Health Career Access Program: Employer Guidance

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Introduction to The Health Career Access Program

Thank you for choosing to participate in the Health Career Access Program (HCAP). Your expression of interest reflects a commitment to quality care for seniors and support for employment opportunities for people in British Columbia (BC).

Since its launch in September 2020, HCAP has supported thousands of individuals to prepare for employment in long-term care, assisted living and home support locations across the province. HCAP provides a pathway for interested participants with little to no health care experience to be hired and receive paid employer-sponsored training. They start their careers as a Health Care Support Worker (HCSWs) and on completion of their educational program qualify as a registered health care assistant (HCA).

HCAP is an innovative employment and education strategy highly valued by employee participants and has received support across the province from both private and public employers. HCAP is committed to inclusive hiring practices, providing equal opportunity for participation in a culturally safe environment for underrepresented groups, including women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities and LGBTQIA2S+ applicants.

While the Ministry of Health provides leadership and oversight, joint responsibility for shaping the program is shared with the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training, and regional health authorities.

A key success factor for the HCAP initiative is that the HCAP employee is welcomed to the health care team in each facility. Employers are responsible for ensuring that management and staff provide a safe and supportive learning environment for the HCAP Health Care Support Worker. A few key points that build success for each employer include:

- Ensure that your facility is operating in a culturally safe manner, including alignment with the principles of Indigenous Cultural Safety and other principles of diversity and inclusion.
- The HCSW position is an introductory position, and participants are often new to health care. Please be mindful of this and ensure that your orientation to the position is thorough, and that new staff (HCSWs) are given the opportunity to ask questions. Further information about orientation and onboarding is included in this guide.
- The HCSW position is a new position in the sector, and other staff in your facility may not be aware of the scope of their work. Please educate your existing staff about the new HCSW role, how it will be incorporated into your facility, and how existing staff can act as mentors for HCSWs. This will assist with their integration into your team and create a strong foundation for long-term success.
- The HCSW does not provide direct care, however, they bring new perspectives and are eager to learn and contribute. The HCSW role can relieve Health Care Assistants (HCAs) of non-clinical aspects of work allowing HCAs to spend quality time with residents. Please ensure that HCSWs are provided with on-the-job learning opportunities wherever possible.

HCAP will increase the supply of HCAs in BC, improving service delivery and quality of care for seniors. A shared commitment to support onboarding and learning will be key success factors in the seniors' sector workforce.

British Columbia's New Training Model for Health Care Assistants

Document Purpose

This document is intended for employers of the Health Career Access Program (HCAP) to reference program policy and procedures. This guide is not a replacement for any clauses under the Employer Funding Agreement. It does, however, replace the Employer Guide released in July 2021, as it contains several key updates.

Program Overview and Intent

On September 9, 2020, the Government of British Columbia announced HCAP to increase the supply of HCAs in BC and support employment transitions to the health sector. HCAP provides an opportunity for individuals to begin employment as an HCSW, a non-direct care role and receive employer-sponsored training leading to a provincially recognized HCA credential. Through HCAP, employers can become an integral part of an innovative strategy that will address recruitment challenges in the long-term care sector and build an engaged workforce. There is no fee or cost levied on organizations that choose to take part. Employee wages, benefits and education costs will be fully covered by the Government of British Columbia.

All long-term care and assisted living employers (including health authority owned and operated, affiliated and private) providing care to seniors in BC <u>and</u> who employ registered HCAs are invited to participate in the HCAP.

Participant Journey

1. Individuals interested in participating in HCAP submit a Participant Expression of Interest (PEOI), which captures name, preferred region of work, and contact information: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/economic-recovery/work-in-health-care
2. PEOI data is then entered into the HCAP Employer Portal, where employers can access a list of participants in the site's proximity, or who have expressed an interest in relocating.
3. Participants are prompted to use their BC Services Card to log in any time to manage their own expression of interest and personal information.
4. Participants may be contacted by eligible employers to discuss possible employment.
5. Once hired, participants sign a Return of Service agreement.
6. Participants complete onboarding and orientation.
7. Participants work as an HCSW in the site. Ideally this is a 3-month period and can be extended up to 6 if necessary.
8. The HCSW is enrolled into an HCA educational cohort and begins the education component at a post-secondary institution (PSI). They will continue to work as an HCSW while they are studying to become an HCA.
9. Upon completion of training program, participants are eligible to register as an HCA.
10. Participants complete a 12-month return of service, during which time they work as an HCA.

Employer Journey

1. Employers interested in participating in HCAP submit an expression of interest (EEOI) with site and workforce information at https://HCAPEmployers.gov.bc.ca
2. EEOI is reviewed and an allocation of HCSWs is confirmed.
3. Once allocation is communicated, employers sign an Employer Funding Agreement administered by the Health Authority.
4. Once signed, employers are granted access to the HCAP Employer Portal where they can access the names and contact information of interested participants. They will then proceed with their regular hiring processes to hire participants.
5. After hiring, employers will support the participant through the onboarding and orientation process, preparing the individual for their role as an HCSW within the employer's organization.
6. Employers provide leave to participants to complete formal HCA training.
7. Upon completion of training and registration as an HCA, participants will be offered a position as an HCA.

Employer Benefits

Employer participation is a key component of the HCAP work-integrated learning model and an opportunity for employers to advance workforce development within their sector. HCAP provides employers funding for a new non-direct, non-patient care role, including formal training at a participating post-secondary institution. Through the program, employers are able to access a provincially developed staffing pool to fill vacancies and support the professional development of internal and external candidates to access rewarding careers within their organizations and the broader sector, thereby building a more equitable workforce.

Employer Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in HCAP, employers must be both:

- Operators of long-term care and assisted-living sites providing care to seniors in BC, including private employers with no public funding, contracted affiliate providers and health authorities. Staffing subcontractors to primary operators are also eligible to participate; and
- Employers of registered health care assistants.

Expression of Interest and Allocation Process

Employers can express their interest in becoming a participating employer by submitting their long term care or assisted living site data and number of HCSWs requested using the web form located at: https://hcapemployers.gov.bc.ca/

At the time of release of this document, the Employer Expression of Interest (EEOI) is a rolling intake; employers may express interest at any time. EEOIs will be reviewed periodically with formal allocations communicated through regional health authorities.

Employer Funding Agreement

Long-term care and assisted-living facility employers must enter into a formal agreement with a regional health authority to participate in HCAP. This agreement, called the *Employer Funding Agreement* outlines specific terms and conditions, funding arrangements and accountabilities with respect to HCAP. There are two versions: one for Health Employers Association of British Columbia (HEABC) members and one for non-HEABC members.

Employers are responsible for complying with the terms and conditions outlined in the funding agreement, including hiring requirements and HCSW employment terms.

In the case of any discrepancies between this document and the *Employer Funding Agreement,* the latter will be deemed to prevail.

Employer Obligations to the HCSW

The following terms outline the related obligations of employers.

The HCAP requires an employer commitment of approximately 12-18 months for each HCSW. During this period:

- The employer will provide supernumerary employment according to the terms and conditions of employment outlined in the EFA.

- Employers will be responsible for working with the applicable regional health authority and post-secondary institution to support enrollment of the HCSW in HCA training. Subsequently, the employer must provide appropriate oversight to the HCSW during their progression through the HCA program.
- Employers must provide the HCSW leave to complete their educational program and pay the educational leave stipend during this time.
- Employers must support principles of equity, cultural safety, and accessibility for participants and other employees.

Employer Support

The following Health Authority services and supports are available to employers:

Employer Liaison and Support	• General point of contact and support for participating non-health authority employers. • Assist participating employers with their information needs to smooth program onboarding and hiring.
Program Administration	• Communicate and facilitate administrative processes, including signing of Employer Funding Agreements, invoicing/payment, reconciliation and monitoring.
Recruitment Support	• Development of regional participant pools to support placement of candidates at participating sites. • Assistance to confirm that HCSW hires meet program eligibility criteria.
Regional Training Coordination	• Respond to questions regarding the standardized provincial HCSW orientation curriculum and the formal HCA education program. • Provide a centralized regional point of contact for participating employers and post-secondary institutions to coordinate the flow of newly hired HCSWs into available training programs. • Prioritize filling approved HCAP training cohorts and bundle learner applications to share with HCA education program. • Work with Government and PSIs to ensure that sufficient training capacity is in place regionally to meet demand created through the program.

Regional Contact List

Health Authority	Contact
Providence Health	phcapply@providencehealth.bc.ca
Interior Health	healthcareeraccess@interiorhealth.ca
Fraser Health	HCAP@fraserhealth.ca
VCH	VCHHCAPInquiries@vch.ca
Island Health	IslandHealthHCAP@viha.ca
Northern Health	Emily.Plummer@northernhealth.ca

WorkBC

WorkBC provides employment-related services and supports to assist people of all backgrounds and abilities to find and keep employment that will improve their lives. WorkBC Centres around the province are available to assist employers with recruiting well-suited candidates to HCAP positions.

In partnership with regional health authorities, WorkBC has identified pathways for WorkBC Centres to flag referrals of pre-screened candidates through email, in addition to the required application through normal program processes.

Employers can connect with the key WorkBC contacts in their local health authorities. These are provided in *Appendix C: WorkBC Key Contacts for HCAP Employers*.

Hiring and Employment Equity

Employers must commit to inclusive hiring practices as part of their participation in HCAP. The program is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in culturally safe environments to underserved groups, including but not limited to women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, racialized peoples, people of specific socioeconomic classes, and LGBTQIA2S+ applicants.

Collective Agreements

A variety of collective agreements are in place across the health sector, including the Health Services and Support Community Subsector Collective Agreement (CBA) the Facilities Bargaining Association (FBA) Collective Agreement and others. All employers participating in HCAP are expected to follow any collective agreement commitments in place within their work site and undertake hiring and implementation of the HCSW opportunity in a manner that is consistent with the collective agreement(s) they are party to, including following position posting requirements.

Employer Onboarding and Hiring Process
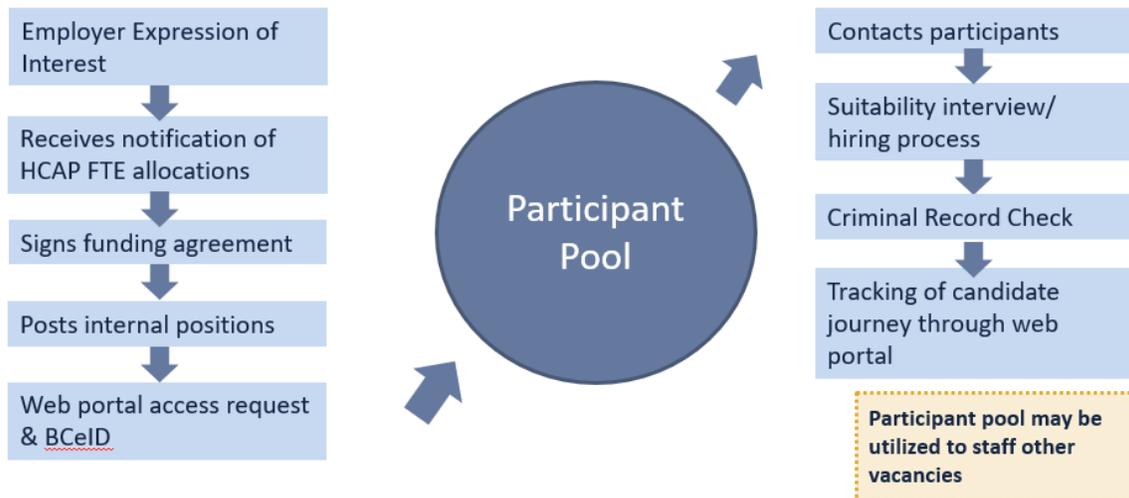
Internal Postings

Where required by the collective agreements, new positions must first be posted internally before they are made available to applicants from outside of an employer's organization. If the work site is not subject to collective

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agreement posting requirements, the position may be filled internally, or the employer may move directly to selecting an applicant through the HCAP matching process.

Note: The HCAP Employer Portal must be used to record an internal hire as described below in the Hiring for Non-HCAP Opportunities section.

Participant Pool

HCAP was launched with a Participant Expression of Interest web form that has enabled thousands of British Columbians to indicate their interest to participate in HCAP. Participants submit their interest online in the link below and become part of the HCAP Participant Pool that can be accessed through the *HCAP Employer Portal* as described in the next section.

The Participant Expression of Interest web form can be found at: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/economic-recovery/work-in-health-care

Signing up for the Employer Portal

The *HCAP Employer Portal* is a web application where HCAP employers can access a list of potential HCAP participants. The portal also enables employers to engage with participants, enter hiring events and track and manage allocations to their long-term care or assisted living sites. For the user to be able to register and use the portal, they must have already submitted an Employer Expression of Interest and signed an *Employer Funding Agreement*.

Access to the HCAP Employer Portal is via BCeID:

Basic BCeID or Business BCeID*
Only if you already have one

If you don't have a BCeID:

1. Create your Basic BCeID online: https://www.bceid.ca/register/
2. Receive an email confirming your BCeID
3. Once obtained, use your BCeID to log into the portal by clicking on the Login button on the top right-hand side of the page at: HCAPEmployers.gov.bc.ca
4. Click on the BCeID button to enter your credentials.
5. Upon initial login attempt, you will land on a disclaimer page and a validation request will be sent to the Ministry.[1]
6. Within two business days, employers receive email correspondence from the Ministry advising of access or of any request concerns.

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[1] Disclaimer:

Thank you for logging in. Your access request is being reviewed.

Please note that your access will only be granted if you have approved allocations under HCAP.

Information in the EEOI portal has been collected under sections 26(c) and (e) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA) for the purposes of administering the Health Career Access Program. Information will only be used by authorized personnel to fulfill the purpose for which it was originally collected or for a use consistent with that purpose. Information to other public bodies or individuals will not be disclosed except as authorized by FOIPPA.

Sourcing Candidates Through the Employer Portal

Once employers have satisfied any applicable internal posting requirements, the HCAP Participant Pool should be the primary source for interested candidates. Participants within their geographic area will be visible to employers who can then use the list to engage participants and record hiring actions.

Once their login has been validated, employers can return to HCAPemployers.gov.bc.ca and use their credentials to proceed to the participant list.

By clicking on the *View Participants* button, employers will see the list of participants available in their hiring area. Contact information is not immediately visible from the *Available Participants* view.

To contact a participant and begin the hiring process:

1. Select a participant and click on the *Actions* button on the participant row, then click Engage.
2. The selected candidate will be moved to your MyCandidates list and contact information will become visible.

The employer must update the candidate's status at each of the following hiring events:

- Interviewing
- Offer Made
- Hired

At any point, should the participant withdraw from the hiring process or not move through to a confirmed hired status, the employer can remove them from consideration by clicking Actions > Archive.

Note that engaging a participant does not remove them from other employers' participant lists. They will be visible to all employers until brought to a Hired status, at which time an indicator will mark that the participant is no longer available.

Provincial Participant Engagement

The Ministry continues to reach out to participants who have submitted their expressions of interest to provide more information about HCAP and the HCA and HCSW roles. Provincial program representatives will also reconfirm their continuing intent to participate in the program and, upon completion, work as an HCA. The last date of confirmed interest is recorded in the portal on the participant record.

Participants who indicate that they are no longer interested will be withdrawn from the program and from the employer view.

External Recruitment

Employers may post externally as a last resort if, following a reasonable attempt, they cannot source internally, through the portal or with assistance from the Health Authority regional point of contact and WorkBC.

Candidate Assessment

To be eligible to participate in HCAP, individuals must meet the minimum requirements set out for the program, irrespective of any higher entrance requirements that may be in place in local post-secondary institutions. Basic criteria for participants include:

- Completion of Grade 10, including the successful completion of English 10, or equivalency;
- No prior completion of an HCA training program in BC;
- Not currently employed in an HCA role; and
- Canadian citizenship or permanent residence.

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English language requirements are consistent with those of the BC Care Aide and Community Health Worker Registry and vary between individuals whose first language is English and those whose first language is not English.

English Language

As an HCAP employer, it is your responsibility to ensure that your new HCSW hires meet the minimum criteria of the program but supports exist within the program to help you.

English language competency requirements are established by the BC Care Aide and Community Health Worker Registry (the Registry). Please note that assessment criteria differ between individuals whose first language is English and those whose first language is not English.

For participants whose **first language is English**, English 10 or equivalent can be shown with:
- Transcript from a country with English language systems/institutions
- 7+ years of education in English or 3+ years at a high school or college level
- Equivalent courses or assessments can be used, but the years of education in English as above must always be demonstrated

If an applicant whose first language is English cannot provide evidence of English language proficiency at an English 10 level (or higher as required by the partner post-secondary institution), they can be referred to an Adult Upgrading program (see Table below). Allow at least 3 months of part-time study per grade level of English upgrading (minimum 90 hours).

Health Authority	Institution	Adult Upgrading (Adult Basic Education)	English Language Learning
Fraser Health	Douglas College	https://www.douglascollege.ca/future-students/explore-douglas/ways-study/english-and-mathematics-upgrading	https://www.douglascollege.ca/programs-courses/explore-programs-courses/faculties/english-language-learning-and-acquisition
	Kwantlen Polytechnic University	https://www.kpu.ca/aca/acp/adult-basic-education-courses	https://www.kpu.ca/acp/els
Interior Health	Okanagan College	https://www.okanagan.bc.ca/upgrading	https://www.okanagan.bc.ca/English-Language
	Thompson Rivers University	https://www.tru.ca/programs/abe.html	https://www.tru.ca/edsw/schools-and-departments/esl/academic_esal/regulations.html
Northern Health	College of New Caledonia	https://cnc.bc.ca/programs-courses/programs/detail/academic-upgrading	https://cnc.bc.ca/programs-courses/programs/detail/english-language

For participants whose **first language is not English** successful completion of an English Language Proficiency test is required. The Registry has identified a number of English Language Proficiency Tests to confirm if a candidate meets

the identified standard. Potential new hires who are required to complete an English Language Proficiency Test may also be eligible for reimbursement of the test fees – see Pre-requisite Stipend section below.

Standardized English language proficiency test cut scores required for HCAP participation:

Assessment	Years Valid	Cut scores – minimum HCA program entry	Cut scores – ELL upgrading or HCA-ESL if available
Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Test (CLBPT)	1	Speaking & Listening – 7 Reading & Writing – 6	Speaking & Listening – 6 Reading & Writing – 5
International English Language Testing System (IELTS)	2	Overall – 6 Speaking & Listening – 6 Reading & Writing – 5.5	Overall – 5.5 Speaking & Listening – 5.5 Reading & Writing – 5
Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), IBT only	2	Overall – 76 Speaking & Listening – 20 Reading & Writing – 18	Overall – 56 Speaking & Listening – 15 Reading & Writing – 13

Mandatory Covid-19 Vaccination Policy

The Provincial Health Officer (PHO) has ordered that all staff working in health care facilities must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 unless provided a medical exemption by the PHO. Employers should apply the same processes for HCAP participants as they are taking with other staff that fall under PHO orders.

- HSCWs working in long-term care and senior's assisted living settings must complete all required doses of COVID-19 vaccine prior to entering the workplace as an employee of HCAP.
- HCSWs must demonstrate their vaccine status to the employer by providing the required documentation prior to entering the workplace as an employee of HCAP.

Employers are required to verify COVID-19 vaccination status of all new employees as a mandatory requirement prior to providing a letter of offer.

Please note that if you are an HEABC employer, you should follow the guidance issued by HEABC regarding implementing the mandatory vaccination requirements (see especially GIU 318, 319, and 321). As an HEABC employer, if you have questions about how GIUs relate to HCAP staff, you should contact your HEABC representative.

This direction does not override any requirements for vaccination under the PHO Order or future orders.

Please note that PHO direction is subject to change and the current information is effective as per the date of issue for version 3.0 of this guide.

Q&As

Why is the Ministry requiring HCSWs who are completing their online education components and/or employed in home health to also be vaccinated?

- Given the PHO vaccination orders, vaccination against Covid-19 is now a requirement to complete HCAP successfully. Regardless of current HCAP work setting or education status, HCSWs must meet Covid-19 vaccination requirements to complete HCAP practicum requirements and to be employed in the health sector to complete their return of service obligations upon graduation.

How do the vaccination orders apply to HCAP practicum students?

- Both vaccination orders include HCAP practicum students in their scope. The Hospital and Community Order (October 14) include students in the definition of "staff member". The Residential Care order defines a staff member as "a person employed by the operator of a facility to work in a facility." As HCAP practicum students are facility employees on educational leave, they are included in the scope of the Order's staff member definition.

How do the vaccination requirements affect the recruitment processes for HCAP?

- You should begin immediately screening for Covid-19 vaccination status as part of recruitment into the program for all HCSWs (including home health positions).

- You may use the following wording in job descriptions to communicate vaccination status as an occupational requirement:
    - *Must be fully vaccinated against Covid-19 by date of hire to be considered. An individual is considered fully vaccinated when they are at least seven (7) days post-receipt of the second dose of an approved Covid-19 vaccine. Proof of vaccination required.*

Should internal HCAP hires who are refusing vaccination be returned to their base positions?

- As the vaccination orders include most health care workers and care settings across the province, internally hired HCSWs base positions are likely impacted. HEABC employers should contact HEABC for advice on specific employees' situations should they refuse to be vaccinated. Non-HEABC employers should contact Ministry staff directly for guidance on specific situations: HCAPInfoQuery@gov.bc.ca

Criminal Record Check and Other Assessments

As per Part 4 of the *Residential Care Regulation* under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*, employers must ensure that new HCSWs meet general staffing requirements. These include required criminal record checks, conducting reference checks to determine employee fit, and other employment requirements.

Employers are required to complete a vulnerable sector check on all potential HCAP hires through the Criminal Records Review Program (CRRP) run by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (PSSG). This program operates in accordance with British Columbia's *Criminal Record Review Act.*

CRRP checks are a requirement for all employers funded by the provincial government or licensed by a health authority. **Employers must request these checks for all new HCSW hires following an offer of employment.** Costs for HCSWs can be funded from the HCAP funding allocation in accordance with the *Employer Funding Agreement*.

The Job Offer

Offers may be contingent upon confirmation of requirements - for example, passing an English proficiency test or completing a criminal record check. Employers are encouraged to record a participant as *hired* in the portal even if there is a test result or criminal record check result pending, as long as the participant has signed the conditional offer.

*Please note that participants are not permitted to begin working as an HCSW until all requirements are satisfied and a final offer is extended.

Once an employer is satisfied that program requirements are met, an unconditional offer of employment as an HCSW may be extended. This triggers the beginning of formal program onboarding for participants.

In the event that a participant does not satisfy the requirements in full, the participant will be withdrawn post-hire (refer to guidance in the Participant Withdrawals and Terminations section below).

Hiring for Non-HCAP Opportunities

Internal movement resulting from HCAP opportunities may be a factor and employers are encouraged to use the Employer Portal to hire for non-HCAP opportunities (such as food services, housekeeping, etc.)– these must be recorded in the system:

- Go to the My Hires tab in the portal
- Click on Non-Portal Hire
- Fill out all the required fields to report hire

NOTE: This action removes the participant from view and consideration of other employers for the HCAP program. It is important for participants to be made aware that their interest in HCAP is no longer visible once hired into a non-HCAP position.

Participant Supports

Participants are eligible for reimbursement for eligible costs incurred through participation in the program. Pre-requisite costs qualify and are described below.

In addition, if specially approved in exceptional circumstances, certain travel and accommodation may be eligible for reimbursement when the student must travel a significant distance to complete a required in-person component of their Education Program (lab or practicum). Regular employee-requested travel will not be considered. Please reference the travel policy on page 19 of this guide.

Pre-requisite Stipend

To enter the formal education component of HCAP, newly hired HCSWs are required to complete a number of pre-requisite courses, some of which may come at a cost to the applicant. These pre-requisites include: FoodSafe and Standard First Aid/Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).

Once an individual is hired into a Health Care Support Worker (HCSW) position, a $342.00 stipend is available to cover prerequisite costs. This amount is fixed and not dependent on the type, number or costs of the prerequisites that are required for a particular applicant. Applicants can access these funds up-front to enable them to self-register for the pre-requisites.

Potential new hires who are required to complete an English Language Proficiency Test are eligible for additional funding through a reimbursement process whether they are successful or not.

To apply for the pre-requisite stipend, HCSWs need to complete an online form and upload all required documents. The Choose2Care team at Health Match BC will process applications and issue funds to eligible applicants.

For more information please review: https://www.choose2care.ca/hcap-pre-requisite-stipend/

Onboarding and Orientation

Long Term Care and Assisted Living:

A provincial orientation has been developed for the HCSW role and should be completed prior to initiating work. It is estimated to take the learner a minimum of 2.5 weeks to complete the orientation/learning requirements to prepare them to work as an HCSW in a Long Term Care or Assisted Living facility, and to prepare for the HCA partnership

pathway. The employer must provide the new HCSW with paid time to complete the orientation activities, which include:

1. **Complete health and safety requirements** (e.g. immunizations, tuberculosis test) required also as part of the HCA education component.

2. **Complete Provincial HCSW orientation curriculum (online)**

   - HCSWs will need to sign up for a LearningHub Account.

   - When verifying account email, non-health authority employees should select Affiliate/Contractor as the account type and select the local area Health Authority region they are in to be able to access the online courses.

   - Once in LearningHub they will enter the **Course Code 24230** in the search field. They should select: **ENROLL in Curriculum: Provincial Standard Health Care Support Worker Orientation Program**. When they have completed all modules, they should send an email confirmation to their Employer.

3. **Complete Additional Provincial Requirements/ Employer Specific Orientation**

   - HCSWs should print off the Additional Provincial Online Requirements/Safety Resources Checklist.

   - Employers should discuss with HCSW regarding the completion of the additional provincial online safety requirements, and the employer-specific requirements listed.

   - Schedule site-based orientation and shadow/ buddy shifts (on-site) for the HCSW.

4. **HCA program pre-requisite courses** (e.g. food safe, first aid with CPR). The HCSW should self-register for these courses and the employer must provide the HCSW with paid time to complete the pre-requisite courses.

   - **FOODSAFE Level 1** – e.g. http://www.foodsafe.ca/courses/level-1.html

   - **Standard First Aid with CPR** – e.g. any course recognized by the Heart and Stroke Foundation

Employers and participants should be aware that local PSIs have differing registration and program entry requirements. Applicants will be supported by the HCAP team, Health Authorities, and their employer to identify and complete all program entry requirements so that they are able to register and complete their formal training.

Health Care Support Workers in the Workplace

Job Duties

The HCSW is a new, temporary, non-clinical role that provides supports to clients and residents in long-term care and assisted living.

Typical duties may include:

- Establishing a caring relationship with residents and their families,
- Providing support and assistance with recreational activities,
- Assisting and directing visitors,
- Restocking supplies and performing housekeeping tasks, and
- Providing support and assistance at mealtimes.

The HCAP program is intended to be a work/learn program that engages HCSWs in learning opportunities (formal and informal) to enrich the understanding of their role and the roles of other team members in long-term care. The HCSW

may take part in observation of care activities including personal care activities (bathing, dressing, etc) with the following provisions:

- The policies of the long-term care facility or community care provider do not limit the ability of an HCSW to engage in observational learning while in their HCSW role;
- The client is informed that the HCSW is engaged in a work/learn program to train as an HCA;
- Any observation of personal care activities occurs with the consent of the client or their next of kin if the client is unable to provide consent;
- Patient will need to provide verbal/documented consent. If they are unable to provide consent, then observation will not be allowed;

Any observation of personal care activities must be approved by the long-term care home unit supervisor.

Employment Terms and Conditions

Details of the terms and conditions of employment are fully described in the Employer Funding Agreement.

The following terms are applicable to both HEABC members and non-HEABC members.

- Employers will use the job description without alteration (see Appendix B).

> These benchmarks may only be used for participants in the HCAP program. Should the program cease in the future, these benchmarks and job descriptions may no longer be used by employers.

- Existing HCAs are not eligible for the HCSW positions/HCAP.
- HCSW positions will be scheduled for full time hours. Employers will set the work schedule for the HCSW, which could include weekends, evenings, nights, and statutory holidays, depending on the needs of the organization.
- The wage rate is linked to the Facilities Bargaining Association collective agreement Grid 11. As of April 1, 2021, the standardized wage rate is $21.37 per hour. This rate will be used for all HCSWs.
- The Ministry of Health will direct employers to pay HCSWs a stipend (funded by the Ministry) while they are on leave completing the education components. As of April 1, 2021, the stipend will be $801/week and may be paid out with the employer's regular payroll (i.e. every 2 weeks). Where applicable, the education stipend should be pro-rated if education time is not for an entire week.
- HCAP participants will be subject to a 12-month return-of-service. Employers will be provided with the negotiated return of service agreement.

Employers will be responsible for ensuring that successful applicants understand that they are required to engage in the HCAP education pathway and that their continuing employment is contingent upon their ability to successfully complete their HCA training. HCSWs who successfully complete the Training Program must register with the *BC Care Aide & Community Health Worker Registry* upon completion.

Supervision

The HCSW works under the supervision and direction of a Registered Nurse or another regulated health care professional (e.g. Licensed Practical Nurse). The regulated professional providing supervision must be an employee of the same long-term care or assisted living operator and must be familiar with the HCSW job role, including its limitations (e.g. the HCSW provides non-direct, non-clinical support only). Oversight and assignment of non-clinical tasks (e.g. housekeeping and laundry) may be provided to the HSCW by an employee in a non-clinical supervisory role.

Supervision is defined as consultation and guidance by the regulated professional. Supervision may be direct, indirect or indirect remote. This means that the supervising regulated professional can be reached by telephone, pager or other electronic means to ensure that two way, direct and real time communication is available at all times.

- **Direct** supervision means a regulated professional is present in the practice setting at the point of care.

- **Indirect** supervision means the regulated professional is available for guidance and consultation and in community health setting, being readily available in the same location where the care is being provided means the supervisor is physically present in the setting.
- Supervision that is **indirect remote** means that the regulated professional is available for consultation and guidance but is not physically present in the location where the care is being provided and is able to be easily contacted using technology.

Note: When the HCSW starts the practice education component of their HCA education program, as an HCA student learner, they will be under the supervision of an RN/ LPN instructor that is employed or seconded by the post-secondary institution.

Participant Leave Policy

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Employers should demonstrate flexibility in accommodating leaves for HCSWs during the program where such leaves do not interfere with the HCSWs' ability to complete the education components as scheduled.
2. Employers should follow their respective collective agreement language regarding allowable leave, benefit continuation, and seniority accrued during any such leave.

HUMAN RIGHTS RELATED LEAVES

3. Employers should be aware of and follow their human rights obligations regarding accommodating leave and providing alternative options upon an HCSW's return. Employers should consult with HEABC or their own legal counsel for assistance in determining the scope of these obligations and how they apply in each specific circumstance.
4. Employers should work collaboratively with regional health authorities, post-secondary institutions, and the Ministry of Health in determining which accommodations may be available for any given employee.

WORKSITE OR POST-SECONDARY CLOSURES DUE TO EMERGENCIES

5. Where an HCAP participant is unable to complete education components due to closures of educational institutions in emergency circumstances, such as fire or flooding, employers should instruct the participant to take on HCSW shifts at their worksite or arrange for HCSW shifts at another worksite, wherever possible.
6. In exceptional circumstances arising from a provincial or regional emergency event where HCAP participants are not able to access their education or worksites (for example, in the case of redeployments in the area), employers should put participants on unpaid leave and provide them with the education stipend for up to two weeks in order to enable them to engage in independent study in support of their HCA education. This instruction is issued by the Ministry of Health to employers pursuant to paragraphs 17(d) and 18(d) of the FBA and CBA HCAP Memoranda of Agreement.

Participant Withdrawals and Terminations

WITHDRAWALS

In the event a participant withdraws from the program after being recorded as hired in the Employer Portal, the employer must record this withdrawal in the Employer Portal promptly by archiving the participant no more than two days after their last day in the HCAP program. This action can be completed in the Employer Portal from the Hired Candidates tab. After logging into the Portal, the employer will take the following steps:

1. Go to the withdrawing participant's record in the Hired Candidates tab
2. On the far right, click Archive

3. Under Type, select Employment Ended
4. Provide the end date (last date of employment), reason for withdrawal, and status of the participant at the time of their program end, then click on the notification to acknowledge. Click Submit.

* Please note, the archive action for hired participants is **not reversible**.

If the participant withdrawing from the program has worked any shifts as an HCSW, begun their education or otherwise had any funds applied to them under the program prior to withdrawal, please notify the Ministry at HCAPInfoQuery@gov.bc.ca and indicate your intent to re-hire to fulfill the allocation. **In these cases, do not proceed with hiring a replacement HCSW until the Ministry has provided approval to do so.** Please allow two days for Ministry response.

TERMINATIONS

If, during the program, the employer terminates a participant's employment, the participant will no longer be eligible to participate in any aspect of HCAP. Employers are encouraged to work to remedy any disputes and challenges with participants following their internal human resource principles and processes and collective agreements prior to proceeding with termination. Employers can also connect with their regional health authority contact for support and guidance.

To backfill a termination, employers follow the same procedure as withdrawals. **The Employer Portal must be updated and the Ministry informed, stating intent to hire and awaiting Ministry approval.** To record a termination in the Portal:

1. Go to the withdrawing participant's record in the Hired Candidates tab
2. On the far right, click Archive
3. Under Type, select Employment Ended
4. Provide the end date (last date of employment),
5. Under Reason, select Terminated by employer, and provide status of the participant at the time of their program end, then click on the notification to acknowledge. Click Submit.

Education

Finding a Post Secondary Program

The connection between HCSWs hired through HCAP and the post-secondary program they will participate in is critical. However, as an HCAP employer, you are not required to identify a specific institution for candidates prior to extending a job offer. Regional education coordinators in each health authority will be responsible for streaming HCSWs into available training opportunities with post-secondary institutions (PSIs) as they become available.

Regional Education Coordination

Health Authorities have a role in regional delivery of HCAP. It is essential that health authorities coordinate with ministry identified and funded PSIs, and support owned/ operated, contracted and private providers to fully utilize regional HCAP training seats. Roles and responsibilities of the regional education coordinator include:

- Respond to questions regional employers have regarding the standardized provincial orientation and the formal HCA education program.
- Work with identified PSIs on education planning (cohort schedule, seat allocation, model framework, faculty needs, clinical placements etc.).
- Provide a centralized regional point of contact for participating employers and PSIs to coordinate flow of newly hired HCSWs to identified training programs.

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- Prioritize filling approved training seats and provide guidance to support further program deployment to meet regional demand for training.
- Ensure HCSWs are aware of the pre-requisite bursary available to them.

Education Expenses

Funding for tuition, fees and other eligible learning expenses such as books, supplies, uniforms, etc. will be provided directly to PSIs after confirmation has been received of student enrollments.

Participating Post Secondary Institutions

Programs will be available at all public PSIs that offer health care assistant training in BC. More programs are in development and will be announced in the coming months.

The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training are collaborating closely and continuously to create HCAP training capacity across all regions to meet regional demands, including creating additional capacity as required with private post-secondary institutions as well.

Program Pre-Requisites

The BC Care Aide and Community Heath Worker Registry sets HCA program recognition standards. The Provincial Curriculum is based upon the Provincial HCA Competency Profile and includes minimum entrance requirements as described under the Candidate Assessment section. Costs associated with pre-requisites are reimbursable, as described in the Participant Supports section above.

The following are to be completed prior to the first practice education experience:

- Proof of meeting current immunizations / vaccinations as per health care organization policies/ guidelines (or signed vaccination exemption form, except TB)
- CRC from the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, including clearance to work with vulnerable adults.
- First Aid/ CPR Level "C" or "HCP"
- Foodsafe Level 1 (or a course deemed equivalent)
- Provincial Violence Prevention Curriculum e-Module (included in HCSW orientation curriculum)

Academic Modules

- MoH, AEST and the PSIs have developed two prototype models for delivering the Health Care Assistant Partnership Pathway. The specific model of delivery will be determined by the PSIs in partnership with participating employers to meet the operational needs and limitations of each organization. The program offers two model frameworks the HCSW enrolled in the program:
  - A **part-time model** where students split their weekly time between work periods and the HCA education program (i.e. study Monday-Wednesday; work Thursday-Friday with the potential opportunity for HAs to schedule workdays Sat/Sun subject to HCSW availability and preference) ; and
  - A **block modular model** where students undertake alternating work periods and education program modules (e.g. four five-week segments or variations of this same pattern).
  - These models follow the established Provincial education standards as the regular HCA program and applicants who are hired into the program are eligible for registration with the BC Care Aide and Community Health Worker Registry upon successful completion.
  - Regardless of which education program an HCSW is enrolled in, all HCSWs are required to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19.

Clinical Experiences

Like the regular HCA educational program, formal training under HCAP requires that learner's complete clinical practicum hours as follows:

- Multi level/ Complex care, including dementia care (210 hours)
  - A minimum of 150 hours must be instructor-led and 50% of hours in morning care.
- Home Support/ Assisted Living/ Group Home (60 hours)

Clinical practicums can take place in the HCSW's place of work but there must be a clear delineation of the learner role (HCA student) from their role as an HCSW in the work environment.

Clinical practicum hours fall towards the end of the education program (following theory and skills lab components) and as such, HCSW may not perform clinical care activities of an HCA until they have successfully completed the program and are registered with the BC Care Aide and Community Health Worker Registry.

Travel Policy

In general, HCSWs should not need to undertake travel that would warrant reimbursement during the program. However, for HCSWs employed in rural and remote communities, some travel may be unavoidable. As an employer, you have a responsibility to follow the guidelines below and, where appropriate, ensure that HSCWs are reimbursed for travel expenses they incur as a result of participating in the HCAP program.

Travel Policy Direction:

1. As an employer, you are directed to reimburse HCSWs for travel expenses they incur related to educational requirements when the following conditions are met:
   a. The HCSW must leave their home community to attend a required in-person educational component of HCAP that cannot be delivered virtually (limited to lab, practicum, or clinical placement), *and;*
   b. the HCSW's home community is a rural or remote community where health care assistant staff are difficult to recruit and retain, *and;*
   c. the HCSW meets eligibility requirements under the regional health authorities' existing travel policy, or the HCSW cannot reasonably be expected to travel to their destination or back to their home within a reasonable time (e.g., must travel 50KM or more each way, must travel to a location with limited access by ferry).
2. As an employer, you must obtain regional health authority approval for reimbursement in advance, *before travel occurs.*
   a. Subject to your regional health authority's existing travel policies, HCSWs are expected to ensure they are using the most cost-effective transportation and accommodation options feasible in their circumstances. This may include, for example, car-pooling and negotiating discounted rates for extended stays in hotels.
   b. Where approval is obtained, you are directed to reimburse HCSWs for the following expenses:
      i. Transportation
      ii. Accommodation
      iii. Meals
   c. Reimbursement rates and limits will be determined by your regional health authority based on their existing travel policies.
3. Travel during the working components of HCAP is not eligible for reimbursement through this program.

As an employer, you will receive clear direction from your regional health authority regarding any proof of eligibility, receipts or documentation required. Questions about eligibility or documentation should be directed to your health authority point of contact. After receiving documentation from you, the health authority will be reimburse you for actual costs incurred as detailed in the employer or subcontractor funding agreement.

Program Completion

As soon as the participant successfully graduates from the education component of the program, the participant is obligated to become registered in the BC Care Aide Registry. Once registration is confirmed, the HCSW term ends. The participant is then obligated to complete a 12-month return-of-service period (ROS period) as an HCA, in accordance with the Return of Service Agreement signed at the program outset.

Employer obligations

Once eligible, the employer should immediately put the participant on its casual care aide list at the worksite where the participant completed the program (the Primary Worksite). Employers should make all reasonable efforts in accordance with their collective agreement commitments to hire HCA graduates into regular HCA (or equivalent, e.g. community health worker) positions.

Upon successful completion of the program, under the Return of Service Agreement, participants are required to accept any available regular care aide positions at the Primary Worksite, unless there is a bona fide reason they are unable to under the *Human Rights Code, RSBC 1996 c210*. Examples of such reasons may include childcare obligations that the employee cannot fulfill while working in the available position(s).

If an employer is unable to offer a regular position at the Primary Worksite, they should make reasonable efforts to offer a regular position at another worksite. At a minimum, the employer must put employees on a casual list at the Primary Worksite – this obligation exists regardless of the availability of any regular positions at any other worksites.

If there are no regular vacancies at the Primary Worksite, employees will have two options for how to fulfill their return of service obligations:

1. They may be placed on the care aide casual list at the Primary Worksite; or

2. They may accept any regular care aide vacancy at any worksite operated by the employer.

If there are no regular care aide vacancies at any of the employer's worksites, then the participant may apply to other worksites located within the same health authority region to satisfy their ROS obligation.

Once a participant accepts a regular position or elects to become casual at the Primary Worksite, the participant is obligated to complete their ROS period at that worksite. However, the participant may elect to post into other care aide positions that become available at the worksite throughout the ROS Period, for instance, if a regular position with a higher FTE becomes available at the worksite.

Return of service commitments are for twelve calendar months, and there are no minimum hours specific to the commitment. Employers should follow minimum hour requirements under their collective agreements for regular or casual positions as applicable.

If an employer deems that there are barriers to fulfilling its hiring obligations, then they should contact the appropriate health authority as early as possible to discuss mitigation strategies.

HCA Registration Gap EFA amendment

In situations where HCSWs have graduated and are awaiting processing of their HCA registration, the employer is obligated to continue scheduling the HCSW for work shifts until the HCA registration is finalized. Employers are encouraged to work with and support HCAP participants in the time leading up to graduation to ensure they are familiar with the registration process, so it is closely synced with the end of their training.

An HCSW that has completed their HCA training and is waiting on their registration with the BC Care Aide and Community Health Worker Registry to be processed will continue to be paid for the HSCW hours they work through the HCAP funding. This permission extends for up to two weeks after graduation.

Failure to fulfil Return of Service

If the HCSW fails to accept employment as an HCA or the 12-month return of service commitment is not fulfilled, they will be required to pay back stipends received and all other education costs (stipend, tuition, fees, cost of necessary books) proportional to the percentage of the return of service period that has not been completed. To determine the applicable tuition and fees amount for a given HCSW, the Employer should contact the Ministry of Health and provide the post-secondary institution and cohort start date for the HCSW.

Program Administration

Funding

HCAP employers are formally able to begin hiring once the Employer Funding Agreement has been signed and returned to their Health Authority regional contact. Sites that fall under a collective agreement must sign and return the HEABC Funding Agreement.

An alternate agreement is available upon request for organizations that are sub-contractors and provide hiring services, in the event that the Health Authority requests this specific agreement. It is critical to follow the terms and conditions of the funding agreement.

Eligible Expenses

The Health Authority will pay up to a prorated maximum of $65,000 per fiscal year for each HCSW based on actual eligible expenses incurred. Eligible expenses are defined as:

a) wages the Employer pays the HCSW;
b) the required weekly stipend the Employer pays the HCSW while the HCSW is attending class or participating in clinical training as part of the Education Program;
c) up to a maximum of 25.6% of the amount paid for a) and b) above for: (i) employer-paid benefits for the HCSW; (ii) the HCSW's self-pay premiums; and (iii) the net incremental amount of payroll expenses; and,
d) the cost the Employer pays for a HCSW's tuberculosis test.

More details on eligible expenses, terms and processes for funding are detailed in the Employer or Subcontractor Funding Agreement.

Invoicing

Employers will prepare a monthly standardized invoice provided by their Health Authority.

Reporting

Employers will be required to provide specific information and data throughout the program including human resources data as necessary to ensure program success. Data elements reported will include:

- Hiring data;
- HCSW schedules and hours worked;
- Progression of HCSWs through the HCA Training Program;
- Site-level staffing and vacancies data (in the same format as the data collected through the Employer Expression of Interest web form);

- o Number of HCA positions filled upon completion of the HCAP program; and,
- o Periodic qualitative feedback on the HCAP program.

In general, data collected will be through the web-based *HCAP Employer Portal.* Employers are required to record significant program events or milestones (hiring, employment start, program completion, etc).

Data will be used to measure the success of the initiative, track the employment status of individuals in the HCSW role, and to distribute funding. In addition to the above, employers may be asked to participate in additional program monitoring or evaluation activities by health authorities or the Ministry of Health.

Getting Help

HCAP Employers may find additional help through the following resources:

- The Health Career Access Program landing page
- The Health Career Access Program mailbox HCAPInfoQuery@gov.bc.ca
- Regional Health Authority HCAP Contacts
- WorkBC: https://www.cachwr.bc.ca/About-the-Registry/Educator-FAQ.aspx
- BC Care Aide and Community Health Worker Registry

Appendix A: Table of Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
AEST	Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training
CBA	Community Bargaining Association
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
CRRP	Criminal Records Review Program
EEOI	Employer Expression of Interest
EFA	Employer Funding Agreement
EL	English Language
FBA	Facilities Bargaining Association
FTE	Full-time Equivalent
HCAP	Health Career Access Program
HCA	Health Care Assistant
HCA-PP	HCA-Partnership Pathway
HCSW	Health Care Support Worker
HEABC	Health Employers Association of British Columbia

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LPN	Licensed Practical Nurse
MoH	Ministry of Health
PEOI	Participant Expression of Interest
PPSG	Safety and Solicitor General
PSI	Post-Secondary Institution
RN	Registered Nurse
VCH	Vancouver Coastal Health

JOB TITLE: Healthcare Support Worker

JOB SUMMARY:

Under the direction of a Registered Nurse or another regulated healthcare professional, performs a variety of non-direct and/or non-clinical healthcare supports to clients, residents, families, and/or visitors in long term care, assisted living and home settings in accordance with the established care plan and safety requirements.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITES:

Participates as an integral member of a healthcare delivery team to provide a variety of non-direct and/or non-clinical healthcare supports to clients, residents, families and/or visitors to meet established needs.

Establishes rapport with clients, residents and families, and assists in promoting physical, emotional, cultural, social, and spiritual well-being. Observes clients and residents, and their environments, to identify and report unsafe conditions, behavioral and/or physical changes to designated supervisor.

Assists with mealtime activities; sets up, welcomes and transports clients or residents to dining areas, sets up and collects meal trays, assists with limited food preparation such as heating prepared food, making tea, coffee, toast, etc. where clients or residents require support.

Provides assistance in carrying out activities; sets up supplies and equipment, assists with transporting clients or residents to designated areas, encourages participation in activities and provides support to clients or residents where required.

Performs housekeeping duties such as sweeping and mopping floors, vacuuming, dusting, washing dishes, and washing, drying, folding, and delivering laundry, where required.

Greets visitors and others in accordance with established safety, security and infection control procedures and guidelines; provides information and/or redirects to appropriate person or area, where required.

Checks and restocks supplies as required, including personal care, first aid, and housekeeping supplies and assists in taking inventory.

Completes and maintains related records electronically, or using documents such as inter-shift communication books, daily log sheets and progress reports related to non-direct and/or non-clinical healthcare activities.

Performs other related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS:

Education, Training and Experience

Grade 10, including successful completion of English 10 or equivalency.

Skills and Abilities

Ability to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing
Ability to deal with others effectively
Ability to organize work
Physical ability to carry out the duties of the position
Ability to operate related equipment

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Fraser Health Region

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Hope	Brenda Dehn	Brenda.Dehn@wcgservices.com	778-860-5452 ext. 1213
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Barriere	Justin Bourke	Justin.Bourke@opendoorgroup.org	778-644-0571
Castlegar	Savina Kelly	Savina.Kelly@kcds.ca	250-551-3224
Chase	Justin Bourke	Justin.Bourke@opendoorgroup.org	778-644-0571
Clearwater	Justin Bourke	Justin.Bourke@opendoorgroup.org	778-644-0571
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