

Worker Retention Payment

Q&A + Salary Increase Calculator



1. How much is the pay increase and how long does it last?

The Worker Retention Payment (federal funding) gives a **15% pay increase** based on the minimum salary under the *Children's Services Award*. This increase lasts for two years, starting in **December 2024** and ending on **30 November 2026**.

2. How is the payment delivered?

The government provides:

- 10% increase back pay to **December 2024**
- Ongoing 10% increase based on the *Children Services Award*
- From **1 December 2025**, an extra 5% increase.

3. If I earn above the minimum wage, do I still get the increase?

Yes. Even if your salary is above the Award minimum, you still receive the 15% increase, calculated from the Award rate (see Tables).

4. My employer says they applied, but I haven't seen a change. Why?

The 15% increase is paid in two parts:

- 10% from **December 2024**
- 5% from **1 December 2025**

Employers must apply and pass the full increase on to eligible educators. If you haven't seen the increase:

- Ask for written confirmation
- Contact the Union for help
- Join the Union today for support

5. Why haven't I received the 10% pay increase?

If your employer has received the grant, you should already see the 10% increase. If not:

- Ask your employer for written confirmation
- Contact the Union for help

Delays may happen if employers didn't apply, they applied but are still under assessment or didn't pass on the increase.

6. Will there be more pay increases in 2026?

The government hasn't confirmed if the program will continue. This is a chance to join the union and campaign for a sustainable better pay conditions for the sector.

7. What if my pay is wrong or hasn't been updated?

Contact the Union. We'll check your payslip and make sure your employer is following the rules.

Pay increase estimation. Use the tables to calculate your pay increase, check where your qualifications, experience and duties match with the Children Services Award 2010 or the Educational Services (Teachers) Award 2020

Classification		Wages July 1, 2024 (Minimum Hourly) Award rate	New minimum rate (award + 10%)	Additional 10%	Estimated additional 5% from 1 December 2025	Total 15% increase from 1 December 2025 to 30 November 2026
Support Worker		\$ per hour	\$ per hour	\$ per hour	\$ per hour	\$ per hour
Qualification	Award Classification					
Level 1.1 Commencement	Assisting w/ food prep, laundry, cleaning, gardening, driving, maintenance, admin	24.10	26.51	2.41	1.2	3.6
Level 2.1 Commencement	Same duties as level 1, 12 months of experience	24.84	27.32	2.48	1.24	3.72
Level 2.2 After 1 year*	As above	25.66	28.23	2.57	1.3	3.87
Cert III or equivalent Level 3.1 Commencement	As above, with Cert III qualification	27.17	29.89	2.72	1.4	4.12

Children's Services Employee		Wages July 1, 2024 (Minimum Hourly) Award rate	New minimum rate (award + 10%)	Additional 10%	Estimated additional 5% From 1 December 2025	Total 15% increase from 1 December 2025 to 30 November 2026
Qualification	Award Classification					
Level 1.1 Commencement	Interact with children, implement service policies, under supervision always.	24.10	26.51	2.41	1.2	3.6
Cert II or experience Level 2.1 Commencement	Assist with implementation of program and daily care routines, assist with children's health and safety, implement service policies	24.84	27.32	2.48	1.24	3.72
Cert II or experience Level 2.2 After 1 year*	As above, 1 year experience	25.66	28.23	2.57	1.3	3.87
Cert III or equivalent Level 3A.1** Commencement	Assist with implementation of program and daily care routines, assist with children's health and safety, implement service policies	26.75	29.43	2.68	1.34	4.02
Cert III or equivalent Level 3A.2** After 1 year	As above, 1 year experience	27.17	29.89	2.72	1.4	4.12
Cert III or equivalent Level 3.1 Commencement	Assist with prep, implementation and evaluation of programs for children, record observations, assist in direction of untrained staff, quality assurance, follow food safety regulations	27.17	29.89	2.72	1.4	4.12
Cert III or equivalent Level 3.2 After 1 year*	As above, 12 months experience	28.10	30.91	2.81	1.4	4.2
Cert III or equivalent Level 3.3 After 2 years*	As above, 24 months experience, highest level of level 3	28.99	31.89	2.90	1.45	4.35
Level 3.4 (Diploma)	As above, comparable duties to level 3.1-3.3 but has attained a diploma level qualification	30.59	33.65	3.06	1.53	4.59
Less than Diploma Level 4A.1 Commencement	Performs Level 4 duties but holds less than a diploma. Duties: in charge of a group of students, appointed Authorised Supervisor. Responsible for implementation / evaluation of program, supervision of students on placement, ensure	28.99	31.89	2.90	1.45	4.35

	safe environment, record keeping, liaise with families					
Less than Diploma Level 4A.2 After 1 year*	Room / group leader - 1 year + experience; duties as above	29.39	32.33	2.94	1.47	4.41
Less than Diploma Level 4A.3 After 2 years*	Room / group leader - 2 year + experience; duties as above	29.79	32.77	2.98	1.49	4.47
Less than Diploma Level 4A.4 After 3 years*	Room / group leader - 3 year + experience; duties as above	30.21	33.23	3.02	1.51	4.53
Less than Diploma Level 4A.5 After 4 years*	Room / group leader - 4 year + experience; duties as above	30.61	33.67	3.06	1.53	4.59
Diploma Level 4.1 On commencement	Room / group leader - in charge of a group of students, appointed Authorised Supervisor. Responsible for implementation / evaluation of program, supervision of students on placement, ensure safe environment, record keeping, liaise with families	32.00	35.20	3.20	1.6	4.8
Diploma Level 4.2 After 1 year*	Same as above, 12 months experience	32.49	35.74	3.25	1.6	4.9
Diploma Level 4.3 After 2 years*	Same as above, 2 years' experience	32.97	36.27	3.30	1.65	4.95

Children's Services Employee Assistant Director		Wages July 1, 2024 (Minimum Hourly) Award rate	New minimum rate (award + 10%)	Additional 10%	Estimated additional 5% From 1 December 2025	Total 15% increase from 1 December 2025 to 30 November 2026
Qualification	Award Classification					
Less than Diploma Level 5A.1 Commencement	Role/Quals: Less than diploma qualification but does duties comparable of assistant director, service coordinator. Duties: Direct activities of employees, contribute to centre policies, coordinate OHS, general supervision of employees, manage service in absence of the centre director	33.46	36.81	3.35	1.67	5.02
Less than Diploma Level 5A.2 After 1 year*	Same as above, 12 months experience	33.95	37.35	3.40	1.7	5.1

Less than Diploma Level 5A.3 After 2 years*	Same as above, 2 years' experience	34.43	37.87	3.44	1.72	5.16
Diploma Level 5.1 Commencement	Role: Assistant director, children's services coordinator Duties: Direct activities of employees, contribute to centre policies, coordinate OHS, general supervision of employees, manage service in absence of the centre director	33.46	36.81	3.35	1.67	5.02
Diploma Level 5.2 After 1 year*	Same as above, 12 months experience	33.95	37.35	3.40	1.7	5.1
Diploma Level 5.3 After 2 years*	Same as above, 2 years' experience	34.43	37.87	3.44	1.72	5.16
Level 5.4*** ***An Assistant Director who holds an Advanced Diploma (AQF 6/3 year qualified) must be paid no less than Level 5.4	Same as above, Advanced Diploma (AQF 6/3 year qualified)	34.55	38.01	3.46	1.73	5.19
Less than Diploma Level 6A.1 Commencement	Role: performs duty of director, but lower qualification Duties: manage service; supervise implementation of programs; recruit staff; maintain accounts; ensure regulatory compliance; liaise with families; budgeting; leadership and development; develop / maintain policies	38.59	42.45	3.86	1.93	5.79
Less than Diploma Level 6A.2 After 1 year*	As above, min 1 year experience	39.07	42.98	3.91	1.95	5.86
Less than Diploma Level 6A.3 After 2 years*	As above, min 2 years' experience	39.55	43.51	3.96	1.98	5.94

Children's Services Employee Director	Award Classification	Wages July 1, 2024 (Minimum Hourly) Award rate	New minimum rate (award + 10%)	Additional 10%	Estimated additional 5% From 1 December 2025	Total 15% increase from 1 December 2025 to 30 November 2026
Qualification						

Diploma or higher Level 6.1 Commencement	Role: Service director up to 39 children Duties: manage service; supervise implementation of programs; recruit staff; maintain accounts; ensure regulatory compliance; liaise with families; budgeting; leadership and development; develop / maintain policies	38.59	42.45	3.86	1.93	5.79
Diploma or higher Level 6.2 After 1 year*	Role: Service director up to 39 children 1 year+ experience at director level 1 Duties: As above	39.07	42.98	3.91	1.95	5.86
Diploma or higher Level 6.3 After 2 years*	Role: Service director up to 39 children 2 year+ experience at director level 1 Duties: As above	39.55	43.51	3.96	1.98	5.94
Diploma or higher Level 6.4 Commencement	Role: Service Director 40 to 59 children Duties: manage service; supervise implementation of programs; recruit staff; maintain accounts; ensure regulatory compliance; liaise with families; budgeting; leadership and development; develop / maintain policies	41.02	45.12	4.10	2.05	6.15
Diploma or higher Level 6.5 After 1 year*	Role: Service director, 40 - 59 children Duties: As above 1 year+ experience at director level 2	41.40	45.54	4.14	2.07	6.21
Diploma or higher Level 6.6 After 2 years*	Role: Service director, 40 - 59 children Duties: As above 2 year+ experience at director level 2	41.89	46.08	4.19	2.09	6.28
Diploma or higher Level 6.7 Commencement	Role: Service director 60+ children Duties: manage service; supervise implementation of programs; recruit staff; maintain accounts; ensure regulatory compliance; liaise with families; budgeting; leadership and development; develop / maintain policies	42.39	46.63	4.24	2.12	6.36
Diploma or higher Level 6.8 After 1 year *	Role: service director 60+ children Duties: As above	42.88	47.17	4.29	2.14	6.4

	1 year + experience at director level 3					
Diploma or higher Level 6.9 After 2 years*	Role: service director 60+ children Duties: As above 2 years + experience at director level 3	43.36	47.70	4.34	2.17	6.51

Teachers – Long day care centres	Wages July 1, 2024 (Minimum Hourly) Award rate	New minimum rate (award + 10%)	Additional 10%	Estimated additional 5% From 1 December 2025	Total 15% increase from 1 December 2025 to 30 November 2026
Qualification	\$ per hour	\$ per hour	\$ per hour	\$ per hour	\$ per hour
Bachelor of Early Childhood Education Level 1 Commencement	36.74	40.41	3.67	1.83	5.50
Bachelor of Early Childhood Education Level 2 Teacher with proficient accreditation / registration	40.16	44.17	4.02	2.01	5.86
Bachelor of Early Childhood Education Level 3 3 years at Level 2	43.72	48.09	4.37	2.18	6.55
Bachelor of Early Childhood Education Level 4 3 years at Level 3	47.28	52.00	4.73	2.36	7.09
Bachelor of Early Childhood Education Level 5 Highly accomplished / lead teacher accreditation	50.83	55.92	5.08	2.54	7.62