



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR PAY EQUITY FUND

Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund Frequently Asked Questions for Early Childhood Educators

August 2023

Information for All DC Early Childhood Educators Employed at Licensed Child Development Facilities

1. What is the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund?

The Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund is a special fund of the District of Columbia Government, administered by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), used to increase compensation of child development facility staff. In FY22 and FY23, OSSE worked with an intermediary organization, AidKit, to disburse pay supplements directly to early childhood educators.

Beginning in [FY24](#), which begins on Oct. 1, 2023, and going forward, OSSE will stop making direct payments to early childhood educators through AidKit. Instead, OSSE will distribute funds directly to child development facilities through the [FY24 child development facility \(CDF\) payroll funding formula](#). This document only has information about FY24 of the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund.

2. How will the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund work in FY24?

In FY24, OSSE will distribute funds to licensed child development facilities that choose to participate in the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund. To participate, a facility must agree to pay eligible early childhood educators, by position and degree, salaries that meet or exceed the [FY24 minimum salaries](#) established by OSSE. Child development facilities are not required to participate in the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund, but it is highly encouraged.

3. Will early childhood educators receive Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Funds from their employer?

Early childhood educators will no longer receive direct pay supplements from AidKit. Child development facilities that participate in FY24 of the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund will receive funds to raise the wages of their employees. Facilities must pay eligible lead teachers and assistant teachers wages or salaries that meet or exceed the [minimum salary requirements](#) established by OSSE. If you are employed in an eligible role at a facility participating in the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund, any monies you receive from the program will be received in the form of pay from your employer, such as your regular paycheck.

4. Why is OSSE distributing funds to employers to then pass along to early childhood educators instead of making direct payments to early childhood educators?

OSSE is implementing the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund in accordance with legislation that established that funding from the program, in FY24 and going forward, is to go through child development facilities. In FY22 and FY23, direct supplemental payments were issued to eligible early childhood educators to swiftly distribute funds to the early childhood workforce in the short-term while a more complex and robust long-term mechanism for disbursing funds to facilities was developed for implementation beginning in FY24.

5. Is my employer required to participate in FY24 of the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund?

Child development facilities are not required to participate in FY24 of the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund, but it is highly encouraged. If your employer does not participate in the program, they will not receive any funds from the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund and will not be required to pay their staff the [FY24 minimum salaries](#). All employers must comply with other District and/or federal laws and requirements regarding worker wages and hours that apply to all employers, including the Fair Shot Minimum Wage Act of 2016, and for child care providers participating in the District's child care subsidy program, the Living Wage Act of 2006.

6. How do I know if my employer is participating in FY24 of the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund?

Ask your employer if they plan to participate in the program in FY24. OSSE will also publish a list of facilities participating in the program later in 2023.

7. If my employer does not participate in FY24 of the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund, can I receive funds through AidKit?

No. Consistent with the law, in FY24, OSSE will cease making direct payments to early childhood educators through AidKit.

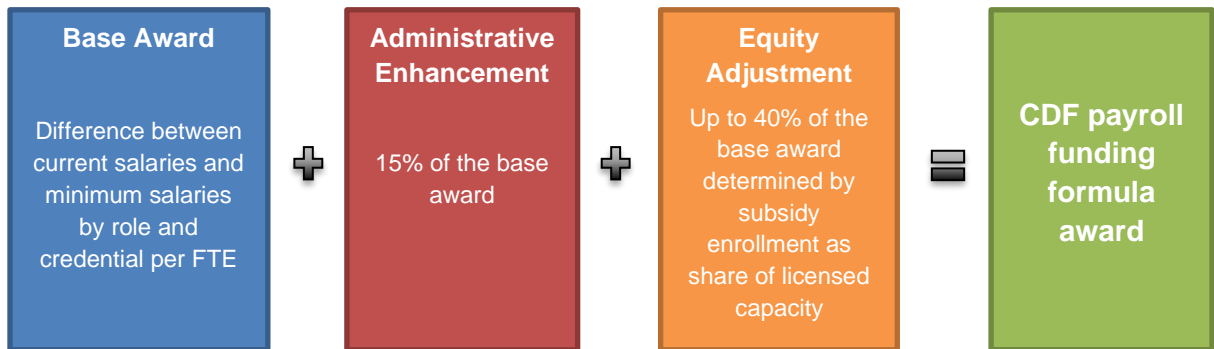
Information for Early Childhood Educators Employed by a Facility Participating in FY24

8. How will OSSE determine the amount of money a child development facility receives from the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund?

OSSE will use the [CDF payroll funding formula](#) to determine the award amount a participating child development facility receives from Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund in FY24. OSSE will calculate CDF payroll funding formula awards quarterly.

The CDF payroll funding formula consists for the following components:

- Base Award;
- Administrative Enhancement; and
- Equity Adjustment.



The CDF payroll funding formula is a new revenue source that will give child development facilities additional resources to raise the salaries of early childhood educators.

9. How do I know if my employer is required to pay me an FY24 minimum salary?

Child development facilities that receive CDF payroll funding formula awards must pay eligible lead teachers and assistant teachers, in the following staff types in the Division of Early Learning Licensing Tool (DELLT), salaries that [meet or exceed the minimum salaries](#).

For FY24 of the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund, the following staff types in DELLT qualify as a **lead teacher**:

- Teacher
- Montessori teacher
- Expanded home caregiver
- Home caregiver

For FY24 of the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund, the following staff types in DELLT qualify as an **assistant teacher**:

- Assistant teacher
- Montessori assistant teacher
- Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion Program (PKEEP) assistant teacher
- Associate home caregiver

If you are assigned one of the staff types listed above in DELLT, your employer will be required to pay you according to the required minimum salaries.

If you are unsure of your staff type in DELLT, please talk with your employer.

10. How does my employer determine what my staff type is in DELLT?

An early childhood educator’s staff type in DELLT is based on their responsibilities at the facility where they are employed AND their 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. Employers must include the required supporting documentation (e.g., proof of degree completion such as a transcript, certificate, diploma, etc.) in an employee's staff record. An educator's staff type in DELLT should reflect the role they spend the majority of their time in.

11. Are there minimum salary requirements for directors, assistant directors or other staff who spend part of their day in child care classrooms (for example, providing coverage)?

OSSE has not established minimum salaries for individuals who have a staff type of director, assistant director, administrative staff, floater and/or substitute in DELLT. However, child development facilities have discretion in how they spend their funding award, as long as they are meeting the minimum salary requirements for eligible lead teachers and assistant teachers. Should a facility have additional funds after meeting the minimum salary requirement for eligible staff, the facility may use the excess funds to compensate additional staff, including directors, assistant directors, administrative staff, floaters, substitutes and individuals employed in other roles.

12. What are the minimum salaries for FY24?

The minimum salary requirement for an eligible early childhood educator is based upon their role and credentials as documented in DELLT. Your staff record in DELLT must include required supporting documentation (e.g., proof of degree completion such as a transcript, certificate, diploma, etc.). See the table below for more information.

Role	Credentials	Minimum Salaries for FY24 (annual salary)	Minimum Salaries for FY24 (hourly wage)
Assistant Teacher	Less than a Child Development Associate (CDA)	\$43,865	\$21.09/hour
	CDA	\$51,006	\$24.52/hour
	Associate degree or higher	\$54,262	\$26.09/hour
Lead Teacher	CDA <u>or</u> 48 credit hours with greater than or equal to 15 hours in Early Childhood Education (ECE)	\$54,262	\$26.09/hour
	Associate degree in ECE <u>or</u> an associate degree with greater than or equal to 24 credit hours in ECE	\$63,838	\$30.69/hour
	Bachelor's degree (or higher) in ECE <u>or</u> a bachelor's degree (or higher) with greater than or equal to 24 credit hours in ECE	\$75,103	\$36.11/hour

13. I am working to meet the education requirement for my staff type that goes into effect on Dec. 2, 2023. Will that impact my pay?

Yes. The minimum salary requirement for an eligible lead teacher or assistant teacher is based on their role and credentials as documented in DELLT. If you earn a higher degree or credential, your pay may increase.

Education requirements for most staff types, including teacher, assistant teacher, associate caregiver, home caregiver and expanded home caregiver, go into effect on Dec. 2, 2023. (Note: the education requirement for center directors went into effect on Dec. 2, 2022.) More information on the credential requirements for teachers, assistant teachers, associate caregivers, home caregivers and expanded home caregivers that goes into effect on Dec. 2, 2023 can be [found here](#).

OSSE recognizes that some eligible lead teachers and assistant teachers may have a waiver to remain in that role as they pursue the required credential. Waivers issued to staff as part of the education requirements do not apply to the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund. As an example, if a facility has a waiver in place for an employee who serves as a teacher and is pursuing their associate degree in ECE, but the teacher currently holds a CDA as their highest credential, the employer must pay a salary that meets or exceeds the minimum salary for a lead teacher with a CDA (\$54,262). When the teacher obtains their associate degree in ECE, the facility's CDF payroll funding formula award will be adjusted the following quarter, as long as the facility updates the staff record accordingly with documentation to prove the new credential was obtained, and the employer will be required to pay a salary that meets or exceeds the minimum salary for a lead teacher with an associate degree in ECE (\$63,838).

14. Will my pay increase on the first day of FY24 (Oct. 1, 2023)?

Employers that opt in to FY24 of the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund will receive quarterly payments calculated using the CDF payroll funding formula. Employers are not required to pay eligible staff the FY24 minimum salaries until after they receive their first quarterly CDF payroll funding formula award payment. Talk with your employer about their plan for implementing the minimum salaries. The quarterly payment schedule that details when OSSE will deliver funds to participating facilities in FY24 can be found below.

- Quarter One: December 2023
- Quarter Two: March 2024
- Quarter Three: June 2024
- Quarter Four: September 2024

15. What happens if I change jobs?

If you take a job at another facility that is participating in the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund program and are employed in an eligible staff type, your new employer is required to pay you at least the minimum salary for FY24 that aligns with your staff type and credentials. Please note, OSSE will issue funds to participating facilities on a

quarterly basis based on a facility's CDF payroll funding formula calculation. Facilities that participate in the program are not required to pay new staff the FY24 minimum salary aligned to their staff type and credentials until they have received the quarterly payment from OSSE that includes the new staff member in the CDF payroll funding formula calculation.

If you take a job at another facility and the facility is not participating in FY24 of the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund, your new employer is not required to pay the FY24 minimum salary for your role and credential but must comply with other District and/or federal laws and requirements regarding worker wages and hours that apply to all employers, including the Fair Shot Minimum Wage Act of 2016, and for child care providers participating in the District's child care subsidy program, the Living Wage Act of 2006.

16. If my staff type changes will my salary change?

The FY24 minimum salary for an eligible lead teacher and assistant teacher is based on their role and credentials. If your staff type has changed, your employer must update your staff record in DELLT and include the required supporting documentation. If your staff type changes between quarterly payments from OSSE to your employer, your employer is not required to meet the FY24 minimum salary for your new staff type until they receive their next quarterly payment from OSSE in which their CDF payroll funding formula award was calculated to reflect your new role. If you are unsure of your staff type or minimum salary requirement, please talk with your employer.

17. If I achieve a higher credential, will my salary change?

The FY24 minimum salary for an eligible lead teacher and assistant teacher is based on their role and credentials. If you achieve a higher credential, your employer must update your record in DELLT and include the required supporting documentation.

If you earn a higher credential between quarterly payments from OSSE to your employer, your employer is not required to meet the FY24 minimum salary aligned to your new credential until they receive their next quarterly payment from OSSE in which their CDF payroll funding formula award was calculated to reflect your new credential. If you are unsure of your credentials documented in DELLT or minimum salary requirement, please talk with your employer.

18. How do I know my employer is paying me the required minimum salary?

If you are employed in an eligible staff type at a child development facility participating in FY24 of the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund, your employer must pay you the FY24 required minimum salary aligned to your role and credential as documented in DELLT on the day the facility's quarterly CDF payroll funding formula award is calculated. See question 13 for the FY24 minimum salaries. Please note, employers are required to meet the minimum salaries before state or federal taxes or other deductions that may come out of your paycheck. If you are unsure of your staff type or credentials in DELLT, please talk with your employer.

19. I am concerned my employer is not paying me the required minimum salary. What can I do?

If you believe your employer is not paying you the minimum salary requirement you are entitled to, please contact OSSE.ECEPayEquity@dc.gov.

20. My employer is participating in the FY24 Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund, but I do not wish to receive increased pay. What can I do?

If you do not wish to receive increased pay, OSSE will request a signed attestation that you are voluntarily declining the salary increase. Please email OSSE.ECEPayEquity@dc.gov if you would like to decline a salary increase.

21. How will this program affect my taxes?

Your employer will be required to pay employer payroll and other taxes and withholding taxes, as they are for other wages and salaries. Early childhood educators may wish to consult with an accountant or other tax expert to find out whether the increase in pay will impact their tax liability.

22. I am employed in an eligible staff type. Do I need to submit an application to my employer to receive a pay increase in FY24?

No. Early childhood educators do not need to submit an application for FY24 of the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund. Eligible early childhood educators will receive Early Childhood Pay Equity Funds through regular pay received from your employer, such as your regular paycheck.

23. Will a pay raise 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 benefits, or housing assistance and cannot provide specific guidance on eligibility for these programs. If you are concerned that a salary increase may impact your eligibility to receive assistance from income-based public benefit programs like Medicaid, SNAP, housing vouchers, etc., please consult with the District agencies that administer those programs for additional information on eligibility. The District currently provides all employees of licensed child development facilities with access to low or no cost health insurance coverage through [HealthCare4ChildCare](#).