



Reimbursement of housekeeping expenses prior to December 1, 2013 (Policy 04-10, Part II, Application 3)

Background

The housekeeping allowance is a benefit for **seriously*** injured workers that came into effect on December 1, 2013. Prior to that date, no such benefit existed for seriously injured workers.

The housekeeping allowance is intended to optimize or maintain an injured worker's independence by offsetting the cost of obtaining outside help for housekeeping tasks the worker can no longer do on their own because of their compensable injury. There are no changes proposed to the housekeeping allowance itself.

*Note: For **severely** injured workers, housekeeping is included in the personal care allowance (see [Policy 04-07, Part II, Application 4](#)). There are no proposed changes to housekeeping for severely injured workers.

Expenses incurred prior to December 1, 2013

Although WCB does not pay a housekeeping allowance for periods before December 1, 2013, we recognize seriously injured workers with the same functional limitations had the same difficulties before the housekeeping allowance came into effect. For these workers, expenses are reimbursed based on confirmed costs (i.e., through expense reimbursement based on receipts), rather than paid as a housekeeping allowance.

Since 2018, WCB receives less than three requests per year for expense reimbursement for dates prior to December 1, 2013.

For transparency, fairness, and consistent decision making, we propose adding this information directly in the policy going forward.

Overview of changes

Here's a summary of what we propose:

Prior to December 1, 2013	On or after December 1, 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Retroactive housekeeping allowance is not available.•Expenses may be reimbursed based on confirmed costs for seriously injured workers who can show that they hired outside help to perform the housekeeping tasks that they were not able to do themselves because of their work injury (up to maximum reimbursement of \$1,200 per calendar year).	<p>WCB will consider paying a housekeeping allowance when all of the following conditions are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•The worker meets the eligibility criteria set out in Question 2 of Policy 04-10, Part II, Application 3, and•There is independent evidence that the worker hired outside help to do the housekeeping they were unable to do themselves.



See attached draft policy for additional details.

We welcome your feedback, ideas and suggestions.

This posting is open until October 4, 2021.

Alberta WCB Policies & Information

Chapter:

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OTHER HOME SERVICES

Authorization

Date:

BoD Resolution ~~2016/06/16~~ **October 25, 2016**

APPLICATION 3: HOUSEKEEPING ALLOWANCE

1. *What is a housekeeping allowance?*

A housekeeping allowance (**HKA**) is a benefit paid under s.89 of the *WCA* ~~that is and is~~ intended to optimize or maintain an injured worker's independence by offsetting the cost of obtaining outside help for housekeeping tasks ~~that~~ the worker is no longer able to do because of the compensable injury.

Outside help means someone other than a member of the worker's household (family or friend) who lives in the same residence. It can include, however, a tenant who rents part of the worker's residence and is paid or receives a rent reduction in return for providing housekeeping services.

2. *Who is eligible for a housekeeping allowance?*

Workers with serious permanent compensable disabilities (see Part I, 2.0) which prevent them from performing some or all of the tasks listed below may be eligible for a housekeeping allowance:

- heavy housekeeping tasks such as washing walls, washing windows, cleaning behind appliances, etc.
- medium-level housekeeping tasks or those that require awkward positioning, such as laundry, putting heavy items on high or low shelves (not waist height), heavy grocery shopping, cleaning bathrooms, vacuuming, or washing floors

WCB first considers whether assistive aids and/or training would enable the worker to complete the housekeeping tasks ~~him or herself~~. If so, WCB will provide the aids and/or training, rather than a housekeeping allowance.

NOTE: This allowance is intended for workers whose injuries, although serious, are not severe. For services for workers with severe injuries, see

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Policy 04-07, Part II, Application 4.

3. *What is the allowance based on and how is it paid?*

Allowance basis and payment (continued)

The allowance is based on typical costs for hiring a cleaning company to complete the included tasks. WCB will periodically review and adjust the allowance amount (see Addendum B).

The allowance is paid to ~~the workers~~ as a monthly allowance so that ~~the workers~~ can make ~~his/her~~~~their~~ own arrangements for the necessary housekeeping.

The allowance does not include general housekeeping ~~that the workers~~ ~~is-are~~ able to do for ~~him or herself~~~~themselves~~.

4. *Is a hospitalized worker eligible for a housekeeping allowance?*

A worker who is confined to an institution on a permanent basis is not eligible for a housekeeping allowance. However, if a worker receiving a housekeeping allowance is temporarily hospitalized, WCB will continue the allowance for as long as the worker maintains the residence.

5. *Will WCB pay a housekeeping allowance retroactively?*

This policy question applies to all requests made on or after December 1, 2013, regardless of the date of accident, for retroactive payment of a housekeeping allowance or reimbursement of housekeeping costs.

WCB will consider paying a housekeeping allowance retroactively when all of the following conditions are met:

- **The worker meets the eligibility criteria set out in Question 2, and**
- **There is independent evidence* that the worker hired outside help to do the housekeeping they were unable to do themselves, and**
- **The retroactive period is for dates on or after December 1, 2013 (the date that the housekeeping allowance came into effect).**

***Although receipts from the service provider are**

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preferred, WCB understands that workers may not have kept their receipts. WCB will consider other independent evidence, such as confirmation from the housekeeper or cleaning company.

Payments for periods before December 1, 2013

The housekeeping allowance came into effect on December 1, 2013; consequently, WCB does not pay the allowance for periods before that date.

However, WCB may reimburse workers for actual expenses incurred before December 2013, up to a maximum of \$1,200 per calendar year, provided they meet all of the other eligibility criteria and conditions indicated above.

The \$1,200 maximum reimbursement is equivalent to a full year of housekeeping allowance at the December 2013 rate.

56. *When is this policy application effective?*

This policy application (Application 3 – Housekeeping Allowance) is effective January 1, 2017, and applies to housekeeping allowances paid for periods on or after that date, except when noted otherwise in a specific policy section(s).

Previous versions

- [Policy 0410 Part II - January 2017](#)
- [Policy 0410 Part II - August 2015](#)
- [Policy 0410 Part II - December 2013](#)