



POWER Ohio Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

More POWER Ohio information including eligibility, benefits, wage supplements and accepted Associate degrees is available at <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcaipcgklclefindmkaj/https://d2hfgw7vtnz2tl.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/POWER-Ohio-Brochure.pdf>

What is the purpose of the program?

The "POWER" in POWER Ohio stands for Powering Optimal Wages and Encouraging Retention. This investment in professionals while they are furthering their education helps programs retain qualified staff members.

Is there a prioritization process for POWER Ohio applications?

Applications will be processed in the order in which they are received for all eligible professionals. OCCRRA will continue to accept professionals for POWER Ohio until funds have been exhausted. A waitlist will be instituted if funding is exceeded.

What is a wage supplement?

A wage supplement is additional monies issued to the professional to increase their current wages. Tied to educational achievements, payments are based upon the professional's role, education and retention milestones.

Are there wage caps for participation?

Yes, depending on the eligible role there are wage caps. Professionals who make less than the wage cap are eligible. For an Assistant Teacher, the wage cap is \$17.00 per hour, for a Lead Teacher, the wage cap is \$20.00 per hour and a Director/Owner, the wage cap is \$23.00.

How do I apply for POWER Ohio wage supplements?

Applying is simple. Log into the Ohio Professional Registry (OPR) <https://registry.occrra.org/> and review your employment and account information in your profile to make sure it is up-to-date. Then click on applications and select the POWER Ohio application. Upload your wage documentation and click submit.

How do I move to a new level or 'level up'?

Complete a new POWER Ohio application once the next level is achieved. Professionals will be paid at the highest level earned as long as funding is available.

How many payments may I receive if I continue to receive Trauma Informed Care Certificates?

The Trauma Informed Care Certificate level is considered a temporary level. Regardless of Trauma Informed Care level, professionals will only receive up to 4 payments.



I am a family child care provider and the lead teacher for my program. Do I qualify for the teacher payments or the director/administrator payments?

You qualify for the director/administrator wage supplement. Teachers who work at your family child care home qualify for the Teacher/Family Child Care Educators wage supplement.

I am currently working on the steps to obtain a CDA. Can I still receive POWER Ohio wage supplements?

No, once a professional receives their CDA Credential, they may apply for that level.

Do all courses to obtain the Associates degree count toward POWER Ohio wage supplements?

Yes, all courses to obtain degrees count toward the wage supplement. Please note that there are total and ECE credit hour requirements for the various levels.

What, if anything, is required from my employer to participate?

A monetary commitment from employers is not required to participate in POWER Ohio wage supplements. Employers need to confirm continued employment for the professional's role of at least working 20 hours per week at multiple points throughout the program. This may consist of a letter on letterhead for retention payments.

How will I receive payments?

Once you have achieved a level, upload your documentation (transcript, credential, continued employment verification) in the appropriate section (credential, education or employment) in your OPR profile. Once verified, the payment will be processed and a check will be sent to the address provided by the professional. The professional will be notified every 6 months to upload proof of employment to receive the next payment until the professional levels up or that approved level is exhausted.

What happens if I receive all the payments from a level and I do not apply for the next level?

The professional's application will be closed and no additional payments will be paid. A professional may apply again once the next level is achieved.

What happens if I am approved for POWER Ohio but I leave my employer?

POWER Ohio wage supplements are a retention tool for programs to retain qualified staff. As such, if a professional leaves employment, wage supplements will stop at that level. A professional may reapply at a new employer once the next level has been achieved.



My application has a status of waitlist. What does that mean and what are the next steps?

POWER Ohio wage supplements are processed as funding is available. Levels 8 and 9 have limited availability. If your application receives a waitlist status, when there is availability for that level, the status will change. Depending on the amount of time from the initial submission, updated information may be requested. Upon receipt, OCCRRRA will process the application and proceed with your wage supplement level.

Do I have to pay taxes on the supplement I receive?

The wage supplement is considered income for IRS purposes. Participants will receive an IRS-1099 form at the end of the year if they received \$600 or more during the calendar year. Recipients are responsible for reporting and paying any personal income taxes due.

I have an active CDA but it is due to expire during the timeframe I am due to receive POWER Ohio Wage Supplements. How will this be handled?

The CDA must remain active during the time when wage supplements are paid. It is the professional's responsibility to renew the CDA or Level Up in POWER Ohio to continue payments.