

Press Release

OVER \$450 MILLION IN WAGE CREDITS FOR MORE THAN 95,000 EMPLOYERS BY 30 JUNE 2020

Over 95,000 employers in Singapore will receive over \$450 million in payouts by 30 June 2020 under the Wage Credit Scheme (WCS).

2 Through the WCS payouts in June 2020, the Government will co-fund 20% of qualifying wage increases given in 2019, 2018, and 2017 to more than 800,000 Singaporean employees earning a gross monthly wage of up to \$5,000.

3 In Budget 2020, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance Heng Swee Keat enhanced the WCS to support wage increases for Singaporean workers. The Government co-funding levels for qualifying wage increases in 2019 and 2020 was raised by five percentage points to 20% and 15% respectively. The gross monthly wage ceiling was also raised from \$4,000 to \$5,000 for both years, which enabled more to qualify for the wage credit. Employers eligible for the Budget 2020 enhancements will receive the supplementary payout for the enhancement in June 2020.

4 Employers do not need to apply to receive the WCS payouts. Eligible employers will receive letters from the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS) by 30 June 2020 informing them of their payout amount. In line with Singapore's Smart Nation efforts, IRAS has fully adopted digital payment modes for WCS payouts, and will no longer issue cheques. As such, the payouts will be credited directly to employers' registered bank accounts through PayNow Corporate¹ or GIRO².

5 Any appeals regarding WCS payouts must be submitted to IRAS by 31 August 2020, and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

6 Please refer to the Annex for details on the WCS. For more information, you may visit the IRAS website (www.iras.gov.sg/irasHome/wcs.aspx), or contact IRAS directly at 1800-352-4727 or email wcs@iras.gov.sg.

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¹ Companies can sign up for PayNow Corporate by linking their company's UEN (without suffix) to their bank account via internet banking. For assistance, please approach the banks.

² Once registered for GIRO for Income Tax/GST, this will be the default payment mode for IRAS' related transactions such as tax payments.

For media enquiries, please contact:

Name: Ms Sherry Goh
Senior Associate (Corporate Communications)
DID: +65-63327336
Email: sherry_goh@mof.gov.sg

Name: Ms Clara Ng
Manager (Corporate Communications)
DID: +65-63512069
Email: clara_ng@iras.gov.sg

About Ministry of Finance

The Ministry of Finance aims to advance the well-being and development of Singapore through Finance. The Ministry strives to achieve a balanced budget through prudent and sustainable fiscal policies, foster a regulatory environment conducive to business and enterprise, ensure prudent investment of the Government's reserves and other public funds, and sets policies for government procurement, customs regulation, accounting standards and business regulation.

We achieve this together with our departments (Accountant-General's Department, Singapore Customs and Vital), and statutory boards/bodies (Accounting & Corporate Regulatory Authority, Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore, Tote Board and Singapore Accountancy Commission).

For more information, please visit www.mof.gov.sg.

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About Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore

The Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS) is the largest revenue agency in Singapore responsible for the administration of taxes. We are a partner of the community in nation-building and inclusive growth. We support Singapore's sustainable economic growth by fostering a competitive tax environment and administering Government schemes.

Visit IRAS' website at www.iras.gov.sg

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Annex

WAGE CREDIT SCHEME (WCS) FAQs

What is the WCS and how is it different from the Jobs Support Scheme (JSS)?

The WCS was introduced in 2013 as a three-year scheme, and subsequently extended to 2020, to support businesses embarking on transformation efforts and encourage sharing of productivity gains with workers. The WCS co-funds wage increases. This is unlike the JSS, which co-funds current wages. The JSS was introduced only in 2020 to provide wage support to employers and help enterprises retain their local employees during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Budget 2020, we also enhanced the WCS.

- The gross monthly wage ceiling was raised from \$4,000 to \$5,000 for 2019 and 2020 qualifying wage increases.
- The Government co-funding levels for 2019 and 2020 qualifying wage increases were raised to 20% and 15% respectively.

Who is eligible?

In any calendar year from 2013 to 2020, employers can qualify for WCS payouts if they give an increase of at least \$50 in monthly wage (up to the Gross Monthly Wage ceiling³) to Singaporean employees who:

- a. Are on their payroll for at least three months in the qualifying year, and
- b. Received CPF contributions for at least three months in the preceding year.

Employees on the payroll of a different employer in the preceding year can still qualify under the new employer for WCS, if they are on the payroll of the new employer for at least three months in the qualifying year.

Singapore Citizen employees who received CPF contributions, including full-time, part-time, and casual employees, are covered by the WCS.

Employers in the following government-related entities or entities not registered in Singapore, are not eligible for the WCS:

- a. Local Government Agencies, including Organs of State, Ministries and Departments, Statutory Boards
- b. Government and Government-Aided Schools
- c. People's Association Services and Grassroots Units
- d. High Commissions, Embassies, Trade Offices, Consulates
- e. Unregistered Local/Foreign Entities
- f. Foreign Military Units
- g. Representative offices of Foreign companies, Foreign Government Agencies, Foreign Trade Associations, Foreign Chambers, Foreign Non-profit Organisations, and Foreign Law Practices
- h. Bank Representative Offices/ Insurance Representative Offices/ Other Financial Representative Offices (registered with MAS)
- i. News Bureaus (which are representative offices)
- j. International Organisations

What wage increases qualify for WCS payouts?

³ As announced in Budget 2020, the qualifying gross monthly wage ceiling was raised from \$4,000 to \$5,000 for 2019 and 2020 qualifying wage increases.

Wage increases are computed on an annual basis, based on the difference between the gross monthly wage of an employee in the qualifying year and the gross monthly wage of the employee in the preceding year. For each qualifying year, WCS payouts will be paid to the eligible employer for all the months in the year in which CPF contributions are made by him for the covered employee.

For the June 2020 payout, new wage increases given to employees in 2019 over 2018, as well as sustained wage increases previously given to covered employees in 2018 over 2017, and in 2017 over 2016, will qualify for WCS payouts. All wage increases and sustained wage increases must be at least \$50 to qualify for WCS payouts.

Will eligible employers receive WCS payouts if they do not use GIRO or PayNow Corporate?

No, these employers will have their WCS payouts retained until they have successfully registered for GIRO for Income Tax/GST or PayNow Corporate.

The last WCS payout will be made in March 2021. Unclaimed payouts will be retained in the employers' WCS account until the scheme closure date (to be announced in 2021). Employers will no longer be eligible to claim the payouts after that.

When will eligible employers with GIRO or PayNow Corporate receive WCS payouts?

For each year that an employer qualifies for WCS payouts, the employer will receive the WCS payouts at the end of March in the subsequent year.

Employers who are eligible for the Budget 2020 enhancements for 2019 wage increases will receive a supplementary payout in June 2020.

IRAS, which is the administrator of the WCS, will notify the employer of his payout by post. Employers do not need to apply to receive the WCS payouts.

How do I register for PayNow Corporate?

You can set up your PayNow Corporate account instantly, simply by linking your UEN / NRIC / FIN to your bank account via internet banking. For example, ROC (2019XXXXXA), ROB (531XXXXXA), UEN (T19LLXXXXA). For assistance, please approach your bank.

How do I register for GIRO with IRAS?

Businesses, including clubs and associations, may register for GIRO by completing an [application form](#) for IRAS' and the relevant bank's processing. Upon successful processing, a notification letter will be mailed to the business' registered address.

Individuals (i.e. those who hire and contribute CPF to employees using a CPF Submission Number which is NRIC/FIN) can set up for GIRO instantly through online application.

Upon successful GIRO registration, GIRO will be the default payment mode for IRAS' related transactions such as tax payments.

How can I check if I have GIRO or PayNow Corporate?

Employers who wish to check if they have a GIRO account for Income Tax/GST may log in to myTax Portal and select "Account". If a payment plan is reflected, there is an existing GIRO arrangement. To check if you have a PayNow Corporate account, please approach your bank.

When do employers have to pay CPF contributions?

CPF contributions are due at the end of each month and must be paid by the 14th of the following month. If the 14th day falls on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday, CPF contributions must be paid immediately on the next working day.

Upon detection of late payment or non-payment of CPF contributions, actions will be taken to recover any arrears or CPF contributions owing. Interest on late payment and a composition amount may be imposed on the defaulting employers. For more information, please visit www.cpf.gov.sg/Employers.