

FAQ: 2025 – 2026 \$400k HSPBA Professional Development Fund

As a member of HSA covered by the HSPBA/HEABC Provincial Agreement, when will I be able to apply for funding to support my education/training?

You may apply now. Applications will be accepted until funds are fully exhausted.

Will the fund cover expenses related to education/training already underway?

The fund is designed to cover education/training that commences during the funding timeframe **between April 1, 2025 and March 31, 2026.**

Can the fund be used for Personal Development?

No. The education or training must be relevant to professional development within a health science discipline practiced within the public healthcare system and cannot be intended for personal development purposes.

How long will it take to process my application?

Due to the unique nature of each application, providing an exact timeline for responses is challenging. Our small team diligently manages numerous applications for education and professional development funds. We will contact you once your application has been reviewed or if further information is required.

Please refrain from contacting HSA to inquire about your application; our team will reach out to you as soon as possible.

How are applications prioritized? Is it first-come, first-served?

Applications are processed in the order they are received.

Approved applications must meet all eligibility criteria and funding guidelines. Successful applicants are required to submit satisfactory expense receipts as per the instructions provided in the letter of approval to receive reimbursement for approved expenses.

Incomplete applications requiring additional details such as updated contact information, a detailed program breakdown including course specifics (start/finish dates, costs, etc.), or other missing information, will significantly delay the processing.

The application form states that the funding is to be allocated to training and upgrading skills for HSPBA members working in professions experiencing shortages or rural and remote locations, as well as to ongoing required professional development for all HSPBA members. Should I submit an application even if I can't say for certain that one of these criteria would be satisfied with my application?

Yes. Do your best to answer how you think your application will serve the particular criterion.

What types of education/training are considered as professional development?

Professional development includes a range of events/instruction, such as workshops, seminars, conferences, courses, or programs. It might require in-person attendance, distance learning, or clinical placement. It might be of relatively short duration or a lengthier pursuit of credentials such as a diploma, advanced certification, or degree.

What if I and several of my colleagues at my site apply to the fund individually but with the net effect that the cumulative total of funds received could pay for a course to be provided to my colleagues and I at our site?

The purpose of the fund is to provide education monies to as many individual members as possible across the province. While more than one member from a site may be approved for a course, "pooling" monies at individual sites in the fashion described above does not meet the funding guidelines established by the union and will not be considered.

Do the amounts on the application need to be in Canadian Funds?

Yes. The member is required to perform the exchange rate calculation and list all amounts in Canadian funds. The listed amount will be used for your approval.

Please note that your reimbursement will only cover up to the approved amount, so it's important to be mindful of the exchange rates used. Kindly indicate the original currency in the description area of the application as this will aid in the review process.

What type of actual costs are considered for reimbursement?

The fund covers tuition fees, registration fees, the cost of required books/materials, and other relevant education/training expenses, **up to the maximum cap of \$1,000.**

Additionally, 'other reasonable education/training-related expenses' encompass costs such as travel and accommodation within Canada and the US. These are applicable if the applicant must travel or temporarily relocate to attend education/training or related clinical placements not offered locally or virtually. The fund covers these expenses up to a maximum cap of \$250 out of the total \$1,000 allocation.

Costs that are **NOT** eligible for reimbursement include:

- Criminal records check
- Professional association or regulatory college fees
- Immunizations or immunization reports
- Technology costs such as software, hardware and any mandatory technology fees
- Materials such as yoga mats or needles
- Any optional school/student fees
- Meals or per diem
- Gas
- Travel outside of Canada or USA

Can I claim meals or per diem?

No. Meals and per diems are not an eligible expense.

Can I apply for my Professional Fees?

No. Professional Fees are not eligible under this fund. Please see Appendix 28.1 of the 2025-2029 HSPBA collective agreement Re: Professional Licensing Fees for information about Professional Licensing Fees.

Can members apply to have wages paid from the fund?

No. To maximize support for professional development among our members, the fund does not cover wage replacement associated with an application.

Can I receive funding for temporary residence?

Yes. If a member is required to temporarily relocate during the training period (e.g., clinical placement, course/training of longer duration not offered locally) they may submit accommodation expenses for consideration. However, there must be a minimum distance of 25km between the applicant's residence and the training location to be eligible and will only receive up to the allowable cap of \$250.

Can my application be transferred to another fund?

No. Each fund has its own unique application, submission, and consideration/approval process based on specified criteria for that funding window. For each new funding period, it is necessary for members to submit a separate application specific to that fund. Applications for one fund will not be automatically transferred or held by HSA for submission to another fund on behalf of the members. Each member is required to apply separately to each fund and adhere to the eligibility and timeline guidelines specific to that fund.

Can I transfer my approved course to a new course or later date?

Once an application has been approved, the funding must be used for the course described in the application. If you are unable to attend the original course, you may contact the PD Fund to request a change of date for the same course. However, we are unable to change the type of course.

Is this fund part of the collective agreement provisions?

This Professional Development Fund of \$400,000 was agreed for under the 2025-2029 HSPBA collective agreement for the 2025-2026 term and was established to be used by HSPBA members. The administration of the fund will be determined by HSPBA.

All provisions of the HSPBA/HEABC Provincial Agreement continue to apply, including Education Leave as per Article 17.01 and Unpaid leave as per Article 22.