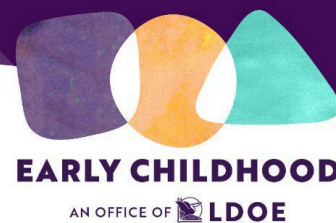




Early Childhood Newsletter



April 11, 2024

Safe Sleep Practices

A safe sleep area can help reduce a baby's risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep-related deaths, such as from accidental suffocation.

Providers must ensure the following safe sleep practices are being followed at all times:

- Only one infant shall be placed in a crib.
- All infants shall be placed on their backs for sleeping. (For exceptions, licensed centers see Bulletin 137 Section 1909 B.1 Page 34. Family Child Care Providers see Bulletin 139 Section 309.26.b.i.page 7. In-Home Child Care Providers see Section 311.26.b.i. page 13.)
- Infants shall not be placed in positioning devices unless the center has written authorization from a physician to use a positioning device.
- "Back To Sleep" signs shall be posted in the room where infants sleep.
- Bibs shall not be worn by any child while asleep.
- Nothing shall be placed over the head or face of an infant while placed for sleep.
- A safety-approved crib must be available for each infant.



Licensed centers should contact a [licensing consultant](#) with any questions. Home-based providers should contact providercertification@la.gov with any questions.

Upcoming Deadlines

- April 18: Deadline to complete ARPA Stabilization Grant Survey

Upcoming Events

- April 9-30 [EdLink trainings](#) on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays
- April 17: Pre-K Eligibility Determinations Office Hours
- April 17: CCAP Provider Training: Household Eligibility
- April 23: Early Childhood Community Network Lead Agency Office Hours Webinar
- April 24: CCAP Provider Training: Attendance Tracking and KinderConnect
- April 26: New Director Webinar
- May 1: CCAP Provider Training: CCAP Payments
- May 2: Monthly Provider Webinar
- September 7: Early Childhood Conference (ECC) 2024 - Shreveport, Shreveport Convention Center
- October 5: Early Childhood Conference (ECC) 2024 - Baton Rouge, Crowne Plaza

More Important Dates

Please see the [LDOE School System Support Calendar](#)

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UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW: Office Hours for New Directors

The LDOE team holds webinars that focus on early childhood quality or operations while also helping expand Early Childhood directors' network of peers. Office hours are targeted towards new directors.

This month's topic is "An Overview of Bulletin 137." Participants will be provided an overview of the Bulletin and learn about common deficiencies cited in early learning centers.

Webinar Date/Time:	April 26 at 12 p.m.
Webinar Link:	https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/92298578944
Webinar Phone Number:	1 346 248 7799
Meeting ID:	922 9857 8944

Please contact tella.henderson@la.gov with questions.

NEW: Early Childhood Provider Update Webinar

The LDOE hosts monthly webinars for early childhood providers. These webinars include important reminders and updates for all provider types. The next monthly Provider Update Webinar will be held May 2, 2024.

Providers can access the upcoming May Provider Update Webinar using the information below:

Webinar Date/Time:	Thursday, May 2 at 1 p.m.
Webinar Link:	https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/93597745872
Phone Number:	1 312 626 6799
Meeting ID:	935 9774 5872
Passcode:	641464

The April 4 presentation slides are available in the [Quality Providers Library](#) on the [Louisiana Believes](#) website.

REMINDER: Early Childhood Conference (ECC) 2024

The Early Childhood Conference is moving to Fall 2024! New this year, the 2024 Early Childhood Conference will be held at two locations, to make it easier for providers from across the state to be able to attend:

- September 7: Shreveport Convention Center, 400 Caddo St, Shreveport, LA 71101
- October 5: Crowne Plaza, 4728 Constitution Ave, Baton Rouge, LA 70808

At each site, ECC 2024 is expected to be held on one day only, a Saturday, to provide more opportunity for educators and providers to attend.

Contact events@emergentmethod.com with questions.

UPDATES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

NEW: Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Finalists Announced March 19

The Louisiana Department of Education is pleased to announce this year's finalists for the [Louisiana Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year awards](#)! These awards are designed to honor the early education teachers and administrators who care for and educate infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

The LDOE believes that early childhood education is integral to the development and academic success of all children. It is also critical to the economic prosperity of all Louisiana communities, which depend upon reliable, high-quality child care for the families that constitute such a significant portion of their workforces. In the last few years especially, providers across the state have exemplified extraordinary resilience and dedication to the families and communities they serve. With 90% of brain development happening before age 5, these exceptional early childhood educators serve as the architects for the foundation of the lives of the children they serve. Their monumental efforts continue to ensure that our youngest learners are safe, loved, and ready to learn every day and that communities can thrive, now and in the future.

All [Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Finalists](#) will be celebrated and honored at the 18th Annual Cecil J. Picard Educator Excellence Awards Gala, which will be held at the WWII Museum in New Orleans on the evening of July 27.

Please contact earlychildhood@la.gov with questions.

UPDATES FOR FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

NEW: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Provider Help Desk Contact Information

The LDOE is pleased to announce the addition of a new contact number to better serve providers and all early childhood stakeholders. The new number is: 225-614-5917.

The Provider Help Desk can be contacted between the hours of 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. daily. The [Provider Ticket System](#) can be accessed at any time for provider concerns, issues, and questions. As a reminder, client verification and documents should not be placed in the ticket system.

Client verification and documents can be submitted by email to LDECCAP@la.gov or by fax to 225-376-6060.

Contact the Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917 or email CCAPPHD@la.gov with any questions.

NEW: Child Care Assistance Program Provider Webinar Series

The LDOE will be hosting a series of webinars in April and May to provide information about CCAP updates, processes, and resources. The sessions will provide an overview of CCAP and applicable practices to help certified providers.

The webinars will begin at 1 p.m. and may be accessed through the links below:

- April 17, 2024 - [Household Eligibility](#)

- April 24, 2024 - [Attendance Tracking and KinderConnect](#)
- May 1, 2024 - [CCAP Payments](#)

Contact the Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917 or email CCAPPHD@la.gov with any questions.

REMINDER: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Stabilization Grant Survey (Rounds 3 and 4 & CCAP Bonus Payment)

The LDOE is conducting a new grant survey related to the final American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Stabilization grants. The LDOE has again partnered with the Early Childhood Grant Assessment Program to collect information regarding the use of these later-distributed ARPA Stabilizations grant funds. The Department will use the information to direct future technical assistance.

Please note that this is a **new** survey of information, regarding ARPA Grants for Rounds 3 and 4 and the CCAP Bonus Grant Payment, that has not previously been collected. Participation in this new survey is **required**. Failure to complete the survey may impact future funding opportunities, and your site may be automatically chosen for an audit of the ARPA grants via the Office of Inspector General (OIG).

This new ARPA survey must be completed by Type I, II, and III licensed early learning centers and Child Care Assistance Program certified in-home and family child care providers that received ARPA Grant Round 3, ARPA Round 4, and/or the CCAP Bonus Grant Payment. Please note: This survey is specific to ARPA Rounds 3 & 4 and the CCAP Bonus Grant Payment and corresponding information should be provided for these grants only.

Please consult the [LDOE Grant Portal](#) for any updates. There you can find the survey form and important dates.

All participating providers should have received an email containing a link to complete the survey from the following sender:

- Sender: Early Childhood Grant Assessment Program
- Email address: info@ldoe-pnsurvey.com
- Subject Line: LDOE ARPA Grant Survey – Rounds 3 and 4

The survey must be completed on a desktop browser, as mobile devices are not supported. The deadline to submit completed surveys is April 18.

Contact the LDOE Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917 with questions. If you require technical assistance regarding how to complete the survey, you may contact the Early Childhood Grant Assessment Program at info@ldoe-grantprogram.com.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Underutilized Authorizations

As the Department begins transitioning to a new payment and processing system, it is important for providers to submit their KinderConnect attendance records weekly for all CCAP-enrolled children. To properly record attendance of CCAP children, families should check their children in and out of care every day using the KinderConnect system.

Authorizations must be utilized by families at the time child care services are rendered. Children who do not attend child care regularly are not receiving the benefits of high-quality care and are preventing other children in need from accessing quality care.

CCAP conducts a monthly review of underutilized authorizations of children who have not attended child care within the previous 30 days.

- If CCAP children are not attending, their authorizations will be discontinued at the end of the month and families will need to re-apply for CCAP benefits.

- Providers **must** request the removal of a child from their CCAP roster if a child is not attending or never enrolled.
- Failure to notify the Department of a child who is no longer attending and/or not enrolled will result in recoupment of CCAP funds.

KinderConnect attendance records will be examined as part of the underutilization review of CCAP attendance.

The following instructions detail how a site is to upload attendance weekly: [KinderConnect-Submit Attendance QRC](#). In addition, an [instructional video](#) is available at [EdLinkinfo.com](#) along with other resources.

Attendance records should be reviewed, prior to submission, for accuracy. If a child's attendance appears in red, the provider will need to make corrections prior to submission. Please refer to [KinderConnect-Correct Incomplete Attendance QRC](#) for more details, including detailed instructions on submitting attendance records weekly.

As a reminder, all children can be entered into KinderConnect as "[Private Pay](#)" children. Once a family becomes certified and authorizations have been input for that child, providers can then [merge the Private Pay and CCAP-certified children](#).

If a provider received a notice of non-attendance for children in their care, the provider does not have to submit attendance logs or contact the Department. Please instruct families to utilize the KinderConnect Attendance Tracking System, and the Department can view the child's attendance in the provider's portal.

Please contact the LDOE Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917 or email CCAPPHD@la.gov with any questions.

UPDATES FOR LICENSED CENTERS

NEW: Required Staff

Each licensed center must have a qualified director or qualified director designee at all times. The director or designee must be at least 21 years of age, qualified, and approved by the Department. The director or director designee must also be an on-site, full-time staff person at the center during the daytime hours of operation (prior to 9 p.m.).

When the director is not an on-site full-time employee at the licensed location, there shall be a qualified director designee who is an on-site full-time employee at the licensed location. The director or designee is responsible for planning, managing, and controlling the center's daily activities, as well as responding to parental concerns and ensuring that minimum licensing requirements are met.

Qualifications for a director or director designee can be found in Section 1709 of [Bulletin 137](#). Please contact your [licensing consultant](#) with questions.

NEW: Cribs

Children are prohibited from sleeping in playpens or cribs with mesh sides. In addition, providers must ensure cribs are free of the following when occupied by a child:

- toys and other soft or loose bedding
- comforters
- blankets
- sheets
- bumper pads

- pillows
- stuffed animals
- wedges

Please contact your [licensing consultant](#) with questions.

NEW: Furnishings and Equipment

Here are some reminders about furnishings and equipment in early learning centers:

1. The manufacturer’s restraint device must be used when equipment is occupied by children.
2. Any time feeding tables are used, children’s feet must be able to rest comfortably on a footrest.
3. Developmentally appropriate seating shall be used.
4. All furniture shall be developmentally appropriate.

The following items are prohibited in early learning centers:

- infant walkers
- toy chests, storage bins, and other equipment with attached lids
- latex balloons for children under age three
- trampolines
- culverts

Please contact your [licensing consultant](#) with questions.

REMINDER: Practice Drills

Emergency evacuation drills must be conducted at least twice per year. In addition to this drill, tornado drills must be conducted at least once per month in the months of March, April, May, and June at various times of the day.

Documentation of these drills must include all children. A sample [practice drill](#) form can be found in the [Licensed Centers Library](#).

Please contact your [licensing consultant](#) with questions.

REMINDER: Updated Assigned Licensing Consultant

Each center has an assigned licensing consultant. The center’s licensing consultant can be identified by the first letter of the center’s name, excluding the articles “A,” “An,” and “The.” If there are any questions regarding Bulletin 137, please contact your licensing consultant for assistance. A licensing consultant can be contacted via the e-mail address below or via phone at 225.342.9905. Please do not contact a licensing specialist with questions regarding Bulletin 137.

First Letter of the Center’s Name	Licensing Consultant
L, T	alicia.bourgeois2@la.gov
M, S	alicia.brown@la.gov
D, J, K	autumn.sullivan@la.gov
A, N, O, U, V, W	curieni.jackson2@la.gov
C, I, Y, Z	daryneshia.weaver2@la.gov

B, E, F, H, Q, X	nyshekita.travis@la.gov
G, R, P	phyllis.politz@la.gov

UPDATES FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE AND IN-HOME PROVIDERS

NEW: Inspections

Providers must be open and available at all times during the hours of operation submitted to the Department.

Providers must allow inspection of the residence where care is being provided by Department staff, other authorized inspection personnel, and parents of children in care, during normal working hours or when children are in care.

Please contact providercertification@la.gov with questions.

REMINDER: Children’s Daily Attendance

Providers must ensure a daily attendance record for children is maintained that includes the following:

- the child’s first and last name and arrival and departure times
- first and last name of person or entity to whom the child is released
- accurate reflection of children in care at any given time

The daily attendance record must also be used to sign in and out if a child leaves and returns to the home during the day.

Please contact providercertification@la.gov with questions.

REMINDER: Obtaining Child Care Criminal Background Checks (CCCBCs)

Family Child Care providers must obtain a CCCBC-based determination of eligibility for child care purposes from the LDOE for the following required persons:

- the provider
- all adults employed in the home or on the property of the home where care is provided
- all adults living in the residence where care is provided
- any other person in the home or on the premises when one or more children in care are present, who is not a household designee for a child in care at the home.

In-Home Child Care providers must obtain a CCCBC-based determination of eligibility for child care purposes from the LDOE for the following required persons:

- the provider
- all adults employed in the home or on the property of the home where care is provided
- all non-caregiver adults living in the home where care is provided
- any other person in the home or on the premises when one or more children in care are present, who is not a household designee for a child in care at the home and who is not a caregiver who is exempt from the requirement of having a CCCBC-based determination of eligibility for child care purposes.
 - Caregivers, as defined in §103 of this bulletin, who are living in the home, are exempt from the requirement of having a CCCBC-based determination of eligibility for child care purposes.

To obtain a Child Care Criminal Background Check, new Family Child Care and In-Home providers are required to

follow the steps below:

1. Visit the [Child Care Criminal Background Check System](#)
2. Select “New Provider/Entity Register Here”
3. Upload required documents to register as a provider:
 - a. state-issued identification verification document (e.g., ID, driver’s license)
 - b. letter of employment on official letterhead (employment verification; W2, or 1099 form)
 - c. proof of incorporation or business registration (business license or letter from the Secretary of State)

If the provider does not have employment verification or proof of incorporation, upload a copy of the Provider Agreement form.

4. Once the Provider/Entity registration is approved, the provider will be emailed a username and temporary password
Create a new password using the special instructions located on the right side of the screen
5. Select the “Home” icon
6. Select “New Application” tab
7. Enter applicant’s information
 - a. Please note: e-mail addresses serve as a username in the CCCBC System. A different e-mail address is required when completing a CCCBC application.
8. Once the CCCBC application is complete, the provider should schedule a fingerprinting appointment by visiting [Idemia’s appointment enrollment site](#)
9. Repeat steps 6-9 for all required persons outlined

Please contact providercertification@la.gov with questions.

REMINDER: Shaken Baby Syndrome, Abusive Head Trauma, and Child Maltreatment Policies

Providers must have a policy and procedure to identify, prevent, and respond to shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment.

Please contact providercertification@la.gov with questions.

UPDATES FOR LICENSED CENTERS, FAMILY CHILD CARE, AND IN-HOME PROVIDERS

NEW: Safe Sleep Practices

Providers must ensure the following safe sleep practices are being followed at all times:

- Only one infant shall be placed in a crib.
- All infants shall be placed on their backs for sleeping.
 - Written authorization from a physician is required for any other sleeping position.
 - Written notice of the specifically authorized sleeping position shall be posted on or near the crib.
- Infants shall not be placed in positioning devices unless the center has written authorization from a physician to use a positioning device.
- Written authorization from a physician is required for a child to sleep in a car seat or other similar device and shall include the amount of time that the child is allowed to remain in said device.
- “Back To Sleep” signs shall be posted in the room where infants sleep.
- Infants who use pacifiers shall be offered their pacifier when they are placed for sleep, but the pacifier can not be placed back in the child’s mouth once the child is asleep if it falls out while the child is asleep.
- Bibs shall not be worn by any child while asleep.

- Nothing shall be placed over the head or face of an infant while placed for sleep.
- A safety approved crib must be available for each infant.

Licensed centers should contact a [licensing consultant](#) with questions. Home-based providers should contact ProviderCertification@la.gov with questions.

REMINDER: Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC)

As the summer months are approaching, many providers hire student workers to assist at a location. Child Care Criminal Background Checks are required for child care staff under 18 years old. Staff under 18 years old [consent and disclosure forms](#) must include a parent’s signature. Government-issued identification is required for application processing. While completing applications, be sure the correct position is selected to prevent delays in processing. All documents and information should be reviewed prior to completing the application. Any error or missing information will cause delays in processing.

Applications remaining in “In Progress” status five business days after a fingerprint submission could possibly be due to fingerprint rejection. Applicants are notified via the applicant’s e-mail of a fingerprint rejection. Status of a fingerprint submission can also be verified using [Idemia’s appointment enrollment site](#). Applicants will be instructed via email to schedule an appointment to re-submit fingerprints using the specified link listed on the appointment enrollment site. Additional fingerprint fees are not required if fingerprints are re-submitted within 30 days of the first fingerprint submission.

Only electronic digital fingerprinting submissions are accepted, unless otherwise stated by the LDOE. If an applicant has a condition that may cause fingerprinting issues, please inform the CCCBC Section prior to the appointment by emailing LDECCBCprocessing@la.gov.

For IDEMIA finance and NCAC questions: contact 877-512-6962 and for UEID and scheduling assistance contact 844-539-5543.

Please contact LDECCBCprocessing@la.gov with questions.

EARLY CHILDHOOD IN THE NEWS

[Louisiana Announces Semifinalists For Teacher And Principal Of The Year, Finalists For Early Childhood And New Teacher](#) (louisianabelieves.com)

CONTACT US



- For questions regarding licensing or child health and safety, please contact LDElicensing@la.gov.
- For all questions regarding child care criminal background check processing, please contact LDEccbcprocessing@la.gov.
- For all other questions regarding early childhood, please contact earlychildhood@la.gov.
- Subscribe to our monthly newsletter by completing this [form](#).