

RCN Guernsey pay offer 2022, 2023, 2024

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who does the pay offer apply to?

This pay award relates to all employees of the States of Guernsey Health and Social Services department employed on an Agenda for Change contract.

This offer does not apply to those employed by the UK NHS who are contracted to work in Guernsey on Guernsey AfC terms and conditions.

2. What is the RCN position on the pay offer?

The RCN is asking you two questions:

1 – if you accept or reject the offer

2 – if you reject the offer are you willing to undertake industrial action

The RCN is recommending members reject this offer.

3. What is the position on funding the pay offer?

The RCN expects this to be a fully funded pay offer from the States of Guernsey.

4. What is the current situation?

There has been no negotiation on this offer despite the RCN asking since the end of last year for negotiations to start. The offer presented to nurses and midwives is the same as that given to all other pay groups on the island. Some pay groups have accepted their offer, other pay groups are consulting their members.

5. When did the States of Guernsey issue the pay offer?

[A letter](#) was sent to all Agenda for Change unions on 9 June outlining the pay offer.

6. What is the pay offer?

2022 - An uplift of 5% plus a payment of £500 to be added to all pay scales. The £500 will be consolidated into basic pay and will therefore be permanent and pensionable. For the avoidance of doubt, any additional payments and allowances, etc. that are not calculated with reference to basic pay will be

uplifted by 5%. This means, for example, that any bonuses or other contractual entitlements that are set at a flat rate will be increased by 5%. Please note as has been the case for many years, the recruitment and retention premia paid to eligible staff after three and six years' service will not be uplifted.

2023 - An uplift of RPIX as at 30th June 2022

2024 - An uplift of RPIX as at 30th June 2023 minus 1%. Should RPIX as of this date be less than 1%, the Employer will not seek to implement a pay cut and the award for that year would be zero.

7. Can I vote for part of the offer?

The offer is presented in its entirety. You must accept or reject all of it and you can't choose to accept one year and reject another.

8. What does consolidated mean?

Consolidated means that the £500 will be a permanent uplift to your salary and will be included in your pension calculations etc.

9. What is the RPIX figure for June 2022?

The RPIX in June 2022 was 7%

10. Why use RPIX when the usual benchmark has been RPI?

Answer provided by States:

The States switched to RPIX as the default in 2009/2010, largely because it was less volatile. Whilst changes have been made to address that volatility, it is worth noting that the Bank of England specifically manipulates interest rates to manage inflation and increasing interest rates should therefore bring inflation down. The application of RPIX (which excludes mortgage interest) is therefore a better measure of "core" inflation pressures. Again, the Committee does not consider that this decision is going to create any significant disadvantage, as RPI has averaged 2.9% since the year 2000, whereas RPIX has averaged 2.8% over the same period.

The RCN did not agree to this switch.

11. Why take the benchmark from June for a rise for the following January, when the usual benchmark has been September?

Answer provided by States

There are a number of reasons for this, including the fact that using the June date means that it is far more likely that pay awards can be implemented for all pay groups by the effective date of 1st January. It also means that both sides have greater certainty during negotiations, as the relevant figure is known well in

advance of the commencement of pay talks. The Employer does not consider that use of the June figure disadvantages any pay group.

The States moved all pay to January the 1st, without negotiation. This has now caused a logistical challenge. Having to negotiate all pay groups at the same time.

The A4C unions asked to move the benchmark to September. This was flatly refused.

12. Why is RPIX minus 1% being considered for 2024

Answer provided by States

With regard to the below inflation figure to be used for 2024, this cannot be taken in isolation as it is only one part of the bigger picture. In the context of the overall deal, your members' pay will, over the three-year period, exceed inflation. The offer has been "frontloaded" to ensure that maximum benefit is gained by your members, with the highest award – which is 2.7% above the relevant RPIX figure as at June 2021 – coming in year one, plus of course the £500 consolidated payment, increasing this above-inflation award even more.

Inflation has risen significantly in recent months and is predicted to continue to rise. We urge members to take this into account when making their decision.

13. What is the predicted inflation rate

The States of Guernsey update the inflation forecasts, please check online for their latest predictions: [Retail Price Index Inflation \(RPI and RPIX\) - States of Guernsey \(gov.gg\)](#)

14. Why is it a three-year offer

The AfC Trade Union group asked for a one year offer. This is because of the volatility in the global markets. We did not sign up for a three year offer as it doesn't give any chance for early negotiation. The next time we will be able to negotiate is towards the end of 2024 for a 2025 offer.

15. How will any pay offer affect members on any form of means-tested benefits?

The effect on an individual's benefits depends on individual circumstances and the type of benefit. To find more detail on your benefit situation, go to [Benefits, Allowances & Support - States of Guernsey \(gov.gg\)](#)

Members who are facing significant hardship and who need additional support and advice, can also seek support from the RCN Foundation. <https://rcnfoundation.rcn.org.uk/apply-for-funding/hardship-grants>

16. How will this pay offer affect deductions from my pay such as tax, social insurance and pension?

The pay award is a gross (total) figure, and you need to take deductions into account when considering the pay award.

Pay is subject to tax, social insurance contributions and, if you are a member of a pension scheme, pension contributions. You should check your current income tax, social insurance rates and pension contributions on your pay slip to assess how the pay offer will affect your take-home pay.

17. Pension contributions

Rises in pensionable pay can affect the contributions you will pay into the scheme.

Some staff, as a consequence of their annual pay uplift and/or incremental pay progression, may end up paying a higher percentage of contributions. This is because their pensionable earnings have increased, and they move into a higher tier in the pension contribution framework. This may make it seem like the value of the individual's pay uplift has been lost. Staff receiving pensionable allowances in addition to their basic pay (for example unsocial hours payments) may also be affected by this. Information on the States pension is here: [States pension - States of Guernsey \(gov.gg\)](https://www.states.gov.gg/pension)

18. I'm hearing the term 'pay parity'? What is this?

You may hear the term 'parity' talked about in relation to pay in Guernsey. It is a reference to Nurses pay banding being significantly lower than Civil Service roles.

What has happened so far

The drive for pay parity has been ongoing for several years. [You can read more about the timeline/history of pay parity here.](#)

Initially roles were matched against A4C banding, and when A4C roles and Civil service roles were considered within those bands a significant financial disparity was seen. Although previous pay rises have started to close this gap, there is still work to be done. Members voted to take industrial action in 2020 and this was largely due to the inequity between nursing roles on A4C and the Civil Service roles. It demonstrated the lack of value placed on nursing roles which are safety critical.

What happened to parity in the pay discussions?

In the 2022 pay discussions, the States presented the offer with no negotiation. There was no reference to pay parity despite this being something that a number of Deputies signed up to when they became Nurse Champions, as part of our election manifesto. Unfortunately, we have not seen any evidence of action.

We asked for a commitment to discuss the parity issue, to review the current position, and for a robust plan to be developed. We asked for this to be achieved to agree a fair pay award in line with Civil service salaries. The States declined to negotiate with us on this issue.

Why is parity important?

As highly qualified safety critical professionals with relevant qualifications and

experience, we deserve to be recognised and paid accordingly. It is difficult to make nursing an attractive career on the islands if nursing pay is not commensurate with the responsibilities nursing staff hold, and salaries are visibly lower than in other sectors.

Salary is a measure of the value the role holds. If nurses are continually paid less than their counterparts, the profession becomes de-valued. It is critical this doesn't happen if we are to maintain and improve recruitment and retention of nurses in Guernsey and Alderney.

What happens to pay parity if I reject the offer?

If you decide to reject the current offer, (which does not make any provision for pay parity), the RCN will include pay parity in the negotiations going forward. This does not mean the States will agree to reconsider pay parity.

What happens to pay parity if I accept the offer?

If you decide to accept the offer, it is highly unlikely that there will be any further discussion on pay parity until 2024 – perhaps even later. This is because the pay offer is for a further three years, and a general election will also be held in 2025. Deputies will be re-elected, absolving current deputies of any responsibility to take this issue forward so the issue is likely to be pushed even further back.

19. Why are the RCN consulting with members?

We must ask your opinion on the pay offer and it will mean different things to different people.

This campaign is led by your South East Board, Council and Trade Union Committee, and they believe RCN members should be heard on the acceptability or otherwise of this pay offer.

20. What's the difference between a pay offer and a pay award?

A pay award is when an employer or government (States of Guernsey) that controls pay decides on the pay for staff and implements that decision by automatically applying it to its employees' contracts of employment.

A pay offer is usually generated from discussions or negotiations between an employer or government that controls pay, and the employees or the employees' trade union.

Once an offer is made, employees are given an opportunity to consider if they wish to accept the offer made by the employer or government.

A pay award is when an employer or government that controls pay decides on pay for the staff and implements that decision by automatically applying it to the

employees' salaries. In these circumstances, a recommendation would be redundant.

21. What is the RCN position?

The offer was considered by the RCN South East Board, the RCN Trade Union Committee and RCN Council which are made up of your elected representatives from the RCN membership.

The RCN is recommending members reject this pay offer.

22. Why is the RCN recommending reject?

The RCN considers this offer is unacceptable.

The offer of 5% plus £500 does not correspond with the rate of inflation of 7% (using RPIX as of June 2022), in most member cases.

For members on band 3, this offer will result in a very small increase above 7% (i.e., 7.1%) but this is insignificant as inflation is predicted to rise rapidly.

The offer for 2024 is RPIX but -1%, this is unacceptable.

Overall, this 3-year deal does not provide for the rapid changes we are seeing in cost of living rises currently, and with an offer below inflation for 2024, it is likely nurses will be worse off in real terms.

The States are unwilling to enter negotiations with the RCN and other A4C groups. There has been no discussion on pay parity, which is important to many of our members.

RCN Council were mindful that in 2020 Guernsey members voted to take industrial action, but that action was not possible due to the Covid pandemic.

23. Why are you already asking about Industrial Action? What if the pay offer is accepted?

If the majority of members accept the offer, we will tell the employer and it will be backdated to January and put into your pay as soon as the payroll team can action this.

If the pay offer is not accepted, the next step is to consider whether you are prepared to take some form of industrial action. The RCN regards industrial action as a last resort and would prefer negotiation as a first step. To date there has been no attempt by the States to negotiate at all.

Conducting a consultative ballot and indicative ballot at the same time will save time and money in the long run.

After an indicative ballot, and if the majority of members responding to the ballot indicate a willingness to take part in some form of industrial action, a formal statutory industrial action ballot would be required before industrial action could take place. The RCN has set out the process it would follow in the [RCN Industrial Action Handbook](#).

24. What if I do not feel comfortable going on strike?

Remember, industrial action of any kind is a last resort. A formal statutory industrial action ballot would be required before industrial action could take place.

Industrial action takes many forms, not just strike action. There is also action short of a strike such as working strictly to the terms of your contract of employment often referred to as “working to rule.”

By working to rule, you are withdrawing the goodwill that your employer often relies on to carry out its business effectively.

The RCN has set out the process it would follow in the [RCN Industrial Action Handbook](#).

25. What if the offer is accepted?

The offer will be put in place in its entirety until 2024 and you will be paid (including back pay to 1 Jan 2022) as soon as the States can action it. We don't have a timeline for this.

26. What if the offer is rejected?

As a Trade Union we will need to look at the vote and the willingness to take further action. This alone may spur the States into negotiations but there is no guarantee. The offer may be imposed (actioned without discussion). The States have threatened to impose a lesser offer for 2022 if the offer is rejected.

27. What are the next steps?

You will receive an email asking you to vote on the pay offer and willingness to undertake industrial action.

The dates of the ballot are 9am 23 August 2022

You must respond by 2pm 13 September 2022

Members will receive their ballot by email from Civica, who will conduct the ballot on behalf of the RCN.

28. I have not received my ballot email?

If you don't see the email from Civica RCN@cesvotes.com in your inbox, remember to check your spam or junk mail folders.

If you have not received an email or a letter it might be that your details in the RCN membership database are not up to date. To update your details [Login to MyRCN](#) or call RCN Direct on 0345 772 6100 (select option one), or email membership@rcn.org.uk. You must include your membership number in your email, and you will be asked for it if you call. You can find out more about RCN membership and other ways to get in touch on our [membership FAQ's](#). This will not result in an immediate email with your link to vote in the ballot, your updated data will be confidentially and securely shared with Civica (the independent scrutineer) who will process and send new emails to vote. Please allow 3-5 days between you updating your details and you receiving your email to vote. Do keep checking your inbox for an email from RCN@cesvotes.com.

The last deadline for updating your details to be included in the indicative ballot is 8am Monday 12 September 2022. The ballot will close at 12 noon on Tuesday 13 September 2022.

29. I have a question that isn't here!

Contact the regional team for support: helen.wigginton@rcn.org.uk

30. Updating your details

To update your details, Login to [MyRCN](#) or call RCN Direct on 0345 772 6100 (select option one), or email membership@rcn.org.uk. You must include your membership number in your email, and you will be asked for it if you call. You can find out more about RCN membership and other ways to get in touch on our [membership FAQ's](#).

Updating your details will not automatically trigger a ballot email to be sent to you. Civica are working from the records held by the RCN as of 22 August 2022. If you require a ballot and haven't received one, you must contact RCN Direct to check your details.