



Ministry of Education

Ontario Child Care and Early Years Funding Guidelines

**for Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and
District Social Services Administration Boards**

Foreword

NOVEMBER 2025

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PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINES

The Ministry of Education (“the ministry”) publishes the Ontario Child Care and Early Years Funding Guidelines (“the guidelines”) to provide information about the funding parameters and related program requirements that apply to Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and District Social Service Administration Boards (CMSMs/DSSABs).

A. GUIDELINE ORGANIZATION AND UPDATES

The guidelines are organized based on theme-based chapters. This structure is meant to support clarity, consistency, accessibility and overall ease of use.

Chapter Structure

Chapter 1: Funding Guideline

- This chapter outlines effective business practices, financial accountability, and robust service system management.

Chapter 2, Division 1: CWELCC Participation Guideline

- This chapter includes all information relevant to CWELCC participation and cost-based funding.

Chapter 2, Division 2: CWELCC Cost-Based Funding Guideline

- This chapter describes cost-based funding parameters and supports CMSMs/DSSABs in the administration of that calculation.
- Appendix 1 of this chapter includes all schedules (i.e. annual benchmarks, geographic adjustment factors, and growth multipliers).

Chapter 3, Division 1: Local Priorities Guideline

- This chapter describes rules for bulk of funding outside of Cost-Based Funding (such as Wage Enhancement Grants, Workforce Compensation, and Flexibility Funding, including programs such as Special Needs Resourcing and fee subsidies).

Chapter 3, Division 2: Innovation Fund

- This chapter outlines parameters for the time-limited Innovation Fund funding allocated to CMSMs/DSSABs to support workforce recruitment and retention.

Chapter 3, Division 3: Early Childhood Educator Promotional Fund

- This chapter outlines parameters for the time-limited funding allocated to SSMs to promote RECE recruitment and retention.

Chapter 4: Indigenous-Led Child Care and Child and Family Programs Guidelines

- This chapter outlines supports to Indigenous communities related to child care and early years.

Chapter 5: Infrastructure Guideline

- This chapter outlines support for Start-Up Grants and Infrastructure Funds.

Chapter 6: EarlyON Guideline

- This chapter describes EarlyON Child and Family Centre programs and services.

Chapter 7: EFIS Reporting Requirements Guideline

- This chapter combines reporting requirements related to service data for all funding programs.

B. CHILD CARE LAWS IN ONTARIO

In addition to the funding requirements contained within these guidelines, CMSMs/DSSABs and all licensees are required to comply with the applicable laws that govern child care in Ontario.

These requirements are set out in the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (CCEYA) and its regulations (O.Reg. 137/15, O.Reg.138/15), which supports Ontario's vision for the early years.

The CCEYA sets out the authority for the Minister of Education to issue policy statements for the purpose of guiding early years programs and services. The Minister issued a policy statement naming *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years* as the provincial framework to guide programming and pedagogy in licensed child care settings across Ontario.

[O.Reg. 137/15](#) includes program-related requirements for centre-based and home child care programs that align with *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years* and help licensees put the ideas and approaches of this pedagogical framework into practice.

[O.Reg. 138/15](#) outlines the framework for funding, cost sharing, and financial assistance for child care and early years programs in Ontario. It details the responsibilities of municipalities and the provincial government in sharing costs, as well as the eligibility criteria and application process for financial assistance to parents/guardians.

In these guidelines, the relevant laws may be referred to as “legislation”, “the CCEYA”, “the Act”, “the statute”, “the regulations” or “O.Reg. 137/15” and “O.Reg. 138/15”.

The above mentioned Act and regulations are not meant to be an exhaustive list of all laws that govern child care in Ontario, but an overview of the key legislation and regulations referenced in the guidelines. Please refer to other legislation as applicable.