



Dear Colleague,

I am pleased to tell you that after months of working behind the scenes, we have received written confirmation from the Ministry of Health that confirms that the Ministry will implement Arbitrator Kaplan's Award to provide pandemic pay to our members. The Government is working with the Hospitals and paymasters to put in place the necessary funding agreements with 'the intention that payments would be made to residents in the middle of October 2021'.

Those of you who were members last year will know that when pandemic pay was announced by the Ontario Government, we were shocked that our members were not on the list. Along with our own advocacy we mobilized countless allies who wrote the Government advocating on our behalf, including our employer, the Ontario Teaching Hospitals. We pursued every conceivable route to help the Government understand the critical role that residents play in our healthcare system. But the Government refused to include us on their list.

We were determined to not give up and as we entered the recent round of negotiations, we searched for a way to include a request for pandemic pay despite the Government's legislation that any compensation increase be limited to 1% per year for the next three years. Thanks to the diligence and brilliance of our legal team and an exhaustive review of the flurry of Government regulations during the pandemic, we found the legislative framework to make the legal case for our much-deserved pandemic pay. During our recent negotiations we were able to reach agreement with the employer on every issue except for pandemic pay. As a result, we took this sole issue to Arbitration. Both sides met with the Arbitrator on the evening of Thursday June 10th and on June 14th, Mr. William Kaplan, one of Ontario's most respected Arbitrators, released his decision. In his decision, Mr. Kaplan ruled that any resident who worked at least 16 weeks, in the period July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021, will receive pandemic pay based on a 60-hour work week together with a \$1000 lump sum. In other words, all our

members who worked at least 16 weeks between July 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021, will receive a gross payment of \$4840!

Since the decision was awarded, we have continued to work tirelessly to ensure that the Government complied with the decision and I am pleased that we now have their commitment in writing. I want to personally thank our employer, the Ontario Teaching Hospitals as well as all our Postgraduate Deans for their continued advocacy and support.

While we were thrilled by this decision, we are sad that the Arbitrator had no way of extending this Award to the period prior to July 1, 2020. To everyone who stepped up in March 2020 to help battle the pandemic in the early days but graduated before July 1, 2020 – thank you. We explored every available route to have the Award apply to you, but it was not possible.

Thank you to all our members, this year and last, who demonstrated that in the face of adversity, even when the Government chose not to bolster our morale by including us on the pandemic pay list, that we not only showed up for work every day but that in the face of adversity, we went above and beyond in delivering the best patient care possible.

Warm regards,

Dr. Carl White Ulysse
PARO President



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PARO
Suite 1901
400 University Avenue
Toronto, On M5G 1S5

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