



District of Columbia
Office of the State Superintendent of Education

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ): Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund

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About the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund

1. What is the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund? (Updated September 2022)

The [Fiscal Year 2022 \(FY22\) Budget Support Emergency Amendment Act of 2021](#) created the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund as a special fund of the District of Columbia Government, to be administered by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) and used to increase compensation of child development facility staff. The Act also created an Early Childhood Educator Equitable Compensation Task Force to make recommendations for implementing the fund.

Consistent with the [recommendations of the Task Force](#), OSSE is working with an intermediary organization, AidKit, to disburse pay supplements directly to early childhood educators in FY22.

In FY23, OSSE, in partnership with AidKit, will continue distribution of direct payments to eligible early childhood educators. Individuals who receive a supplemental payment in FY22 and remain employed in an eligible role in a child development facility licensed by OSSE can expect to receive future payments between October 2022 and September 2023. Information on eligibility, payment amounts and the distribution schedule for FY23 can be [found here](#).

Starting in FY24, OSSE will shift to distributing funds to child development facilities; facilities that accept funds will be required to pay eligible early childhood educators wages that reflect the recommendations of the Early Childhood Educator Equitable Compensation Task Force. More information about these salaries and requirements for providers and eligible staff will be available in spring 2023.

The information in this document pertains solely to the distribution of pay equity funds directly to educators in FY22.

2. How will pay equity funds be distributed? (Updated September 2022)

OSSE has engaged an intermediary organization, AidKit, to manage the pay supplement application and distribution process. To receive a supplemental payment, eligible early educators must complete and submit an application to AidKit. The application for FY22 can be [found here](#). The application for FY22 will close at 5 p.m. on Sept. 20, 2022. Applications submitted after 5 p.m. on Sept. 20, 2022 will not be considered. Early childhood educators must complete and submit the application to AidKit; employers can not submit applications on behalf of their employees. Additional information on how to apply for these funds is addressed in questions 19 through 21 of this document.

Eligibility

3. Who is eligible to receive a supplemental payment from the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund?

In order to be eligible to receive a supplemental payment distribution from the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund for FY22, an early childhood educator must meet the following requirements:

- Be currently employed in a child development facility licensed by OSSE, with employment starting on or before May 16, 2022; and
- Be employed in an eligible role:
 - Teacher;
 - Assistant Teacher;
 - Associate Caregiver;
 - Expanded Home Provider;
 - Home Provider;
 - Montessori Assistant Teacher; or
 - Montessori Teacher.

For more information on eligibility requirements, see page 1 of the [Child Care Staff Eligibility and Payment Amounts for Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund policy document](#).

OSSE and AidKit will verify all applicants' employment on the date an application is submitted and again prior to disbursement of funds. Early childhood educators who leave employment after submitting an application for funds and who are not employed in an eligible position in a child development facility at the time funds are disbursed, will lose eligibility for funding. Employees who are on temporary leave (e.g., paid family leave, short-term disability, family and medical leave act) are eligible for funds, provided they were employed in a child development facility in an eligible role prior to May 16, 2022, remain employees of the facility and intend to return to work in the facility following the end of their temporary leave.

4. Are part-time workers eligible for pay equity funds? How will OSSE determine if I am a full- or part-time worker?

Yes. Individuals who work at least 10 hours a week at a child development facility in an eligible role (see question 3) are eligible for a supplement payment if they are currently employed and were employed in a child development facility on or before May 16, 2022.

Part-time workers are defined as those who work between 10 and 30 hours per week on average, or who have worked at least 80 hours in the last eight weeks (staff must meet at least one of these criteria).

Full-time workers are defined as those who work 30 or more hours per week on average, or who have worked at least 240 hours in the last eight weeks.

Eligible early childhood educators must certify their full- or part-time status when applying for a supplemental payment.

5. I have an individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN). Am I eligible to apply for the fund?

If you meet the eligibility requirements detailed in question 1 you may apply for funds regardless of your documentation status. You may use a Social Security Number (SSN) or ITIN when completing your application.

6. I'm a lead teacher in a Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion Program (PKEEP). Why won't I be able to receive funds from this program?

Child development facilities that participate in PKEEP are required to pay PKEEP teachers at parity with DC Public Schools (DCPS) teachers. Therefore, PKEEP lead teachers are not eligible to participate in the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund. If you are a PKEEP lead teacher and believe that your employer is not paying you the required salary for PKEEP lead teachers, please contact OSSE.DELCommunications@dc.gov and we will refer your information to the PKEEP program manager for further assistance.

7. I started working in a child development facility on or after May 17, 2022. Am I eligible to receive a supplemental payment? (Updated September 2022)

No. In order to be eligible to receive a supplemental payment through the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund, you must be employed at a licensed child development facility on or before May 16, 2022, in an eligible role. Early childhood educators hired after May 16, 2022, are not eligible to participate in FY22, but may be eligible to receive pay equity funds in future years, if they remain employed in a child development facility in an eligible role. Information on eligibility, payment amounts and the distribution schedule for the FY23 administration of the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund can be [found here](#).

8. If I change jobs between now and the time funds are distributed, will I still be eligible to receive a supplemental payment? (Updated September 2022)

In order to receive your supplemental payment, you must be currently employed in a child development facility in an eligible role on or before May 16, 2022 and be employed in a child development facility in an eligible role at the time you submit your application and at the time funds are disbursed. If you take a job in an eligible role in another child development facility licensed by OSSE before your payment is disbursed, you will still be eligible to receive a supplemental payment, but you or your employer may need to provide additional documentation. OSSE will provide additional information for staff who move between eligible roles in child development facilities licensed by OSSE and their employers.

If you change jobs and are no longer employed in an eligible role in a child development facility licensed by OSSE, you will no longer be eligible to receive a supplemental payment.

9. Are directors, assistant directors or other staff who spend part of their day in child care classrooms (for example, providing coverage) eligible to receive pay equity funds? (Updated September 2022)

No. To be eligible to receive a supplemental payment through the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund, your position listed in the Division of Early Learning Licensing Tool (DELLT) must be an eligible role. However, there are a few cases in which OSSE will consider an appeal. Per the [appeals policy](#), OSSE will consider an appeal if an applicant’s “Staff Type” is listed as “Other,” “Substitute,” or “Home assistant/Substitute” and the applicant can demonstrate that their primary job responsibilities focus on providing early care and education services to children, and that they spend at least 10 hours a week or at least 60 percent of their employed hours (whichever is greater) in a child development home or child development center classrooms delivering early care and education services to children. Additionally, OSSE will consider an appeal if an applicant’s “Staff Type” in DELLT is “Director” only if the applicant serves as an assistant director who is also a full-time classroom teacher and provides a written statement from the facility’s director affirming that the assistant director’s primary responsibilities are as a classroom teacher and that they spend the majority of their working hours in a classroom carrying out teaching responsibilities. OSSE will not otherwise consider appeals from applicants whose “Staff Type” in DELLT is “Director.”

For more information on the requirements for accepted grounds for an appeal, requirements for approved appeals and the appeals process, see the FY22 [Policy: Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund Ineligibility Appeals Policy and Process](#).

10. Are staff who are working at a facility that is operating under a restricted license eligible for a supplemental payment? (Updated June 2022)

Yes.

11. I was working at a facility licensed by OSSE on May 16, 2022, in a role that is eligible to receive a supplemental payment. However, I was recently promoted and am now a director/instructional coach/other role at the facility. Am I still eligible for a supplemental payment? (Updated September 2022)

In order to receive your supplemental payment, an early childhood educator must:

- **be currently employed** in a child development facility at each of the following times: a) **on or before May 16, 2022**, b) **at the time they submit their application**, and c) **at the time funds are disbursed**; and
- **be employed** in a child development facility in an **eligible role** (e.g., teacher, assistant teacher, associate caregiver, expanded home caregiver, home caregiver, Montessori assistant teacher or Montessori teacher) **at the time they submit their application**.

If you are promoted to a non-eligible role before you submit your application, you are no longer eligible for a supplemental payment. If you are promoted to a non-eligible role after you submit your application, you are eligible for a supplemental payment.

12. Do I need to reapply for my current job to qualify for funds? (Updated June 2022)

No. Early childhood educators who are eligible to receive a supplemental payment do not need to submit an application to their employer or reapply for their current job. To apply for a supplemental payment, eligible early childhood educators must [submit an application](#) through AidKit's platform. For more information, see question 19.

13. Am I required to meet specific education requirements (e.g., Child Development Associate [CDA], associate degree, bachelor's degree) to receive a supplemental payment? (Updated June 2022)

To receive a supplemental payment, you must meet the eligibility criteria detailed in question 3.

Your staff type/role is based on your responsibilities at the facility where you are employed and your qualifications. For example, an individual in the assistant teacher role must carry out the responsibilities that reflect an assistant teacher role as defined in [licensing regulations](#) **AND** have the credentials required for the role as of the date of application. Early childhood educators do not need to meet the new educational credential requirements that will be in effect as of December 2023 in order to receive funds from the pay equity fund in FY22. For more information on current and future credential requirements, see:

- Teacher or [Assistant Teacher in a Child Development Center](#)
- [Home, Expanded Home or Associate Home Caregiver](#)

14. Are employees of DC Public Schools (DCPS) or public charter schools eligible to receive a supplemental payment? (Updated September 2022)

No. The Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund was created to support pay parity for early childhood educators employed at child development facilities licensed OSSE with their peers employed in DC public and public charter schools. As such, employees of DCPS and charter schools are not eligible for these funds.

Information for Employers

15. What actions do I need to take to ensure staff at my child development facility receive a pay supplement? (Updated September 2022)

To ensure staff at your facility receive a pay supplement, you must review and update staff records in DELLT.

Updates made to DELLT in May 2022 give facilities direct access to staff information in the provider profile section. You must update staff records individually to include the correct Staff Type, staff mobile phone number, staff email address and staff home address. Other staff information must also be reviewed to ensure the information is correct. Your staff's eligibility for funding and the amount they receive will depend on their Staff Type listed in DELLT, so it is important to make sure this information is accurate. All staff **MUST** have the credentials **AND** carry out the responsibilities of the

Staff Type they are assigned in DELLT. You must provide supporting documentation (e.g., proof of degree completion such as a transcript, certificate, diploma, etc.) to verify the individual's credentials and staff members must be included in the facility's staffing plan.

16. How do I update staff records for my facility in DELLT?

On May 16, 2022, the person of record listed in DELLT for your facility received a guide with information on how to update staff information in DELLT. If you require assistance, please contact your assigned licensing specialist.

17. I am the director of a child development facility. Why am I not eligible to receive a pay supplement?

OSSE is implementing the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund consistent with the [recommendations](#) of the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Task Force and [legislation](#) passed by the DC Council. Both the Task Force and DC Council indicated that the primary intended beneficiaries of the fund are early educators whose primary and daily focus is direct work with children. While directors play an important role in supporting children's development and learning, and sometimes also fill teaching responsibilities, the primary responsibilities of a director are administrative. Child development facilities may use other funding sources, including funds received through the [DC Child Care Stabilization Grant](#), to provide bonuses or other financial incentives for directors and other staff not eligible for pay supplements through the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund.

18. I am currently recruiting for a vacant position in my facility. Will staff I hire for this position be eligible to receive payments from the fund? (Updated September 2022)

Early childhood educators employed on or before May 16, 2022, in a role eligible to receive a supplemental payment are eligible to receive funds. If you hire a staff member who was employed in an eligible role in another facility licensed by OSSE on or before May 16, 2022, and that staff member is employed in an eligible role at the time they apply and the time funds are disbursed, they maintain eligibility for funding, but you or the staff member may be contacted by an OSSE staff member and asked to provide some additional information to verify current employment. Staff hired after May 16, 2022, who were not working in an eligible role in a child development facility licensed by OSSE on or before May 16, 2022, will not be eligible to receive a pay supplement in FY22. They may, however, be eligible to receive [pay equity funds in FY23](#) if they remain employed in a child development facility in an eligible role. For more information on eligibility in FY23, see [Policy: Child Care Staff Eligibility, Payment Amounts and Distribution Schedule for the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund FY23](#).

Information for Eligible Child Care Staff

19. How do I apply to receive a supplemental payment? (Updated September 2022)

To receive a supplemental payment in FY22, you must submit an application through AidKit’s platform. The application for FY22 will close at 5 p.m. on Sept. 20, 2022. Applications submitted after 5 p.m. on Sept. 20, 2022 will not be considered. Please note that this is not a competitive program; applicants who meet eligibility criteria and provide all required documentation should expect to receive funds. Early childhood educators who require assistance accessing or completing the application should email support@ecepayequity.aidkit.org or call (202) 831-9298 for support.

20. What information or documents do I need to apply for funds? (Updated September 2022)

As part of your payment request, you must share the following information/documentation:

- Photo ID;
- Headshot/selfie;
- Payment information (direct bank deposit or debit card);
- SSN/ITIN; and
- W-9 form.

For more details, see page 2 of the [Child Care Staff Eligibility and Payment Amounts for Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund policy document](#).

21. How much money will I receive through the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund?

Your payment amount is determined based on a combination of your staff type and employment status (e.g., full- or part-time employee). More information is available in the table below and on pages 3-4 of the [Child Care Staff Eligibility and Payment Amounts for Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund policy document](#).

Staff Type	Time Status	
	Full-Time	Part-Time
ECE I: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant Teacher • Associate Caregiver • Montessori Assistant Teacher 	\$10,000	\$5,000
ECE II: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher • Expanded Home Provider 	\$14,000	\$7,000

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Home Provider• Montessori Teacher		
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22. How will my supplemental payment be distributed?

When completing your payment request you will have the option to choose between receiving your payment via direct bank deposit or debit card. If you choose to receive your payment via direct bank deposit, it will be distributed directly to the bank account for which you provide information. It is important to make sure the bank information you provide to AidKit is correct. If you choose to receive your payment via debit card, a debit card will be mailed to your home address or a centralized collection location. Funds will not be loaded on the debit card until you have verified receipt. Information on how to verify receipt will be shared with staff who elect to receive payments via debit card through a separate communication.

23. When will I receive my supplemental payment? (Updated September 2022)

After an early childhood educator’s application has been approved, their payment should be distributed within three to four weeks. The timing on which eligible early childhood educators receive funds will depend on how quickly they submit the required information.

24. Will funds be distributed on a “first-come, first-served” basis? (Updated August 2022)

All eligible early childhood educators who complete and submit the payment request through AidKit’s platform by 5 p.m. on Sept. 20, 2022, will receive funds. To receive your supplemental payment in a timely manner, you are encouraged to submit your payment request as soon as possible.

**Note: A previous version of this document incorrectly stated the deadline to submit an application for the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund. The correct deadline is 5 p.m. on Sept. 20, 2022.*

25. Is the supplemental payment I received from the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund subject to income tax?

Yes. Supplemental payments are subject to both state and federal taxes. Unlike your paycheck, state and federal taxes are not withheld from pay supplements distributed through this program. This means that you will need to report the income when filing your state or federal taxes and may need to pay additional tax on these funds when you file your 2022 taxes. AidKit will provide the documentation that early childhood educators who receive funds will need to submit their 2022 taxes but will not withhold state or federal taxes. Early childhood educators who receive a supplemental payment may wish to consult with an accountant or other tax expert, and/or to save a portion of funds received to cover potential future tax liabilities.

26. Will accepting a supplemental payment impact my eligibility to receive assistance from income eligible benefits programs (e.g., Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), housing vouchers)?

OSSE does not administer Medicaid, SNAP, or housing assistance and cannot provide specific guidance on whether or not pay supplements will be considered income by the agencies responsible for administering these programs. If you receive SNAP, WIC, Medicaid, or other public benefits, you should consult with the agencies that administer those programs and their established eligibility policies. Please note that the law (DC Act 24-492) does exempt supplemental payments from income calculations for the following purposes: local public assistance, the DC HealthCare Alliance program, local education scholarships, the Home Purchase Assistance Program, the Rent Supplement Program, and the Grandparent Caregiver Program. Early childhood educators who receive or are considering applying for these benefits should consult with the District government agencies responsible for administering each program for additional information on eligibility requirements and factors that may affect eligibility for these programs.

27. Are there restrictions on how I can use the funds I receive from the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund?

Pay supplement funds are your money, just like the compensation you receive from your employer. Eligible early educators who receive funds may use them as you see fit, and do not need to report on how funds were spent. (OSSE or AidKit may conduct voluntary surveys in the future to learn more about how funds are benefitting early educators, but these will be anonymous and completely optional.)

In making decisions about how to use funds, please keep in mind that pay supplements are subject to federal and state income taxes, which will not be withheld at the time funds are distributed. This means you may need to plan to pay additional taxes on them when you file your 2022 taxes.

OSSE will share information on financial planning resources (e.g., workshops hosted by partners) with eligible early educators in the coming months.

28. Am I required to give my employer a portion of my supplemental payment?

No. Your employer may not require you to provide them a portion of your supplemental payment. If your employer directs you to give them a portion of your supplemental payment, please contact OSSE at OSSE.DELCommunications@dc.gov.

29. I believe I am eligible to receive a supplemental payment, but I have not received an invitation to apply for funds. Who should I contact? (Updated September 2022)

Early childhood educators who believe they are eligible to receive a supplemental payment can complete the application [found here](#).

30. Do I need to return funds if I leave my job? (Updated September 2022)

Early childhood educators who receive a supplemental payment are strongly encouraged to remain employed in a licensed child care facility in the District through and beyond December 2022, and

those who do so will be eligible for additional payments through the fund in FY23, as well as increased pay from their employers in future years.

OSSE will pursue recoupment of funds only in cases where individuals knowingly submit inaccurate or misleading information on their applications for funding.

31. I am concerned my employer did not update my information in the Division of Early Learning Licensing Tool (DELLT). What should I do? (Updated September 2022)

No early educator who is eligible for funds will be denied a supplemental payment because their employer did not update staff records to include an email address and/or phone in DELLT by a specific date. Eligible early educators who did not receive an invitation directly from AidKit to apply for funds when the application launched will still be able to access the application and apply for funds, but their employer will need to update their employment information in DELLT before funds can be disbursed. If an applicant's employment cannot be confirmed in existing DELLT data, AidKit and/or OSSE staff will follow up with the applicant and/or employer to determine eligibility and ensure that DELLT data is updated to include the employee. Early childhood educators who submit applications but whose information cannot be verified in DELLT will receive additional information through the application process.

Please note, section 131.1 of OSSE's child care licensing regulations requires licensed child care providers to maintain accurate staff records and provide required staff information to OSSE, in the form required by OSSE. Facilities are required to update all staff information in DELLT regardless of position or eligibility for pay equity funds.

If an early childhood educator is deemed ineligible for a supplemental, they may appeal the decision. OSSE will consider appeals only from applicants who complete and submit the full application in the AidKit platform. Individuals who do not complete and submit the full application cannot submit an appeal. OSSE will not consider appeals of payment amounts from applicants who are found eligible for a supplemental payment but disagree with the "Staff Type" on which their payment amount is based. For applicants found eligible for payment, the "Staff Type" listed in DELLT is the final determinant of payment amount. For more information on the requirements for accepted grounds for an appeal, requirements for approved appeals and the appeals process, see the FY22 [Policy: Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund Ineligibility Appeals Policy and Process](#).

32. Why are early childhood educators who are new to the field eligible for the same payment amounts as educators who have been in the field for several years? (Updated September 2022)

For the FY22 administration of the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund, the payment amount an eligible early childhood educator receives will be determined based on their staff type and employment status (e.g., full time or part time), as detailed in the [payment amount policy document](#). In the application for a supplemental payment for FY22, early childhood educators will be asked questions about their experience. Information provided in response to these questions will assist

OSSE in long-term planning. An early educator's response to these questions will not impact the payment amount they receive in FY22.

As noted in question 1, the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund is a program created by the DC Council based on the recommendations of the Early Childhood Educator Equitable Compensation Task Force. The DC Council, in following the task force's recommendations, directed OSSE to issue supplemental payments directly to eligible early childhood educators in FY22 with payment amounts based on an individual's staff type/role and employment status. The task force did not recommend payment amounts be based on years in the field for supplemental payments issued in FY22.

In June 2022, the DC Council passed legislation that authorizes OSSE to continue distribution of direct payments to eligible child care workers in FY23. Given this legislation and the funds appropriated in the FY23 budget, child care workers who receive pay equity funds in FY22 and remain employed in an eligible role in a child development facility licensed by OSSE can expect to receive further payments between October 2022 and September 2023. Information on eligibility, payment amounts and the distribution schedule for FY23 can be [found here](#).

Starting in FY24 (October 2023), OSSE will shift to distributing funds to child development facilities; facilities that accept funds will be required to pay eligible child care workers wages that reflect the recommendations of the Early Childhood Equitable Compensation Task Force. More information about these salaries and requirements for providers and eligible staff will be available in spring 2023. OSSE will continue to engage early childhood stakeholders in the coming months to inform the design, implementation and launch of the program for FY24 and beyond.

33. I have a question about the application I submitted to receive funds from the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund. Who should I contact? (Updated September 2022)

Early childhood educators who have questions about their application or require support should reach out to the AidKit support team at support@ecepayequity.aidkit.org or (202) 831-9298.