



EARLY CHILDHOOD NEWSLETTER

February 8, 2024

Upcoming Deadlines

- February 3: 2024 Teacher Leader Summit [Regular Registration](#) opens
- February 28: TS GOLD® Winter Checkpoint Due
- March 5: 2024 Teacher Leader Summit [Regular Registration](#) closes

Upcoming Events

- February 20: Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council Meeting
- February 23: New Director Webinar
- March 7: Monthly Provider Webinar

More Important Dates

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

In This Issue

- [Provider Updates](#)
- [Updates for Teaching and Learning](#)
- [Updates for Funding and Enrollment](#)
- [Updates for Licensed Centers, Family Child Care, and In-Home Providers](#)
- [Updates for Directors](#)
- [Updates for Community Network Lead Agencies](#)
- [Other](#)
- [Early Childhood the News](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

Provider Updates

NEW: Early Childhood Provider Update Webinar

The Department hosts monthly webinars for early childhood providers. These webinars include important reminders and updates for all provider types. The next monthly Provider Update Webinar will be held March 7, 2024.

Providers can access the upcoming February Provider Update Webinar using the information below:

Webinar Date/Time:	Thursday, March 7, at 1 p.m.
Webinar Link:	https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/93597745872
Phone Number:	1-312-626-6799
Meeting ID:	935 9774 5872

The February 1 presentation slides are available in the [Quality Providers Library](#) on the [Louisiana Believes](#) website.

UPDATES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

NEW: Spring 2024 CLASS® Observation Period

Community Network Lead Agencies are currently working with sites to conduct local Spring CLASS® observations for the 2023-2024 academic year. All early childhood classrooms that were open on February 1, 2024 are required to have a local spring observation. A representative from your local Community Network Lead Agency will be reaching out to schedule observations for your site.

Contact your [Community Network Lead Agency](#) with questions.

NEW: Spring 2024 CLASS® Observation Period - Third Party Observations

Third-party observations are also being scheduled and conducted by the Picard Center.

- Third-party observations are designed to provide an additional level of review to ensure reliability.
- The month before the scheduled observation, the Picard Center will send an email providing the site with the timeframe in which the observations will occur. Please respond with any potential dates that the site is not available for observations.

Contact EarlyChildhood@la.gov with questions.

NEW: February 1 Child Count

As established in [Bulletin 140](#), Community Network Lead Agencies and early childhood sites must work together to submit a count of all publicly-funded children twice each academic year (October 1 and February 1). A representative from your local Community Network Lead Agency will be reaching out to collect February 1 child count data for your site.

Contact your [Community Network Lead Agency](#) with questions.

UPDATES FOR FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

NEW: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) KinderConnect Attendance Submission

As the LDOE begins transitioning to a new payment and processing system, it is important for providers to submit their KinderConnect attendance records weekly for all CCAP-enrolled children. Authorizations must be utilized by families at the time child care services are rendered. KinderConnect attendance records will be examined as part of the underutilization review of CCAP attendance. Please refer to [KinderConnect-Submit Attendance QRC](#) for detailed instructions.

Attendance records should be reviewed prior to submission for accuracy. If a child's attendance appears in red, the provider will need to correct prior to submission. Please refer to [KinderConnect-Correct Incomplete Attendance QRC](#) for more details.

As a reminder, all children can be inputted into KinderConnect as [Private Pay children](#). Once a family becomes certified and authorizations have been inputted for that child, providers can then [merge the Private Pay and CCAP-certified children](#).

For more information visit EdLinkinfo.com or contact the LDOE Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-252-9543 with any questions.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Semi-Automated Invoice (SAI) Requests and Back Payments

As Waitlist Verification Forms are returned for cases with application dates October 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023, those families are being certified for services, if still eligible.

- As slots become available, additional eligible applicants from July 1, 2023, and on will be removed from the waitlist, based on the date of application.
- If an eligible family enrolled their child while on the waitlist, the provider will only be reimbursed from the time the family was certified for services.
 - SAIs are generated based on the date that the household was removed from the waitlist and certified for services.
- Providers must complete and sign the SAI and return it with the attendance logs for the requested dates within 10 days of the invoice date.

SAIs and attendance logs can be faxed to 225-376-6056. Contact the LDOE Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-252-9543 with any questions.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Waitlist Removal Notification

The Department is finalizing contacting families certified to the Child Care Assistance Program Waitlist from October 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023.

To ensure eligible families are still in need of child care, the Department must evaluate families' continued need for services. The Waitlist Verification Form includes five "YES" or "NO" questions. If the family answers "NO" to any question, a CCAP 10 [Report of Changes Form](#) will also be required to be submitted along with the Waitlist Verification Form. It is important that families complete and return these forms by the deadline listed in the mailouts.

Forms can be faxed to 225-376-6060 or emailed to LDECCAP@la.gov. Contact the LDOE Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-252-9543 with any questions.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance (CCAP) Provider Help Desk Ticket Submission Procedures

To expedite the processing of [Provider Help Desk tickets](#), new streamlined submission processes are being implemented. For guidance, review the [Check Status/Resolve Ticket](#) document. Please note the following changes:

1. For most issues, there are new required fields to help expedite your concern. The subject line on the ticket should state only a single concern within the ticket (i.e., if the subject line says, "remove a child," the ticket should only include the names of children who should be removed from the roster). Most help topics allow the option to submit up to five children for the same issue.
2. To address multiple issues, use multiple tickets. Each ticket should note an individual issue.
3. Please do not submit duplicate tickets for the same issues.
4. Please allow 30 days from date of submission for case status updates on intake or redetermination applications before initiating a ticket.
5. Use the ticket system first for assistance with an issue or concern. When emailing for additional help, the ticket number must be included in the email.
6. Client applications, provider or client verifications, Semi-Automated Invoices, attendance logs, or Change Reports should not be submitted in the ticket system or sent to a staff email.
7. Please refer to [this document](#) to help determine the best ticketing system to resolve your concern. This document outlines the differences between the Provider Help Desk and the EdLink Help Desk to better ensure your issue is routed correctly.
8. Should your issue be resolved, please reply to your ticket that the ticket can be closed because it is resolved.

Contact the LDOE Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-252-9543 with any questions.

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

NEW: Allergies and Special Diets

Children with allergies or special diets shall not be served foods identified as restricted by the parent. If a child has any special dietary needs, restrictions, food allergies, or intolerances it must be listed on the child's information form.

Information regarding food allergies and special diets of children must be posted in the food preparation area with special care taken to ensure that individual names of children are not in public view. If a parent chooses to allow the posting of the child's name and allergy information in public view, there must be a signed and dated authorization obtained from the parent.

Contact your [licensing consultant](#) with any questions.

NEW: Practice Drills

Emergency evacuation practice drills must be conducted at least twice per year. In addition to this drill, tornado drills must be conducted at least once per month in the months of March, April, May, and June at various times of the day. Documentation of these drills must include all children. A sample [practice drill](#) form can be found in the [Licensed Centers Library](#).

Contact your [licensing consultant](#) with any questions.

NEW: School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTCs)

For tax filing assistance, teachers and families can call 211 to make an appointment with a VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program for your area. VITA programs offer free tax preparation for qualifying individuals. Louisiana Pathways mailed tax form R-10615 "For Child Care Director and Staff Member" in January 2024 to eligible child care staff and administrators.

Directors should also share information with families about the family tax credit. This [one-pager](#) contains information for families regarding eligibility, amounts, and assistance with tax preparation.

For questions regarding SRTCs, please contact demita.walker@la.gov.

REMINDER: Updated Assigned Licensing Consultant

Each center has an assigned licensing consultant. The center's licensing consultant can be identified by the first letter of the center's name excluding the articles "A," "An," and "The." If there are any questions regarding Bulletin 137, please contact your licensing consultant for assistance. A licensing consultant can be contacted via the email address below or via phone at 225.342.9905. Please do not contact a licensing specialist with questions regarding Bulletin 137.

First Letter of the Center's Name	Licensing Consultant
L, T	alicia.bourgeois2@la.gov
M, S	alicia.brown@la.gov

D, J, K	autumn.sullivan@la.gov
A, N, O, U, V, W	curieni.jackson2@la.gov
C, I, Y, Z	daryneshia.weaver2@la.gov
B, E, F, H, Q, X	nyshekita.travis@la.gov
G, R, P	phyllis.politz@la.gov

Contact your [licensing consultant](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: Online Medication Administration and Health and Safety Training Coming Soon

The Department is currently developing online training support for the Medication Administration and Health and Safety training requirements to better serve child care providers by creating easier training access. Child Care Health Consultants can still be used during this time to receive the required training. Additional information will be shared when the training supports are completed and ready for implementation.

Contact your [licensing consultant](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: EdLink Licensing System and Training Opportunities

All providers must use the EdLink system to submit new Licensing applications, submit renewal Licensing applications, submit Licensing request changes, and access the Department’s new attendance system, KinderConnect.

Please note, renewal applications

- must be submitted prior to the first day of the month in which the current license expires in order to ensure that there is no interruption of service and authorizations are not dropped
 - For example, if the center’s license expires March 30, 2024, the renewal application must be submitted by no later than February 29, 2024
- can be started up to 90 days prior to the expiration date
- must include all required documentation

Please note: Failure to renew timely will result in children being dropped from the site’s roster; if renewal applications are submitted late (e.g., less than prior to the first day of the month in which the current license expires), payments may be delayed as well.

The LDOE is offering multiple [EdLink trainings](#) where providers will be given instructions for accessing and navigating the system. For the months of February and March 2024, training is scheduled for Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays only (excluding holidays). Note: In-home and Family Child Care provider sessions are only available upon request by submitting a [ticket](#) to the EdLink support team.

It is highly recommended that providers attend each session in the order the sessions are listed. All sessions require registration. Register early since space is limited.

- Accessing EdLink
 - Mondays 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.; [Register Here](#)
 - Wednesdays 8:00 - 9:00 a.m.; [Register Here](#)
 - Fridays 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.; [Register Here](#)
- Completing Type I, II, and III New and Renewal Applications

- Mondays 12:00 -1:00 p.m.; [Register Here](#)
- Completing Entity Change Applications
 - Wednesdays 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.; [Register Here](#)
- Staff Management
 - Wednesdays 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.; [Register Here](#)
 - Fridays 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.; [Register Here](#)

For questions regarding EdLink, please submit a ticket in the [EdLink Support Ticket System](#) or visit the Department's [EdLink Training](#) page to access training videos and training manuals at any time. For detailed guidance and screenshots on how to register in EdLink and for access to other resources, please visit the Department's [EdLink Support](#) page.

REMINDER: Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC)

In accordance with federal regulation 45 CFR §98.4, the Child Care Criminal Background Check Section must request the following for applicants who have legally resided in another state within the past five (5) years:

- A name-based search of the Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) of the State(s);
- A name-based search of the Sex Offender Registry (SOR) of the State(s) ; and
- A name-based search of the Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Registry of the State(s).

In the Child Care Criminal Background Check System, the provider must download the out-of-state forms and unique instructions located in the "Attachments" section of the CCCBC application. The provider must then upload the completed forms in order to finish the application process. The Department will review the uploaded forms and may return applications that are in need of corrections.

To prevent application processing delays, providers should follow the CCCBC instructions carefully. Please note, some states require original documents to perform checks. If original forms are required, the provider must also mail the completed original Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) and Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) forms to the LDOE; the LDOE will then mail the original documents to the other state(s).

Please note that fingerprint submissions may be unsuccessful. As a result, there may be delays in the application process. Fingerprint rejections occur due to the following:

- Poor image quality
- Fingerprint missing (a specific finger was not scanned)
- Too much pressure applied to the electronic digital scanning system

Fingerprint rejections require an additional fingerprint submission. It is possible an applicant may be required to submit fingerprints four times before a name-based search can be performed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Applications remaining "In Progress" five business days after a fingerprint submission could possibly be due to fingerprint rejection. Applicants are notified by email of a fingerprint rejection. Status of a fingerprint submission can also be verified using [Idemia's appointment enrollment site](#). Applicants will be instructed to schedule an appointment to re-submit fingerprints using the specified link listed on the appointment enrollment site. Additional fingerprint fees are not required if fingerprints are re-submitted within 30 days of the first fingerprint submission.

The LDOE recommends the following tips to submit successful fingerprints:

- hands are clean, dry, and free of any residue or oil-based substance
- ensure fingerprinting scanning area is cleaned and dry
- use the electronic digital fingerprinting option
- verify whether prints are accepted before departing the location

Only electronic digital fingerprinting submissions are accepted, unless otherwise stated by the LDOE. Please inform the CCCBC Section by emailing LDECCBCprocessing@la.gov if an applicant has a condition that may cause fingerprinting issues prior to their fingerprinting appointment. For IDEMIA finance and NCAC questions, contact 877-512-6962; for UEID and scheduling assistance, contact 844-539-5543.

UPDATES FOR DIRECTORS

NEW: Office Hours for New Directors

The LDOE team holds webinars that focus on early childhood quality or operations while also helping expand EC directors' network of peers. Office hours are targeted towards new directors.

This month's topic is "Affordable Health Insurance Options for Your ECE Educators and Staff." Participants will learn about the Louisiana Department of Education Early Childhood team's partnership with Navigators for a Healthy Louisiana, which provides early childhood educators free one-on-one assistance with exploring and applying for low-cost or no-cost health insurance options through the federal Health Insurance Marketplace and/or Louisiana Medicaid settings.

Webinar Date/Time: February 23, 2024 at 12:00 p.m.
Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/92298578944>
Webinar Phone Number: 1 346 248 7799
Meeting ID: 922 9857 8944

Contact tella.henderson@la.gov with any questions.

UPDATES FOR COMMUNITY NETWORK LEAD AGENCIES

REMINDER: Early Childhood Community Network Lead Agency Office Hours Webinar

The Early Childhood Strategy team hosts Early Childhood Community Network Lead Agency (CNLA) Office Hour webinars for CNLA administrators on most Tuesdays at 3 p.m. The purpose of these webinars is to provide updates to CNLAs.

Upcoming CNLA Office Hour Webinars:

- February 13, 2024 - No webinar due to the Mardi Gras holiday
- February 20, 2024
- February 27, 2024
- March 5, 2024

Presentations from previous Early Childhood Community Network Lead Agency Office Hours webinars are located in the [Community Network Lead Agency Library](#).

Contact earlychildhood@la.gov with any questions.

REMINDER: Teacher Leader Summit 2024 Registration

Teacher Leader Summit (TLS) 2024 will be held Tuesday, May 28 - Thursday, May 30 at the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center.

- Regular registration began on February 3, 2024, and will close on March 15, 2024, or at sellout. There will be no onsite registration. All registrations must be completed in advance of arriving at the event.
- Educators will use Cvent to [register](#) for the event. The LDOE strongly encourages the email address used for Cvent to be the participant's professional email address.

Contact events@emergentmethod.com with any questions.

REMINDER: Early Childhood Conference (ECC) 2024

The Early Childhood Conference is moving to Fall 2024! New this year, the 2024 Early Childhood Conference will be held at two locations, in order to make it easier for providers from across the state to be able to attend:

- Shreveport, LA event date: September 7, 2024
- Baton Rouge, LA event date: October 5, 2024

At each site, ECC 2024 is expected to be held on one day only, a Saturday, to provide more opportunity for educators and providers to attend.

Contact events@emergentmethod.com with any questions.

Other

NEW: Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Advisory Council Upcoming Meeting, February 20, 2024

The next ECCE Advisory Council meeting will take place on February 20, 2024, at 1 p.m. in the Thomas Jefferson Room at the Claiborne Building, located at 1201 N. Third Street in Baton Rouge ([Zoom](#) for livestreaming). An overview of the ECCE Advisory Council and meeting materials are available online in the [Policy and Guidance Library](#).

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, for special assistance at this meeting please contact caitlyn.robinson@la.gov at least three business days in advance of the meeting describing the assistance that is needed.

For additional information, please email caitlyn.robinson@la.gov.

Early Childhood in the News

[Statement From State Superintendent Dr. Cade Brumley on Election of New BESE Officers](#) (louisianabelieves.com)

CONTACT US



- For questions regarding licensing or child health and safety, please contact LDElicensing@la.gov.
- For all questions regarding child care criminal background check processing, please contact LDEccbcprocessing@la.gov.
- For all other questions regarding early childhood, please contact earlychildhood@la.gov.
- Subscribe to our monthly newsletter by completing this [form](#).