



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

**EDUCATION**

**Child Development Staff New Education Requirements  
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Early Childhood Staff  
Updated December 2021**

**Overview:**

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is committed to increasing access to quality, affordable child care in the District of Columbia (DC). As part of this commitment, OSSE increased the minimum education requirements for the early childhood workforce in DC. This includes center directors, teachers, assistant teachers and caregivers in licensed family child development homes.

To support implementation of these new requirements, OSSE expanded funding and resources for scholarships to ensure our current and prospective early childhood workforce have the tools they need to meet these new education requirements. Child development staff, including center directors, teachers, assistant teachers, home caregivers, associate home caregivers and expanded home caregivers can access information about the new early childhood education requirements and find resources to support their educational needs at [osse.dc.gov/eceresources](https://osse.dc.gov/eceresources).

For information about licensed child care in DC, visit My Child Care DC at [mychildcaredc.org](https://mychildcaredc.org), contact OSSE's Licensing and Compliance Unit at (202) 727-1839 or email [osse.delcommunications@dc.gov](mailto:osse.delcommunications@dc.gov).

**Child Development Associate (CDA)**

**1. If a person has an associate degree in an area other than early childhood, do they need to obtain a CDA?**

A person with an associate degree in a field other than early childhood would need 24 semester credit hours in early childhood education. More information on teacher credentials can be found at [osse.dc.gov/eceresources](https://osse.dc.gov/eceresources).

**2. Where can I obtain my CDA?**

OSSE provides grants to some of the CDA programs and there are other CDA programs in the DC area. More information on CDA programs can be found at [osse.dc.gov/eceresources](https://osse.dc.gov/eceresources).

OSSE's Division of Early Learning (DEL) awarded CentroNía and Southeast Children's Fund the CDA Training Scholarship and Promotion Program grant. This program provides scholarship funds for early childhood professionals seeking an initial, renewal or non-cohort CDA credential. More information on the CDA Training, Scholarship and Promotion programs can be found [here](#).

**3. How long does it take to obtain a CDA?**

The length of time for a person to obtain a CDA depends upon the individual. Typically, it can be between six months to one year to meet all the requirements for obtaining a CDA.

- 4. What are the pre-requisites, if any, to register for the CDA scholarship program in DC?**  
 A person pursuing a CDA through an OSSE-sponsored program needs only to have a high school diploma and be a DC resident (or staff in a District of Columbia child development facility). More information on CDA scholarship programs can be found at [osse.dc.gov/eceresources](https://osse.dc.gov/eceresources).
- 5. Will a CDA count toward credits at Trinity Washington University or the University of the District of Columbia – Community College(UDC-CC)?**  
 The universities in the Washington region (District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia) have different criteria for accepting the CDA towards college credits. It is best to contact the university directly and ask how many college credits could potentially be earned for a person with a CDA credential.
- 6. Can I complete my CDA requirements using Quorum?**  
 You can use Quorum courses to complete the minimum of 120 instructional hours towards the CDA requirements. There are still additional steps to be taken in order to receive your CDA. More information on CDA requirements can be found on the Council for Professional Recognition website at [cdacouncil.org](https://cdacouncil.org).

**Staff Qualifications**

- 7. When does someone have to meet the new education requirements?**  
 The timelines for child development facility staff to meet the new requirements varies depending on position. Please see Table 1 for the specific deadlines for each position type.

**Table 1. Requirements for Child Development Facility Staff**

	<b>Position</b>	<b>Degree/Credential</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
<b>Center-Based</b>	Director	Bachelor’s degree in early childhood education or a bachelor’s with at least 15 semester credit hours in early childhood	December 2022
	Teacher	Associate degree in early childhood education or an associate with at least 24 semester credit hours in early childhood	December 2023
	Assistant Teacher	CDA	December 2023
<b>Home-Based</b>	Home Caregiver and Associate	CDA	December 2023
	Expanded Home Caregiver	Associate degree in early childhood education or an associate with at least 24 semester credit hours in early childhood	December 2023

**8. Who is the contact person for questions regarding staff qualifications?**

For questions relating to staff qualifications, contact your assigned licensing specialist. If you have questions about who your licensing specialist is, please contact the Licensing and Compliance Unit at (202) 727-1839 or [osse.delcommunications@dc.gov](mailto:osse.delcommunications@dc.gov).

**9. What are the minimum education requirements for center directors?**

A director of a center must have a bachelor's degree in early childhood education (or closely related field) or a bachelor's degree in any field with at least 15 semester credit hours in early childhood education by December 2022. More information on center director credentials can be found at [osse.dc.gov/page/center-director](https://osse.dc.gov/page/center-director).

**10. I am a teacher, and I have a bachelor's degree not in early childhood education. Do I need to obtain an associate degree?**

If you currently have a degree that is not in early childhood education, OSSE can review your transcript(s) to see if the minimum of 24 semester hours of ECE, which would be the teacher qualifications requirement, has been met. An OSSE/DEL team member will review the transcript and if the qualifications are met, will issue a Credential Verification Certificate. The request for a transcript review, i.e., credential verification, can be made through the Professional Development Information System (PDIS) at [dcpdis.org](https://dcpdis.org), by clicking the "Apply for a Credential Verification Certificate" once the user has logged in. More information on teacher credentials can be found at [osse.dc.gov/page/teacher](https://osse.dc.gov/page/teacher).

**11. What if I have a degree from another country?**

OSSE recognizes degrees awarded in foreign countries a certified translation by an official translation organization that can certify the U.S. equivalent of degree coursework and conferred degree with an official transcript.

### **Support for Meeting the New Education Requirements**

**12. I am having trouble with one of the new education requirements. What should I do?**

Anytime you are having difficulty understanding or meeting the requirements in the licensing regulations, you should contact your assigned licensing specialist. OSSE also provides individualized technical assistance via the ECE Help Desk at [ECEHelpDesk@dc.gov](mailto:ECEHelpDesk@dc.gov) or (202) 478-5903. The ECE Help Desk can help you to review licensing regulations, conduct transcript audits and identify resources to meet education requirements.

**13. What if I can't afford to go back to school?**

OSSE understands that continuing education can be costly. For this reason, OSSE has dedicated funds, time and resources to support the DC early childhood workforce. More information on education programs, resources available and planning guides can be found at [osse.dc.gov/eceresources](https://osse.dc.gov/eceresources).

**14. What online degree options are available?**

While there is a vast number of higher education options, OSSE has looked to local universities and their offerings first. A listing of higher education programs in the DC area relevant to your position can be found at [osse.dc.gov/eceresources](https://osse.dc.gov/eceresources).

## **Wages/Salary**

### **15. If OSSE is requiring higher education, will there be a salary increase?**

The education requirements can create new opportunities for the early childhood education workforce. To help increase wages, DC raised its subsidy rates in 2013, 2017 2018 and 2021. Additionally, Beginning July 1, 2021, the minimum wage in the District of Columbia increased from \$15 per hour to \$15.20 per hour for all workers, regardless of the size of the employer.

### **16. What does my employer have to pay me to work in DC?**

Every licensed child development facility is required to adhere to all applicable federal and DC government laws and regulations. This includes the minimum wage and living wage rates that are set by DC. For more information about the minimum wage and living wage rates, please visit the Office of Wage Hour Compliance website at [does.dc.gov/service/office-wage-hour-compliance-0](https://does.dc.gov/service/office-wage-hour-compliance-0).

### **17. How will new education requirements affect the cost of child care?**

OSSE recognizes that child care in DC, as in many places across the country, is a major expense for families. OSSE is committed to continually understanding the effects of these new regulations.