

Public Information Session: Seniority Rate Increase in the MassHealth PCA Program

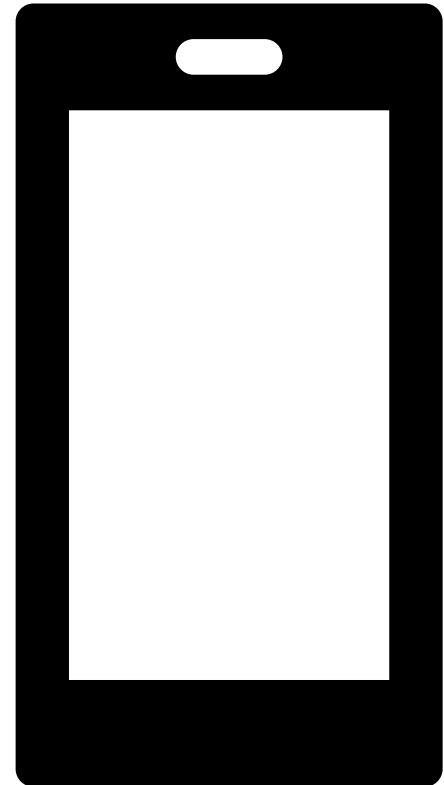
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
MassHealth Personal Care Attendant (PCA) Program

January 9, 2025

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Joining from a Mobile Device

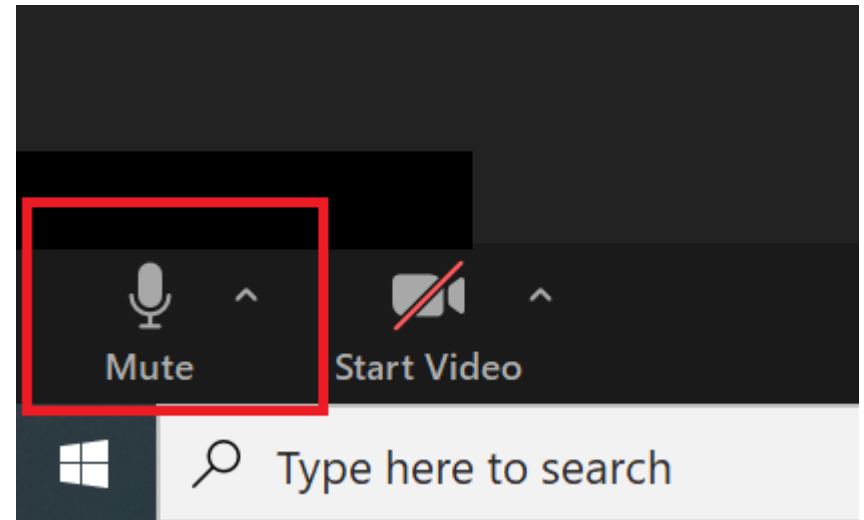
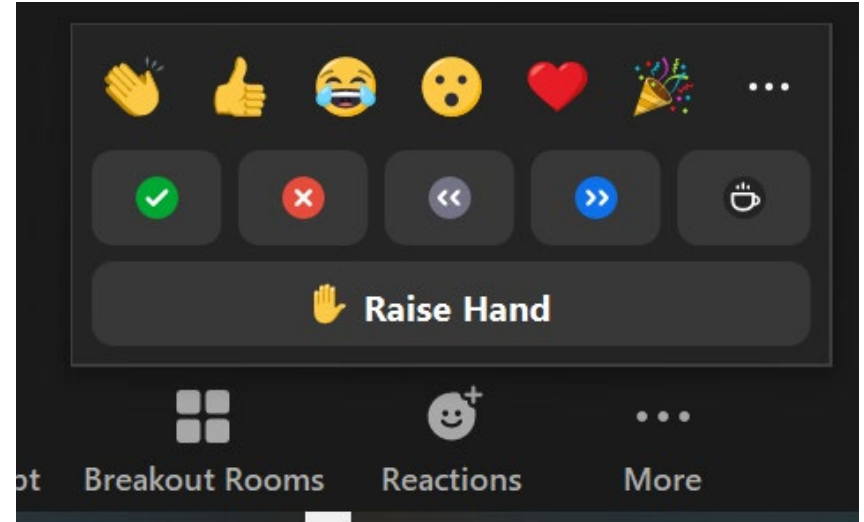
- If you are joining this meeting from a mobile device, you have two options:
 - Join by calling in
 - Join via the Zoom mobile application
- Information session details, including call in information and the meeting password, can be found online at mass.gov by searching “Notice of PCA Public Information Session” and opening the search result for January 9, 2025.
- If you are having difficulty joining via the mobile application, please call in using the information provided in the communications sent for this Information session.
- If you call in, the deck we are reviewing will be posted on mass.gov and can be found by searching “January PCA Public Information Session”.



MassHealth asks that you please hold all comments until the end of the presentation.


Muting and Unmuting Your Line

- All attendees are in listen-only mode for this presentation.
- If you need to unmute your line to ask a question, you can get MassHealth's attention by "raising your hand" by clicking the Reactions button and choosing Raise a Hand.
- When you are called on to speak, you need to **unmute** your line. You can do so by following these instructions:
 - If you are connected to audio **on your phone**: Press *6 on your phone.
 - If you are connected to audio **on your computer or via the Zoom app**: Click the Mute icon at the bottom of the screen.



MassHealth asks that you please hold all comments until the end of the presentation.

Closed Captioning & Spanish Interpretation

- Closed captions are available during this session for those using their computer.
- A Spanish Interpreter is provided for this meeting. To choose the Spanish channel, click Interpretation  in the meeting controls and select the Spanish language channel.
- Se proporciona un intérprete de español para esta reunión. Para elegir el canal en español, haga clic en Interpretación en los controles de la reunión y seleccione el canal en español.

Providing Input

- This Public Information Session includes a presentation by MassHealth followed by an opportunity for attendees to provide input. **Please hold all comments and questions until the end of the presentation.**
- Attendees can provide input by either typing their comment into the chat section or by unmuting and verbally giving their comments once called upon.
 - MassHealth asks that individuals providing comments indicate their role as a stakeholder. For example, identify if you are a consumer, a PCA, a PCM employee, etc.
 - Feedback will be prioritized in the following order:
 1. A MassHealth representative will read any comments submitted to the comments section.
 2. A MassHealth representative will call on anyone using the “raise hand” feature.
 3. Attendees will have the opportunity to unmute and provide feedback.
 - MassHealth anticipates that many individuals may want to provide feedback. We ask that you be as concise as possible to ensure that all attendees who want to provide input have time to do so.
- MassHealth will respond to questions at the end of this session.
- Written responses will be accepted at any time at PCAfeedback@mass.gov

Why is MassHealth Holding this Public Information Session?

Public Information Sessions are voluntary. Attendance is **NOT** required.

- MassHealth is holding Public Information Sessions to discuss the implementation of the seniority rate increases in the MassHealth Personal Care Attendant (“PCA”) program, that begin on 4/1/25.
- In this Public Information Session, MassHealth will share policy updates regarding the seniority rate.
- This Public Information Session is not a training.
- For this Public Information Session, MassHealth will respond to feedback and **answer questions at the end of the session**. Please do not raise your hand until the end.
- This presentation will be available to download, after the Public Information Session is over. To download a copy, visit mass.gov and search for “PCA Public Information Session” in the search box.
- The presentation will also be available in Spanish.

MassHealth asks that you please hold all comments until the end of the presentation.

What is the seniority rate?

- Beginning April 1, 2025, for eligible PCAs, the seniority rate is an increased wage that is added to a PCA's base hourly wage.
- The seniority rate is based on the number of hours a PCA has worked as a PCA since 2008.
- To be eligible for these rates, you must either:
 - Have taken the New Hire Orientation (NHO) or
 - Be exempt from NHO because Tempus FI has a record of and knows that you have worked as a PCA prior to January 1, 2014.
- There are **five** different seniority rate pay steps, listed here:

Seniority Rate Step	Hours worked as a PCA since 2008	Seniority Hourly Rate (This is the amount a PCA will receive, <i>in addition to</i> their base wage)	PCA Hourly Wage (After completing NHO or if exempt from NHO) <i>Beginning April 1, 2025</i>
Step 1	0 – 3,640 hours	\$0.00 per hour	\$19.50
Step 2	3,641 – 7,280 hours	+\$0.60 per hour	\$20.10
Step 3	7,281 – 12,740 hours	+\$1.20 per hour	\$20.70
Step 4	12,741 – 18,200 hours	+\$1.80 per hour	\$21.30
Step 5	18,201+ hours	+\$2.40 per hour	\$21.90

Who is eligible to receive the seniority rate?

- Starting April 1, 2025, New Hire Orientation (NHO) is a requirement for any future rate increases and seniority-based rate steps, unless a PCA is exempt from NHO.
- Effective April 1, 2025, if a PCA has completed NHO or is exempt from NHO, they will receive payment based on the applicable seniority rate step, which is based on the number of hours the PCA has worked.
- If a PCA has not taken NHO, **they are encouraged to do so as soon as possible.**
- If a PCA has not taken NHO, this means they will not receive the seniority rate increase in April 2025, nor the wage increase in July 2025.

Seniority Rate Eligibility Examples

EXAMPLE 1: Here is an example of how this change will affect a PCA who has taken New Hire Orientation (NHO):

Previously:

There are no seniority steps in place.
PCA receives only the base wage of \$19.50 per hour.

After the Change, beginning on April 1, 2025:

Seniority steps are effective and in use.
PCA has worked and been paid for 7,290 hours,
and is in Step 3.
PCA receives the base wage of \$19.50 per hour and
an extra \$1.20 per hour, for a total of \$20.70 per hour.

EXAMPLE 2: Here is an example of how this change will affect a PCA who has **NOT** taken New Hire Orientation (NHO):

Previously:

There are no seniority steps in place.
PCA receives only the base wage of \$19.50 per hour.

After the Change, beginning on April 1, 2025:

Seniority steps are effective and in use.
PCA has worked and been paid for 7,290 hours,
and is in Step 3.
PCA receives the base wage of \$19.50 per hour, but
because they have not taken NHO, they do not receive
the extra \$1.20 per hour.
PCA receives only the base wage of \$19.50.

How did MassHealth calculate hours worked?

MassHealth used two data sources to calculate each PCA's hours worked since 2008.

Source 1: W-2s (2008 – 2014)

- The W-2s* include wages that represent Federal Taxable wages.
- To determine the hours for the year, MassHealth divided the total W-2 wages by the average wage rate for that calendar year.

Source 2: Fiscal Intermediary (FI) Check History (2015 – Present)

- Check history includes all Day/Evening, Regular, and Night hours a PCA worked.

Using these two sources, MassHealth determined how many hours each year a PCA worked.

*A W-2 is an IRS form, also known as the Wage and Tax Statement

How will a PCA know how many hours they have worked and what their seniority rate is?

- All active PCAs will receive a letter from MassHealth in **December 2024 or January 2025** with additional information about the seniority rate.
- The letter will include the total number of hours a PCA has worked as a MassHealth PCA since 2008 and whether they completed New Hire Orientation (NHO).
 - A PCA will receive this letter if they have not completed NHO: [English](#) & [Spanish](#)
 - A PCA will receive this letter if they have completed NHO or are exempt from NHO: [English](#) & [Spanish](#)
- By April 1, 2025, the number of hours worked will be located on a PCA's check stub. Here is an example:

Emp ID: 44XYZ1999999 Smith, John

PTO Accr Bal: 24.68

Lifetime Hours: 12.24

NHO Status: Completed

Company: Jill Consumer

Date: 1/14/2022

Check #: 123456789

Amount: \$0.00

Description	Payroll Period Dates	Hours	Rate	Current	YTD
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What should a PCA do if they disagree with MassHealth's calculation of their total hours worked?

- MassHealth and Tempus FI have conducted a thorough review of available data and made every effort to ensure the accuracy of each PCA's total hours worked. If you are a PCA and you have records that demonstrate they have worked an amount of hours that differs from MassHealth's summary, you may request a review of the total hours worked by:
 - Completing the Hours Review form [HERE](#).
 - Calling 877-479-7577 to request the form.
 - Emailing MAFMS@tempusunlimited.org to request the form be sent to you.
- To ensure sufficient time for processing prior to the seniority rate effective start date, MassHealth encourages reviews be requested by **January 31, 2025**.
- A PCA should expect to hear back about their hours worked review within 30 days.
- Note: Only PCAs can complete this form.

If a PCA is not New Hire Orientation (NHO) exempt and needs to take NHO, what are the steps to do so?

- If a PCA is not NHO exempt and needs to take NHO, they must do so by April 1, 2025, otherwise they will **not** be eligible to receive the seniority rate on this date.
- New Hire Orientation is a four-hour paid training.
- NHO can be taken in two parts, or all at once.
- NHO is considered complete only after a PCA has taken both parts of the training.
- To sign up for NHO, a PCA can:
 - **Call the Homecare Training Benefit at (877) 409-8283, ext. 7** to learn more about NHO classes, locations, dates and times.
 - **Visit <http://bit.ly/pcanho>** to learn more about NHO classes, locations, dates and times; or
 - For Part One ONLY: Discuss NHO with their Consumer-Employer and take the Consumer-taught NHO option.

If a PCA is not exempt from NHO and takes NHO AFTER April 1, 2025, when should a PCA expect to see the seniority rate applied to their base wage?

- The seniority rate can only be applied from the date Tempus receives confirmation of NHO completion from the Training and Education Fund (TEF).
- Once a PCA completes NHO, they will be paid at the seniority rate for future hours worked and paid.

If a PCA moves up a seniority step during a pay period, when will they start receiving their new rate? Will they be notified of their new rate?

- If a PCA moves up seniority steps, their new rate will be applied in their next paycheck. This will begin after April 1, 2025.
- A PCA **will not be notified** of this change by Tempus FI. They will be able to see the new rate reflected in their check stub.
- A PCA can monitor their hours worked in the [employee self-serve \(ESS\) portal](#). The portal is available on Tempus FI's website.

EXAMPLE: Here is an example of how this change will affect a PCA who has taken New Hire Orientation (NHO) and moves up steps during a pay period:

- A PCA has worked and been paid for 7,270 hours as a PCA. The PCA is in Step 2.
- During the pay period of April 13, 2025 to April 26, 2025, the PCA works and is paid for 40 hours. The PCA now has 7,310 hours and is in Step 3.
- The PCA's paycheck for the pay period of April 13 to April 26 will include payment for Step 2 (\$20.10/hour).
- During the pay period of April 27, 2025 to May 10, 2025, the PCA works and is paid for 30 hours. The PCA now has 7,340 hours and is still in Step 3.
- The PCA's paycheck for the pay period of April 27 to May 10 (and for future paychecks) will include payment for Step 3 (\$21.30/hour).

Where should go if I have questions?

- If you are a PCA, please reach out to your Consumer-Employer.
- If you are a Consumer or surrogate, please refer to the [Collective Bargaining Agreement \(CBA\) letter](#) sent to you over the summer or contact your Personal Care Management (PCM) agency with questions.
- If you have general questions about the seniority rate or about your NHO status, please call 877-479-7577 or email MAFMS@tempusunlimited.org

Do you have any questions for MassHealth regarding the seniority rate increase?

Feedback Reminders

- Feedback will be prioritized in the following order:
 1. A MassHealth representative will read any comments submitted to the comments section.
 2. A MassHealth representative will call on anyone using the “raise hand” feature.
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- For this Public Information Sessions, MassHealth **will** respond to feedback. Please use the “raise hand” feature and wait for a MassHealth representative to call your name. Please identify your role as a stakeholder before sharing your comment or question.

Thank you!

Additional feedback can be submitted to MassHealth by emailing:

PCAfeedback@mass.gov

Visit <https://tempusunlimited.org/seniority-rate/>
to learn more about the seniority rate.