

**MARKET SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM**

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**Report of the Market Supplement Review  
Committee**

**Public Health Inspector  
(Degree, Senior Levels)**

**FINAL**

**January 29, 2021**

## **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the Market Supplement Program is to ensure that the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) can attract and retain the employees required to provide appropriate health care services to the people of Saskatchewan.

This program is designed to address specific skill shortages, by use of a temporary market supplement, to attract and/or retain qualified employees. The program is also designed to ensure that temporary market supplements respond to valid labour market criteria, to address recruitment/retention pressures.

## **OVERVIEW**

The Market Supplement Review Committee (MSRC) reviewed updated documentation submitted in the annual review process regarding the market supplement for the Public Health Inspector classification. The first market supplement report was released by the Market Supplement Review Committee on December 19, 2002. The first annual review was conducted by the MSRC in December 2003, and the second in December 2004. The MSRC recommended maintaining the existing market supplement in those reviews. The annual review in 2005 for this classification resulted in an increase to the market supplement that was implemented in January 2007. This report is to be considered as part of the ongoing review of the market supplement process for this classification, as described in the SAHO/HSAS Letters of Understanding pertaining to the Market Supplement Program.

There were ten locations included in this analysis on Public Health Inspectors. Public Health Inspectors are members of the Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan (HSAS).

The committee reviewed this occupation on

Role of a Public Health Inspector:

*The Public Health Inspector (PHI) is a vital member of the public health team and delivery system. The role of the PHI includes preventing disease; promoting health; and improving the environment through the use of education, consultation, inspection and monitoring techniques and, if necessary, by the enforcement of health legislation. The scope of interest covers food hygiene; insect and rodent control; communicable disease investigation; public accommodation; community care facilities; public recreational facilities; water supply and waste disposal systems; tobacco control; occupational health and safety; and environmental pollution (air, water, soil and noise).*

Qualifications:

*To work as a Public Health Inspector, certification must be obtained with the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors (CIPHI).*

*Public Health Inspectors must obtain educational qualifications from one of the following five Environmental Health programs in Canada: Ryerson University, British Columbia Institute of Technology, Concordia University College of Alberta, University of Cape Breton, Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning and the First Nations University of Canada. The First Nations University program in Environmental Health and Science is closing and no longer accepts new applications.*

*In addition, Public Health Inspectors must successfully complete a certification process consisting of an examination process with both written and oral components. To be eligible for certification, Public Health Inspectors must complete 12 weeks of practicum under the supervision of a certified Public Health Inspector.*

Information regarding budgeted positions and vacancies is provided in the following table:

**Table 1 – Public Health Inspector (Budgeted and Vacant Positions):**

Number of Budgeted Positions (As of March 2021)		Number of Vacant Positions (As of March 2021)		% Vacancy	
Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
65	4	9.5	1.5	14.62%	37.50%

## ANALYSIS

The MSRC discussed the Labour Market Criteria as required by the Market Supplement Program.

**SERVICE DELIVERY IMPACTS:** *(Respondents were asked to provide information that addresses current service delivery impacts resulting from staff shortages; potential staff short term service delivery impacts; potential long term service delivery impacts; and options for alternative service delivery models.)*

During the 2020-21 pandemic Public Health Inspectors supported the enforcement of public health orders. This was an increased demand upon those services and the PHIs.

There were ten locations reporting to this review. Of those, three reported experiencing no service delivery issues related to recruitment and retention; four experienced moderate issues; and three reported significant issues.

Areas with vacancies have experienced service delays, overtime, increased wait times, and difficulty maintaining some programs to previous levels.

**VACANCY RATE ANALYSIS:** *(Respondents were requested to provide information about the frequency and timing of vacancy occurrences {i.e., seasonal vacancies; do the vacancies always follow an event, etc.}; and to identify trends that may affect recruitment/retention efforts.)*

There were 9.5 full-time and 1.5 part-time vacancies reported in this review for vacancy rates of 14.62% and 37.05%.

Vacancies are not occurring equally across the province. For full time vacancies five of the reporting former RHAs (urban and rural) reported no vacancies. 7 of the 9.5 vacant positions (74%) were found in two rural former RHAs. There were only four part time positions reported across the reporting former RHAs.

There has been a reported increase in the number of vacancies for Public Health Inspectors across the Saskatchewan Health Authority. A number of vacancies have been created by movement within Public Health as PHIs have moved into management roles, from smaller to larger centres, to other opportunities (e.g. into a senior position) and into Infection Control Practitioner positions.

A number of respondents noted that the upcoming elimination of the Public Health Inspector training program at First Nations University of Canada could lead to future recruitment challenges. The program is no longer accepting new applicants, and will be graduating its last/current students by spring of 2022. Historically, the program has proved to be a valuable resource in terms of recruiting potential candidates. There is no other program in Saskatchewan.

**TURNOVER RATES:** *(Respondents were asked to provide local analysis of reasons for leaving and trends that may be emerging. They were also asked to provide annual turnover {loss of employees to other competitor employers} ratio to the existing staff complement {budgeted positions} in the given occupation.)*

The following turnover is reported:

- Last 12 months – 14 (8 other employment; 1 change of occupation; 1 family/domestic reasons; 2 other; 2 retirement)
- Previous 12 months – 7 (5 other employment; 1 family/domestic; 1 retirement)

**RECRUITMENT ISSUE ANALYSIS:** *(Respondents were asked to provide information such as length of recruitment times; training investments; licensing issues; supply and demand issues, etc.; as well as information that would identify trends that may affect recruitment and/or retention efforts.)*

One location reported recruiting times of one month, three others reported recruiting times of 12 months to greater than 20 months, while one reported actively recruiting for two months.

One location reported no recruitment challenges, two reported minor challenges, five reported moderate challenges, one reported significant challenges, and one reported critical challenges related to recruitment.

They generally use typical recruiting/retention measures, including advertising online; attending career fairs; and other networking activities. They also provide relocation incentives, with return for service agreements, and offer practicum experience.

**SALARY MARKET CONDITIONS:** *(Respondents were asked to identify situations where their salary levels are lower than other employers that they would expect to recruit employees from, or other employers that recruit their employees. This may be local, provincial, regional, national or international, depending on the occupation group and traditional recruitment relationships. Cost of living considerations may or may not be appropriate to factor into market salary comparisons.)*

The MSRC reports the following market conditions for Public Health Inspectors (Degree):

- Saskatchewan Health Authority – maximum \$43.64, five steps, effective April 1, 2021.
- Alberta Health Services –maximum \$52.36/hour, nine steps, effective April 1, 2019.
- British Columbia Regional Health Authorities – maximum \$39.88/hour, six steps, effective April 1, 2021.
- Manitoba Regional Health Authorities – maximum \$36.05/hour; nine steps, effective April 1, 2021.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Considering the labour market criteria within the Market Supplement Program Letters of Understanding, the Market Supplement Review Committee makes the following conclusions:

- Of the ten respondents, three reported no service delivery issues related to recruitment and retention; four experienced moderate issues; and three reported significant issues.
- There were 9.5 full-time and 1.5 part-time vacancies reported in this review for vacancy rates of 14.62% and 37.05%.
- Vacancies are not occurring equally across the SHA. And there is some evidence that PHIs are choosing to move across former RHAs including from smaller centers to larger ones. If that is driving some movement then an increase in the market supplement would apply equally and not address the issue. Normally these types of choices by employees or new hires could be influenced by the use of recruitment bonuses.
- According to wage comparison data provided to the committee Saskatchewan pays more than the health services in British Columbia (by \$3.76 an hour at the maximum rate) and Manitoba (by \$7.59 an hour). The wage rate in Alberta is higher (by \$8.72 an hour. Alberta does pay higher and is seen as a competitor but the committee was not provided with data showing a loss of PHIs to Alberta.
- The committee was provided with evidence that vacancies and turnover may have been affected by internal wage differences. Public Health Inspectors are qualified to work and are attracted to work as Infection Control Practitioners. The top of the range for the ICP is \$51.576 an hour or \$7.93 more than the top wage for the PHI. There could be other factors such as working conditions affecting these decisions. The purpose of the market supplement should not be to address internal wage issues particularly within the

same bargaining unit. To do so could disrupt existing processes for job evaluation by introducing an alternative process.

- One location reported no recruitment challenges, two reported minor challenges, five reported moderate challenges, one reported significant challenges, and one reported critical challenges related to recruitment.

Having reviewed the information as provided by respondents, and considering the labour market criteria, the Market Supplement Review Committee has determined that the current provincial markets supplement should be **maintained** for this classification.