



# Prison Pay

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) provides pay to prisoners to encourage participation in programs.<sup>1</sup>

There are four different **pay levels** (pay levels A, B, C and D), ranging from \$5.25 to \$6.90 per day. Your pay level is reviewed at least every 6 months. You can work your way up the pay levels by:

- taking programs in your Correctional Plan and meeting the expectations of your programs;
- by going to work every day (unless you have permission to be away), being on time and not leaving early (if you have a job);
- having no disciplinary convictions; and

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1 *Corrections and Conditional Release Act, SC 1992, c 20, s 78(1) ("CCRA").*

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- showing that you have a good attitude, that you are motivated, productive and engaged, that your behaviour is good, that you have positive relationships, and that you are responsible and accountable.

Your pay level can also be reduced if you don't meet the criteria of the pay level you are on. See Annex B of CD 730 for the criteria of each pay level.<sup>2</sup>

You get an **allowance** of \$2.50 per week day if you have permission to be away from your program or if you can't participate in a program for reasons beyond your control (if no jobs or programs are available to you).

You get a **basic allowance** of \$1 per day if you refuse to be in programs. If you are in disciplinary segregation, you will receive no pay or allowance for the first 10 days and then a basic allowance of \$1 per day after that.<sup>3</sup>

## Deductions from your pay

If you are being paid at level A, B, C or D, CSC normally deducts 22% of your CSC payment for food and accommodation. If you have other sources of income, you will also be charged 30% of your income from those sources. The most that CSC can deduct for food and accommodation from all your income sources combined is \$18 per day and \$90 per week.<sup>4</sup>

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2 CSC, CD 730: "Offender Program Assignment and Inmate Payments" (2016-08-22), paras 15, 37-42, Annex B – Payments to Inmates: Levels of Payment and Allowances ("CD 730").

3 CD 730, para 15, Annex B.

4 CCRA, s 78(2); *Corrections and Conditional Release Regulations*,

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If you are only receiving an allowance or basic allowance (described above), you are **not** charged for food and accommodation.<sup>5</sup>

For prisoners receiving any of the pay levels or allowances, CSC deducts 8% of your payment for the administration of the inmate telephone system.<sup>6</sup>

## How to apply for an exception

If you have special reasons that you should receive higher pay, you can **apply to the warden for a higher pay level** than the one you would normally be eligible for. For example, if you have a disability or a mental health care need, the warden might authorize a higher pay level. You might also be able to get a higher pay level if you have other special circumstances.<sup>7</sup>

The warden or district head can also **waive your obligation to pay for food and accommodation**, or reduce the amount you pay for this. You should apply for this waiver or reduction if the deduction is interfering with your ability to:

- meet your basic needs;
- meet your family or parental responsibilities; or
- meet the objectives of your Correctional Plan.<sup>8</sup>

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SOR/92-620, s 104.1(2); CD 730, para 16; CSC, CD 860: “Offender’s Money” (2014-10-27), paras 4, 6-7, 13 (“CD 860”).

5 CD 860, para 10.

6 CD 860, para 16.

7 CD 730, para 17.

8 CD 860, paras 2, 15.

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Ask the warden to give you a written response. If the warden refuses your request, you can file a National level grievance about the decision.<sup>9</sup> You should do this within 30 days of getting the decision. See PLS' booklet: "Writing an effective grievance".

If the warden approves your request, your payment will be reduced or waived for 6 months. After that, you will need to apply again.<sup>10</sup>

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9 *Corrections and Conditional Release Regulations, SOR/92-620, s 75(b).*

10 CD 860, para 15.

**This publication contains general information only. Each situation is unique. Law and policy can also change. If you have a legal problem, contact Prisoners' Legal Services or a lawyer.**



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