directors of Human Resources:  
NHS Boards and Special Health  
Boards, NHS National Services  
Scotland (Common Services  
Agency) and Healthcare  
Improvement Scotland

#### For information

Members, Scottish Partnership  
Forum  
Members, Scottish Terms and  
Conditions Committee  
Members, Scottish Workforce and  
Governance Committee

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### Enquiries to:

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Directorates  
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7. The payment will also be made to staff on Covid Special Leave or who are shielding, on sick leave for other reasons or on maternity leave.

8. The payment will not apply to:

- Agency Staff
- Board Chairs and Non-Execs
- People working under IR35 arrangements or Direct Engagement models
- Workers paid on a “fee” basis
- People on career breaks
- Employees dismissed for gross misconduct

9. Staff will receive their bonus payment in February salaries. However we are aware that a number of staff are concerned that a one off lump sum payment could have an adverse impact on any benefits payable by the Department of Work and Pensions . Accordingly we have made provisions for these staff to receive their payment in equal instalments over a 3 month period February – April if they so wish

10. **Should any member of staff wish to opt for payment by instalment please complete the attached form and submit no later than 31 January 2021.** NHS Boards will advise of the process to submit the form and to whom.

11. NHS boards should make staff aware of the circular and the arrangements for the £500 payment as soon as is practically possible.

#### **Action**

12. NHS Boards and Special Health Boards should ensure that the above payment is made according to the criteria set out in this circular.

#### **Enquiries**

13. Employees should direct their personal enquiries to their employing NHS Board or Special Health Board.

14. This circular is available online at [www.publications.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.publications.scot.nhs.uk).

Yours sincerely



#### **LAURA ZEBALLOS**

Deputy Director  
Health and Social Care,  
Workforce Pay, Practice and Engagement Division



**NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE  
APPROVAL OF REMUNERATION AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**

In accordance with regulations 2 and 3 of the National Health Service (Remuneration and Conditions of Service) (Scotland) Regulations 1991 (S.I. 1991/537) the remuneration and conditions of service set out in the attached Scottish Government Health Workforce Directorate circular of XX December 2020 – PCS(COV)2020/1 – in respect of the payment of a £500 one off payment are hereby approved for the purposes of the said Regulations.

**LAURA ZEBALLOS**

Deputy Director  
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Workforce Pay, Practice and Engagement Division  
Scottish Government  
St Andrew's House  
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23 December 2020

## **Q&A ON £500 COVID PAYMENT**

### **Q. The payment is “non-consolidated”. What does that mean?**

Non-consolidated means it is not pensionable and does not create a new baseline for future pay calculations. However, tax and national insurance are payable on the sum. The payment will not increase any hourly rates.

### **Q. Will this payment be included in my holiday pay calculation?**

No, the additional £500 stands in isolation and will not be included in the calculation of any payment which is based on a reference period, such as holiday pay, sick pay or occupational maternity pay.

### **Q. When will I receive my payment?**

Payments will be received in February salaries. Staff who wish to receive their payments in three instalments from February to April should make this clear by 31 January 2021. NHS boards will make clear the process for doing this.

### **Q. I was part time during the qualifying period and worked additional hours, will this be reflected in my payment?**

Yes, your part time hours, including additional hours worked, will be averaged over the qualifying period. Your payment will therefore be based on your average hours worked per week, pro rata to the full time payment of £500.

### **Q. I was full time during the qualifying period and worked overtime, will this be reflected in my payment?**

No, overtime hours above full time are excluded for the purpose of the calculating the payment. Your payment will be capped at £500.

### **Q. I worked full time and part time during the qualifying period, how will this affect my payment?**

A pro rata calculation will be done, based on the period you were full time and the period you were part time. Any excess hours worked when you were part time will also be taken into account.

### **Q. Will I receive this payment if I have left or retired from NHS Scotland?**

Everyone who meets the qualifying criteria is eligible for the payment. In this case at least one month's continuous service in NHS Scotland between 17 March and 30 November is required. So former NHS Scotland staff who retired between 17 April and 30 November are eligible, providing they meet the qualifying criteria. NHS Boards will contact leavers/retirees who are due a payment to advise of this and to confirm bank details.

### **Q. Will I receive this payment if I left one NHS board and commenced employment in another NHS Board?**

Providing you meet the qualifying criteria in either of your employments then you will receive the payment, but will be capped at £500 if appropriate. Any payment due from

the leaver Board will be processed by your current employer, subject to the £500 capping.

**Q. What about situations where someone has died in service or left and subsequently died?**

Everyone who meets the qualifying criteria is eligible for the payment. In this case at least one month's continuous service in NHS Scotland between 17 March and 30 November is required. In situations where staff died in service between 17 April and 30 November or left in that time having fulfilled the qualifying criteria and subsequently died, the payment would be payable to their estate.

**Q. The payment is capped at £500. How will the service prevent someone who has moved post during the qualifying period receiving two payments in excess of £500.**

NHS Payroll department are setting up a process to match anonymised payroll records across Boards to ensure consistent application of the £500 cap, meaning no-one should receive a double payment in excess of £500.

**Q. I am a student. Will I receive the payment?**

Those students who had paid contracts in the NHS during the qualifying period, providing they meet the other qualifying criteria, will be eligible. Students on normal placements for their courses will not be eligible as they are not directly employed by the NHS during this time.

**Q. I left half way through the qualifying period. How will my payment be worked out?**

For staff who left during the qualifying period, providing they had at least one month's continuous service during the period 17 March and 30 November 2020, the payment will be worked out according to their average hours during the period of service.

**Q. I started employment half way through the qualifying period. How will my payment be worked out?**

For staff who join during the qualifying period, providing they have at least one month's continuous service during the period 17 March and 30 November 2020, the Covid payment will be worked out according to their average hours during the period of service.

**Q. I started with NHS Scotland on 15 November this year. Will I get the payment?**

The qualifying criteria stipulates one month's continuous service in NHS Scotland between 17 March and 30 November 2020 so anyone who joined the service after 31 October 2020 will not qualify.

**Q. I am in receipt of a protection payment, will the Covid payment be offset against my protection earnings?**

No, the payment will not be offset against protection earnings.

**Q. Will the payment be used in any future Organisational Change protection calculation of earnings?**

No, the Covid payment will not be included as earnings for any Organisational Change protection.