

Note: These Q&A's were originally published on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. We anticipate the Q&A will evolve over time based on cohorting experience; therefore as Q&A are added or if an answer changes, we will provide a date within the Answer line.

**1. Do all employees who work at a LTC Home or Personal Care Home (PCH) have to complete a Preference form?**

A: No, only those employees who work at more than one worksite within the health care system have to complete a preference form. (April 23, 2020)

**2. Are health care workers prevented from working in other health care services if they work within LTC?**

LTC staff are cohorted and restricted to working at one worksite within the health care system. LTC employees that are cohorted to one LTC worksite are no longer able to work in other LTC worksites (SHA LTC facilities and Personal Care Homes) or in an Acute, Home Care, and Primary Health Care setting or at the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. (April 23, 2020)

**3. The Public Health Order identifies Home Care as an exempted area of employment – does this mean a Home Care Employee can maintain work shifts in Home Care and work shifts at a LTC Home or Personal Care Home?**

A: No. Home care staff are not exempted from being cohorted if they have a position in a LTC environment. As such, if they are cohorted to the LTC home, they will not work in Home Care. Similarly, if they are assigned to work in Home Care they cannot work shifts in LTC. The Exemption for Home Care was to allow them to go into multiple environments throughout a home care shift as part of their regular daily service requirements as a Home Care Worker. (April 23, 2020)

**4. Based upon the Public Health Order, can employees work at other types of employers?**

A: Yes, as per section 2 h), the order is not intended to restrict Staff Members from employment that is external to the health sector, for example at the local Co-op, Walmart, restaurant industry, school district, etc. The intent is to limit employees to work at one LTC/Personal Care Home and to ensure LTC/PCH staff members are not permitted to work at a LTC/PCH Facility if they also work at a hospital. Employees can also maintain work at group homes and other similar employers as long as they are not a long term care or personal care home. (April 23, 2020)

**5. Can I continue to work for a Group Home Employer and still work in a LTC/PCH facility?**

A: Yes, the Public Health Order does not limit or cohort employees between Group Homes and LTC/PCH facilities. (April 23, 2020)



**6. There appears to be exemptions, will it be individual based or profession based? If individual, how do employees apply for them?**

**A:** Employees do not apply for exemptions. Employers can request further exemptions based upon operational requirements by making a request to the appropriate medical health officer as identified in Section 2 (g) of the Public Health Order. (April 23, 2020)

**7. How does the order apply to integrated facilities that provide both Acute & LTC services?**

**A:** For practical purposes, the facility may need to be considered as one depending upon the following analysis:

- If feasible/practical (both physically and from an HR perspective), the facility should physically separate the environment and cohort staff between LTC and Acute. If we are able to do so, these two services would be considered as separate facilities.
- If staff cannot be cohorted to the separate services (including non-direct care staff such as dietary) or if the environment/building cannot be physically separated, then the entire facility is considered as one for cohorting purposes. Note: there may be certain situations (i.e. cleaning by Environmental Services outside of client hours utilizing appropriate equipment and PPE) that are approved by the MHO that will not result in the entire facility being considered as one for cohorting purposes.

However, in the event of an outbreak, the areas where staff worked at the time of the outbreak is declared is where they would be cohorted going forward as we will need to work to cohort between the two services as per specific direction of the MHO. (April 29, 2020)

**9. Does the order apply to support services staff, for example dietary, maintenance and environmental services workers?**

Yes, the LTC cohorting order applies to support services staff members as well as staff members who provide direct care services. Note: trades people are exempted by section 2 g) of the Public Health Order. (April 23, 2020)

**10. Section 3 of the Cohorting Framework identifies that employees will retain their combined guaranteed hours. Can you explain this further?**

**A:** An Employee has a 0.25 FTE at worksite A and a 0.50 FTE at worksite B. When they are cohorted to a worksite, they will be guaranteed and scheduled to work their total combined 0.75 FTE.

When cohorted to a single site, employees with guaranteed hours (fulltime or part-time) will be scheduled to work their total combined guaranteed up to fulltime hours (1.0 FTE) in a single bargaining unit at the single site. Daily and weekly overtime, under the appropriate collective bargaining agreement, will apply to all applicable hours. Relief/Casual employees will be encouraged to maximize their hours, based upon operational requirements, regardless of status at their cohorted site. See question 12 for PCH details. (April 29, 2020)



**11. Section 4 of the Framework identifies that All employees limited to working at a single worksite under the Public Health Order will: Maintain their hourly rates for the guaranteed hours of their full-time/part-time positions and relief/casual hours already scheduled in the posted and confirmed period when first cohorted, regardless of the site to which they are cohorted. Can you explain this further?**

A: If an Employee has a 0.25 FTE position at worksite A with an hourly wage of \$25 per hour, and a 0.50 FTE position at Worksite B with an hourly wage of \$20 per hour. If they are cohorted to worksite B, they will receive their normal \$20 per hour rate for their 0.50 FTE but will be paid \$25 per hour for the .25 FTE that “originated” at worksite A. See question 12 for PCH details. (April 29, 2020)

**12. Q: How will an employee who is co-employed between SHA and a PCH, cohorted to the PCH be scheduled and compensated for their guaranteed hours from the SHA?**

A: Employees cohorted to at a PCH will work their SHA/Affiliate hours up to their average hours worked over the last 6 months, to a maximum of FT hours. These hours will be paid by the SHA/Affiliate at the SHA/Affiliate hourly rate. The PCH will compensate them for all hours worked in addition to the SHA/Affiliate paid hours. (April 29, 2020)

**13. Are visiting professionals, EMS staff, physicians, diagnostics staff or trades people, etc. restricted from providing services to or within a LTC or Personal Care Home?**

A: Section 2(g) of the Public Health Order states:

Section 2(d) (restricting the movement of staff among facilities) and 2(e) (staff disclosing to their supervisors each facility where they provide services) do not apply to dietitians, medical laboratory technologists, medical laboratory assistants, nurse practitioners, home care workers, public health nurses, paramedics, pharmacists, physicians, resident physicians, speech language pathologists, staff who provide podiatry type care, inter-facility transport staff, delivery persons, trades people, regular and biochemical waste removal people, biomedical engineers, visitors or any other person or class of person who are exempted by the medical health officer. These employees are subject to daily screening protocols to ensure fitness to work (April 23, 2020)

**14. Can employees who work at a COVID-19 positive unit or testing / assessment site work in non-LTC facilities?**

A: An employee who works at a COVID-19 positive unit or a testing or assessment site is restricted from working in LTC as of April 21, 2020, they can still work in other units/sites that provide acute and/or emergency services. This is correct as long as the local operational manager/leader has not provided different direction. (April 23, 2020)



**15. An employee is cohorted to a LTC facility or Personal Care Home. Subsequently, they need to be redeployed to a different service within the SHA (i.e. Acute, Home Care, etc.). Assuming that the LTC/PCH facility is not on COVID outbreak, how many hours/days are required between their last shift in LTC and their first shift in the other program/service?**

A: Self-isolation is not a requirement in this scenario, nor is a period of time required to pass before they are available to work as related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The employee will self-monitor for symptoms and participate in daily fitness to work screening. (April 23, 2020)

**Scheduling Questions:**

**16. If an employee is cohorted to a facility can they update their casual/relief availability form?**

A: No. Casual/relief shifts will be offered/assigned to the employee based on the existing call-in/relief processes and availability forms. (April 23, 2020)

**17. What will be the start of the posted and confirmed period for the purposes of determining the hours the Employer will guarantee for casual/relief and part-time employees that have picked up hours in excess of their guarantee?**

A: The start of the posted and confirmed period for cohorted employees will be the date on which they were advised they will be cohorted to a specific facility(ies). The posted a confirmed period varies by collective agreement so please contact your Human Resources Business Partner or Labour Relations Consultant to discuss further. (April 23, 2020)

**17. I hold two positions, one at a Long Term Care (LTC) site and another in Acute Care. I am working my last night shift on April 27 from 23:45 - 07:15 at the Long Term Care site. After this date, I will no longer have a schedule in the LTC site. Am I able to work my last night shift in LTC, since cohorting will begin on April 28?**

A: The staff member would be able to work the night shifts that started on April 27. The Public Health Order is effective as of April 28, and even though the employee has a shift that overlaps on April 27th and 28th, the cohorting order would only apply to shifts that originated on April 28 or later. (April 23, 2020)