

Your 15% pay rise is locked in, and there's more to come...

YOUR PAYRISE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

United Workers Union Members fought hard to secure a historic 15% pay rise for educators

The Union pay rise is provided through the government Worker Retention Grant, and is available to the vast majority of educators working in early education.

This has meant that most educators on award wages will have received pay rises of 18.5 per cent this year – 10% in December, 3.5% in July, and another 5% rise this December.

These pay increases set a new standard in early childhood education and care – there is no going back!

1. What makes up the pay rise?

15% of your hard-earned pay rise comes from the historic sector-wide Union agreement and Worker Retention Grant. An additional 3.5% comes from the annual award-based wage review, fought for by Union members. Our wage table has more detail and specific rates. **Most educators are earning \$11,000+ a year more than they were in 2024!**

- 10% increase in December 2024
- 3.5% increase in July 2025
- 5% increase in December 2025.

2. How much will my wage increase?

In total this year, most educators will receive a pay rise of more than \$10,000! Union members have fought hard for this pay rise and educators deserve every cent! Your wage increase depends on your qualification, role and years of service. Our projected wage table below has more detail and shows you just what impact these pay rises have on your hourly, weekly and annual salary.

3. I'm still waiting for the 10% increase - when will I receive it?

The 10% increase started in **December 2024** for educators covered by the Worker Retention Grant. If your employer signed up for the grant, you should already see this in your pay. If you don't:

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

At first, the Department took a while to process applications, but then some employers delayed passing the increase on or didn't even apply at all. If you think this has happened, join the Union and get support now.

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4. What's the difference between the 15%, and the 2026 award increase?

- The 15% Worker Retention Grant came in two parts.
 - 10% in December 2024.
 - 5% in December 2025.
- Award increases: Permanent changes to minimum pay rates starting January 2026.
- The 15% is a temporary payment due to end in November 2026. The plan is for the Award rate to match the 15% by this time, so that no educator will go backwards.

5. What happens in November 2026 when the Worker Retention Grant ends?

The government has told the Fair Work Commission that wages in the Children's Services Award should go up like this:

- 5% increase in January 2026
- 10% increase in December 2026
- More increases in 2028 and 2029 up to 23% - depending on your classification

This means by the time the Worker Retention Grant ends on **30 November 2026**, the Award will have gone up by **15%**, matching the grant increase. The government's plan is designed so educators don't lose pay when the grant finishes. While the final decision isn't made yet, this proposal is a strong sign that the 15% increase will be locked into the Award.

6. Why isn't every educator receiving the same pay increase?

Not all employers signed up for the Union-won 15% worker retention grant.

- The 15% increase comes from the Worker Retention Grant and applies to employers who signed up to the grant. Union members across thousands of centres have campaigned successfully for their employer to sign up this year and by December, those educators will be \$10,000 better off. If you want to make sure you get better wages – join your Union today.
- The Award increases start in 2026 and apply to everyone covered by the Award. The plan is for the award to eventually match the wages of educators on the 15% Union pay increase. This is a huge win and only happened because of the hard work of Union members.

If you're not sure which applies to you, contact your Union.

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7. What if my employer refuses to sign on to the 15% increase?

If your employer won't sign up for the Worker Retention Grant, you still have options:

- **Join the Union** — we can support you and help campaign for your employer to sign on.
- Use the EarlyEd Quality Check (EEQC) - this new tool shows which centres are paying the Union-won increase and lets you report your pay. You can see where you might earn more and hold employers accountable.

8. My employer said they applied for the 15% - why haven't I seen any change in my pay?

The 15% increase comes from the Worker Retention Grant that was paid in two installments – 10% from December 2024 and 5% from December 2025. Employers must apply and then pass the full increase on to eligible educators. If your employer says they applied but you haven't seen the increase:

- Ask for written confirmation
- Contact the Union immediately

We've already helped thousands of educators get their 15% increase. **Join the Union today** so we can support you too. The first 10% was applicable from December 2024. The next pay increase is due in the **first full pay cycle** after 1 December 2025.

9. My employer received the 15%, but my base rate went down - is that allowed?

No. Employers must pass on the full 15% increase to eligible educators. If your base rate has dropped, that's not allowed. Contact the Union straight away.

10. How do I know if my centre has received the funding?

Ask your employer for written confirmation. If they won't tell you or you're unsure, contact the Union, we can check for you.

11. How is the Union fighting for better wages beyond this funding?

Union members are relentless in their fight for better wages and are winning. We are pushing for:

- Faster Award increases
- A renegotiation of the sector wide union agreement covering over 45,000 workers and 516 employers.
- Annual minimum wage review in July each year that helps everyone with the cost of living.

Join the Union to help us win more for you. Together we've already achieved a 15% increase, and we want to keep on winning.

YOUR PAYRISE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

12. Will there be more pay increases in 2026?

Yes. Here's what's coming!

- The award increases planned for next year are:
 - +5% in January 2026
 - +10% in December 2026

These will apply to all workers who are on award wages & not receiving the current worker retention grant.

- Even if you're already getting the 15% Worker Retention Grant, you could also see another increase in July 2026 from the annual wage review - this is something Union members fight for every year and will apply to everyone.
- Plus, over 45,000 educators across the country from 516 employers are covered by the biggest-ever sector wide agreement - the Multi-Employer Agreement (MEA). This agreement is due for renegotiation in November 2026, giving Union members another chance to win even better wages and conditions.
- More increases are also planned for the award in 2028 and 2029 depending on your classification.

13. I'm on the multi-employer agreement; will I get a pay increase next year?

Over 45,000 educators across 500 employers are on the multi-employer agreement. It is the biggest sector wide agreement ever. This agreement is due for renegotiation in November 2026, giving Union members another chance to win even better wages and conditions. The more members there are the more educators can win.

If you are part of the sector agreement, depending on your current wages, you could see another increase in July 2026 from the annual wage review - this is something Union members fight for every year. Last year the majority of educators covered by the sector agreement got a 3.5% increase.

14. What should I do if I think my pay is wrong or hasn't been updated?

Keep your payslips and contact the Union. We'll check your pay and take action if your employer isn't following the rules. Already this year, the Union has won back almost \$12million for our members.

Union members built this tool so that educators can keep employers accountable.

[Earlyedqualitycheck.org.au](https://earlyedqualitycheck.org.au)

Join your union now to keep winning better pay.



2025 Pay Rate Projection – Award Rates Only

These pay tables apply only to educators on Award rates before the increase.
 If you're on an EBA or already earning above Award rates, your pay may be different — contact your Union for advice.

EDUCATOR												
		AWARD-based wages July 1 2024		AFTER 10% paid December 2024		AFTER 3.5% paid July 1 2025		AFTER 5% paid December 2025		INCREASE BY DECEMBER 2025		
Qualification	Award classification	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Hourly	Weekly	Annual
No qualification	Children's services employee level 1.1 on starting	\$910.90	\$24.10	\$1,001.99	\$26.51	\$1,037.06	\$27.45	\$1,084.20	\$28.69	\$4.59	\$173.30	\$9,040.64
Cert II	Children's services employee level 2.1 on starting	\$944.00	\$24.84	\$1,038.40	\$27.32	\$1,074.74	\$28.28	\$1,123.60	\$29.57	\$4.73	\$179.60	\$9,369.16
Cert II	Children's services employee level 2.2 after 1 year	\$975.00	\$25.66	\$1,072.50	\$28.23	\$1,110.04	\$29.22	\$1,160.49	\$30.54	\$4.88	\$185.49	\$9,676.83
No qualification/WA	Children's services employee level 3A.1 on starting	\$1,016.40	\$26.75	\$1,118.04	\$29.43	\$1,157.17	\$30.45	\$1,209.77	\$31.84	\$5.09	\$193.37	\$10,087.73
No qualification/WA	Children's services employee level 3A.2 after 1 year	\$1,032.30	\$27.17	\$1,135.53	\$29.89	\$1,175.27	\$30.93	\$1,228.70	\$32.34	\$5.17	\$196.40	\$10,245.54
Cert III	Children's services employee level 3.1 on starting	\$1,032.30	\$27.17	\$1,135.53	\$29.89	\$1,175.27	\$30.93	\$1,228.70	\$32.34	\$5.17	\$196.40	\$10,245.53
Cert III	Children's services employee level 3.2 after 1 year	\$1,067.90	\$28.10	\$1,174.69	\$30.91	\$1,215.80	\$32.00	\$1,271.07	\$33.45	\$5.35	\$203.17	\$10,598.86
Cert III	Children's services employee level 3.3 after 2 years	\$1,101.50	\$28.99	\$1,211.65	\$31.89	\$1,254.06	\$33.00	\$1,311.06	\$34.50	\$5.52	\$209.56	\$10,932.35
Diploma	Children's services employee level 3.4 (Diploma)	\$1,162.40	\$30.59	\$1,278.64	\$33.65	\$1,323.39	\$34.83	\$1,383.55	\$36.41	\$5.82	\$221.15	\$11,536.77
Performs duties of a level 4 without a diploma	Children's services employee level 4A.1 on commencement	\$1,101.50	\$28.99	\$1,211.65	\$31.89	\$1,254.06	\$33.00	\$1,311.06	\$34.50	\$5.52	\$209.56	\$10,932.34
Performs duties of a level 4 without a diploma	Children's services employee level 4A.2 after 1 year	\$1,116.90	\$29.39	\$1,228.59	\$32.33	\$1,271.59	\$33.46	\$1,329.39	\$34.98	\$5.59	\$212.49	\$11,085.19
Performs duties of a level 4 without a diploma	Children's services employee level 4A.3 after 2 years	\$1,132.10	\$29.79	\$1,245.31	\$32.77	\$1,288.90	\$33.91	\$1,347.48	\$35.45	\$5.67	\$215.38	\$11,236.04
Performs duties of a level 4 without a diploma	Children's services employee level 4A.4 after 3 years	\$1,148.00	\$30.21	\$1,262.80	\$33.23	\$1,307.00	\$34.40	\$1,366.41	\$35.96	\$5.75	\$218.41	\$11,393.85
Performs duties of a level 4 without a diploma	Children's services employee level 4A.5 after 4 years	\$1,163.30	\$30.61	\$1,279.63	\$33.67	\$1,324.42	\$34.85	\$1,384.62	\$36.43	\$5.82	\$221.32	\$11,545.70
Cert IV & appointed as person in charge	Children's services employee level 4.1 on commencement	\$1,216.00	\$32.00	\$1,337.60	\$35.20	\$1,384.42	\$36.43	\$1,447.34	\$38.09	\$6.09	\$231.34	\$12,068.75
Cert IV & appointed as person in charge	Children's services employee level 4.2 after 1 year	\$1,234.60	\$32.49	\$1,358.06	\$35.74	\$1,405.59	\$36.99	\$1,469.48	\$38.67	\$6.18	\$234.88	\$12,253.35
Cert IV & appointed as person in charge	Children's services employee level 4.3 after 2 years	\$1,253.00	\$32.97	\$1,378.30	\$36.27	\$1,426.54	\$37.54	\$1,491.38	\$39.25	\$6.27	\$238.38	\$12,435.97

2025 Pay Rate Projection – Award Rates Only

NON-EDUCATOR ROLE Maintenance, administration officer, cleaner, laundry worker, food services, kitchen hand, gardener

		AWARD-based wages July 1 2024		AFTER 10% paid December 2024		AFTER 3.5% paid July 1 2025		AFTER 5% paid December 2025		INCREASE BY DECEMBER 2025		
Qualification	Award classification	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Hourly	Weekly	Annual
Untrained	Support worker level 1.1 on starting	\$910.90	\$24.10	\$1,001.99	\$26.37	\$1,037.06	\$27.45	\$1,084.20	\$28.69	\$4.59	\$173.30	\$9,040.645
No qualification	Support worker level 2.1 on starting	\$944.00	\$24.84	\$1,038.40	\$27.32	\$1,074.74	\$28.28	\$1,123.60	\$29.57	\$4.73	\$179.60	\$9,369.16
No qualification	Support worker level 2.2 after 1 year	\$975.00	\$25.66	\$1,072.50	\$28.23	\$1,110.04	\$29.22	\$1,160.49	\$30.54	\$4.88	\$185.49	\$9,676.83
Cert III	Support worker level 3.1 on starting	\$1,032.30	\$27.17	\$1,135.53	\$29.89	\$1,175.27	\$30.93	\$1,228.70	\$32.34	\$5.17	\$196.40	\$10,245.53

TEACHER

		AWARD-based wages July 1 2024		AFTER 10% paid December 2024		AFTER 3.5% paid July 1 2025		AFTER 5% paid December 2025		INCREASE BY DECEMBER 2025		
Qualification	Award classification	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Hourly	Weekly	Annual
Level 1	Level 1	\$1,396.10	\$36.74	\$1,535.71	\$40.41	\$1,589.46	\$41.83	\$1,661.71	\$43.73	\$6.99	\$265.61	\$13,856.24
Level 2	Level 2	\$1,525.90	\$40.16	\$1,678.49	\$44.18	\$1,737.24	\$45.72	\$1,816.20	\$47.80	\$7.64	\$290.30	\$15,144.50
Level 3	Level 3	\$1,661.20	\$43.72	\$1,827.32	\$48.09	\$1,891.28	\$49.78	\$1,977.24	\$52.04	\$8.32	\$316.04	\$16,487.35
Level 4	Level 4	\$1,796.50	\$47.28	\$1,976.15	\$52.01	\$2,045.32	\$53.83	\$2,138.28	\$56.28	\$9.00	\$341.78	\$17,830.19
Level 5	Level 5	\$1,931.70	\$50.83	\$2,124.87	\$55.91	\$2,199.24	\$57.87	\$2,299.21	\$60.50	\$9.67	\$367.51	\$19,172.05

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/COORDINATOR

		AWARD-based wages July 1 2024		AFTER 10% paid December 2024		AFTER 3.5% paid July 1 2025		AFTER 5% paid December 2025		INCREASE BY DECEMBER 2025		
Qualification	Award classification	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Hourly	Weekly	Annual
No qualification	Children's services employee level 5A.1 on starting	\$1,271.60	\$33.46	\$1,398.76	\$36.81	\$1,447.72	\$38.09	\$1,513.52	\$39.83	\$6.37	\$241.92	\$12,620.58
No qualification	Children's services employee level 5A.2 after 1 year	\$1,290.00	\$33.95	\$1,419.00	\$37.35	\$1,468.67	\$38.65	\$1,535.42	\$40.41	\$6.46	\$245.42	\$12,803.20
No qualification	Children's services employee level 5A.3 after 2 years	\$1,308.30	\$34.43	\$1,439.13	\$37.87	\$1,489.50	\$39.19	\$1,557.20	\$40.97	\$6.55	\$248.90	\$12,984.82
Level V Diploma	Children's services employee level 5.1 on commencement	\$1,271.60	\$33.46	\$1,398.76	\$36.81	\$1,447.72	\$38.09	\$1,513.52	\$39.82	\$6.37	\$241.92	\$12,620.58
Level V Diploma	Children's services employee level 5.2 after 1 year	\$1,290.00	\$33.95	\$1,419.00	\$37.35	\$1,468.67	\$38.65	\$1,535.42	\$40.41	\$6.46	\$245.42	\$12,803.20
Level V Diploma	Children's services employee level 5.3 after 2 years	\$1,308.30	\$34.43	\$1,439.13	\$37.87	\$1,489.50	\$39.19	\$1,557.20	\$40.97	\$6.55	\$248.90	\$12,984.82
Level V Advanced Diploma	Children's services employee level 5.4	\$1,313.00	\$34.55	\$1,444.30	\$38.01	\$1,494.85	\$39.34	\$1,562.80	\$41.12	\$6.57	\$249.80	\$13,031.47

2025 Pay Rate Projection – Award Rates Only

DIRECTOR LEVEL 6												
		AWARD-based wages July 1 2024		AFTER 10% paid December 2024		AFTER 3.5% paid July 1 2025		AFTER 5% paid December 2025		INCREASE BY DECEMBER 2025		
Qualification	Award classification	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Hourly	Weekly	Annual
No qualification	Children's services employee level 6A.1 on commencement	\$1,466.30	\$38.59	\$1,612.93	\$42.45	\$1,669.38	\$43.93	\$1,745.26	\$45.93	\$7.34	\$278.96	\$14,552.97
No qualification	Children's services employee level 6A.2 after 1 year	\$1,484.60	\$39.07	\$1,633.06	\$42.98	\$1,690.22	\$44.48	\$1,767.05	\$46.51	\$7.43	\$282.45	\$14,734.59
No qualification	Children's services employee level 6A.3 after 2 years	\$1,502.80	\$39.55	\$1,653.08	\$43.51	\$1,710.94	\$45.02	\$1,788.71	\$47.07	\$7.52	\$285.91	\$14,915.23

DIRECTOR LEVEL 1												
		AWARD-based wages July 1 2024		AFTER 10% paid December 2024		AFTER 3.5% paid July 1 2025		AFTER 5% paid December 2025		INCREASE BY DECEMBER 2025		
Qualification	Award classification	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Hourly	Weekly	Annual
Degree & Director of a Service Licenced for up to 39 children	Children's services employee - Director - level 6.1 on commencement	\$1,466.30	\$38.59	\$1,612.93	\$42.45	\$1,669.38	\$43.93	\$1,745.26	\$45.93	\$7.34	\$278.96	\$14,552.97
Degree & Director of a Service Licenced for up to 39	Children's services employee - Director - level 6.2 after 1 year	\$1,484.60	\$39.07	\$1,633.06	\$42.98	\$1,690.22	\$44.48	\$1,767.05	\$46.51	\$7.43	\$282.45	\$14,734.59
Degree & Director of a Service Licenced for up to 39	Children's services employee - Director - level 6.3 after 2 years	\$1,502.80	\$39.55	\$1,653.08	\$43.51	\$1,710.94	\$45.02	\$1,788.71	\$47.07	\$7.52	\$285.91	\$14,915.23

DIRECTOR LEVEL 2												
		AWARD-based wages July 1 2024		AFTER 10% paid December 2024		AFTER 3.5% paid July 1 2025		AFTER 5% paid December 2025		INCREASE BY DECEMBER 2025		
Qualification	Award classification	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Hourly	Weekly	Annual
Degree & Director of Service Licenced for between 40-59	Children's services employee - Director - level 6.4 on commencement	\$1,558.90	\$41.02	\$1,714.79	\$45.12	\$1,774.81	\$46.71	\$1,855.48	\$48.83	\$7.80	\$296.58	\$15,472.02
Degree & Director of Service Licenced for between 40-59	Children's services employee - Director - level 6.5 after 1 year	\$1,573.20	\$41.40	\$1,730.52	\$45.54	\$1,791.09	\$47.14	\$1,872.50	\$49.28	\$7.88	\$299.30	\$15,613.95
Degree & Director of Service Licenced for between 40-59	Children's services employee - Director - level 6.6 after 2 years	\$1,592.00	\$41.89	\$1,751.20	\$46.08	\$1,812.49	\$47.70	\$1,894.88	\$49.86	\$7.97	\$302.88	\$15,800.54

DIRECTOR LEVEL 3												
		AWARD-based wages July 1 2024		AFTER 10% paid December 2024		AFTER 3.5% paid July 1 2025		AFTER 5% paid December 2025		INCREASE BY DECEMBER 2025		
Qualification	Award classification	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Hourly	Weekly	Annual
Degree & Director of a Service Licenced for 60 or more	Children's services employee - Director - level 6.7 on starting	\$1,611.00	\$42.39	\$1,772.10	\$46.63	\$1,834.12	\$48.27	\$1,917.49	\$50.46	\$8.06	\$306.49	\$15,989.11
Degree & Director of a Service Licenced for 60 or more	Children's services employee - Director - level 6.8 after 1 year	\$1,629.40	\$42.88	\$1,792.34	\$47.17	\$1,855.07	\$48.82	\$1,939.39	\$51.04	\$8.16	\$309.99	\$16,171.73
Degree & Director of a Service Licenced for 60 or more	Children's services employee - Director - level 6.9 after 2 years	\$1,647.80	\$43.36	\$1,812.58	\$47.70	\$1,876.02	\$49.37	\$1,961.29	\$51.61	\$8.25	\$313.49	\$16,354.35