

Nova Scotia Department of Health

Subject: Nova Scotia's Nursing Strategy *Relocation Allowance Program*

Effective date: April 2007
Review date: March 2009

Approved by: Original signed by Donna Denney
Nursing Policy Advisor

I. POLICY STATEMENT

The Nova Scotia Department of Health is committed to addressing the health human resource requirements for a quality health care system. The Nova Scotia Department of Health supports *Nova Scotia's Nursing Strategy, April 2001*, and is committed to the implementation of initiatives identified in that document.

To support efforts in attracting and retaining the best qualified nurses within the national and international nurse-marketing arena, the Department will support the relocation allowance initiative for eligible Registered Nurses (RNs) and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) moving to Nova Scotia for employment.

II. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Relocation Allowance: Financial support for relocation to the province for employment opportunities and career advancement in the field of nursing.
- 2.2 Return-in-Service Commitment: A written contract stating the employee's commitment to provide service for a period of one year as a RN or LPN in return for an investment made by the employer.

III. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

- 3.1 attract qualified nurses:
 - 3.1.1 encourage nurses educated or previously employed in Nova Scotia to return to the province for career opportunities
 - 3.1.2 encourage nursing professionals from outside the province or country to relocate to Nova Scotia for career opportunities
- 3.3 achieve a net gain in the nursing workforce

IV. APPLICATION

This policy applies to:

- 4.1 Eligible employees including Registered Nurses (RNs) and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs):
 - 4.1.1 from outside the province and/or country
 - 4.1.2 hired to work in a permanent full time, part time or temporary position of at least one year's duration
 - 4.1.3 hired to work in a position which requires them to be a practising nurse

- 4.1.4 hired to work in a casual position but have obtained a permanent full time, part time or temporary position of at least one year's duration within 90 days of their date of hire.
- 4.2 Eligible employers including District Health Authorities (DHAs); IWK Health Centre; VON; Department of Health Home Care Nova Scotia; as well as Long Term Care facilities funded by the Department of Health

V. POLICY DIRECTIVES

5.1 Employee Responsibilities

- 5.1.1 The employee will be responsible for review of the terms and conditions for relocation allowance as provided by the employer and, upon acceptance, comply with those terms and conditions.
- 5.1.2 The employee will be responsible for the submission of a claim for expenses, supported by necessary documentation, within one year of start date of employment.
- 5.1.3 The employee will provide a one-year return-in-service commitment following licensure to the employer. The employee will be responsible for repayment of relocation allowance if they voluntarily terminate employment prior to completion of the one-year commitment. Repayment will be pro-rated based on the proportion of time remaining in the agreement.

5.2 Employer Responsibilities

- 5.1.1 The employer will be responsible for administration of the relocation allowance initiative in accordance with criteria set in this policy.
- 5.1.2 The employer will be responsible for providing information regarding relocation allowance to the eligible employee and ensuring their understanding and acceptance.
- 5.1.3 The employer will be responsible for securing a one-year return-in-service commitment in their organization.
- 5.1.4 The employer will be responsible for determining compliance with allowable moving expenses as submitted by the employee which include:
- 5.1.4.1 Travel expenses to move the employee and members of her/his household, including:
- transportation - *economy airfare, train, mileage as per employer policy or \$0.3885/km, ferries, highway tolls*
 - meals - *as per employer policy or \$6-breakfast/\$12-lunch/\$20-dinner (no receipts necessary)*
 - accommodations - *reasonable lodging during travel*
- 5.1.4.2 Transportation and storage costs for household effects
- 5.1.4.3 The cost of cancelling an unexpired lease
- 5.1.4.4 The cost of selling a former home, including legal fees and real estate commissions, as well as legal fees for the purchase of a new property
- 5.1.4.5 The cost to replace automobile permits and driving licenses
- 5.1.4.6 The cost of utility hook ups and disconnections
- 5.1.4.7 The cost of interim lodging (a per diem rate of \$20 may be applied if there is no formal charge for lodging; i.e., lodge with

friend or family) and meal expenses in Nova Scotia as PREAPPROVED by the employer, not to exceed 14 days.

- 5.1.5 Submission of a claim for reimbursement of expenses MUST be supported by original receipts, unless otherwise indicated in this policy. The employer will be responsible for ensuring submissions include all necessary documentation. The employer is required to retain all original documents and receipts which may be required by the Department of Health for review.
 - 5.1.6 The employer has final approval in determining the eligibility of any and all expenses claimed by the employee. The maximum relocation allowance available is \$5000 per person. In the case that more than one member of the household is eligible for relocation allowance, each person must submit a claim with original receipts as per 5.1.3 and 5.1.4. The same expenses may not be claimed for reimbursement more than once.
 - 5.1.7 The employer will be responsible for completing a quarterly report (Appendix I) and appending it to an invoice for submission to the Department of Health for reimbursement. Reports will be due within 30 days from the end of each fiscal quarter (July 31, October 31, January 31, and April 30). Reports will include:
 - Name of organization
 - Employee's name
 - Professional designation (RN/LPN)
 - Position filled (permanent/temporary and FT/PT)
 - Clinical area
 - Relocated from
 - Learned of vacancy from
 - Year of graduation
 - Amount of relocation allowance
 - Repayment received (where applicable)
 - 5.1.8 The employer will be responsible for retaining complete records for each claim made for relocation allowance in accordance with generally accepted accounting and audit procedures.
 - 5.1.9 The employer will be responsible for application of repayment procedures if an employee voluntarily terminates employment prior to completion of the one-year service contract. Repayment will be pro-rated based on the proportion of time remaining in the contract. The employer will notify the Department of Health of each breach of contract and pro-rated amount charged the employee - refer to Appendix I, Nursing Strategy - Relocation Allowance - Quarterly Report.
- 5.3 Nursing Policy Advisor Responsibilities
- 5.3.1 The Nursing Policy Advisor will be responsible for review of quarterly reports and timely reimbursement of relocation allowance expenses to employers.
 - 5.3.2 The Nursing Policy Advisor will be responsible for the collation of information provided by employers through the quarterly reporting process and for developing an Annual Report based on that information.

VI. POLICY GUIDELINES

- 6.1 The Nursing Policy Advisor will participate in the Department of Health Business Planning process and make recommendations for Departmental contribution to the Relocation Allowance initiative. Recommendations will be based on a yearly review of program results and priorities within the Nursing Strategy.
- 6.2 In extraordinary circumstances, the return-in-service agreement may be renegotiated between employers should the employee assume a position elsewhere in the province.

VII. ACCOUNTABILITIES

- 7.1 The Nursing Policy Advisor is responsible for funding allocations on a yearly basis in accordance with up-to-date health human resource requirements and other relevant documentation.
- 7.2 Employers are responsible for the application of the policy in the delivery of relocation allowances to employees.

VIII. MONITORING

- 8.1 The Nursing Policy Advisor is responsible for monitoring policy implementation.
- 8.2 The Nursing Policy Advisor is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the program on recruitment; specifically, the effectiveness of relocation allowances on recruitment of nurses from outside of Nova Scotia and achieving a net gain in the province's nursing workforce.

X. ENQUIRIES

All enquiries relating to the interpretation and application of this policy should be referred to:

Nursing Policy Advisor	Phone: 424-0122
Department of Health	Fax: 424-6690
P.O. Box 488	E-mail: NursingStrategy@gov.ns.ca
Halifax, NS B3J 2R8	

XI. APPENDICES

Appendix I *Nursing Strategy - Relocation Allowance Program - Employer Quarterly Report Form*

NURSING STRATEGY – RELOCATION ALLOWANCE – EMPLOYER QUARTERLY REPORT

Requested by: _____
 (name of organization/facility)

for reimbursement of Relocation Allowance funds provided to eligible employees for the period:

April-June July-September October-December January-March Year _____

EMPLOYEE'S NAME	PROF. DESIGNATION		POSITION FILLED Permanent/Temporary FT/PT	CLINICAL AREA	RELOCATED FROM	LEARNED OF VACANCY FROM *	YEAR OF GRADUATION	AMOUNT OF RELOCATION ALLOWANCE
	RN	LPN						
							Total Box A	

* see next page for categories

NURSING STRATEGY – RELOCATION ALLOWANCE – EMPLOYER QUARTERLY REPORT

Repayments received as per 5.1.9 of the Relocation Allowance Policy.

EMPLOYEE'S NAME	RELOCATION AMOUNT PAID	# MONTHS NOT COMPLETED	CALCULATED REPAYMENT AMOUNT	REPAYMENT RECEIVED

Total Box B

* Learned of Vacancy From:	
Job Fair	JF
School	S
Internet	I
Newspaper	N
Word of Mouth	W
Professional Journal	PJ
Other <i>(please specify)</i>	O

<i>TOTAL BOX A</i>	
<i>– TOTAL BOX B</i>	
= TOTAL FUNDING REQUESTED	

Employer verification: I certify that the amounts in this claim meet the terms and conditions as outlined in the DoH Policy *Nova Scotia's Nursing Strategy Relocation Allowance*.

Name *(please print)*: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

DOH USE ONLY	
Date Received:	Authorized Signature: