



**Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)**

Fédération des enseignantes et des enseignants  
de l'élémentaire de l'Ontario (FEEO)

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## **Teacher and Occasional Teacher Compensation Arbitration: Frequently Asked Questions**

### **QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ARBITRATION HEARING**

#### ***What is this arbitration hearing about?***

In December 2023, ETFO members ratified the 2022-2026 Teacher/Occasional Teacher Central Agreement ('the Central Agreement'). The negotiated terms included that increases to teacher and occasional teacher compensation (i.e., salary grids, wage schedules and allowances) for the September 1, 2022 to August 31, 2026 period would be referred to arbitration for a final and binding decision.

The Memorandum of Understanding about compensation between ETFO, the government and the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) can be found [here](#).

#### ***When did the arbitration hearing on compensation take place?***

The hearing took place on Wednesday, April 17, 2024. Submissions were made by ETFO, the government and OPSBA before a board of arbitration chaired by Arbitrator William Kaplan.

#### ***When will a decision be issued by the board of arbitration?***

Under the terms of the Central Agreement, every reasonable effort must be made by the board of arbitration to provide a decision within **60 days** of the conclusion of the hearing. ETFO will provide an update with the results of the decision as soon as it is made available.

#### ***When should I expect to receive retroactive pay owed to me as a result of the compensation award?***

Any compensation items that are retroactive should be paid no later than 30 days following ratification of a member's local collective agreement. So, those members who have already ratified local agreement should expect to see increases 30 days following the decision. However, in those locals where bargaining is ongoing, their compensation won't be affected until the conclusion of local bargaining.

#### ***Can the award on compensation be challenged in court by ETFO, OPSBA or the government?***

No. The board of arbitration's compensation award is final and binding.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT ELIGIBILITY

### ***Can you please explain who is eligible to receive retroactive compensation increases?***

Eligibility for “retro pay” is limited to those individuals who worked as ETFO members (in teacher and/or occasional teacher roles only) any time between September 1, 2022 and the present. This includes members who received paid sick leave during this period of time.

### ***I started working as an ETFO member after September 1, 2022. Will the compensation increases be applied to my wages?***

Yes, your salary grids, wages schedules and allowances will be revised to reflect the increases that will result from compensation award. However, you would only receive retroactive pay back to the date you started working for your school board.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT LEAVES OF ABSENCE AND RETIREMENTS

### ***How will the compensation retroactive payment be made if I am currently on an unpaid leave of absence?***

School boards will be required to revise current wages in their respective collective agreements in accordance with the award. Members on leave will be placed on the applicable, revised compensation grid upon their return to work. Any retroactive payment owing will be made through each school board’s regular payroll systems, regardless of your leave status.

Members on an unpaid leave of absence who have additional questions about their specific situation should contact their school board.

### ***I am on a self-funded leave (e.g., a “four over five” leave, a “three over four” leave, etc.) this school year. How would I be receiving the compensation award?***

A self-funded leave will not affect your retroactive pay, provided you were working during the period in question. If you are currently receiving pay during your leave year, this pay should be adjusted upward based on the increased grids.

If you have questions about your specific entitlement, you should contact your school board directly.

### ***What impact will the compensation award have on members who are on long-term disability (LTD)?***

Your LTD payment is based on your insurable earnings as of your LTD start date. OTIP will adjust for retroactive salary increases on LTD claim payments if applicable. In addition, those on claim will have their payments adjusted as a result of the increases to insurable earnings. Once the compensation award is issued, it will take OTIP some time to review increased grid rates and adjust the LTD payment accordingly, where applicable.

***I am currently on a leave and receiving Employment Insurance (EI) benefits. How will the retroactive pay owing from the compensation award affect me?***

Retroactive pay is specifically excluded from consideration as earnings during the benefit period, as it is considered income earned during the period worked. However, if your insurable earnings were less than the maximum insurable amount your EI benefits could be adjusted upwards slightly based on the increased earnings.

The maximum insurable amounts in the last few years have been:

- 2024: \$63,200
- 2023: \$61,500
- 2022: \$60,300

If you have questions about your specific entitlement, you should contact Service Canada directly.

***I recently retired. Am I eligible for a compensation retroactive payment?***

If you were receiving compensation as an ETFO teacher or occasional teacher between September 1, 2022 and present, you would be eligible for a retroactive wage adjustment. Any retroactive payment owing will be made through each school board's regular payroll systems to the banking information the board has on file. If you have not changed your banking info, no further action should be required on your part.

Retirees who have additional questions about their specific situation should contact their school board.

***Will the compensation award be applied to my pension?***

Yes, the compensation adjustment is pensionable income and will count towards members' pension credit calculation.

Retirees who have additional questions about their specific situation should contact the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP).