

Practice Incentive Rebate Program – Q&As

What is the Practice Incentive Rebate Program?

Introduced for the construction and trucking industries in 2013, the Practice Incentive Rebate Program encourages employers to implement effective health and safety management systems as an important step toward reducing the risk of workplace injury.

Assessed employers in the construction and trucking industries whose health and safety management systems successfully meet the requirements of a recognized health and safety system accreditation will be eligible to receive a rebate.

What is a “recognized health and safety system accreditation”?

A recognized health and safety system accreditation is a certification issued to companies who have passed an audit of their health and safety management system by a WCB-approved audit provider. The certifications that currently meet the criteria for the Practice Incentive Rebate Program are WCB Safety Certified and Construction Safety Nova Scotia’s Certificate of Recognition (COR).

How does my business qualify for a Practice Incentive Rebate?

To be eligible to receive a Practice Incentive Rebate, you must meet the following criteria:

- Operate in either the construction or trucking industries – (i.e., employers that pay a levy for either Construction Safety Nova Scotia (CSNS) or the Nova Scotia Trucking Safety Association);
- Hold a valid WCB Safety Certified or a CSNS Certificate of Recognition (COR) (which must be valid on December 31 of the qualifying year);
- Must be in **Good Standing** with the WCB at the time of the rebate (i.e., the business cannot have periods of unreported payroll or have money owing to the WCB);
- Must have **no compensable fatalities** during the eligibility period, or during the time prior to the rebate being issued:
 - *For example, an employer who receives a WCB Safety Certified or COR in 2017 is eligible to receive a rebate in 2018, as long as they have no compensable fatalities in 2017 or in the months leading up to when the rebate is issued in 2018.*

The rebates are issued in April of the following calendar year (i.e. 2017 rebates are issued in April 2018).

How do I apply for a Practice Incentive Rebate?

There is no application for the practice incentive rebates. If you are assessed in the construction and trucking industries, and have a valid WCB Safety Certified Accreditation or COR, you are automatically considered for a Practice Incentive Rebate.

Approved audit providers enter certificate information into a WCB-maintained database. The WCB uses that information to identify which employers meet the Practice Incentive Rebate criteria and are therefore eligible for the rebate. The rebate is issued by cheque and mailed to the organization’s financial contact address on file with the WCB.

How much can my business receive through the Practice Incentive Rebate?

The amount of your Practice Incentive Rebate will vary based on the WCB premiums you paid during the eligibility period. The rebate amounts are based on the following scale:

- **5% Rebate** for employers with **premiums of \$10,000 and above**
- **\$500 Rebate** for employers with **premiums between \$5,001 - \$9,999**
- **10% Rebate** for employers with **premiums of \$5,000 or less**

For example:

- *An eligible employer that pays \$11,000 in WCB premiums in 2017 will receive a rebate of \$550 in 2018.*
- *An eligible employer whose 2017 premiums are between \$5,001 and \$9,999 will receive a flat rebate amount of \$500 in 2018.*
- *An eligible employer whose 2017 premiums are \$2,000 will receive a \$200 rebate in 2018.*

What if my business has multiple divisions?

For eligible employers with multiple divisions *in the same industry*, your rebate amount will be calculated by combining the premiums paid for each division. For example, if you have three eligible divisions in the same industry that each pay \$4,000 in WCB premiums, you will receive a total rebate amount of \$600:

$$\begin{aligned} \$4,000 \times 3 &= \$12,000 \text{ Total Premiums Paid} \\ \$12,000 \times 5\% &= \$600 \text{ Total Rebate Amount} \end{aligned}$$

What if my WCB account is not in good standing in April during the rebate processing period?

If your account is not in good standing with the WCB in April when the rebates are processed, your rebate will be forfeited for the year.

How do I know if my WCB account is in good standing?

You can log onto [MyAccount](#). You can also call the WCB at 1.877.211.9267 for more information. *(Not yet registered for MyAccount? Click [here](#) or call us at 1.877.211.9267 to get started!)*

How do I make the necessary changes to get my WCB account in good standing?

You can call the WCB toll-free line at 1.877.211.9267 to speak with one of our Inquiry Representatives for more information.

Do I only get a rebate for the year in which I receive my WCB Safety Certified or CSNS COR?

There are varying expiry periods for the certifications, and as long as your WCB Safety Certified or COR is valid on December 31st of the qualifying year **and** you meet the Practice Incentive Rebate criteria, you will be eligible to receive a rebate **for each year your certification is valid** – not just for the year you receive your certification.

Are employers with Special Protection accounts eligible for the Practice Incentive Rebate?

Yes. The same eligibility criteria apply for Special Protection accounts as for other all other accounts.

Do you anticipate making the Practice Incentive Rebate available to employers in other industries?

It is our intent to evaluate the program's effectiveness and its impact on reducing claims costs for the construction and trucking industries. The question of rolling out the program to other industries will be considered after that time.

How do I get WCB Safety Certified or a Certificate of Recognition (COR)?

These certifications are issued to organizations that have passed an audit of their health and safety systems. The audits are conducted by audit providers approved by the WCB. [Approved audit providers](#) are listed on the WCB website.

Does it matter which audit provider I choose?

No, it doesn't matter which approved audit provider you choose. We encourage you to make your choice of provider the same way you would decide on any service provider. You should contact them and ask them to describe their audit process, the time involved, the cost and the benefits. Although all approved audit providers can conduct a health and safety system audit in any industry, some providers may be more familiar with a particular industry than with others. You will need to determine which approved provider best suits your audit needs.

Can I earn a Practice Incentive Rebate without having WCB Safety Certified or COR?

No. In order to qualify for the Practice Incentive Rebate program, you **must** have a WCB Safety Certified or CSNS COR valid at the end of the period to which the rebate applies. For example, in order to be eligible for a 2017 rebate, your WCB Safety Certified or CSNS COR must be valid on December 31, 2017.

Does my business need a COR or WCB Safety Certified Accreditation on all of their divisions to qualify for a Practice Incentive Rebate?

Yes. Employers with multiple divisions **must** have a valid WCB Safety Certified or CSNS COR for each of their divisions that are in the construction or trucking industries, in order for all divisions to qualify for a rebate.

Where can I get more information on WCB Safety Certified?

More information is available [here](#). You can also contact Candace Nahas at (902) 491-8370 or Candace.Nahas@wcb.ns.ca

What happens if my business closes after receiving a WCB Safety Certified Accreditation or COR? Am I still eligible to receive a Practice Incentive Rebate?

It depends on the nature of the closing. You could still be eligible if you meet the other program criteria, unless the closure was due to filing for bankruptcy.

Can a surcharged employer still receive a Practice Incentive Rebate?

Yes, but not indefinitely if they remain in surcharge. Surcharged employers must show a **minimum 25% improvement** in their cost experience ratio **three years** following their initial practice incentive rebate in order to be eligible for further rebates from that point forward.

How can you give money back to employers, when worker benefits remain low?

It is important to understand that rebates are funded directly by the participating industries and not by the Workers' Compensation Board. This program is funded through increased rates in the construction and trucking industries. The intent of the rebate program is to encourage employers to make safe work practices an ongoing priority. That will ultimately help reduce the human and financial cost of workplace injuries in the province.