

Early Childhood Provider Updates



November 7, 2024 – 1:00 p.m.

Welcome



Agenda

- Welcome
- Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Reminders & Updates
- Home-Based Provider Reminders & Updates
- Licensing Reminders & Updates
- Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) Reminders & Updates
- Teaching and Learning Reminders & Updates
- Special Focus:
 - Supporting Early Childhood Language and Literacy,
Brittney Cochran, LDOE ECCE Director of Academics
- Upcoming Events



Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

Reminders & Updates



KinderConnect Attendance Tracking

It is important for providers to submit their KinderConnect attendance records weekly, for all CCAP-enrolled children. As a reminder:

- CCAP authorizations must be used by families at the time child care services are rendered. Providers **are required** to ensure that the KinderConnect Attendance Tracking system is accessed by parents **daily** to capture attendance.
- KinderConnect attendance records will be examined as part of the Department's underutilization review of CCAP attendance. If a family is using KinderConnect to sign in and out, the case will not appear on the LDOE Underutilized Report.
- If you have any questions about how to verify and submit your attendance records weekly via KinderConnect, please refer to [KinderConnect-Submit Attendance QRC](#) for detailed instructions.



Underutilized Monitoring

- Families who have not scanned their children in/out of care for 30 days are considered to be underutilizing participants.
- **This may result in termination of the family's CCAP benefits.**



Underutilized Monitoring

- If child care services are still needed, the parent may contact the Department immediately at 1-877-453-2721 or submit a “CCAP 10- Report of Changes” form (ensure section 8 is completed), indicating that services are still needed.
- Timely receipt of the call to the Department or Report of Changes form will prevent closure of the family’s case.
- If the case is closed, the parent will have to reapply and then, if still deemed eligible, will be placed on the Waiting List until additional funds are available for Child Care Assistance.



KinderBridge (API) for Child Care Management Systems

- If your site is using Procure Online, BrightWheel, or another attendance reporting/Child Care Management System (CCMS) that needs to connect with KinderConnect, **you must contact KinderSystems Support to configure KinderBridge (API).**
- KinderBridge (API) is the software that connects KinderConnect to a site's CCMS and allows providers to transmit attendance data from the CCMS to KinderConnect.
 - **Remember:** Transmitting attendance data through KinderConnect will ensure that attending children do not show up on the LDOE's Underutilized Report.

For more information on KinderBridge, see [Guides and Quick Reference Cards \(QRCs\)](#) and [Listing of Active and Certified CCMS providers](#).



CenterTrack

- CenterTrack is a Child Care Management System (CCMS) available to Louisiana child care providers.
 - All provider types are welcome to use the CCMS at no cost.
- CenterTrack simplifies data collection, generates reports, and saves providers time and resources.
- CenterTrack is fully integrated with the KinderConnect Attendance Tracking System.
- Families can access invoices and accounts and make child care payments conveniently through CenterTrack.
- Providers can complete this [form](#) for KinderSystems support team to help with setup and training of CenterTrack.

For more details or further assistance visit EdLinkInfo.com or contact KinderSystems Support at 1-888-829-9258 or by email at SupportLA@KinderSystems.com.

Child Care Assistance Program Reminders & Updates

For questions, contact LDECCAP@la.gov



CCAP Wait List Update

- Beginning November 1, the Department began contacting by phone families who were certified to the Wait List in July 2023.



Call #1: Verify Address



Call #2: Reminder to Complete Mailed Form



Call #3: Final Reminder to Complete Mailed Form

- Three attempted calls will be made to families to notify and assist them with completing and returning the Wait List Verification Form.
- This week the Department began mailing those eligible July 2023 families a Wait List Verification Form.**

Child Care Assistance Program Reminders & Updates

For questions, contact LDECCAP@la.gov



CCAP Wait List Update

- When received, families should review the Waitlist Verification Form and note any changes since submitting their original application.
 - Changes may include household contact information or household composition.
 - Families should check “Yes” if all information remains the same, sign the form, and return it to the Department as quickly as possible.
 - If there have been changes, the family should indicate the changes on the form and return it to the Department as quickly as possible.
- All families are required to list their provider information on the form to receive authorizations.
- If a child needing care is past due for required immunizations, the parent should submit an updated shot record or an appointment card when returning the Waitlist Verification Form.



CCAP Monthly Call

The Department is pleased to announce the “Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Monthly Call” for providers. The monthly call will include the following:

- Current practices for this month’s topic, “Underutilization and Attendance Tracking”
- Answers to provider questions and concerns
- Resources to contact as CCAP issues arise

The Monthly Call can be accessed with the link below:

- **Webinar Title:** Underutilization and Attendance Tracking
- **Webinar Date/Time:** Wednesday, November 20, at 1:00 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/96000018276>
- **Webinar ID:** 960 0001 8276



Special Needs Copay



Per the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), to establish that a child meets “Special Needs” requirements, the following are acceptable forms of verification:

- Current Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)
- Current Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- Current Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Award letter for the child
- A written medical statement from the child’s physician

Special Needs Copay

- Families meeting the Special Needs criteria receive Child Care Assistance at the state maximum rate per age of the child.
- Providers may charge a daily rate above the state's maximum rate, and parents are required to pay the difference to the provider for child care services.



Presumptive Eligibility for Redetermination Applications

- To improve application processing and payment practices for families and providers, the LDOE will implement a brief period of Presumptive Eligibility for Redetermination Applications for families, effective October 1, 2024.
- Presumptive Eligibility will allow additional time for families to submit all documents required for a renewal application in Cafe for CCAP services to continue.
- This will eliminate a possible lapse in child care services for families as they work to renew their certification.



Presumptive Eligibility for Redetermination Applications

How can providers support presumptive eligibility for redetermination applications?

- Providers can assist by having families complete their Child Care Assistance Program applications and requests for changes online through the [Cafe Customer Portal](#).
- A complete application at redetermination means the CCAP office receiving an application with **all** supporting documents for processing the application, **prior to the end of the family's certification**.



Presumptive Eligibility for Redetermination Applications – Example



Sara Lee has submitted an application before the redetermination date of 10/31/24.



Sara Lee has a missing document by 10/31/24.

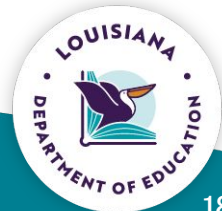


Sara Lee is given a specified amount of additional time to provide needed documentation before case is closed.

Child Support & CCAP Eligibility Determination

Also effective for applications received on or after October 1, as families submit complete initial or redetermination applications in Cafe and report income, the unearned income of child support will no longer be budgeted in the family's income as part of CCAP eligibility determination and certification.

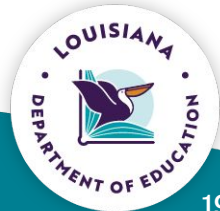
- Applications received after October 1, 2024, will no longer have child support budgeted in the household income as a requirement for certification.
- Applications submitted prior to October 1, 2024, will still have child support budgeted in the household's monthly income.



CCAP One-Pager

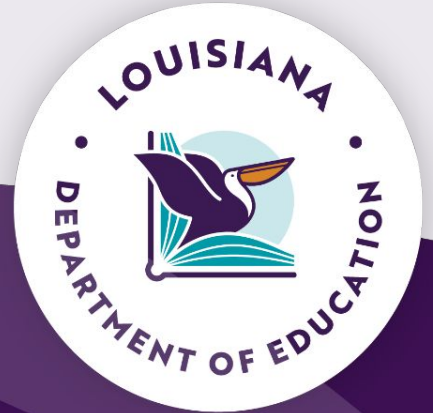


Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Reminders & Updates



CCAP Home-Based Providers

Reminders & Updates



Product Safety Information

The Louisiana Office of the Attorney General issues a quarterly newsletter called “The Safety Box,” which contains information on recalled children’s products and toy hazard recalls received from the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC):

- Please note that any items listed as recalled must be immediately removed from the early learning premises.
- The Fall 2024 Safety Box Newsletter and previous newsletters can be found at <https://www.ag.state.la.us/Safetybox>.



Home-Based Provider Inspection Trends

The LDOE Division of Licensing's inspections of Family Child Care and In-Home providers revealed the following trends as the most-cited deficiencies from September 2024-present:

- **Medication Administration Training -**
 - Certified providers must present documentation of current medication administration training at initial and renewal certification.
- **Child Daily Attendance -**
 - The Daily Attendance Log must accurately reflect all children in care at any given time and include each child's first and last name, arrival and departure times, and first and last name of the person or entity to whom the child is released. This log must include times the child may leave and return to the home during the day.



Home-Based Provider Inspection Trends

The LDOE Division of Licensing's inspections of Family Child Care and In-Home providers revealed the following trends as the most-cited deficiencies from September 2024-present:

- **Current E-mail Address -**
 - Home-based providers must maintain a current e-mail address and notify the Department immediately upon a change in such e-mail address, by submitting written notice to the LDOE via fax, via email, or via the EdLink portal.
- **Continuing Education Training -**
 - Home-based providers must annually complete 12 clock hours of required job-related training topics. The [CCAP Training and Technical Assistance](#) web page provides more information on the required training topics. A list of trainers can be found at [Louisiana Pathways](#). Once accessed, refer to the Approved Trainer Referral List on the web page.



Licensing

Reminders & Updates



Top-Cited Deficiencies in October



Daily Attendance Records - Visitors

There must be a daily attendance record to capture all visitors that come to the center.

The record must include the following:

- Name of the visitor
- Date of visit
- Arrival and departure times of visitor
- Purpose of the visit



Cribs

When an infant is in the crib, only the child and the fitted sheet must be in the crib.

Cribs shall be free of the following:

- Toys, including stuffed animals
- Other soft or loose bedding, including
 - Comforters
 - Blankets
 - Sheets
 - Bumper pads
 - Pillows
 - Wedges

Note that this list is not an exclusive list.

Infants & Bottle Feeding

Infants should always be held for bottle feeding.

Caregivers/teachers should hold infants in the caregiver's/teacher's arms or sitting up on the caregiver's/teacher's lap.

Bulletin 137 §1919.H. states the following:

- Infants who cannot hold a bottle shall be held while being bottle-fed.
- A child shall not be placed lying down on a mat or otherwise with a bottle, sippy cup, etc.
- A bottle shall not be propped at any time.

Continuing Education

Providers should conduct an assessment to identify areas of focus and provide opportunities for continuing education of staff members.

Each staff member of an early learning center must obtain a minimum of 12 clock hours of continuing education per center anniversary year. This includes volunteers and substitutes.

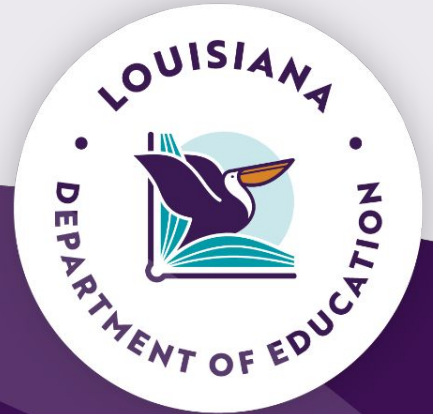
Staff members who are not left alone with children and who have no supervisory or disciplinary authority over children must obtain a minimum of 3 clock hours of continuing education in job-related topics.

- Example: If the center's cook is not in a classroom assisting with children or walking children down the hall, only 3 clock hours of continuing education is required.



Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC)

Reminders & Updates



Fingerprinting Site Updates

Please note the following fingerprinting site updates:

- The fingerprinting site located at Mystic Boulevard in Houma, Louisiana, permanently closed on October 8, 2024.
- The fingerprinting site in Colfax, Louisiana is currently closed until further notice.
- A new fingerprinting site has been established in Slidell, Louisiana, located at 3191 Terrace Ave inside of FITS Indoor Range.



Teaching and Learning

Reminders & Updates



2023-2024 Performance Profiles

Performance Profiles for the 2023-2024 academic year will be released in alignment with K-12 school performance scores:

- The release is anticipated for this month.
- Preliminary results from last year can be calculated using the [Performance Rating calculator](#) and the community network calculator roster from the EC CLASS® Portal.
- Performance Profiles are anticipated to be available on [Louisiana School and Center Finder](#) at the beginning of 2025.

2024 Early Childhood Conference Certificates

The LDOE has provided the 2024 Early Childhood Conference training certificates and presentation materials to educators who attended either conference date:

- Training certificates were e-mailed to participants of both Shreveport and Baton Rouge conferences on or before October 9, 2024.
 - If providers did not receive conference certificates for attended training, please contact earlychildhood@la.gov for support.
- Presentation materials for both conferences can be found on the [2024 Early Childhood Conference](#) webpage.

Teaching and Learning Reminders & Updates

Please contact earlychildhood@la.gov with questions.



Early Childhood Health & Safety Training

In November the LDOE plans to launch an online, interactive, self-paced training program, ***EC Learn***, for early childhood providers to access Health and Safety training, which will include Medication Administration training. These free online trainings can be used to meet the training requirements in [Bulletin 137](#) and [Bulletin 139](#).

Benefits of the upcoming ***EC Learn*** professional learning suite:

- Providers can support staff enrolling in courses, regardless of group size, with flexibility around site schedules.
- Training certificates will be more accessible.
- Providers will have more control over training processes and can potentially reduce potential deficiencies related to staff training requirements.



Early Childhood Health & Safety Training

The **EC Learn** Canvas Catalog is an online self-paced training platform where early childhood providers can enroll in free continuing education courses and access certificates to meet requirements of Bulletin 137 and Bulletin 139.

Early childhood providers are invited to attend an upcoming **EC Learn** Canvas Training webinar on one of the following dates to learn more about this new EC workforce resource and how to access trainings.

- [November 12, 2024 at 12:00 p.m.](#)
- [November 14, 2024 at 3:00 p.m.](#)



Teaching and Learning Reminders & Updates

Please contact eclearn@la.gov with questions.

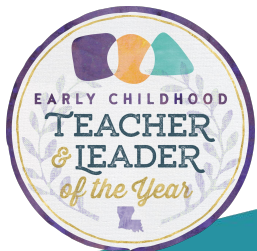
Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Award Program

The Louisiana Department of Education, in partnership with [Dream Teachers](#), recognizes and celebrates some of the state's most exceptional educators through the Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year programs:

- These programs provide an opportunity to acknowledge those teachers and leaders who are making exceptional gains with Louisiana's youngest learners.

The [application portal](#) for the Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Award Program for the 2026 award year has opened and will close on **January 15, 2025 at 11:59 p.m.:**

- Please review the [Awards Programs](#) page for more information.
- All Teachers and Leaders from Type III, CCAP-certified FCCs, and Early Head Start/Head Start programs are invited to apply.
 - Even if you were not nominated for this award program, you are invited to apply!
 - Past finalists are invited to re-apply. Only overall honorees are excluded from re-applying.



Teaching and Learning Reminders & Updates

Please contact shallan.jones@la.gov with questions.



School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC)

The Department sent email notifications of site star ratings and levels to eligible directors in October 2024.

Parent School Readiness Tax Credit (SRTC) forms (R-10614) will be mailed to Type III sites and Family Child Care sites with Academic Approval in December 2024.

- Once tax forms are received, directors should complete the child care portion and distribute the forms to all eligible parents.



School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC)

Early childhood educators must have a valid Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate (ECAC) by December 31, 2024, to qualify for certain levels of SRTCs.

- Directors and teachers with an expiring Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate must submit a renewal application **at least four to six weeks before expiration**, via the [LDOE Educator Certification Portal](#).
- Complete initial or renewal applications must be submitted **as soon as possible**, to guarantee processing by the processing deadline of December 31, 2024.
- Incomplete applications, or those submitted after November 1, may not be processed by the Certification team before the deadline and thus may not qualify for re-leveling and a potential increase in SRTCs for tax year 2024.



School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC)

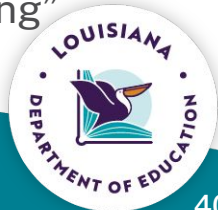
The Provider School Readiness Tax Credit (SRTC) is aligned with early learning site Performance Profile Ratings issued through the unified quality rating system established by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in [Bulletin 140](#):

- The amount of the tax credit is based on the Star Rating of the site and the number of CCAP children served.
- The number of eligible children served includes children attending the site through the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) or children who are in foster care under the custody of DCFS.

Provider School Readiness Tax Credit (SRTC) letters for the 2024 tax year will be mailed by the Department in **March 2025**. These letters will include the “Certificate of Star Rating” and “Average Number of Children.”

Teaching and Learning Reminders & Updates

Contact Demita.Walker@la.gov with questions.



School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC)

Director and Staff School Readiness Tax Credit (SRTC) forms (R-10615) will be mailed from Louisiana Pathways beginning in January 2025.

For re-leveling on the Louisiana Pathways Career Ladder, new credentials and certifications should be submitted via e-mail to cowanj@nsula.edu or via mail to Louisiana Pathways before December 31, 2024, at the address below:

Louisiana Pathways
Attention: Career Development
1800 Warrington Place
Shreveport, LA 71101-4425

Teaching and Learning Reminders & Updates

Contact Demita.Walker@la.gov with questions.



School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC)

In order to claim [family](#), teacher, or director School Readiness Tax Credits, individuals must file a tax return.

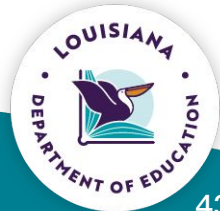
- The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program offers free tax help to lower-income individuals who need assistance in preparing their own tax returns. This assistance is offered by IRS-certified volunteers and provides free basic income tax return preparation with electronic filing to qualified individuals.
- Please contact 2-1-1 for more information or to make an appointment for assistance in filing a tax return.
- For VITA programs in your area, visit the [Louisiana 211](#) website.



School Readiness Tax Credit (SRTC) One-Pager



Teaching and Learning Reminders & Updates



Supporting Early Childhood Language and Literacy

Brittney Cochran, LDOE Director of Academics



Supporting Early Childhood Language and Literacy

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, “Reading aloud with young children is one of the most effective ways to expose them to enriched language and encourage specific early literacy skills needed to promote school readiness. Reading regularly with young children stimulates optimal patterns of brain development.”

The Department encourages Early Childhood educators to read often with young children and be reminded that:

- The joy of reading starts early, so read early and often.
- Reading with children from birth and beyond helps build a foundation for lifelong learning.



Supporting Early Childhood Language and Literacy

Here are some ideas for educators when planning activities related to reading with young children:

- Read, read, read! Plan activities for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers to enjoy new or familiar books during their learning day, each and every day.
- Develop routines with reading as the focus, remembering to plan accordingly around transition times, meals, nap/sleep time, and play.
- Use environmental print, which is print that is seen in daily life, i.e. print that is on signs, labels, and logos. Young children may not be able to read, but they can recognize familiar print.
- Connect with families! Encourage families to make reading with children a part of their daily lives by highlighting fun and creative activities and ideas that could make reading a wonderful way to unwind, have fun, and interact with their child.



Supporting Early Childhood Language and Literacy

The importance of reading with young children should be shared with families regularly. Here are some strategies to share with families regarding the incredible impact of reading at home with their children:

- It is important to read together every day with your child to promote strong future literacy skills.
- Encourage families to try some fun rhyming activities or have purposeful, engaging conversations while they play and cuddle with their child every day.
- Develop routines at home that flow well with schedules already established (i.e., reading a book during bedtime routines).
- Reading together helps to develop a strong and nurturing relationship with your child.



Upcoming Events



2024 Louisiana Child Care Parent Poll

The Louisiana Policy Institute for Children, in partnership with the Louisiana Department of Education, is administering its annual survey to help further understand the child care needs of Louisiana families with children under the age of 5:

- The [2024 Louisiana Child Care Parent Poll](#) opens Thursday, November 7, and can be shared in [English](#), in [Spanish](#), or in [Vietnamese](#).
- This survey is for any parent, guardian, or caregiver raising children under the age of 5, not just for moms and dads.
- Participation in this survey is entirely voluntary and will not affect families' eligibility for child care or any other services. Families do not need to complete this survey to continue participating in any public program, including the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).
- All answers will be kept confidential, and participants can answer the survey without giving their name.
- The survey will take less than 15 minutes to complete.

2024 Louisiana Child Care Parent Poll

Please share the Louisiana Child Care Parent Poll with families in one of the following ways:

- Download printable flyers (available in [English](#), [Spanish](#), and [Vietnamese](#)) with the survey link and post them on a parent information board.
- Share the survey on Facebook and/or Twitter:
 - This [social media toolkit](#) has several templates and graphics for Facebook posts and Twitter posts to help promote the survey.
- Send a letter about the Parent Poll (to be released by the Department on November 7) home to families.
 - E-mail the content of the Parent Poll letter to families.

The poll closes November 21.

Should you have any questions about the survey, you may contact info@policyinstitutela.org.

Monthly Provider Webinar

The Department hosts monthly webinars for early childhood providers. These webinars include important reminders and updates for all provider types.

Providers can access the next provider webinar using the information below:

- **Webinar Date/Time:** Thursday, December 5, 2024 at 1 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/91532982014?pwd=D5xkBgKac4rzD1SbQlOOC5BNmQTQsE.1>
- **Phone Number:** 1 470 250 9358
- **Meeting ID:** 915 3298 2014
- **Passcode:** 519100

Upcoming Events

Please contact earlychildhood@la.gov with any questions.



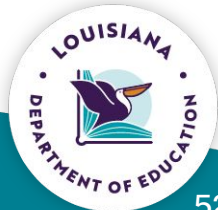
Provider Webinar Slides

This month's webinar slides will be available early next week on the [Louisiana Believes](#) website.



Monthly Provider Webinar

Please contact earlychildhood@la.gov with any questions.



Contact Information



Mellynn Baker, Assistant Superintendent of
Early Childhood Care and Education
Mellynn.Baker@la.gov

Child Care Licensing

- Call 225-342-9905
- Email ldelicensing@la.gov or email licensing consultants directly

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

- Call 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917
- Email ldeccap@la.gov or enter a [ticket](#) at the Provider Help Desk

Child Care Provider Certification

- Email providercertification@la.gov

Child Care Criminal Background Checks (CCCBCs)

- Call 225-342-2716 or 225-342-5311 or email ldcccbbcprocessing@la.gov

General Early Childhood Support

- Email earlychildhood@la.gov

