

## **Guidance on Administering 2023-2024 CCAP B-3 Seats**

This guidance document provides information on and requirements for administering the 2023-2024 CCAP B-3 Seats Pilot program.

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## Planning Document

Each Network Lead Agency receiving CCAP B-3 Seats in 2023-2024 will complete a “CCAP B-3 Seats Planning Document that includes:

- Sites with whom the Network Lead Agency will partner and rationale for partnership
- Approximated allocation of seats and age group by site
- Budget draft
- Partnership agreement draft
- Other responses to planning questions, such as requirements for partnership agreement and rationale, network business office planning, and how your office will manage eligibility determination.

Each Network Lead Agency will submit their planning document to the Department **by September 15 at 5 p.m.** The Department will review and provide feedback to each Community Network Lead Agency on their 2023-2024 plan.

## Eligible Sites

The CCAP B-3 Seats Pilot program aims to ensure high-quality care and education for children who did not previously attend child care *or* to continue care for eligible children who participated in this pilot in a previous year. Network Lead Agencies must determine which sites in their network will be partners this year and receive allocated seats.

**In order to participate, sites must meet all of the following eligibility criteria:**

- Possessing a score of “Proficient” or higher on Performance Profile Rating for the 2022-2023 Academic Year
  - If a site is new for the 2023-2024 Academic Year,
    - a robust plan should be included in this Planning Document to demonstrate how the network will effectively support the site to achieve a “Proficient” or higher Performance Profile Rating for 2023-2024
    - along with an explanation of why it is important for this site to participate in 2023-2024 CCAP B-3 Seats in its first year (e.g., meeting a geographic or other need identified by network data gathering)
- Possessing CCAP certification
- Offering, or able to offer through CCAP B-3 Seat funding, infant seats
- Offering full-time, year-round seats (at least 30 hours per week, at least six hours of continuous care minimum per weekday)
- Meet the ECAC requirement for Lead Teachers that Lead Teachers in classrooms where CCAP B-3 seats will be placed should have their ECAC or be working with an ECAC program to enroll during the 2023-2024 academic year
  - Lead Teachers in classrooms where CCAP B-3 seats will be placed should have their ECAC or be working with an ECAC program to enroll during the 2023-2024 academic year

### **NEW for 2023-2024**

To ensure equal opportunities for providers across the network to participate in this valuable opportunity, Network Lead Agencies must notify **all** eligible providers in the network (including eligible Type III providers and Family Child Care providers participating in Academic Approval) of the network’s 2023-2024 application for CCAP B-3 Seats. In the “Planning Document,” Networks will share a copy of this application with the LDOE, whether the Network is using the LDOE-created template, a modification of the LDOE-created template, or a new network-created application. In addition to sharing the application used, the network will also share in the Planning Document the network’s CCAP B-3 Seats

application's release date and due date.

Network Lead Agencies may consider weighing the following criteria in their decisions:

- Partner sites' participation in local collaborative meetings
- Participation in other grants or early childhood initiatives that expand quality and/or access
- The extent to which the partnership expands access or creates needed new child care supply in the community in which the site is located
- Existing waitlists or evidence of high demand

Participating Network Lead Agencies will set up partnership agreements, sometimes called MOUs or assurances, with their participating sites (a sample agreement can be found on page 10 of the "CCAP B-3 Seats Planning Document 2023-2024"). These agreements outline the requirements for the site to maintain participation in the program. Sites must agree to and sign these partnership agreements to participate in the program, and Network Lead Agencies should maintain these agreements for auditing purposes. In addition to the guidance provided by the LDOE on these partnership agreements, Network Lead Agencies should consider reviewing these agreements with their organizations' legal council.

### **Eligibility Determination: Families and Children**

Network Lead Agencies that are awarded CCAP B-3 Seats funding will be required to determine eligibility for families in order to place children in these seats. Eligibility for a child lasts from the time of enrollment to *the expiration of available funding* (currently, through June 30, 2024). Families will need to be processed for eligibility again, also known as redetermination, in each year of funding. That means that all families who received a seat in a previous pilot year will need to go through the redetermination process to ensure continued eligibility for CCAP B-3 Seats in 2023-2024.

**Note: A child can be funded by either a CCAP B-3 Seat or a CCAP Voucher Seat but not both.**

Mid-year, the LDOE Monitoring team will conduct an audit of all eligibility documentation to ensure compliance with guidance. Documentation should be kept and be prepared to share with the LDOE as requested.

All Network Lead Agencies must collect eligibility documentation from families filling CCAP B-3 Seats including:

- Child documentation (e.g., birth certificate, social security card)
  - *This is for all dependent children in the household to verify household size, not just for the child(ren) enrolling in CCAP B-3 Seat care.*
- Income eligibility (pay statements, unearned income documents, calculations of overall income)
- Work, School/Training, or Actively Seeking Work Requirements
- If categorically eligible, necessary documentation for verifying foster care

**Household Composition:** The members of the household include the head of household, legal or non-legal spouse, dependent children below the age of 18, and, if applicable, a minor unmarried parent.

**Income eligibility:** Families at or below 85% State Median Income (SMI) (see chart below) are eligible for these seats. Income is calculated by combining *all* earned income (employment) *and* unearned income (e.g., unemployment statements, alimony, child support) for a total monthly amount.

**Unearned Income:** Families may receive a combination of financial benefits that contribute to their monthly income. Typical examples of these include, but are not limited to, unemployment, disability benefits, child support, alimony, social security income, and retirement benefits. These are self-reported by the family. Network Lead Agencies reviewing eligibility should ask for any and all unearned income from the family along with documentation to verify their benefits. Network Lead Agencies should then add any unearned income to the total monthly income. Some families may not have any unearned income.

To qualify, the combined income (including earned and unearned) must be at or below the income amounts listed below:

| <b>85% State Median Income</b> |                      |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Family Size                    | Gross Monthly Income |
| 2                              | \$4,020              |
| 3                              | \$4,966              |
| 4                              | \$5,912              |
| 5                              | \$6,858              |
| 6                              | \$7,804              |
| 7                              | \$7,981              |
| 8                              | \$8,159              |
| 9                              | \$8,336              |
| 10                             | \$8,513              |
| 11                             | \$8,691              |

**Work, School/Training, or Actively Seeking Work Requirements:** To be eligible for these seats, members\* in the household must work and/or attend a school/training program for a minimum of 20 hours per week (this can be a combination of work hours + training/education hours) OR be actively seeking work\*\*.

- **Work:** For Networks to verify this, the adults of the household should provide their four most recent sequential pay statements dated within 45 days of the application date that show the rate of pay, the hours worked, and the dates of the pay periods. Please note that some pay frequencies may only have two or three pay statements within the 45 day period, i.e. monthly pay statements. In that case, the Network Lead Agency would ask for as many sequential statements as available within that 45 day window. A minimum of two statements is needed for calculations.
- **School/Training:** If in school or a training program, the adults of the household who are students or in training should provide a transcript with hours of participation in training or education program(s) dated within 45 days of the application. A detailed school schedule (if applicable) from an accredited college or training program

deeming full-time status, or a letter from a school advisor signed on the institution's letterhead, could also verify student status. The typical minimum full-time status is 12 credit hours.

- **Actively Seeking Employment:** If adult(s) in the household are unemployed, they may still qualify by demonstrating they are actively seeking work. To qualify as “actively seeking work,” families must provide validated documentation that demonstrates they are actively seeking employment. Every unemployed adult in the household must submit validation of their Active HiRE Account information from the Louisiana Workforce Commission. *A person applying as Actively Seeking Employment cannot also already be employed.*
  - **If applicants were determined eligible as “Actively Seeking Employment” in a previous year of the pilot, they must be verified as employed or in training to be eligible for this current year, as they are redetermined for ongoing eligibility.**

\*Head of Household, legal or non-legal spouse, or minor unmarried parent between the ages of 16 and 18 years of age must meet the eligibility requirements of employment, school/training, or actively seeking work. This establishes a need for care. This definition aligns with [Bulletin 139](#), Section §103. Definitions of *Household* and *Training or Employment Mandatory Participant (TEMPs)*, and Section §507. *Certification Requirements for Categorically Eligible Households.*

*This means that each adult in the household must meet these requirements individually. For example, Mother must be working 20 hours per week **and** Father must be working 20 hours per week, or Mother must be a full time student **and** Father must be actively seeking employment.*

\*\*Unless disabled as established by receipt of Social Security Administration disability benefits, supplemental security income, Veterans' Administration disability benefits for a disability of at least 70 percent, or unless disabled and unable to care for his or her child(ren) as verified by a doctor's statement or by worker determination, the head of household must meet the training or employment activity requirements listed above, in alignment with [Bulletin 139](#) §507. *Certification Requirements for Categorically Eligible Households.*

**Children in Foster Care:** Children in foster care are categorically eligible for CCAP B-3 Seats. Children in foster care should be verified by their DCFS caseworker. Children in foster care should be enrolled immediately or, if seats are unavailable, moved to the top of the network's CCAP B-3 Seats waitlist. Children in foster care who cannot be placed in a CCAP B-3 Seat immediately and are placed on a network waitlist should also be directed to apply for a CCAP Voucher Seat, to ensure that their need for care is met as quickly as possible.

**Families Experiencing Homelessness:** Families who report they are experiencing homelessness must still meet eligibility requirements for long-term care but benefit from an extended application process. The LDOE recommends 90 days of enrollment with the guarantee from the family that by the end of the 90 day period, they will have submitted all necessary application documentation to verify eligibility. Families experiencing homelessness must meet all other eligibility requirements, such as being employed for 20 hours or more per week or actively seeking employment and having an income that falls at or below 85% SMI. Families experiencing homelessness should be verified through the local McKinney-Vento Liaison to verify eligibility for continuing services past the initial 90 day period. Families experiencing homelessness should be enrolled immediately or, if seats are unavailable, moved to the top of the network's CCAP B-3 Seats waitlist. Children of families experiencing homelessness who cannot be placed in a CCAP B-3 Seat immediately and are placed on a network waitlist should also be directed to apply for a CCAP Voucher Seat, to ensure that their need for care is met as quickly as possible.

**Minor Unmarried Parents:** If the parent needing child care is a minor unmarried parent, or MUP, the parent of the MUP is the head of household. A MUP aged 16-18 years old must additionally meet the school or training requirements but still is not the head of household. Consequently, the MUP must have their legal guardian apply on behalf of the child needing care. The only exception to the MUP not being the head of household is if the MUP is legally emancipated: in that case the minor unmarried parent would need to provide documentation from family court to verify the emancipation.

**Age Eligibility Requirement:** The birth date cut off for each year is September 30. Children’s ages are determined by the following brackets:

| BIRTH DATE RANGE (2023-2024 Year) |           | AGE GROUP  |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| 10/1/2022                         | Present   | Infant     |
| 10/1/2021                         | 9/30/2022 | 1-Year-Old |
| 10/1/2020                         | 9/30/2021 | 2-Year-Old |
| 10/1/2019                         | 9/30/2020 | 3-Year-Old |
| Older                             |           | Ineligible |

| Documents to Verify Eligibility   |                                       |   |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Required for all applications (except categorically eligible families)</b>   | <b>Child and Family Documentation</b> | Immunization records or Immunization Exemption (child only)<br><br>Identification and proof of residency (e.g., state-issued ID, such as Driver's License or social security card) for Head of Household applying on behalf of child)<br><br>Birth certificates or hospital records (children only)<br><br>Custodial documentation (only if not biological parent of child) such as Custody Judgments, Child Placement Agreement from DCFS, Provisional Custody by Mandate, Military Power of Attorney, Non-Legal Custodian Affidavit |
| <b>Head of household, legal or non-legal spouse of head of household, and (if applicable) minor unmarried parent aged 16-18, needs to</b> | <b>Work Eligibility</b>               | Minimum of two sequential pay statements dated within 45 days of the application date that show the rate of pay, hours worked, and the dates of the pay period<br><br>OR<br><br>If newly employed, a professional letter from the employer with the work hours, the weekly schedule, the rate of pay, and the start date of employment. Contact information of the employer must be included, and then verified by Community Network Lead Agency  |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| submit documentation that falls into one of these three categories |  | OR<br><br>If self employed, the adult can submit the statement of irregular employment form and state hours worked per week, earned income, and start date of work. The person completing the form must provide an IRS 1099 form <b>or</b> statement from employer/financial supporter to verify information   |
|  | <b>School/Training Eligibility</b>             | Official school or training transcript with full time or part-time status indicated (enrolled within 45 days of the application)<br><br>OR<br><br>A detailed school schedule (if applicable) from an accredited college or training program deeming full-time status<br><br>OR<br><br>Letter from a school advisor signed on the institution's letterhead verifying student status |
|  | <b>Actively Seeking Employment Eligibility</b> | HIRE Account Registration screen shot with client name and date of registration<br><br>OR<br><br>Unemployment statements with client's name and date of payments for all adults in the household who are not employed or in training   |
| <b>Required for all applications</b>                               | <b>Income eligibility</b>                      | If employed, documentation for work eligibility contributes to income eligibility<br><br>AND<br><br>All unearned income documentation <b>must</b> be counted when calculating income eligibility   |

### Income Calculation

| How to Translate Income into a Monthly Figure                                 |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Pay Period  | Formula                               |
| Hourly  | (Hourly Wage x hours per week) x 4.33 |
| Monthly (same gross pay each month)   | Use gross salary                      |
| Paid same gross amount exactly 2 times per month (e.g. 1st and 15th of month) | Gross salary x 2                      |
| Paid same gross amount every 2 weeks (e.g. every other Friday)                | (Gross salary ÷ 2) x 4.33             |

Income for families should be calculated using an average of their monthly earned income and unearned income, as applicable to each family situation. A family’s income is the total average monthly income based upon the documents provided by the family.

### Redetermining Eligibility for Returning Families

All families who received a seat in prior years of the pilot **MUST** go through the redetermination process now, to continue in 2023-2024 CCAP B-3 Seats. To complete this process, the Network Lead Agency should:

- Notify families of eligibility documents needed - *reminder, if a family was previously deemed eligible through Actively Seeking Employment, in the subsequent year they must provide employment or training verification to remain eligible*
- Notify families of deadline to return documents for redetermination (no later than one year after initial application)
- Verify eligibility once documents are received
- Confirm placement or retention of seat
- For 3-year-olds served in 2022-2023, support families in transitioning to LA 4 or another pre-K program

**All families, including those who participated in the previous year(s) of the pilot, must meet the described eligibility criteria.** Eligibility for a child lasts through the funding period, which for 2023-2024 will be June 30, 2024.

| Suggested Family Application Timeline   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| Initial Meeting*  | Family Submits Application  | Network Lead Agency verifies Eligibility  | Child(ren) Enrolls  |
| <i>Before enrollment, discuss eligibility documentation needed for receiving a seat, provide deadlines to families and guidance for returning eligible documents.</i> | <i>All dates on eligibility documentation should be dated within 45 days of application date.</i> | <i>Suggested turn-around in determination is no more than 10 days after application. If children are in foster care, they should be enrolled immediately.</i> | <i>Family is notified of any outstanding documentation and given a timeline on when to return with documents to enroll in child care.</i> |



### Rates for 2023-2024 CCAP B-3 Seats

| Age Group                      | CCAP B-3 Rate Allocated by LDOE |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 3 Year Olds                    | \$10,670                        |
| Toddlers<br>(1 or 2 Year Olds) | \$11,700                        |
| Infants                        | \$18,940                        |

These rates are based on what CCAP is currently paying as of February 1, 2023. This rate also includes an estimated CCAP Quarterly Bonus Payment, based on the estimated amount given to four star sites. These rates have been calculated in such a way that Network Lead Agencies should ensure that CCAP B-3 Seats 1) are financially desirable for sites to maintain 2) support teachers in earning competitive salaries. Network Lead Agencies will make payments to sites based on enrollment and attendance submitted to the LDOE on a monthly basis.

### Enrollment and Attendance Tracking

An additional requirement of this pilot is for Network Lead Agencies and sites to track daily attendance and submit that to the Department monthly. Signed attendance trackers will be due by the 10th day of the following month (in alignment with LA 4 attendance tracking) and must account for each day of the child's enrollment.

Tracking will only capture "present" or "absent" and not take into account excused absences. Network Lead Agencies should maintain consistent communication with their sites and establish an internal protocol on how and when sites should submit attendance to the Network Lead Agency, so networks may enter the attendance into the Department-reviewed tracker. The tracker will be shared as a Google Sheet by no later than October 1, 2023. In the case of a child not regularly attending, Network Lead Agencies and site leaders should make ample attempts to contact the family to ensure the child's presence in care. If a child is enrolled but has not attended for more than 30 days, the Network Lead Agency should notify the family of potential loss of the publicly-funded seat, and the Network Lead Agency should enroll a new child in the seat at that site.

### Additional Recommendations

One of the greatest benefits of CCAP B-3 Seats being a pilot program is the learning and innovation each participant brings to the greater cohort. Throughout the first years of the pilot, the Department studied practices and procedures used across the participating networks to see areas where individual Network Lead Agencies found success. The following recommendations come from those conversations, surveys, and data reflections.

- 1. Pay Schedules:** The Department recommends paying centers at the beginning of the month based on enrollment. At the beginning of the pilot year, the Department also recommends paying participating centers a percentage of their allocation for "start up" funds, to buffer any gaps in pay or in enrollment.

2. **Partnership Agreements - Flexibility:** The Department recommends establishing partnership agreements that provide sites with a predictable number of seats, by age, to count on for the year. At the same time, family needs are unpredictable: they may have multiple siblings in need of care or prefer a site closer to home rather than work. The LDOE encourages partnership agreements to include a clause related to some flexibility in seat allocations, due to family needs that are not able to be predicted. Network Lead Agencies and providers should collaborate in good faith simultaneously to ensure financial stability for the provider as well as responsiveness to family needs as able. A sample partnership agreement is attached to the Planning Document.
3. **Partnership Agreements - Removal of Seats:** The Department recommends including a clause in each partnership agreement describing cause for removal of seats. In the rare occasion that seats need to be permanently relocated to another site, it is important to have clear language to establish that protocol if needed.
  - a. Example: *The Network Lead Agency has the right to remove children and funding from \_\_\_\_\_ (site) at any point during the year if the Network Lead Agency finds that \_\_\_\_\_ (site) is out of compliance with any of the listed agreement requirements or in violation of any requirements listed within [Bulletin 137](#).*
4. **Establish a Waitlist Specific to CCAP B-3 Seats:** Some Network Lead Agencies requested more seats than the LDOE was able to award; however, additional allocations may be awarded throughout the year depending on levels of enrollment in other networks and the existence of a waitlist in a network that has achieved 100% enrollment. Network Lead Agencies are encouraged to notify the LDOE when they have reached 100% enrollment and communicate the number of children on the waitlist. This allows for any possible additional allocations to be administered as quickly as possible.

## Calendar of Events

| Date                                      | Activity   |
|---|--|
| August 8, 2023, 3:30-4 p.m.               | Kickoff Webinar - Planning Document Released to Networks   |
| September 1, 2023, 1-2 p.m.               | Eligibility Webinar Part 1   |
| September 7, 2023, 3-4 p.m.               | Eligibility Webinar Part 2   |
| September 15, 2023, 5 p.m.                | Planning Document and signed assurances due to <a href="mailto:earlychildhood@la.gov">earlychildhood@la.gov</a> , including the network's application for providers and partnership agreement with providers |
| (Update to be shared as soon as possible) | Funds available to recipients  |