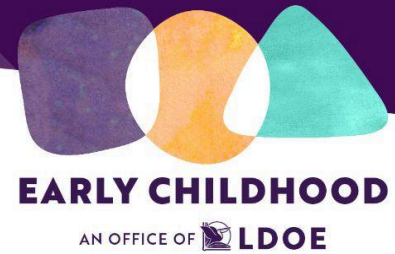




# Early Childhood Newsletter

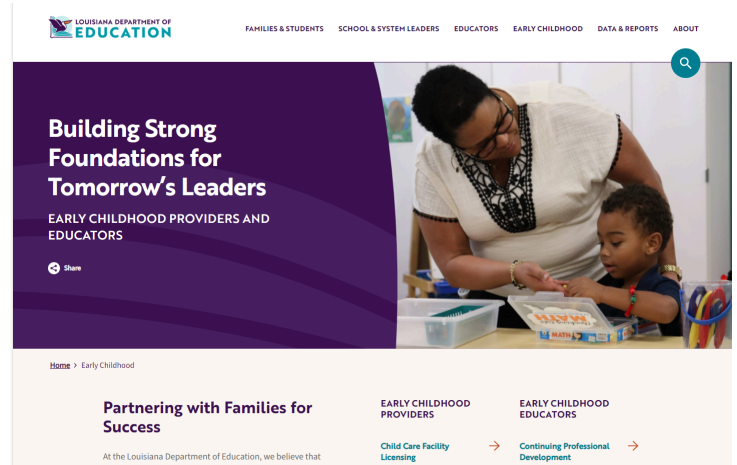


January 9, 2025

## New Year, New Website!

As we all begin a new year with new resolutions and a renewed commitment to the education of young children and support of families, the LDOE is also pleased to announce the launch of its new website, [doe.louisiana.gov](https://doe.louisiana.gov)!

Additional updating of the website is ongoing, but, in the meantime, if you cannot find what you need, please contact [ldoecommunications@la.gov](mailto:ldoecommunications@la.gov) or [earlychildhood@la.gov](mailto:earlychildhood@la.gov).



## Upcoming Deadlines

- January 15: [Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Application](#) closes
- February 28: Teaching Strategies GOLD® Winter Checkpoint

## Upcoming Events

- January 23: [CCAP Monthly Call for Providers](#)
- January 31: [New Director Office Hours](#)
- February 6: [Monthly Provider Webinar](#)

## More Important Dates

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

## In This Issue

- [Upcoming Events](#)
- [Updates for Funding and Enrollment](#)
- [Updates for Licensed Centers](#)
- [Updates for Licensed Centers, Family Child Care, and In-Home Providers](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

---

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### NEW: Early Childhood Provider Update Webinar

The LDOE hosts monthly webinars for early childhood providers. These webinars include essential reminders and updates for all provider types. Providers can access the upcoming February Provider Update Webinar using the information below:

- **Webinar Date/Time:** February 6 at 1 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/91532982014?pwd=D5xkBgKac4rzD1SbOlOOC5BNmOTOsE.1>
- **Meeting ID:** 915 3298 2014
- **Passcode:** 519100

The December 5 webinar presentation slides are available in the [Quality Providers Library](#) on the LDOE website.

For more information, contact [earlychildhood@la.gov](mailto:earlychildhood@la.gov).

### NEW: Office Hours for New Directors

The LDOE team conducts webinars on various topics related to early childhood quality and improving child care sites' administrative and operational functions. Through engaging sessions and monthly guest speakers, the office hours are designed to support directors seeking professional development training to facilitate effective ECE leadership development.

This month's topic is "Active Supervision." Participants will gain an understanding of best practices related to the safety and well-being of children in group care while fostering a positive and engaging learning environment.

- **Webinar Date/Time:** January 31 at 12 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/93015014527?pwd=WfJgicO9gVqJFtYDs3lI9traYaMqv3.1>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 1 346 248 7799
- **Meeting ID:** 930 1501 4527
- **Passcode:** 012444

Please contact [tella.henderson@la.gov](mailto:tella.henderson@la.gov) with questions.

### REMINDER: The 2026 Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Award Application Portal Has Opened!

The [application portal](#) for the Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Award Program for the 2026 award year has opened and will close on **January 15**.

- Please review the [Awards Programs](#) page for more information.
- All Teachers and Leaders from Type III, CCAP-certified FCC, and Early Head Start/Head Start programs are invited to apply.
  - Even if you were not nominated for this award program, you are invited to apply!
  - Past finalists are invited to re-apply. Only overall honorees are excluded from re-applying.

School-based pre-K applicants should apply for the pre-K through grade 12 Teacher and Leader of the Year Awards.

Please contact [shallan.jones@la.gov](mailto:shallan.jones@la.gov) with questions.

---

## UPDATES FOR FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

### NEW: February 1 Child Count

Per *Bulletin 140*, Community Network Lead Agencies (CNLAs) and publicly funded sites are required to count publicly funded children served at each of those sites as of February 1 and submit that count to the LDOE by February 28.

CNLAs will work with each publicly funded early learning site in capturing accurate data as of February 1, 2025:

- Child Count is intended to count every publicly funded child birth through age four at each publicly funded site in the state.
- Child count is intended to be an unduplicated count: only count children under one funding source.
- A child's age cohort is determined by the child's age on September 30 of the academic year, not the age configuration of the classroom they are in. During February Child Count, the child age cohort is still determined by the child's age on September 30. Determine the child's age using the table below:

Age Group	Children born between...	Children who have...
Infants	October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024	Not reached their first birthday before September 30, 2024
Ones	October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023	Reached first birthday on or by September 30, 2024
Twos	October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022	Reached second birthday on or by September 30, 2024
Threes	October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021	Reached third birthday on or by September 30, 2024
Fours	October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2020	Reached fourth birthday on or by September 30, 2024

For questions regarding child count, please contact your local [Community Network Lead Agency](#).

### New: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Wait List Removal

The LDOE has begun removing children from the CCAP Wait List. Clients who submitted an application in the months of July, August, and September of 2023 are being contacted by phone and mail, and a Wait List Verification Form is being sent to families via the U.S. Postal Service as well as via e-mail to families whose e-mail address the LDOE has. Providers are encouraged to assist families in completing all 7 questions on the form: to receive services families must return the Wait List Verification Form to the LDOE by no later than the due date on the form.

To avoid delays in processing, the form must include the following:

- Indicate if child care services are still needed
- If immunizations are not current, an updated shot record or an appointment card must be submitted with the Wait List Verification Form
- Update the family's contact information (phone and/or e-mail address, as applicable)
- If family changes have occurred since being placed on the Wait List, the changes must be submitted on the Wait List Verification Form (changes may include household size, income, or Education & Training hours)
- The current child care provider that children presently attend or the new provider of choice for the family
- A printed name, signature, and date form was signed

**Note:** Any questions not answered will deem the Wait List Verification Form as an invalid form, and the application will not be processed.

For more information, contact the CCAP Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917.

### **NEW: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Monthly Call for Providers**

The next Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Monthly Call for Providers is scheduled for January 23, 2025. The call will include time for each of the following:

- Spotting “red flags” as a certified provider
- KinderConnect updates and reminders
- Time to connect with questions and answers

Providers can access the monthly call with the link below:

- **Webinar Title:** CCAP Quality Control Guidance
- **Webinar Date/Time:** January 23 at 1 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/95071530570>
- **Webinar ID:** 950 7153 0570

### **REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) KinderConnect Attendance Tracking**

Providers caring for CCAP-certified families are required to track daily attendance in the KinderConnect Attendance Tracking System:

- Specifically, providers must check the KinderConnect portal daily to observe whether there are successful check-in/check-outs for *all* certified children in attendance.
  - The LDOE suggests that providers review the portal after the morning check-in and at the end of the day.
- Next, providers must ensure daily check-in/check-outs in the KinderConnect portal *match* the physical Attendance log.
- Providers who use a Child Care Management System (CCMS) different from CenterTrack must ensure that their system is connected to the KinderConnect System via KinderBridge (API).
  - CenterTrack is a free CCMS offered by KinderSystems that certified providers may obtain to track attendance.

Providers may contact KinderSystems by e-mail at [supportLA@kindersystems.com](mailto:supportLA@kindersystems.com) or by calling 1-888-829-9258.

For LDOE assistance, contact the CCAP Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917.

### **NEW: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Underutilization of CCAP Authorizations**

Providers who check the KinderConnect portal daily for successful attendance tracking are aiding parents in maintaining their CCAP certification:

- Providers should submit attendance logs weekly in KinderConnect. Access this [attendance submission resource](#) for help in submitting attendance in KinderConnect.
- Providers immediately addressing incomplete attendance in KinderConnect means parents will not be included on an LDOE CCAP Underutilization Report. Access this [resource](#) for assistance with correcting incomplete attendance in KinderConnect.
- Providers speaking with parents (“Sponsors”) whose attendance has a discrepancy in the KinderConnect System (i.e., no attendance in KinderConnect, an incomplete attendance alert) and assisting parents with corrections means parents will not be included on the LDOE CCAP Underutilization Report.
- Providers timely reporting children who no longer attend or never attended a child care site means parents will not be included on an Underutilization Report.
  - Providers may submit a ticket in the [Provider Ticket System](#) to have the children removed from their child care roster in KinderConnect.

For questions, contact the CCAP Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917.

### **REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Part-Time Care**

School-aged children receive part-time authorizations to attend certified providers. Providers must ensure that parents/household designees input a total of 4 attendance checks for children attending part-time:

- This means a check-in and out for the morning and a check-in and out for the afternoon.
- This covers entering the family home/center, checking out to attend school, returning to the home/center after school, and finally leaving the home/center for the day.

If care is needed for summer and holiday ONLY, this must be clearly indicated on the [CCAP Report of Changes Form](#) submitted by families. “Summer and Holiday only” care includes full-time authorizations for the summer and the

holidays listed below when CCAP payments for part-time children are automatically transferred to full-time payments:

- Thanksgiving 11/25/2024 - 11/29/2024
- Christmas 12/23/2024 - 1/03/2025
- Mardi Gras 3/03/2025 - 3/07/2025
- Easter 4/21/2025 - 4/25/2025

For more information, contact the CCAP Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917.

---

## UPDATES FOR LICENSED CENTER

### NEW: Safety of Equipment

All equipment, materials, furnishings, and play areas must be safe and in good repair for control of the following safety hazards:

- Openings that could entrap a child's head or limbs
- Mismatched size and design of equipment for the intended users
- Insufficient spacing between equipment
- Tripping hazards
- Sharp points or corners
- Splinters
- Protruding nails, bolts, or other components that could entangle clothing or snag skin
- Loose, rusty parts
- Strangulation hazards
- Tip-over hazards, such as chests, bookshelves, and televisions

The hazards listed above are some of those found to be most commonly associated with injury.

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

### NEW: Foods that Are Choking Hazards

Children under age four cannot have food items that are implicated in choking incidents. Almost 90% of fatal choking occurs in children younger than four years of age. To reduce the risk of choking, menus should reflect the developmental abilities of the age of children served.

Examples of these foods include but are not limited to the following: whole hot dogs, hot dogs sliced in rounds, raw carrot rounds, whole grapes, hard candy, nuts, seeds, raw peas, hard pretzels, hard chips with the exception of puffs, peanuts, popcorn, whole marshmallows other than when melted in other foods or found in boxed cereals, spoons of peanut butter, and chunks of meat larger than what can be swallowed whole.

It is recommended that food for infants be cut into pieces one quarter inch or smaller and that food for toddlers be cut into pieces one-half inch or smaller, to prevent choking.

In addition to food monitoring, children should always be seated when eating, to further reduce choking hazards. Children must be supervised while eating, to watch the size of food and to watch that children are eating appropriately (for example, ensuring that children are not stuffing their mouths full).

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

### NEW: Documentation

The LDOE is responsible for thoroughly reviewing applications for licensure and supporting documentation. In some cases, the LDOE will contact the agency that issued the documentation to verify the documentation submitted.

Please note that according to [Bulletin 137 §1301.A. 15](#), an application for licensure may be denied, a license may be revoked, or license renewal may be refused for any act of fraud, such as the submission of false or altered documents or information.

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

#### **NEW: Licensing Deficiency Review**

A request can be made for a managerial review of a deficiency cited if it is believed to be inaccurate or a statement within the deficiency is believed to be inaccurate. A written request to the Department, using the [Licensing Deficiency Review Request form](#), and the statement of deficiency must be submitted to [ldelicensing@la.gov](mailto:ldelicensing@la.gov) within 10 calendar days of the centers' receipt of the cited deficiency.

If the cited deficiency is upheld in the managerial review, a written request can be made for a second review. This request must be submitted using the [Licensing Deficiency Review Request form](#), and the form and the statement of deficiency must be submitted to [ldelicensing@la.gov](mailto:ldelicensing@la.gov) within 10 calendar days of the written managerial review response.

For additional information, see [Bulletin 137 §713. Renewal and Other Inspection Procedures D. Licensing Deficiency Review](#).

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

---

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

### **REMINDER: EC Learn Portal is Open For Continuing Education Training**

**EC Learn** is the LDOE's Early Childhood free online training and learning resource where early childhood educators can enroll in and access new continuing education courses.

During the first phase of **EC Learn**, Health & Safety Training, including Medication Administration in Child Care, has been launched to support the needs of the early childhood workforce in obtaining continuing education courses required by [Bulletin 137](#) and [Bulletin 139](#). Within each individual's **EC Learn** account, early childhood educators can access and download certificates of completion for the required courses. In addition, certificates will be e-mailed upon successful course completion to the participant's registered e-mail address.

Educators can access and enroll in courses at <https://eclearn.doe.louisiana.gov/>. Additional training will be added periodically to support the growth and development of the EC workforce, including new teachers and administrators. Educators have the capability to check progress on enrolled courses and access training transcripts or certificates on "My Dashboard."

Please contact [eclearn@la.gov](mailto:eclearn@la.gov) with questions.

### **REMINDER: School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC)**

Parent School Readiness Tax Credit (SRTC) forms (R-10614) are being mailed to Type III sites and Family Child Care sites with Academic Approval..

- Once received, site directors should complete the child care portion and distribute the forms to all eligible parents.

Director and Staff member School Readiness Tax Credit (SRTC) forms (R-10615) will be mailed from Louisiana Pathways beginning this month to educators who work at a Type III site or a Family Child Care site with Academic Approval. Louisiana Pathways will mail out that form if in 2024 those educators were enrolled with Louisiana

Pathways; worked in the site for at least six months of the calendar year; and worked at least 30 hours per week at the site.

Please contact [demita.walker@la.gov](mailto:demita.walker@la.gov) for questions regarding SRTCs.

### **NEW: IDEMIA Payment Methods**

IDEMIA offers various payment options at the time of service. These methods include credit card, business check, money order payable to IDEMIA, and "No Charge Authorization Codes" ([NCACs](#)), commonly known as coupon codes.

It is important to note that payments made via business checks and money orders may require 3-5 business days for fingerprinting processing after the fingerprints have been captured. Additionally, regardless of payment method, once the results are made available to the LDOE CCCBC team, it may take another 1-5 business days for the LDOE CCCBC team to provide a determination.

For questions contact [ldeccbcprocessing@la.gov](mailto:ldeccbcprocessing@la.gov).

### **NEW: Fingerprint Submission Requirement**

Fingerprint submissions are essential for processing CCCBC applications. These submissions provide two important components of a Child Care Criminal Background Check: federal criminal history and Louisiana criminal history. It is important to note that CCCBC applications cannot be processed until they are entered into the CCCBC System and fingerprints are submitted.

Only electronic digital fingerprint submissions are accepted, unless specified otherwise by the LDOE. If an applicant has a condition that may cause fingerprinting issues, please notify the LDOE CCCBC Section before the scheduled fingerprinting appointment, by e-mailing [LDECCBCprocessing@la.gov](mailto:LDECCBCprocessing@la.gov).

Contact [LDECCBCprocesing@la.gov](mailto:LDECCBCprocesing@la.gov) with any questions or for assistance.

---

## **CONTACT US**



- For questions regarding licensing or child health and safety, please contact [LDElicensing@la.gov](mailto:LDElicensing@la.gov).
- For all questions regarding Child Care Criminal Background Check processing, please contact [LDEccbcprocessing@la.gov](mailto:LDEccbcprocessing@la.gov).
- For all other questions regarding early childhood, please contact [earlychildhood@la.gov](mailto:earlychildhood@la.gov).
- Subscribe to our monthly newsletter by completing this [form](#).