

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALBERTA RVTS

1 Members advocate for their employers to provide compensation packages that clearly outline rates of pay, how and when increases happen, overtime and on-call rates during the employment life cycle. It is anticipated this would increase recruitment and retention.

2 Members advocate for their employers to provide a comprehensive benefits statement that summarizes all benefits provided (employer and employee paid) during the employment life cycle. It is anticipated this would increase recruitment and retention.

3 A minimum salary of \$20.00 per starting salary for new graduates. Rates of pay should be reviewed and adjusted should the differential drop below \$5.00 of the minimum wage. Example if the minimum wage is adjusted to \$15.30 the minimum starting salary for a new graduate should be \$20.30.

4 It is recommended that RVTs receive a minimum of a 3.5% merit increase with every year of satisfactory service in addition to general wage increase (GWI) aligned with the cost of living published by Statistics Canada be provided to RVTs. Responsibilities requiring specialty training should be compensated as a percent of hourly rate of pay in addition to years of experience.

5 RVTs should be familiar with provincial Employment Standards as it relates to overtime. Overtime should be compensated in accordance with respective Employment Standards Codes and applies to both salary and hourly employees as it is unlikely that RVTs satisfy any overtime exemption requirements under the Codes.

6 Vacation leave needs to adhere to Employment Standards at the minimum. Vacation leave needs to be offered commensurate with years of experience in the profession, not just with the current employer, and may exceed legislated minimums. This should apply across rural and urban populations. Vacation entitlements should factor in any allowances for paid sick leave and paid personal leave. If providing for the latter, vacation can follow the statute and it is recommended that an additional week of vacation be provided at five-year intervals such as ten years, fifteen years, etc. If not providing paid personal time, it is recommended to provide an additional week of vacation to that provided by statute, following the same thresholds for increases as above. To combat burnout, paid time away from work is vital to industry tenure.

7 Paid sick leave is not regulated but should be provided as part of a comprehensive compensation package at a rate of five days of paid sick leave annually, aligning to what was established during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ideally employees have sick leave as opposed to utilizing vacation leave when ill to ensure there is time set aside specifically for illness.

8 Paid personal leave is not regulated but should be provided as part of a comprehensive compensation package at a rate of five days of paid personal leave annually. This can be used to offset the reported flexibility provided for family commitments, resulting in more consistent utilization in employees, promoting work life balance, contributing to employee satisfaction and retention.

ALBERTA INDUSTRY & EMPLOYERS RECOMMENDATIONS

01 Retention and recruitment of experienced RVTs as it relates to compensation & benefits are the most significant issues. The following provides some things that could be done to ensure experienced RVTs are happy and successful in their workplaces. By retaining and recruiting experienced RVTs workplaces can expect to improve client experiences, increase transfer of knowledge to less experienced RVTs, improve productivity, morale and quality of services.

02 Provide a compensation package and communication that clearly outlines rates of pay, how and when increases happen, overtime and on-call rates during the employment life cycle. See Appendix One.

03 Provide a comprehensive benefits statement that summarizes all benefits provided (employer and employee paid) during the employment life cycle. See Appendix One.

04 Provide benefits such employer paid benefits program for RVTs and their families that includes health, wellness benefits, paid personal days, flexibility in scheduling, profit sharing and bonus programs, discounted pet foods and services

05 Pay for training including training in specialty areas of practice and enter into Return of Service (ROS) Agreements with RVTs to both increase the accessibility and affordability of the training, as well as, realize the investment in the practice and create and enhance the capacity to deliver more specialized services.

06 Think strategically when contemplating salaries for experienced staff by making the increases exponentially larger with each year of service. The rate of pay should be relative to experience.

07 There should be no distinction between urban and rural compensation rates and benefits.