

**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
DECISION NOTE**

DATE: July 28, 2021
CLIFF#: 261047

DATE OF PREVIOUS NOTE (if applicable): N/A
PREVIOUS CLIFF # (if applicable): N/A

PREPARED FOR: Honourable Mitzi Dean, Minister of Children and Family Development and
Honourable Katrina Chen, Minister of State for Child Care

s.13; s.17

BACKGROUND:

- The ECE Wage Enhancement (ECE WE) currently provides a \$2 per hour top-up to base wages for eligible front-line ECEs.
- BC Budget 2021 announced a commitment to double the ECE WE to \$4 per hour; a September 2021 implementation date was publicly announced on July 8, 2021, during the joint Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreement announcement with the Government of Canada, and on June 8 in the New Child Care Legislation announcement.

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DISCUSSION:

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¹ Source: 2020/2021 Provider Profile Survey.

² Source: 2020/2021 Provider Profile Survey; this includes ECEs with their basic certificate, and those with ITE and/or SNE certification.

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DECISION and SIGNATURE
Honourable Mitzi Dean
Minister of Children and Family Development

DATE SIGNED

DECISION and SIGNATURE
Honourable Katrina Chen
Minister of State for Child Care

DATE SIGNED

Attachments:

- Appendix A - Unionized Versus Non-Unionized ECE Wages Data Table
- Appendix B - Funding Guidelines—ECE Employees in Unionized Facilities
- Appendix C - Draft Funding Agreement Amendment Wording
- Appendix D - s.12; s.14; s.17
- Appendix E - Communications Plan

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|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
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Appendix A: Unionized Versus Non-Unionized ECE Wages Data Table

ECE+ Wages by Unionization Before ECE WE

| | Union | | | Non-Union | | | Total | |
|--------------|---|--|--------------------------------|---|--|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Wage Amount | Number of ECE+ receiving wage or higher | Percent of Union ECE+ receiving wage or higher | Percent of Total ECE Workforce | Number of ECE+ receiving wage or higher | Percent of Non-Union ECE+ receiving wage or higher | Percent of Total ECE Workforce | Number of ECE+ receiving wage or higher | Percent of ECE+ receiving wage or higher |
| \$25.19/hour | 295 | 22% | 3% | 1,153 | 13% | 12% | 1,448 | 14% |
| \$30.07/hour | 65 | 5% | 1% | 384 | 4% | 4% | 449 | 4% |

ECE+ Wages by Unionization After ECE WE

| | Union | | | Non-Union | | | Total | |
|--------------|---|--|--------------------------------|---|--|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Wage Amount | Number of ECE+ receiving wage or higher | Percent of Union ECE+ receiving wage or higher | Percent of Total ECE Workforce | Number of ECE+ receiving wage or higher | Percent of Non-Union ECE+ receiving wage or higher | Percent of Total ECE Workforce | Number of ECE+ receiving wage or higher | Percent of ECE+ receiving wage or higher |
| \$25.19/hour | 543 | 40% | 5% | 1,875 | 22% | 19% | 2,418 | 24% |
| \$30.07/hour | 142 | 11% | 1% | 530 | 6% | 5% | 672 | 7% |

Estimation of ECE+ Wages by Union After ECE WE is raised to \$4/hour

| | Union | | | Non-Union | | | Total | |
|--------------|---|--|--------------------------------|---|--|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Wage Amount | Number of ECE+ receiving wage or higher | Percent of Union ECE+ receiving wage or higher | Percent of Total ECE Workforce | Number of ECE+ receiving wage or higher | Percent of ECE+ receiving wage or higher | Percent of Total ECE Workforce | Number of ECE+ receiving wage or higher | Percent of ECE+ receiving wage or higher |
| \$25.19/hour | 839 | 62% | 8% | 3,351 | 39% | 33% | 4,190 | 42% |
| \$30.07/hour | 215 | 16% | 2% | 754 | 9% | 8% | 969 | 10% |

Data Source: 2020/21 Provider Profile Survey

Notes:

ECE+ are staff which have at least one of Early Childhood Educator (ECE), Infant Toddler Educator (ITE), or Special Needs Educator (SNE) certification.

ECE counts are based on Provider Profile responses. The response rate for the Provider Profile at time of data collection was approximately 90%. Actual provincial ECE counts are likely about 10% higher.

ECE+ counts only include ECEs at Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF) facilities. It does not include ECEs at Prototype Sites and licensed facilities that do not participate in CCOF.

There is a total of 8,662 Non-Union ECE+ and 1,346 Union ECE+.

Salaries data was trimmed to exclude extreme values.

Union participation is on the facility basis. Facilities that indicated some or all staff are unionized are included in the Union group.

ECE+ do not need to be receiving ECE WE to be included in these counts.

Appendix B: Funding Guidelines

ECE Employees in Unionized Facilities

Approved Organizations with facilities that employ unionized Front-line ECEs may be eligible for the ECEWE, as reflected in Table 1 below, provided they have reached a local agreement with their union to amend their collective agreements to implement the ECE-WE.

Unionized Front-line ECE employees working at approved Organizations/facilities may qualify for the ECE-WE if their wages are set through local agreement negotiations. In some instances, recently ratified collective agreements have set out a process for ECEs whose wages are set through these local agreements to access the ECE-WE.

Organizations with facilities where the province funds more than 50% of the child care program(s), resulting in unionized ECE wages that are set through Joint Job Evaluation Plan classification and wage grids currently do not qualify for the ECE-WE. In these cases, Government's Low Wage Redress funding supports ECE wage adjustments that exceed those available through the ECE-WE.

The ECE-WE funding is intended to be used to supplement wages of eligible unionized ECEs by up to \$4 per hour, up to a maximum of the Joint Job Evaluation Plan wage rates established in the Community Social Services Sector Bargaining Association (CSSBA) collective agreement with the Community Social Services Employers' Association (CSSEA). Any surplus funding may be used to support ECE professional development or other negotiated supports for eligible unionized ECEs.

Unionized ECEs whose wages exceed the JJEP wage rates as a result of receiving the ECE-WE prior to September 1, 2021 will continue to receive the same ECE-WE amount (\$2 per hour), and not see a reduction in their WE rate.

Table 1: ECE-WE Eligibility in Unionized Environments

| Type of Unionized Employer | Description | Eligibility for ECE-WE |
|--|---|--|
| Community Social Services Employers' Association (CSSEA) Member – provincially funded ECEs | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Employer is a CSSEA Member and subject to collective agreement with the Community Social Services Bargaining Association (CSSBA). | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Not eligible. Government's Low Wage Redress funding supports ECE wage adjustments. |

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|--|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receives more than 50% of their child care operating costs from the Province. • Employers must pay unionized ECE wages according to the CSSEA Collective Agreements. The rates are set through CSSEA's Joint Job Evaluation Plan (JJEP) wage grids. | |
| CSSEA Member – non-provincially funded ECEs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer is a CSSEA Member. • Receives less than 50% of their child care operating costs from the Province – not eligible for Low-Wage Redress funding for child care operations. • Some employers have been paying ECEs according to CSSEA Collective Agreements (i.e., as per JJEP wage grids) while others have been paying ECEs at rates lower than JJEP wage grids (these lower ECE rates are set | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be eligible, contingent on confirmation that the Employer's bargaining agent has reached an agreement with the union to amend the collective agreements (or negotiated a side agreement) in order to implement the ECE-WE. The ECE-WE funding will offset the cost to employers of matching or narrowing the gap with the JJEP rates for ECEs established in the CSSBA-CSSEA Collective Agreement. The ECE-WE |

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| | through local side agreements that modify the CSSEA Collective Agreements). | <p>funding is not intended to be used to supplement ECE wages beyond the JJEP rates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any surplus funding may be used to support ECE professional development or other negotiated supports. |
| All Other Unionized Employers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any other unionized employers (public, non-profit, or private) with a collective agreement that includes ECEs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be eligible, contingent on confirmation that the Employer has reached an agreement with their union to amend their collective agreements in order to implement the ECE-WE. The ECE-WE funding is not intended to be used to supplement ECE wages beyond the JJEP rates. Any surplus funding must be used to support ECE professional development or other negotiated supports. |

APPENDIX C

Draft Funding Agreement Amendment Wording re: Distribution of ECE WE

1. ECE Wage Top-Up Funding

We will pay you the ECE Wage Top-Up Funding in the amount of \$4.00 for each Hour Worked by your ECE Employees up to a maximum of 195 hours per month per ECE Employee. You will distribute the ECE Wage Top-Up Funding to each of those ECE Employees in accordance with section 5.1 of the Agreement and in accordance with the following provisions:

- a) For those ECE Employees who are paid on a salaried (non-hourly) basis, the ECE Wage Top-Up funding and ECE Portion of Statutory Benefits Funding will be paid based on a breakdown of Hours Worked by those ECE Employees.

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APPENDIX D ^{s.13; s.14; s.17}

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Early Childhood Educators Wage Enhancement – up to \$4 per hour Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Plan

Context:

BC Budget 2021 announced a commitment to double the Early Childhood Educators Wage Enhancement up to \$4 per hour. A September 2021 implementation date was formalized during the joint Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreement announcement with the Government of Canada on July 8. This date was picked up and distributed by multiple news agencies and appears to be well-known and anticipated within the sector.

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Once implemented, the increase will be paid retroactively to September 1, 2021. Notification of the increase must be given to providers a minimum of 30 days prior to month of implementation. notice must be sent out no later than:

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- December 1 for a January 1 rate change,
- December 31 for a February 1 rate change (Jan 1 is a Saturday) or
- January 28 for a March 1 rate change.

The ECE-WE rate increase must be implemented no later than March 1 so that providers remain bound by the 2021/22 Funding Agreement terms and conditions which expire March 2022. s.17

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Issues:

Implications from the decision to delay the payment (implementation) of the wage enhancement will result in approximately 10,000 ECEs being affected with payment coming at the end of the ^{s.13; s.17}
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Communications Objectives:

- Inform child care sector of upcoming \$2 per hour wage enhancement.
- Mitigate potential negative response to government's decision to delay payment until Jan/Feb 2022.

Key Messages to Stakeholders:**Top messages:**

- As part of Government's [ECE Recruitment and Retention Strategy](#), front-line Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) working in licensed child care facilities will soon be eligible to receive wage enhancement up to a total of \$4 per hour, bringing the median wage for ECEs to about \$25/hour.
- This is the third wage enhancement offered to licensed ECEs since September 2019.
- ECEs will begin receiving the benefit in early 2022 and it will be retroactive to September 2021.
- As of April 2021, the Province has invested over \$62 million to provide more than 13,800 early childhood educators with wage enhancements.
- Earlier this month, we announced an extension of the Canada-British Columbia Early Learning and Child Care Agreement and a one-time federal investment of \$48.8 million in 2021-2022 to support B.C.'s early childhood educator recruitment and retention efforts.
- Our partnership with the Government of Canada will further support recruitment and retention of child care workers through the development of a professional wage grid, something advocates have been calling for.

- Government has also expanded student bursaries to help with the cost of post-secondary education and created new, more flexible training opportunities for people interested in becoming certified ECEs.
 - \$16 million in funding has gone to the ECE Bursary program, which has provided roughly 8,000 bursaries and workforce-development supports for students pursuing a career in child care.
 - An additional \$5.2 million is available to ECE students for the 2020-21 academic year.
- BC Budget's 2021 invests in 110 more seats at post-secondary institutions and more on-the-job training – bringing the total number of early childhood educator seats created since the beginning of Childcare BC to over 1,100.
- In 2020, MCFD expanded ECE learning opportunities through access to teaching specialists – known as pedagogists – in child care and post-secondary programs.

Secondary Messages:

- Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) are at the heart of building a universal child care system – that's why we're focusing on both ECE recruitment and retention.
- Participation in the Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement (ECE-WE) is optional, and child care providers can apply at any time.
- To be eligible, a child care facility must have an active funding agreement, be approved for the [Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative](#) and have at least one facility approved for ECE-WE for 2021/2022.
- Callers with questions about the ECE-WE asked to call 1 888 338 6622 and select option 2 for CCOF or option 7 for Universal Child Care Prototype Sites.

If asked about the delay:

- Part of building a universal child care system is making sure early childhood educators have access to the training and support they need, along with the compensation and recognition they deserve. This is the third wage enhancement we have implemented since September 2019.
- Between September 2019 – April 2021, we've invested over \$62 million in wage enhancements for ECEs.
- The wage enhancement will come into effect by March 2022 and be retroactively paid back to ECE's on hours worked as of September 1, 2021.

- The wage enhancement program is one way we are working to support the growth of this rewarding and in-demand profession.
- We're also investing in bursaries, professional development and more training opportunities for early childhood educators.

If pressed on why the delay:

- We apologize for the inconvenience this delay may cause.
- It's important to note the wage enhancement will be retroactive to September 1, 2021.
- Similar to 2019, setting up the system to implement an additional \$2 per hour takes time. We want to ensure a smooth implementation of the wage enhancement and ensure more eligible ECEs receive the benefit.

Timing and Workplan:

| Timing | Tactics | Stakeholders | Materials | Responsible |
|--------------|--|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Aug 16 | Key messages/QA for Minister | Public | KMs/QA - TBD | GCPE |
| Wed Aug 18 | Phone calls to key stakeholders | List Below | Contact info/KMs | MO/SEDS |
| Thurs Aug 19 | Information letter sent to providers with an active Funding Agreement and at least one facility approved from ECE-WE for 2021/22. Letter will inform the sector that a third round of ECE-WE will be implemented early in the new year retroactive to September 1, 2021. | CCOF facilities | Letter | SEDS/ policy |
| August 17 | Key messages provided to call centre staff on implementation of WE schedule | ECEs/Operators | KMs | SEDS |
| August 17 | Questions/Answers provided to call centre staff on implementation of WE schedule | ECEs/Operators | QA | Policy (CCOF) |

| | | | | |
|-----------|---|--------|--------|------|
| August 19 | Update ECE-WE web page informing of the implementation of WE payment schedule | Public | Web | SEDS |
| August 19 | Form letter to be used in correspondence responses. | Public | Letter | SEDS |

Risks:

| | Likelihood | Impact | Mitigation |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|--|
| <i>Describe the risk to government or stakeholders</i> | <i>High/Medium/Low</i> | <i>High/Medium/Low</i> | <i>Explain the strategy for mitigating this risk</i> |
| Influx of correspondence from sector/stakeholders | High | Low | Develop approved key messages for call centre staff and form letter responses ready to go once news is communicated to sector. |

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Key Stakeholders:

Minister's Office to Contact:

- **Provincial Child Care Council (PCCC)**
 - **Sandra Menzer** Chair
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 -
 -
- **Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC**
 - **Susan Harney** Board member
 - info@cccabc.bc.ca
 - (604) 515-5439
 - Sharon Gregson (\$10aday) sgregson@telus.net
- **Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECEBC)**
 - **Emily Gawlick (Mlieczko)** Executive Director
 - Executive.Director@ecebc.ca
 - 604-709-6063 ext 2
- **Play School Platoon (In-Home Multi-Age, Grand Forks)**
 - **Yvonne Coupland**
 - ycoupland@telus.net
 - 250-442-3024
- **Multi-Age Child Care Association of BC**
 - **Lindsay Vanatko**
- **BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS)**
 - **Karen Isaac** Executive Director
 - Karen@acc-society.bc.ca
 - 604-913-9128 ext 222

ECE Employers' Unions and Associations – Workforce Group Members

- **David Fleming** Canadian Union of Public Employees of BC
 - dfleming@cupe.ca
 - 604-291-9119
- **Stephanie Smith** President, BC Government Employees' Union
 - president@bcgeu.ca
 - s.22 | Assistant's Direct Line: 604-343-1223

SEDS to Contact:

- **Tanya Behardien** President, The Federation of Community Social Services of BC
 - Tanya.Behardien@OneSkyCommunity.com
 - 250-487-3367
- **Gentil Mateus** CEO, Community Social Services Employers Association
 - gmateus@cssea.bc.ca
 - dsmall@cssea.bc.ca
 - 604 551 9382
- **Vancouver Society of Children's Centres (child care provider)**
 - **Bernice Scholten** Chief Executive Officer
 - (604) 718-6559
 - bernices@vsocc.org
- **YMCA of Greater Vancouver**
 - **Cathy Poole** VP for Children and Youth
 - (604) 939-9622
 - cathy.poole@gv.ymca.ca
- **Aboriginal Head Start Association of British Columbia (AHSBC)**
 - **Joan Gignac** Executive Director
 - executivedirector@ahsabc.com

- 250-858-4543
- **Métis Nation of BC**
 - **Sharlene Wedel Metis** Early Years Manager
 - swedel@mnbc.ca
 - 604-557-5851 CELL: 604-787-5080
- **Inclusion BC**
 - **Karla Verschoor** Executive Director
 - 604-764-2591 ext 516
- **Association of Neighbourhood Houses BC (ANHBC)**
 - **Rhea Hubbard** Contact, Kensington Prairie
 - rhubbard@alexhouse.net
 - 604-535-0015
 - **Frog Hollow PT site**
 - **Anna Cuomo** Contact
 - annac@froghollow.bc.ca
 - 604-251-1225 ext 230
 - **Liz Lougheed Green**
 - Chief Executive Officer
 - elgreen@anhbc.org
 - 604-875-9111 x 107

**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
DECISION NOTE**

DATE: October 22, 2021

CLIFF#: 262456

PREPARED FOR: Kevena Hall, ADM, Child Care Division, Ministry of Children and Family Development

ISSUE: Extending eligibility for the Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Wage Enhancement to directly employed Supported Child Development (SCD) and Aboriginal Supported Child Development (ASCD) Support Workers, who are Provincially Certified as ECEs.

BACKGROUND:

The ECE Wage Enhancement (ECE WE) launched on January 1, 2019, as part of the Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy.

- The purpose of the ECE WE is to support the development of a stable, qualified, and skilled professional ECE workforce to support the creation of new licensed child care and to deliver high quality child care programming to more families across the province.
- The [2021/22 Funding Guidelines](#) state that “the ECE WE is available to Front-line ECEs (including those who are also owner/operators) working in eligible licensed child care facilities”.
- Provincially Certified ECEs working as SCD/ASCD Support Workers (SWs) were determined ineligible for the ECE WE because they are paid externally, through the separate SCD/ASCD program budget, through two different models:
 - Model 1: The SCD/ASCD program signs a contract with a child care program to provide funds to the provider, who then directly hires and pays SCD/ASCD SWs, creating an employer-employee relationship; or
 - Model 2: The SCD/ASCD program employs and pays SCD/ASCD SWs directly and assigns/deployes them to child care programs.

Since the implementation of the ECE WE, the Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF) program has received ECE WE claims from multiple child care providers who directly employ ECE-certified SCD/ASCD SWs. There is also evidence that some SCD/ASCD programs have increased funding to child care providers to “match” the ECE WE as a recruitment and retention strategy, which negatively impacts the SCD/ASCD budget and will reduce the number of children who are supported by SCD/ASCD over time.

Most recently, CCOF received correspondence from:

- the BC Centre for Ability (Appendix A) stating their confusion over how to interpret the Funding Guidelines for eligibility of their ECEs, as the term and role of “Supported Child Development Worker” was not clearly defined in the Funding Guidelines; and
- the Comox Valley Child Development Association (Appendix B) communicating to child care centres they provide services to that ECEs working as SCD SWs and who are directly employed by a child care centre (model 1) *are* eligible under the current Funding Guidelines.

It is also important to note that SCD/ASCD SWs are not required to hold ECE certification or credentials; there are SWs that have other educational backgrounds, and would not be eligible for the ECE-WE regardless of their employment status.

DISCUSSION:

The CCOF Provider Profile Survey, completed annually by all child care providers in receipt of CCOF funding, shows that from 2014/15 to 2017/18, child care providers reported that an average of 292 SCD SWs employed in CCOF-funded child care programs were certified as ECEs. This number represents only SCD SWs who are directly employed by the child care program. Since 2018, \$10M in Federal funds has been invested annually in the SCD/ASCD program; therefore the number of ECEs working as SCD/ASCD SWs could be higher (roughly estimated at an additional 28 SCD/ASCD SWs), for a total of 320¹.

Feedback from both the child care and SCD/ASCD sectors indicates that the ineligibility of SCD/ASCD-funded positions in child care centres for the ECE WE has had significant impacts on recruitment and retention for these positions provincially.

¹ This estimate of 292 is based on the most recent available data on the number of SCD SWs with ECE certification; this question is no longer posed through the Child Care Provider Profile Survey, as of 2018, so this data is no longer collected. Given the \$10M enhancement to SCD coupled with recruitment and retention challenges, it is roughly estimated the number is closer to 320.

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² Note: unionized facilities that do not meet the current eligibility requirements, as outline on p.4-5 of the 2021/22 ECE WE Funding Agreements

RECOMMENDATION:

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Approved

November 30, 2021

DECISION and SIGNATURE

Kevena Hall
ADM Child Care Division

DATE SIGNED

ATTACHMENTS

- A. **s.12; s.13**
- B. Letter from Comox Valley Child Development Association

Contact

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Supported Child Development Program



August 10, 2021

Dear Child Care Centres

The Supported Child Development (SCD) Planning/Resource Committee (PR Committee) meets four times a year to allocate funds, from the budget provided to us from the Ministry for Children and Family Development (MCFD), to provide extra staffing supports in Early Childhood Centres.

In a recent telephone call with a staff person from the Wage Enhancement Department of MCFD we were able to confirm with them that Support Workers employed by Early Learning Centres who are registered/certified Early Childhood Educators are eligible for the Wage Enhancement (WE) as per the Early Childhood Educator- Wage Enhancement Funding Guidelines January 2021 [2021/22 ECE-WE Funding Guidelines \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/child/familydev/earlychildhood/earlychildhoodeducatorwageenhancementfundingguidelinesjan2021.pdf)

“To be eligible, ECEs must:

- Hold a valid Early Childhood Educator, Infant and Toddler Educator, and/or Special Needs Educator certificate issued by the BC ECE Registry;
- Be in Good Standing with the BC ECE Registry; and
- Be a Front-line ECE Employee directly employed or self-employed on a full- or part-time/casual basis by a Licensed Child Care Facility that is in receipt of CCOF and has been approved by the Ministry to opt in to both the CCFRI (if eligible to do so) and the ECE-WE.”

Support Workers who have their ECE are ineligible for the wage enhancement **only** if they are employed by the SCD Program as per the ECE-WE Funding Guidelines.

This is great news for the Early Learning Community!

The Comox Valley SCD Program has included the Wage Enhancement for eligible Support Workers in the extra staffing funding since the WE program started to facilitate the equity of wages of support workers and regular staff. We believe that Child Care providers have long been underpaid and undervalued and applaud the introduction of the WE program but have been concerned about the impact this has had on our limited budget as the WE continues to increase.

Effective August 1, 2021 SCD will no longer be adding the Wage Enhancement to the funding allocated to Early Learning Programs and each centre should submit the hours worked for eligible Support Workers to the Wage Enhancement Program.

SUPPORTED CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM REPORT

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If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to be in touch with your consultant or with me.

Sincerely



Supported Child Development Planning/Resource Committee

SUPPORTED CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM REPORT

CHILD:

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**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
INFORMATION NOTE**

DATE: January 5, 2021
CLIFF#: 266211

DATE OF PREVIOUS NOTE (if applicable): N/A
PREVIOUS CLIFF # (if applicable): N/A

PREPARED FOR: Kevena Hall, ADM Child Care Division, Ministry of Children and Family Development

ISSUE: Changes to 2022/23 ECE Wage Enhancement Funding Guidelines

BACKGROUND:

The Child Care Benefit and Operating Funding Branch is preparing for renewals of Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF) Funding Agreements for the 2022/23 funding term.

Some updates are being made to the ECE Wage Enhancement (ECE WE) Funding Guidelines as a result, including basic updates to reflect the ECE WE increase from \$2 to \$4, and to include reference to the Universal Child Care Prototype Sites where appropriate, along with the program contact information.

DISCUSSION:

The Ministry's Budget 2022 request to Treasury Board includes a request to expand eligibility for the ECE WE to all Provincially Certified ECEs working in eligible licensed facilities, regardless of the percentage of time they spend working in a "Front Line" capacity.

Eligibility requirements for the ECE WE used to be included in the Funding Agreement – which cannot be changed outside of the regular CCOF renewal period without significant provider and program administration efforts.

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The resulting changes to the Funding Agreement and Funding Guidelines are summarized below. All changes are shown in track changes in the attached document.

Definitions removed from the 2022/23 CCOF Funding Agreement:

- "Front-line"
- "Casual ECE Employee"

Definitions added to the 2022/23 CCOF Funding Agreement:

- "ECE Employee" means an ECE who meets the criteria set out in the ECE Wage Enhancement Funding Guidelines

- “ECE Wage Enhancement Funding Guidelines” means the guidelines that describe the eligibility requirements for ECE Wage Enhancement including, but not limited to, organization eligibility, facility eligibility, and ECE eligibility

New and updated definitions in the 2022/23 ECE WE Funding Guidelines:

- **Casual ECE Employee:** A Front-line ECE Employee who provides Direct Care at the Facility in a substitute or casual capacity.
- **Direct Care Staff:** Staff employed at the Facility on either a full-time, part-time, or casual basis providing Direct Care, and includes ECE Employees.
- **Statutory Benefits Funding:** Funding provided by the Ministry to offset the increased costs of Statutory Benefits associated with the ECE-WE. Note: Statutory Benefits Funding amounts are adjusted on January 1 of each year as required to reflect any changes to federal tax rates.

If Treasury Board approves the Ministry’s request to expand eligibility for the ECE WE, the definitions in the Funding Guidelines related to “Direct Care”, “Direct Care Staff”, “ECE Employee” and “Front-line” will be amended or removed accordingly without having the update the Funding Agreement or trigger CCOF renewal.

Draft timeline:

January 2022

- 2022/23 ECE-WE Funding Guidelines published to support CCOF Funding Agreement renewal.

February 2022

- 2022/23 CCOF Funding Agreements are drafted, and providers may begin accepting terms to entering into agreements.

February/March 2022

- Budget decision may prompt amendment to 2022/23 ECE WE Funding Guidelines.

NEXT STEPS:

- Child Care Policy will send updated Funding Guidelines to Stakeholder Engagement and Divisional Services to upload to the web once finalized.

ATTACHMENTS (if applicable):

A. Updated 2022-23 ECE Wage Enhancement Funding Guidelines

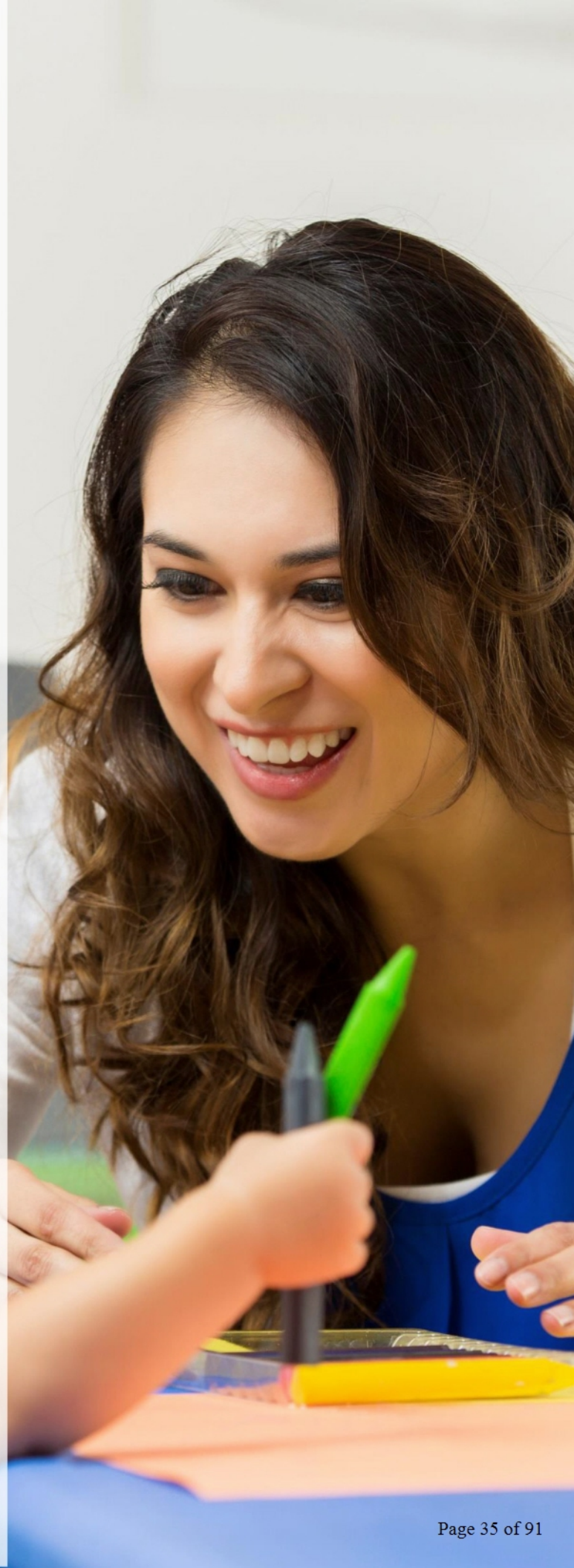
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MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND
FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement (ECE-WE)

Funding Guidelines 2022/23

RELEASED March 2022



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1. Introduction

Recruiting and retaining a skilled, knowledgeable Early Childhood Educator (ECE) workforce is a key factor in implementing [ChildCareBC](#). Improving the recruitment and retention of ECEs contributes to enhancing the overall quality of early childhood programs throughout British Columbia and supports the commitment to speed up the creation of new licensed child care spaces so that more families have access to quality child care in their community.

The ECE Wage Enhancement (ECE-WE) is part of a broader [Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy](#) to support the development of a stable, qualified, and skilled professional ECE workforce, and recognizes early care and learning as a sustainable and valued career.

The ECE-WE is available to all ECEs (including ECEs who are also owner/operators) directly employed by and working in eligible licensed child care facilities.

2. What's New for 2022/23

The ECE-WE has increased by \$2 per hour, to a total of \$4 per hour. This increase came into effect September 1, 2021 with payment implemented in March 2022. Please see "ECE Employees in Unionized Facilities" for further information on applicability for unionized settings.

Effective April 1, 2022, eligibility for the ECE-WE is expanded to all provincially certified ECEs directly employed by and working in eligible licensed facilities, regardless of the percentage of time they spend working in direct care of children. Please see "ECE Staff Eligibility" for further information and Appendix A for updated definitions.

3. Who is Eligible?

Receipt of the ECE-WE is dependent upon the following three factors, as detailed in the subsequent sections and Table 1:

1. Eligibility of an Organization/\$10 a Day ChildCareBC Centre;
2. Eligibility of facilities that are owned/operated by the Organization; and
3. Eligibility of ECE Employees (employed or self-employed by the Organization/facility).

Organization Eligibility

Organizations must be enrolled in [Child Care Operating Funding](#) (CCOF) Base Funding or operate as a [\\$10 a Day ChildCareBC Centre](#) to participate in the ECE-WE. Participation in the ECE-WE is voluntary, meaning Organizations can decide whether or not to apply. However, while participation is voluntary, in order to receive the ECE-WE, Organizations must apply on behalf of their eligible ECE Employees.

Facility Eligibility

Organizations may have either a single facility that delivers licensed child care in one location, or multiple facilities delivering licensed child care in a variety of settings. For administering the ECE-WE, funding will be provided based on each facility's physical address/location rather than by facility licence. For ECEs working at each facility to be eligible for the ECE-WE, the facility must be approved to participate in the [Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative](#) (CCFRI), if eligible, or be approved as a [\\$10 a Day ChildCareBC Centre](#).

If a facility chooses not to enroll, is not approved to enroll, or is otherwise not permitted to participate in CCOF Base Funding, the CCFRI, or the \$10 a Day ChildCareBC Centre initiative, ECEs working at that facility will not be eligible for the ECE-WE.

While an Organization may have multiple facilities, each facility's eligibility for the ECE-WE is assessed separately. Additionally, a facility that has opted in to the ECE-WE cannot opt-out during the term of their Funding Agreement.

ECE-WE Opt-in for CCFRI-ineligible facilities

ECEs who are employed/self-employed at Licensed Child Care Facilities that are not eligible for CCFRI funding (i.e., facilities that do not offer child care in the CCFRI Eligible Care Categories) may still be eligible for the ECE-WE, if the facility is enrolled in CCOF Base Funding or operates as a \$10 a Day ChildCareBC Centre.

Please note that ECEs working in facilities offering a combination of eligible CCFRI Eligible Care Categories and ineligible child care programs – i.e., Preschool (ineligible) and Infant/Toddler (eligible) – are also eligible for the ECE-WE, as long as the facility is enrolled in the CCFRI for the CCFRI Eligible Care Categories.

Example: Organization A has three facilities (Facility 1, 2 and 3) in receipt of CCOF Base Funding. Facilities 1 and 2 are eligible for the CCFRI, and Facility 3 is ineligible. Facility 1 has opted in and been approved for the CCFRI, while Facility 2 has not opted in to CCFRI. In this scenario, Facilities 1 and 3 are eligible to receive the ECE-WE.

ECE-WE Ineligible Facilities

Facilities **ineligible** to participate in the ECE-WE include, but are not limited to:

- Facilities operating under an organization that is not enrolled in CCOF Base Funding or \$10 a Day ChildCareBC Centre Funding;
- Facilities that provide care to CCFRI Eligible Care Categories and are eligible for the CCFRI, but have not applied or have not been approved for the CCFRI; and/or
- Facilities that do not have ECE Employees.

ECE Staff Eligibility

Eligible Staff

To be eligible, ECEs must:

- Hold a valid Early Childhood Educator, Infant and Toddler Educator, and/or Special Needs Educator certificate issued by the [BC ECE Registry](#);
- Be in Good Standing (see Appendix A: Definitions) with the BC ECE Registry; and
- Be an ECE Employee (see Appendix A: Definitions) directly employed or self-employed on a full- or part-time or substitute basis by a Licensed Child Care Facility that is in receipt of CCOF or is a \$10 a Day ChildCareBC Centre and has been approved by the Ministry to opt in to both the CCFRI (if eligible to do so) and the ECE-WE.
- An ECE working as a Supported Child Development (SCD)/Aboriginal Supported Child Development (ASCD) Worker who is directly employed by a Licensed Child Care Facility is also eligible for the ECE-WE

Ineligible Staff

Staff that are **ineligible** to receive the ECE-WE include individuals who do not hold active ECE certification issued by the BC ECE Registry and/or who are not directly employed or self-employed by a Licensed Child Care Facility or \$10 a Day ChildCareBC Centre.

Ineligible individuals include, but are not limited to:

- ECEs working as Supported Child Development Consultants (see Appendix A: Definitions);
- SCD/ASCD Workers who are employed and paid by SCD/ASCD programs directly and assigned or deployed to a Licensed Child Care Facility (see Appendix A: Definitions);
- ECE Assistants;
- Responsible Adults;
- Volunteer (unpaid) staff;
- ECEs who are employed as independent contractors; **Note:** this does not include owners/part-owners of a facility participating in the ECE-WE;
- ECEs caring solely for their own children.

Important notes on staff eligibility:

The intent of the ECE-WE is to support ECEs working in a licensed setting.

Government recognizes that ECE Assistants and all Early Care and Learning Professionals are important to the sector and support the overall provision of quality care. At this time, however, eligibility for the ECE-WE is limited to certified ECEs.

Government is responding first to the most urgent needs within the sector. This includes increasing ECE staffing and responding to the critical need for trained and qualified early childhood educators, as well as improving families' access to affordable child care. In addition, the purpose of targeting this wage enhancement to certified ECEs is to encourage more individuals to obtain their certification.

Facilities that choose to employ a higher number of ECEs than what is required under the Child Care Licensing Regulation are eligible to report Hours Worked by all ECEs employed at the facility, regardless of staffing ratio.

ECE Employees in Unionized Facilities

Approved Organizations with facilities that employ unionized ECEs may be eligible for the ECE-WE, as reflected in Table 1 below, provided they have reached a local agreement with their union to amend their collective agreements to implement the ECE-WE.

Unionized ECE employees working at approved Organizations/facilities may qualify for the ECE-WE if their wages are set through local agreement negotiations. In some instances, recently ratified collective agreements have set out a process for ECEs whose wages are set through these local agreements to access the ECE-WE.

Organizations with facilities that have provincially-funded child care programs (i.e., the province funds more than 50% of the program) where unionized ECE wages are set through Joint Job Evaluation Plan classification and wage grids currently do not qualify for the ECE-WE. In these cases, Government's Low- Wage Redress funding supports ECE wage adjustments that exceed those available through the ECE-WE.

Table 1: ECE-WE Eligibility in Unionized Environments

| Type of Unionized Employer | Description | Eligibility for ECE-WE |
|---|--|--|
| 1) Community Social Services Employers' Association (CSSEA) Member -- provincially funded ECEs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employer is a CSSEA Member and subject to collective agreement with the Community Social Services Bargaining Association (CSSBA). Receives more than 50% of their <u>child care operating costs</u> from the Province. Employers must pay unionized ECE wages according to the CSSEA Collective Agreements. The rates are set through CSSEA's Joint Job Evaluation Plan (JJEP) wage grids. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not eligible. Government's Low-Wage Redress funding supports ECE wage adjustments. |
| 2) CSSEA Member – non-provincially funded ECEs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employer is a CSSEA Member. Receives less than 50% of their child care operating costs from the Province – not eligible for Low-Wage Redress funding for child care operations. Some employers have been paying ECEs according to CSSEA Collective Agreements (i.e., as per JJEP wage grids) while others have been paying ECEs at rates lower than JJEP wage grids (these lower ECE rates are set through local side agreements that modify the CSSEA Collective Agreements). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eligible. The ECE-WE funding will partially offset the cost to employers of matching or narrowing the gap with the new JJEP rates to be established per the 2019-2022 CSSEA Collective Agreement. Subject to confirmation they are paying the JJEP wage rates or, if a lesser amount, a side agreement has been concluded to implement the ECE-WE. |
| 3) All Other Unionized Employers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any other unionized employers (public, non-profit, or private) with a collective agreement that includes ECEs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be eligible, contingent on confirmation that the Employer has reached an agreement with their union to amend their collective agreements in order to implement the ECE-WE. |

4. Program Contacts

For information about CCOF, CCFRI and the ECE-WE, please call the CCOF Program:

Telephone: 1 888 338-6622 (option 2) – 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday

Online: gov.bc.ca/childcareoperatingfunding

For information about \$10 a Day ChildCareBC Centres, please call:

Telephone: 1 888 338-6622 (option 7) – 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday

Email: MCF.Prototype@gov.bc.ca

For information about ECE certifications and renewals, please call the Early Childhood Educator Registry:

Telephone: 1 888 338-6622 (option 3) – 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday

Online: gov.bc.ca/earlychildhoodeducator

Appendix A: Definitions

CCFRI Eligible Care Categories: One or both of the Under 36 Months care category and the 3 Years to Kindergarten care category.

Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI): Funding provided by the Ministry to eligible licensed child care Organizations (Group and Family) in receipt of CCOF Base Funding for facilities offering child care in the CCFRI Eligible Care Categories and approved to enroll in the CCFRI, on the condition that such Organizations abide by the requirements set out in the CCOF Funding Agreement and reduce parent fees for children enrolled in the CCFRI Eligible Care Categories by a prescribed amount.

Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF Base Funding): Funding provided by the Ministry to enrolled licensed child care Organizations on a per-facility basis to assist with the day-to-day costs of running a Licensed Child Care Facility.

Early Childhood Educator or ECE: Any individual who holds a current Early Childhood Educator, Infant and Toddler Educator, or Special Needs Educator certificate issued by the BC Early Childhood Educator Registry which has not expired, been suspended, or cancelled.

Early Childhood Educator Registry (ECER): The legislated authority responsible for the certification of ECEs and ECE Assistants; for the recommended approval of post-secondary educational institutions offering early childhood education programs; and for the investigation of practice concerns regarding ECEs and ECE Assistants.

ECE Employee: An ECE employed at the Provider's Facility on either a full-time, part-time, or substitute basis, but does not include ECEs whom the Provider engages as an independent contractor. An ECE Employee also includes:

- The owner or co-owner of a Facility so long as such owner or co-owner is an ECE;
- ECEs primarily working in an administrative function; and
- Supported Child Development Workers (see definition below).

Employer: The owner or part-owner of a Licensed Child Care Facility participating in the ECE-WE. Under the ECE-WE, owners may be eligible to receive the ECE-WE provided they hold valid ECE certification in good standing and are working at such facility or facilities.

Employer Health Tax or EHT: An annual payroll tax implemented in January 2019 that applies to For-Profit employers with total B.C. remuneration greater than \$500,000 and Non-Profit employers with a B.C. remuneration greater than \$1,500,000.

Employer Health Tax (EHT) Reimbursement: The funding that the Ministry provides to Organizations enrolled in the ECE-WE if those Organizations are required to pay the EHT. This funding offsets additional EHT payment obligations that those Organizations may incur as a result of participating in the ECE-WE.

Good Standing: Having no outstanding balances owing to the Ministry unless a Ministry approved payment plan is in place and being complied with to the Ministry's satisfaction. Also, in the case of:

- An ECE certification: the status of a certification, where an ECE holds a valid ECE certificate issued by the Director of the BC ECE Registry that is not suspended, cancelled, or expired; and,
- An Organization/\$10 a Day ChildCareBC Centre that is a society or corporation: a status of good standing with BC Registries and Online Services.

Hours Worked: Regular or overtime hours where an ECE Employee (see definition above) is paid wages for activities at a facility.

Hours Worked do not include:

- Sick time, parental leave, long-term disability, vacation, unpaid leave; or,
- Time spent solely in the care of children for whom the ECE Employee is a Parent (as defined herein) or is otherwise a parent or person standing in the place of a parent.

Licensed Child Care Facility: The physical location of child care services operated by the Organization/\$10 Day ChildCareBC Centre for which a valid child care facility licence has been issued under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* and as outlined in Schedule A of the Organization's CCOF Funding Agreement or the \$10a Day ChildCareBC Centre's Funding Agreement.

Maximum Hours: 195 Hours Worked each month by each ECE Employee.

Organization: The Provider under an existing CCOF Funding Agreement with the Ministry.

Parent: A parent, or a person standing in the place of a parent, with respect to a child enrolled in an Enrolled Space at the facility.

Statutory Benefits: The Employer's cost of the statutory group benefits associated with the increased wages provided as a result of this ECE-WE funding. Statutory group benefits include:

- Employment Insurance (EI);
- Canada Pension Plan (CPP);
- Workers' Compensation Insurance, through WorkSafeBC;
- Statutory Holiday Pay;
- Vacation Pay; and
- Other such benefits as may be statutorily imposed during the term of the contract period.

Statutory Benefits Funding: Funding provided by the Ministry to offset the increased costs of Statutory Benefits associated with the ECE-WE. Note: Statutory Benefits Funding amounts are adjusted on January 1 of each year as required to reflect any changes to federal tax rates.

Supported Child Development Consultant: Staff of a contracted agency who provides a range of training and consulting services to child care operators/staff and families to support full participation of children with support needs. When required, these consultants determine eligibility for enhanced staffing supports (support worker hours).

Supported Child Development/Aboriginal Supported Child Development Support Worker:

Eligible: Any ECE working as a SCD/ASCD Worker who is directly employed by a Licensed Child Care Facility is eligible for the ECE-WE.

Ineligible: Any ECE who is employed and paid by the SCD/ASCD program directly, and is assigned/deployed to a Licensed Child Care Facility; any SCD/ASCD Support Workers who do not meet the criteria as detailed under ECE Staff Eligibility.

\$10 a Day ChildCareBC Centre: A child care facility that has entered into a contract with the Ministry to participate in the \$10 a Day ChildCareBC Centre program.

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s.13 ; s.17

Background information on Early Care and Learning Licensing, Certification and Workforce

Certification Requirements of Early Care and Learning Workers

Early Childhood Educator:

- Must have completed all the necessary competencies within a recognized post-secondary ECE program.
- Must have 500 hours of work experience under the supervision of a certified ECE who attests to the individual's competence in the following areas:
 - child development, guidance, health and safety and nutrition,
 - development and implementation of an ECE program, and
 - fostering positive relationships with children and families under their care, and co-workers
- Must be of good character, and have the ability and temperament, as well as the training, skills, and experience necessary to work with children.

Special Needs Educator OR Infant Toddler Educator:

- Must meet the requirements of an ECE (as above).
- Must have completed a Special Needs or Infant Toddler "post-basic" program at an approved post-secondary institution.
- Infant Toddler Educators are required staffing in Group Child Care (under 36 months) programs; one within each child group.

ECE Assistant:

- Must have completed at least a 'Child Development', 'Child Guidance' or 'Health, Safety and Nutrition' course with a recognized post-secondary ECE program.
- Must be of good character, and have the ability and temperament, as well as the training, skills, and experience necessary to work with children.

Responsible Adult:

- Are not certified by the ECE Registry. Designation comes from the facility Licensing Officer.
- Must prove to Licensing Officer they have completed a course, or a combination of courses, of at least 20 hours duration in 'Child Development', 'Child Guidance' or 'Health, Safety and Nutrition'.
- Must be a minimum of 19 years old, be able to provide care and mature guidance to children and have the have relevant work experience.

Staff Requirements under Child Care Licensing Regulations

| Care Type | Number of Children | Minimum Staff Requirements |
|--|--------------------|--|
| Group Child Care (Under 36 Months) | ≤ 4 | One infant and toddler educator |
| | 5 – 8 | One infant and toddler educator and one other |
| | 9 – 12 | One infant and toddler educator, one other |
| Group Child Care (30 Months to School Age) | ≤ 8 | One educator |
| | 9 – 16 | One educator and one assistant |
| | 17 – 25 | One educator and 2 assistants |
| Preschool (30 Months to School Age) | ≤ 10 | One educator |
| | 11 – 20 | One educator and one assistant |
| Group Child Care (School Age), with preschool or grade 1 | ≤ 12 | One responsible adult |
| | 13 – 24 | 2 responsible adults |
| Group Child Care (School Age), no preschool or grade 1 | ≤ 15 | One responsible adult |
| | 16 – 30 | 2 responsible adults |
| Family Child Care, any child | ≤ 7 | The licensee |
| Family Child Care, all children > | ≤ 7 | The licensee |
| Occasional Child Care, any child present < 36 months old | ≤ 4 | One responsible adult |
| | 5 – 8 | 2 responsible adults |
| | 9 – 12 | 3 responsible adults |
| | 13 – 16 | 4 responsible adults |
| Occasional Child Care, if no child present is younger than 36 months old | ≤ 8 | One responsible adult |
| | 9 – 16 | 2 responsible adults |
| | 17 – 20 | 3 responsible adults |
| Multi-Age Child Care, if any | ≤ 8 | One educator |
| Multi-Age Child Care, if no child | ≤ 8 | One educator |
| In-Home Multi-Age Child Care, | ≤ 8 | The licensee, who must be certified as an educator |
| In-Home Multi-Age Child Care, | ≤ 8 | The licensee, who must be certified as an educator |
| Child-minding | ≤ 8 | 1 responsible adult |
| | 9 – 17 | 2 responsible adults |
| | 18 – 24 | 3 responsible adults |

Current Early Care and Learning Workforce

Please note, the data presented below represents only those who are employed by a facility who is in receipt of the Ministries Child Care Operating Funding. There is currently no way to estimate the number of individuals working in non-licensed child care facilities by certification type.

Table 1: Group Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF) and Universal Child Care Prototype (PT) Site Providers

| Certification | Estimated Workforce | CCOF Median Wage Before ECE WE | CCOF Median Wage After ECE WE |
|---|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Responsible Adult | 4,053 | \$18.00 | \$18.00 |
| Early Childhood Educator Assistant (ECEA) | 3,650 | \$18.00 | \$18.00 |
| Early Childhood Educator (ECE) | 7,304 | \$20.00 | \$22.00 |
| Infant Toddler Educator (ITE) or Special Needs Educator (SNE) | 4,591 | \$21.90 | \$23.68 |
| Total | 19,590 | | |

Table 2: Family CCOF and PT Site Providers

| Certification | Estimated Workforce |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| ECE or ECE ITE/SNE | 709 |
| Other | 2,462 |
| Total | 3,171 |

Notes:

Data Source: 2020/21 Provider Profile Survey

Survey results were sampled prior to all providers responding. Workforce count estimates are extrapolated from that sample.

Workforce estimates include workers at both CCOF and PT Sites.

Wage information only includes workers at CCOF facilities.

Wage information is only available for group providers.

Benefit information is not available at the individual worker level. From overall provider expenditure information the median expenditure amount on staff benefits is 8% of the wage expenditure. For example if a provider spent \$10,000 on direct wages we would anticipate \$800 expenditure on staff benefits.

Table 3: CCOF Spaces to Staff Ratio by Care Type

| Care Type | CCOF Spaces Per Staff |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Group Infant and Toddler | 3.2 |
| Preschool | 7.3 |
| Group 3-5 | 5.9 |
| GMA | 4.9 |
| OOS | 8.1 |
| Total | 7.2 |

Notes:

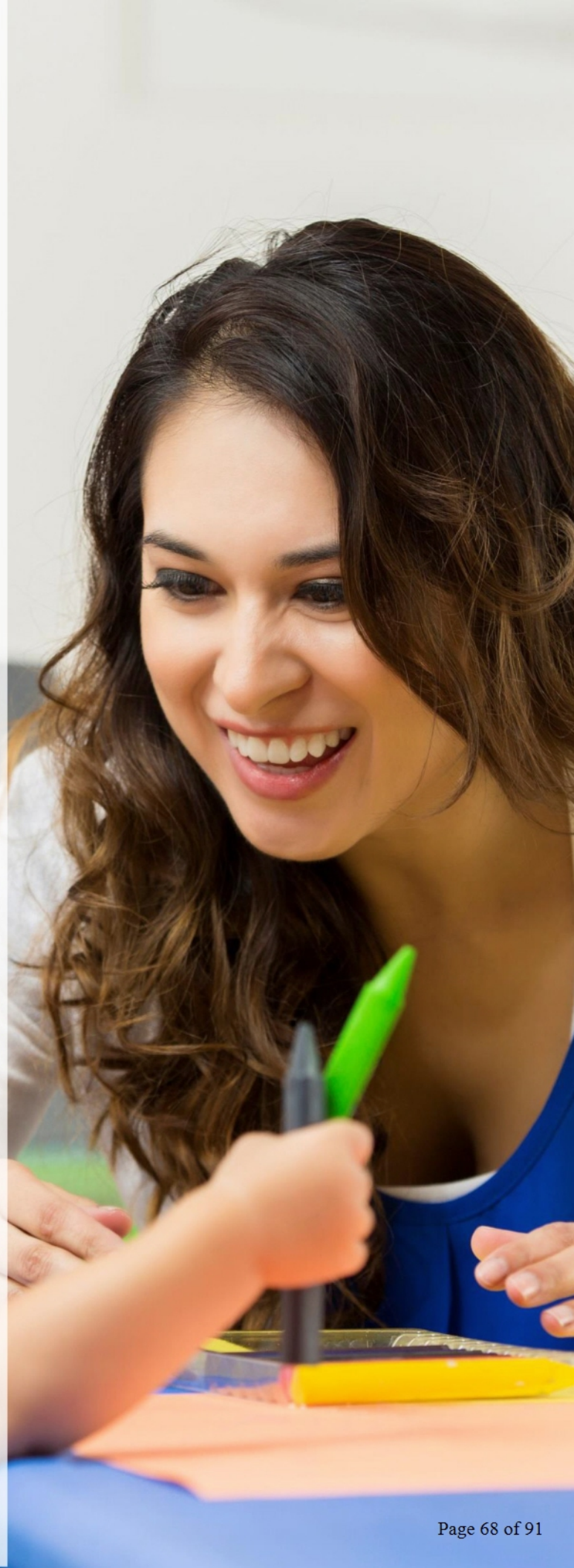
Data Source: 2020/21 Provider Profile Survey and CCOF

MINISTRY OF CHILDREN
AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement (ECE-WE)

Funding Guidelines 2022/23

RELEASED JANUARY 2022



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1. Introduction

Recruiting and retaining a skilled, knowledgeable Early Childhood Educator (ECE) workforce is a key factor in implementing [Childcare BC](#). Improving the recruitment and retention of ECEs contributes to enhancing the overall quality of early childhood programs throughout British Columbia and supports the commitment to speed up the creation of new licensed child care spaces so that more families have access to quality child care in their community.

The ECE Wage Enhancement (ECE-WE) is part of a broader [Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy](#) to support the development of a stable, qualified, and skilled professional ECE workforce, and recognizes early care and learning as a sustainable and valued career.

The ECE-WE is available to Front-line ECEs (including ECEs who are also owner/operators) working in eligible licensed child care facilities.

2. What's New for 2022/23?

The ECE-WE increased by \$2 per hour, to a total of \$4 per hour. Please see "ECE Employees in Unionized Facilities" for further information. This increase came into effect September 1, 2021 with payment implemented by March 2022.

3. Who is Eligible?

Receipt of the ECE-WE is dependent upon the following three factors, as detailed in the subsequent sections and Table 1:

1. Eligibility of an Organization/Universal Child Care Prototype Site;
2. Eligibility of facilities that are owned/operated by the Organization; and
3. Eligibility of ECE Employees (employed or self-employed by the Organization/facility).

Organization Eligibility

Organizations must be enrolled in [Child Care Operating Funding](#) (CCOF) Base Funding or the Universal Child Care Prototype Funding to participate in the ECE-WE. Participation in the ECE-WE is voluntary, meaning Organizations can decide whether or not to apply. However, while participation is voluntary, in order to receive the ECE-WE, Organizations must apply on behalf of their eligible ECE Employees.

Facility Eligibility

Organizations may have either a single facility that delivers licensed child care in one location, or multiple facilities delivering licensed child care in a variety of settings. For administering the ECE-WE, funding will be provided based on each facility's physical address/location rather than by facility licence.

For ECEs working at each facility to be eligible for the ECE-WE, the facility must be approved to participate in the [Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative](#) (CCFRI), if eligible, or be approved as a [Universal Child Care Prototype Site](#).

If a facility chooses not to enroll, is not approved to enroll, or is otherwise not permitted to participate in CCOF Base Funding, the CCFRI, or the Universal Child Care Prototype Site initiative, ECEs working at that facility will not be eligible for the ECE-WE.

While an Organization may have multiple facilities, each facility's eligibility for the ECE-WE is assessed separately.

Additionally, a facility that has opted in to the ECE-WE cannot opt-out during the term of their Funding Agreement.

ECE-WE Opt-in for CCFRI-ineligible facilities

Front-line ECEs who are employed/self-employed at Licensed Child Care Facilities that are not eligible for CCFRI funding (i.e. facilities that do not offer child care in the CCFRI Eligible Care Categories) may still be eligible for the ECE-WE, if the facility is enrolled in CCOF Base Funding or Universal Child Care Prototype Funding.

Please note that Front-line ECEs working at facilities offering a combination of eligible CCFRI Eligible Care Categories and ineligible child care programs – i.e. Preschool (ineligible) and Infant/Toddler (eligible) – are also eligible for the ECE-WE, as long as the facility is enrolled in the CCFRI for the CCFRI Eligible Care Categories.

Example: Organization A has three facilities (Facility 1, 2 and 3) in receipt of CCOF Base Funding. Facilities 1 and 2 are eligible for the CCFRI, and Facility 3 is ineligible. Facility 1 has opted in and been approved for the CCFRI, while Facility 2 has not opted in to CCFRI. In this scenario, Facilities 1 and 3 are eligible to receive the ECE-WE.

ECE-WE Ineligible Facilities

Facilities **ineligible** to participate in the ECE-WE include, but are not limited to:

- Facilities operating under an organization that is not enrolled in CCOF Base Funding or Universal Child Care Prototype Funding;
- Facilities that provide care to CCFRI Eligible Care Categories and are eligible for the CCFRI, but have not applied or have not been approved for the CCFRI; and/or
- Facilities that do not have ECE Employees.

ECE Staff Eligibility

Eligible Staff

To be eligible, ECEs must:

- Hold a valid Early Childhood Educator, Infant and Toddler Educator, and/or Special Needs Educator certificate issued by the [BC ECE Registry](#);
- Be in Good Standing (see Appendix A: Definitions) with the BC ECE Registry; and
- Be a Front-line ECE Employee (see Appendix A: Definitions) directly employed or self-employed on a full- or part-time/casual basis by a Licensed Child Care Facility that is in receipt of CCOF or

Universal Child Care Prototype Funding and has been approved by the Ministry to opt in to both the CCFRI (if eligible to do so) and the ECE- WE.

Ineligible Staff

Staff that are **ineligible** to receive the ECE-WE include individuals who don't hold active ECE certification issued by the BC ECE Registry and/or who are not working in a Front-line capacity.

Other ineligible individuals include, but are not limited to:

- ECEs working as Supported Child Development (SCD) Consultants and/or SCD Support Workers;
- ECEs primarily working in an administrative function;
- ECE Assistants;
- Volunteer (unpaid) staff;
- ECEs who are employed as independent contractors; **Note:** this does not include owners/part-owners of a facility participating in the ECE-WE who work in a Front-line capacity; and
- ECEs caring solely for their own children.

Important Notes on staff eligibility:

The intent of the ECE-WE is to support ECEs working in a Front-line capacity providing Direct Care to children in a licensed setting.

Government recognizes that ECE Assistants and all Early Care and Learning Professionals are important to the sector and support the overall provision of quality care. At this time, however, eligibility for the ECE-WE is limited to certified ECEs.

Government is responding first to the most urgent needs within the sector. This includes increasing ECE staffing and responding to the critical need for trained and qualified early childhood educators, as well as improving families' access to affordable child care. In addition, the purpose of targeting this wage enhancement to certified ECEs is to encourage more individuals to obtain their certification.

Facilities that choose to employ a higher number of ECEs than what is required under the Child Care Licensing Regulation are eligible to report Hours Worked by all Front-line ECEs employed at the facility, regardless of staffing ratio.

ECE Employees in Unionized Facilities

Approved Organizations with facilities that employ unionized Front-line ECEs may be eligible for the ECE-WE, as reflected in Table 1 below, provided they have reached a local agreement with their union to amend their collective agreements to implement the ECE-WE.

Unionized Front-line ECE employees working at approved Organizations/facilities may qualify for the ECE-WE if their wages are set through local agreement negotiations. In some instances, recently ratified collective agreements have set out a process for ECEs whose wages are set through these local agreements to access the ECE-WE.

Organizations with facilities that have provincially-funded child care programs (i.e. the province funds

more than 50% of the program) where unionized ECE wages are set through Joint Job Evaluation Plan classification and wage grids, currently do not qualify for the ECE-WE. In these cases, Government's Low-Wage Redress funding supports ECE wage adjustments that exceed those available through the ECE-WE.

Table 1: ECE-WE Eligibility in Unionized Environments

| Type of Unionized Employer | Description | Eligibility for ECE-WE |
|---|--|--|
| 1) Community Social Services Employers' Association (CSSEA) Member -- provincially funded ECEs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer is a CSSEA Member and subject to collective agreement with the Community Social Services Bargaining Association (CSSBA). • Receives more than 50% of their <u>child care operating costs</u> from the Province. • Employers must pay unionized ECE wages according to the CSSEA Collective Agreements. The rates are set through CSSEA's Joint Job Evaluation Plan (JJEP) wage grids. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not eligible. Government's Low-Wage Redress funding supports ECE wage adjustments. |
| 2) CSSEA Member – non-provincially funded ECEs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer is a CSSEA Member. • Receives less than 50% of their child care operating costs from the Province – not eligible for Low-Wage Redress funding for child care operations. • Some employers have been paying ECEs according to CSSEA Collective Agreements (i.e., as per JJEP wage grids) while others have been paying ECEs at rates lower than JJEP wage grids (these lower ECE rates are set through local side agreements that modify the CSSEA Collective Agreements). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible. The ECE-WE funding will partially offset the cost to employers of matching or narrowing the gap with the new JJEP rates to be established per the 2019-2022 CSSEA Collective Agreement. • Subject to confirmation they are paying the JJEP wage rates or, if a lesser amount, a side agreement has been concluded to implement the ECE-WE. |
| 3) All Other Unionized Employers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any other unionized employers (public, non-profit, or private) with a collective agreement that includes ECEs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be eligible, contingent on confirmation that the Employer has reached an agreement with their union to amend their collective agreements in order to implement the ECE-WE. |

4. Program Contacts

For information about CCOF, CCFRI and the ECE-WE, please call the CCOF Program:

Telephone: 1 888 338-6622 (option 2) – 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday

Online: gov.bc.ca/childcareoperatingfunding

For information about Universal Child Care Prototype Sites, please call:

Telephone: 1 888 338-6622 (option 7) – 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday

Email: MCF.Prototype@gov.bc.ca

For information about ECE certifications and renewals, please call the Early Childhood Educator Registry:

Telephone: 1 888 338-6622 (option 3) – 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday

Online: gov.bc.ca/earlychildhoodeducator

Appendix A: Definitions

Casual ECE Employee: A Front-line ECE Employee who provides Direct Care at the Facility in a substitute or casual capacity.

CCFRI Eligible Care Categories: One or both of the Under 36 Months care category and the 3 Years to Kindergarten care category.

Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI): Funding provided by the Ministry to eligible licensed child care Organizations (Group and Family) in receipt of CCOF Base Funding for facilities offering child care in the CCFRI Eligible Care Categories and approved to enroll in the CCFRI, on the condition that such Organizations abide by the requirements set out in the CCOF Funding Agreement and reduce parent fees for children enrolled in the CCFRI Eligible Care Categories by a prescribed amount.

Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF Base Funding): Funding provided by the Ministry to enrolled licensed child care Organizations on a per-facility basis to assist with the day-to-day costs of running a Licensed Child Care Facility.

Direct Care: Directly responsible for and engaged in the care and supervision of Enrolled or Drop-in space children in a Licensed Child Care Facility.

Direct Care Staff: Staff employed at the Facility on either a full-time, part-time, or casual basis providing Direct Care, and includes ECE Employees.

Early Childhood Educator or ECE: Any individual who holds a current Early Childhood Educator, Infant and Toddler Educator, or Special Needs Educator certificate issued by the BC Early Childhood Educator Registry which has not expired, been suspended, or cancelled.

Early Childhood Educator Registry (ECER): The legislated authority responsible for the certification of ECEs and ECE Assistants; for the recommended approval of post-secondary educational institutions offering early childhood education programs; and for the investigation of practice concerns regarding ECEs and ECE Assistants.

ECE Employee: An ECE employed at the Provider's Facility on either a full-time or part-time basis, who works in a Front-line capacity, but does not include ECEs whom the Provider engages as an independent contractor. An ECE Employee also includes:

- The owner or co-owner of a Facility so long as such owner or co-owner is an ECE working in a Front-line capacity; and
- Casual ECE Employees working in a Front-line capacity.

Employer: The owner or part-owner of a Licensed Child Care Facility participating in the ECE-WE. Under the ECE-WE, owners may be eligible to receive the ECE-WE provided they hold valid ECE certification in good standing and are working in a Front-line capacity at such facility or facilities.

Employer Health Tax or EHT: An annual payroll tax implemented in January 2019 that applies to For-Profit employers with total B.C. remuneration greater than \$500,000 and Non-Profit employers with a B.C. remuneration greater than \$1,500,000.

Employer Health Tax (EHT) Reimbursement: The funding that the Ministry provides to Organizations enrolled in the ECE-WE if those Organizations are required to pay the EHT. This funding offsets

additional EHT payment obligations that those Organizations may incur as a result of participating in the ECE-WE.

Front-line ECE: An ECE Employee (which includes an ECE owner/operator of the applicable licensed child care operation) who works in either a full-time or part-time capacity and who spends:

- (i) 50% or more of their Hours Worked (see definition below) providing Direct Care to enrolled or drop-in children in that licensed child care setting; and
- (ii) The remaining percentage of their Hours Worked performing child care related duties for that licensed child care, which could include administrative activities necessary for the child care operation.

Good Standing: Having no outstanding balances owing to the Ministry unless a Ministry approved payment plan is in place and being complied with to the Ministry's satisfaction. Also, in the case of:

- An ECE certification: the status of a certification, where an ECE holds a valid ECE certificate issued by the Director of the BC ECE Registry that is not suspended, cancelled, or expired; and
- An Organization/Universal Child Care Prototype Site that is a society or corporation: a status of good standing with BC Registries and Online Services.

Hours Worked: Regular or overtime hours where an ECE Employee (see definition above) is paid wages for Front-line activities at a facility.

Hours Worked do not include:

- Sick time, parental leave, long-term disability, vacation, unpaid leave; or
- Time spent solely in the care of children for whom the ECE Employee is a Parent (as defined herein) or is otherwise a parent or person standing in the place of a parent.

Licensed Child Care Facility: The physical location of child care services operated by the Organization/Universal Child Care Prototype Site for which a valid child care facility licence has been issued under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* and as outlined in Schedule A of the Organization's CCOF Funding Agreement or the facility's Universal Child Care Prototype Site Funding Agreement.

Maximum Hours: 195 Hours Worked each month by each ECE Employee.

Organization: The Provider under an existing CCOF Funding Agreement with the Ministry.

Parent: A parent, or a person standing in the place of a parent, with respect to a child Enrolled in an Enrolled Space at the facility.

Statutory Benefits: The Employer's cost of the statutory group benefits associated with the increased wages provided as a result of this ECE-WE funding. Statutory group benefits include:

- Employment Insurance (EI);
- Canada Pension Plan (CPP);
- Workers' Compensation Insurance, through WorkSafeBC;
- Statutory Holiday Pay;
- Vacation Pay; and
- Other such benefits as may be statutorily imposed during the term of the contract period.

Statutory Benefits Funding: Funding provided by the Ministry to offset the increased costs of Statutory

Benefits associated with the ECE-WE. Note: Statutory Benefits Funding amounts are adjusted on January 1 of each year as required to reflect any changes to federal tax rates.

Universal Child Care Prototype Site: A child care facility that has entered into a contract with the Ministry to participate in the Universal Child Care Prototype program.

2021 ECE-WE

Key messages

Updated: August 16, 2021

Key Messages to Stakeholders:

Top messages:

- As part of Government's [ECE Recruitment and Retention Strategy](#), front-line Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) working in licensed child care facilities will soon be eligible to receive wage enhancement up to a total of \$4 per hour, bringing the median wage for ECEs to about \$25/hour.
- This is the third wage enhancement offered to licensed ECEs since September 2019.
- ECEs will begin receiving the benefit in early 2022 and it will be retroactive to September 1 2021.
- As of April 2021, the Province has invested over \$62 million to provide more than 13,800 early childhood educators with wage enhancements.
- Earlier this month, we announced an extension of the Canada-British Columbia Early Learning and Child Care Agreement and a one-time federal investment of \$48.8 million in 2021-2022 to support B.C.'s early childhood educator recruitment and retention efforts.
- Our partnership with the Government of Canada will further support recruitment and retention of child care workers through the development of a professional wage grid, something advocates have been calling for.
- Government has also expanded student bursaries to help with the cost of post-secondary education and created new, more flexible training opportunities for people interested in becoming certified ECEs.
 - \$16 million in funding has gone to the ECE Bursary program, which has provided roughly 8,000 bursaries and workforce-development supports for students pursuing a career in child care.
 - An additional \$5.2 million is available to ECE students for the 2020-21 academic year.
- BC Budget's 2021 invests in 110 more seats at post-secondary institutions and more on-the-job training – bringing the total number of early childhood educator seats created since the beginning of Childcare BC to over 1,100.
- In 2020, MCFD expanded ECE learning opportunities through access to teaching specialists – known as pedagogists – in child care and post-secondary programs.

Secondary Messages:

- Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) are at the heart of building a universal child care system – that's why we're focusing on both ECE recruitment and retention.

- Participation in the Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement (ECE-WE) is optional, and child care providers can apply at any time.
- To be eligible, a child care facility must have an active funding agreement, be approved for the [Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative](#) and have at least one facility approved for ECE-WE for 2021/2022.
- Callers with questions about the ECE-WE asked to call 1 888 338 6622 and select option 2 for CCOF or option 7 for Universal Child Care Prototype Sites.

If asked about the delay:

- Part of building a universal child care system is making sure early childhood educators have access to the training and support they need, along with the compensation and recognition they deserve. This is the third wage enhancement we have implemented since September 2019.
- Between September 2019 – April 2021, we've invested over \$62 million in wage enhancements for ECEs.
- The wage enhancement will come into effect by March 2022 and be retroactively paid back to ECE's on hours worked as of September 1, 2021.
- The wage enhancement program is one way we are working to support the growth of this rewarding and in-demand profession.
- We're also investing in bursaries, professional development and more training opportunities for early childhood educators.

If pressed on why the delay:

- We apologize for the inconvenience this delay may cause.
- It's important to note the wage enhancement will be retroactive to September 1 2021.
- Similar to 2019, setting up the system to implement an additional \$2 per hour takes time. We want to ensure a smooth implementation of the wage enhancement and ensure more eligible ECEs receive the benefit.

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Subject: Increase to ECE Wage Enhancement

Dear Child Care Operator,

We know that Early Childhood Educators are the heart of the child care system and we thank them for their dedication to children and families, especially during the pandemic. As part of government's commitment to Early Childhood Educators through the Early Care and Learning [Recruitment and Retention Strategy](#), front-line Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) working in licensed child care facilities will soon be eligible to receive an additional \$2 per hour wage enhancement bringing the total to \$4 per hour. This is the third wage enhancement offered to licensed ECEs since September 2018, bringing the median wage for ECEs to about \$25 per hour. This \$2 increase is funded by the Province and is a commitment of Budget 2021.

You are receiving this letter because your child care facility has an active government funding agreement and one or more facilities approved for ECE-WE for 2021/2022. We are writing to inform you that this wage enhancement will come into effect September 1, 2021 with payment implemented by March 2022. Funds will be retroactively paid back to ECE's in a lump sum on hours worked as of September 1, 2021. Participating providers do not need to take any further action; the payment will be based on their regular monthly reports.

To date, the Province has invested over \$62 million to provide more than 13,000 early childhood educators with wage enhancements. Government has also invested \$16 million in expanded student bursaries to help with the cost of post-secondary education and created new, more flexible training opportunities for people interested in becoming certified ECEs.

More information will be provided once available and participation in ECE-WE is optional. Please feel free to share this letter with your ECE staff. If you have any questions, please contact the Child Care Operating Funding Program at 1-888-338-6622 (Option 2).

Sincerely,

Childcare BC
Stakeholder Engagement Team

ECE-WE Rate Increase – technical FAQs

Q: When is the retroactive period for the ECE-WE rate increase?

A: The retroactive period for hours worked will begin on September 1, 2021.

Q: Why is payment of the ECE-WE rate increase going to be made by March 2022? Why will it be paid retroactively?

A: We want to ensure a smooth implementation of the wage enhancement. This will take a bit more time than at first anticipated. Nonetheless, payment will be retroactive with ECEs receiving the \$2 lift back to hours worked as of September 1st.

Q: Will retroactive payments be made as a lump sum or multiple payments?

A: Retroactive payments for the ECE-WE will be made as a lump sum.

Q: What are the tax implications of receiving a lump sum by March 2022 for hours worked since September 1, 2021?

A: We cannot provide detailed information regarding taxes; however, receiving the ECE-WE in 2022 may have implications for the employee's tax bracket when the payment is distributed to them as well as their reported income for 2022. Detailed information about tax implications can be found by contacting the [Canada Revenue Agency](#).

Q: Do ECEs who change employers, before the rate increase comes into effect in March 2022, still qualify for retroactive payment? What do I do if I can't contact my old employer?

A: Yes, the ECE WE increase will apply to ECEs who change employers for any hours worked from September 1, 2021. The CCOF/ECE WE Funding Agreement outlines the requirement for ECE Employers to contact former ECE Employees to make arrangements to provide them with any outstanding payments that may be owed to them under the agreement.

Q: What if I leave the child care sector?

A: Contact your previous employer and you will be paid out for any hours worked onwards from September 1, 2021 until the day you left your position as an Early Childhood Educator at a licensed facility.

Q: Am I required to retroactively pay my ECEs if my facility closes before March 2022? Will there be changes made to the reporting process during the retroactive period?

A: Yes. If your facility closes before March 2022, you will be required to pay employees for any hours worked from September 1, 2021 to when you close. You should ensure you keep employee records for past employees to facilitate this. You should continue to claim Hours Worked by eligible ECE Employees as usual, throughout the retroactive period.

Q: Is participation in ECE-WE mandatory for providers in receipt of CCOF? How do I apply?

A: Participation in the Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement (ECE-WE) is optional, and child care providers can apply at any time. To be eligible, a child care facility must have an active funding agreement and be approved for the [Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative](#). If you decide to apply for ECE-WE after opting out in your Program Confirmation Form (PCF), you can contact us and we can unlock your PCF so you can apply for the program. [Universal Child Care Prototype Sites](#) are also eligible to apply.

Q: The ECE-WE rate increase is effective September 1, but the retroactive payment is not being made until 2022. Do I need to pay my ECE's the increased rate now?

A: Providers are not required to pay the increased rate until they receive the retroactive payment. Any payments made over and above the existing \$2 per hour rate prior to receiving the retroactive lump sum payment are at the provider's own discretion. Per your Funding Agreement you are required to distribute the ECE-WE to your eligible employees no later than 30 days **after** receipt of the funding.

Q: How much money has government invested in ECE-WE and how is it funded?

A: Wage enhancement is funded by the Province of British Columbia. Budget 2021 included the commitment to this latest \$2 increase. Between September 2019 – April 2021, the Province has invested over \$62 million in wage enhancements for ECEs.

Q: Is the approach to retroactively pay the wage enhancement associated with the fall federal election?

A: No. the wage enhancement is funded by the Province of British Columbia with funding commitment included in Budget 2021. The retroactive payment will be made in the spring as scheduled.