

A 'step forward': B.C. raises pay \$2 per hour for some daycare workers ^[1]

Higher wages needed to recruit and retain early childhood educators: advocate

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Excerpts

Daycare workers at British Columbia's licensed child-care facilities will receive a \$2-per-hour pay increase starting Jan. 1.

Grace Lore, B.C.'s minister of state for child care, said Monday that early childhood educators play a vital role in the early development of children and are critical for families and the economy.

"We need to better recognize and compensate those incredible professionals and to encourage more people ... to join the field, and to stay in the field," Lore said.

B.C.'s Education and Child Care Ministry says the \$2-per-hour raise combined with previous wage boosts totalling \$4 an hour since 2018 will increase the hourly wage for early childhood educators to \$28 per hour.

The ministry says workers who hold specialized certificates for infant, toddler and special needs education are also eligible for up to \$3,000 extra per year.

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A 'step forward' but more action needed, says advocate

Sharon Gregson, spokesperson for the Coalition of Childcare Advocates of B.C., said the move is a "step forward," but more action is needed to ensure the sector can recruit and retain enough workers to meet demand.

Findings from a November 2022 report by the Early Childhood Educators of B.C. found that 45 per cent of employers are losing more staff than they can hire.

The report said early childhood educators and early childhood education assistants who left the field cited reasons such as low pay, a lack of benefits, and poor working conditions.

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Gregson is calling for a publicly-funded, provincewide wage grid that starts at \$30 per hour.

Lore said the province is working on developing a wage grid for the sector, which they will begin testing at select child-care centres later this fall.

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Region: British Columbia ^[3]

Tags: early childhood educators ^[4]

recruitment and retention ^[5]

wages ^[6]

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