

**Ministry of Education**

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**Ministère de l'Éducation**

Division de la petite enfance et de la  
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315, rue Front ouest  
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**2020: EYCC04**

**MEMORANDUM TO:** Chiefs of First Nations with Child Care & Child and Family Programs Agreements  
First Nations Administrators  
Transfer Payment Agency Administrators

**FROM:** Jill Dubrick  
Director, Early Years and Child Care Programs and Service Integration Branch  
Early Years and Child Care Division  
Ministry of Education

**DATE:** October 1, 2020

**SUBJECT:** **2020-21 First Nations Child Care and/or Child and Family Program Service Agreement Package**

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I am pleased to provide you with the 2020-21 child care and/or child and family program service agreement package. This package includes:

- 2020-21 service agreement for your First Nation
- 2020-21 Ontario Child Care and Child and Family Programs Business Practice, Service and Funding Guideline (“guideline”)
- Chart of changes in the 2020-21 guideline (Appendix A)
- Other relevant supporting documents (where applicable), including:
  - 2020-21 Health and Safety Funding Request Form
  - Child and Family Program Serious Occurrence Form
  - Ontario Works Overview Document

*Please refer to the applicable sections of the guideline for details on each of the specific funding lines noted in the Budget Schedule of your 2020-21 service agreement.*

**Re-opening Funding Approach**

Throughout the closure period, the ministry has continued to fund First Nations according to their allocations under the 2019-20 service agreement to support sustainability in child care and child and family programs and ensure a smooth reopening that supports the health, safety and well-being of children, families and staff in these programs.

The ministry requests that First Nations use available funding from within their 2020-2021 allocations from the ministry to support re-opening costs, where possible. Federal Safe Restart Funding is included in the agreements as two separate allocations (child care vs. child and family programs), where applicable. Funding is intended to be used for centres that have opened or are planning to reopen and specifically for the costs of equipment, staffing and minor capital associated with re-opening. To support First Nations in covering these costs, the ministry is providing enhanced financial flexibility between funding lines so that First Nations may use their existing budget from the ministry to the greatest extent possible (see Section C below). The Province is also procuring and delivering face coverings directly to child care centres, licensed home child care agencies and child and family programs across Ontario in order to comply with the ministry's reopening operational guidance.

In addition, First Nation communities are encouraged to maximize any federal and provincial funding supports available that can be used to cover additional re-opening costs.

If after maximizing these avenues your First Nation still requires additional funding to meet licensing and enhanced health and safety requirements required for child care re-opening, First Nations may request funding through the annual Health and Safety funding process (funding request form attached). Expenses related to reopening may include:

- Costs for enhanced cleaning (over and above regular cleaning costs prior to COVID-19);
- Costs for required personal protective equipment (PPE);
- Purchase and installation of materials and equipment (e.g. plexiglass, washable area rugs, etc.);
- Costs for increased staffing (additional staff for screening, etc.).

Your Early Years Advisor will connect with you to discuss your community's needs for reopening funding.

## **Other Ministry Updates**

### ***A. Changes to Business Practice Sections***

In an effort to streamline the guideline, all business practices, regardless of funding amount (i.e. above or below \$500K), can be found under Section 2: Business Practices. Specific details regarding the method by which financial statements should be submitted are available therein. There is no change to the funding threshold for financial reporting and the corresponding submission type (i.e. EFIS or attestation).

### ***B. Updates to Data***

Some communities will see an increase to the following funding lines as a result of some updated data including Ontario Works caseload and licensed child care capacity:

- Ontario Works Child Care – Formal
- Ontario Works Child Care – Informal
- Child Care Transformation
- Child Care Supervisor Network – Capacity Funding

### **C. Updates to Financial Flexibility**

First Nations now have the flexibility to transfer funds from Wage Subsidy (A392) into Supervisor Network and Capacity Building Funding (A405), however, the reverse is not permitted. Prior to the transfer of Wage Subsidy funding, First Nations must ensure that all wage subsidy requirements of eligible staff in a licensed child care centre or home child care agency have been met.

To support child care re-opening, funds may be transferred from Special Needs Resourcing (A377), Wage Subsidy (A392), Ontario Works Formal (A402)/Informal (A403), Child Care Supervisor Network – Capacity Building Funding (A405) and Child and Family Programs to Child Care Transformation Funding (A404). Child Care Transformation Funding may be used for operating costs associated with the re-opening of child care.

### **D. Financial Statements Submission**

Given the uncertainties with the current environment, the due date for the 2019-20 Financial Statements submissions for First Nations and TPAs related to Child Care & Child and Family Programs has been deferred to a future date. The ministry will provide you with sufficient time to complete the submission once it is made available to you.

### **E. Wage Enhancement / Home Child Care Enhancement Grant (HCCEG)**

In 2020-21, the wage enhancement / HCCEG notional allocation is determined based on 2019-20 entitlement, while factoring in salary cap increase.

In previous years, newly licensed centres / agencies were only eligible to apply for wage enhancement / HCCEG the year following operation. All newly opened, expanded or licensed child care centres and home child care agencies with staffing changes are eligible to apply for wage enhancement / HCCEG funding in the same year the program begins operation.

Licensed child care centres and home child care agencies that are newly opened, expanded or with staffing changes that would result in entitlement exceeding the notional allocation are asked to communicate with their Financial Analyst to request the Wage Enhancement Application Form in order to request additional funding. These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Licensees opening in the current fiscal year who wish to apply for wage enhancement / HCCEG will be required to estimate the number of hours to be worked.

### **F. 2020-21 Health and Safety Funding**

The ministry is inviting First Nations communities with licensed child care centres and home child care agencies to apply for Health and Safety funding for 2020-21. This funding may also be used to support re-opening costs. Please refer to the enclosed guideline for more details. While applications will continue to be accepted throughout the fiscal year, First Nations communities are encouraged to submit their applications for Health and Safety funding to the ministry as soon as possible.

### ***G. Early Childhood Education Qualifications Upgrade Program (ECE QUP)***

Some communities have identified challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified ECEs to deliver culturally responsive programs. To support staff in child care and early years settings in upgrading their skills, the ECE QUP prioritizes applicants living and/or working in First Nation communities.

Further information on the ECE QUP can be found in the enclosed guideline and at the [ECE QUP website](#).

### ***H. Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE) Exemption for Child and Family Programs***

Where a child and family program has tried but is unable to recruit at least one RECE to oversee core services related to supporting early learning and development, First Nations may grant an exemption from the requirement. The ministry, however, is encouraging all child and family programs to employ at least one RECE in every program by April 1, 2023. First Nations who are unable to do so must document the reasons for the exemption. The exemption provision does not apply to past members of the College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE) or individuals who have completed the educational requirements to be registered with the CECE but have not become members.

### ***I. Grand-Parenting Provision for Child and Family Programs***

Additionally, the ministry has introduced a grand-parenting provision. Similar to the RECE exemption, the grand-parenting provision does not apply to past members of the CECE or individuals who have completed the educational requirements to be registered with the CECE but have not become members.

Furthermore, the grand-parenting provision does not apply to new hiring for positions that will oversee the delivery of core services related to supporting early learning and development. Child and family programs will be required to recruit a RECE for any new hiring for such positions. If a child and family program is unable to do so, First Nations may grant an exemption in accordance with the RECE exemption provision.

### ***J. Inclusion of Close-ended Leases as an Eligible Expenses for Child and Family Programs***

Details regarding close-ended leasing of a vehicle to support the delivery of First Nations Child and Family Programs as an allowable operating expense are available in the enclosed guideline.

### ***K. File Retention***

All First Nations and TPAs are required to retain financial and service records for a period of 6 years.

## **2020-21 Cash Flow**

Monthly cash flow in 2020-21 will initially be based on the most recent signed 2019-20 service agreement (less any one-time items). Once the 2020-21 signed service agreement is received by the ministry, monthly cash flow will be updated to reflect your 2020-21 allocations.

Pending receipt of the signed service agreement by **October 27, 2020**, child care and/or child and family program cash flow for 2020-21 allocation will be updated in December 2020. The December payment will include any catch-up payment to ensure that cash flow is reflective of your 2020-21 allocation.

## **2020-21 Key Dates**

The 2020-21 service agreement must be submitted to the ministry by **October 27, 2020**. If possible, please submit a **complete** copy of the signed service agreement by email to: [tpa.edu.earlylearning@ontario.ca](mailto:tpa.edu.earlylearning@ontario.ca). The ministry will email a copy of the completed agreement back to you for your records.

As some staff are working remotely with no opportunity for signing authorities to actually sign service agreements, the ministry will accept an email from a signing authority in place of a signature. Please refer to the guidelines for the email approval process.

The chart below lists all documents that are required to be submitted to the ministry for the 2020-21 fiscal year. Documents are to be submitted via email.

<b>Document</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
2020-21 Health and Safety Request Form (where applicable)	Accepted throughout the year
2020-21 Service Agreement	October 27, 2020
2020-21 Wage Enhancement Application Form (where applicable)	October 27, 2020
2020-21 Health & Safety Attestation Forms (where applicable)	March 26, 2021
2020-21 Financial Statements (EFIS and Attestation)	July 30, 2021

Please contact your Early Years Advisor directly if you have any questions or concerns regarding this memorandum and the enclosed materials. For questions regarding your 2020-21 cash flow or financial reporting, please contact your Financial Analyst. A contact list and other information on funding are available on the [Financial Analysis and Accountability Branch website](#).

Thank you once again for your ongoing partnership.

Sincerely,

***Original signed by:***

Jill Dubrick  
Director  
Early Years and Child Care Programs and Service Integration Branch  
Early Years and Child Care Division  
Ministry of Education

Copy: Shannon Fuller, Assistant Deputy Minister, Early Years and Child Care Division,  
Ministry of Education

Becky Doyle, Director, Financial Accountability and Data Analysis Branch, Early Years  
and Child Care Division, Ministry of Education

Early Years Advisors, Early Years & Child Care Programs and Service Integration  
Branch, Early Years and Child Care Division, Ministry of Education

Financial Analysts, Financial Accountability & Data Analysis Branch, Early Years and  
Child Care Division, Ministry of Education

## Changes made in the 2020-21 Ontario Child Care and Child and Family Programs Business Practice, Service and Funding Guideline

Please note: The table below reflects the important changes made to the 2020-21 Ontario Child Care and Child and Family Programs Business Practice, Service and Funding Guideline. The information outlined below is only meant to be a guide and does not capture all changes.

SECTION	DESCRIPTION	CHANGES MADE	PAGE
<b>Section 2: Business Practices</b> – Updated to provide streamlined information on all business practices, regardless of allocation amount (i.e. above or below \$500K) in one section.	Contracting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This section provides information on how to submit a signed/approved service agreement to the ministry in light of remote work arrangements.</li> </ul>	7-8
	Financial Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This section provides information on both financial reporting methods (EFIS and attestation). There is no change to the funding threshold for financial reporting and the corresponding submission type.</li> <li>Business practices were previously laid out in two sections (below \$500K, and \$500K and above).</li> <li>These changes have been made to streamline the guideline and there are no changes to the content.</li> </ul>	8-11
	Child Care Re-Opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This section provides information on funding available for child care re-opening costs.</li> </ul>	14
	In-Year Flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated to provide enhanced flexibility to support child care re-opening and associated additional costs.</li> <li>Update to financial flexibility section and illustration to show that                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wage Subsidy (A392) can be transferred into Child Care Supervisor Network – Capacity Funding (A405)</li> <li>Special Needs Resourcing (A377), Wage Subsidy (A392), Ontario Works Formal (A402)/Information (A403), Child Care Supervisor Network – Capacity Building Funding (A405) and Child and Family Programs can be transferred to Child Care Transformation Funding (A404) to support child care re-opening</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	14-16

SECTION	DESCRIPTION	CHANGES MADE	PAGE
<b>Section 3: Child Care Service, Funding Eligibility and Requirements</b>	A375 – Health and Safety (Repairs and Maintenance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added sub-section on additional funding and eligible expenses available for child care re-opening.</li> </ul>	24-25
	A402/A403 – Ontario Works Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sub-section removed. All information regarding Ontario Works Child Care funding is available in Section 5.</li> <li>This change has been made to streamline the guideline and there are no changes to the content.</li> </ul>	N/A
	A404 – Child Care Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added sub-section on additional funding and eligible expenses available for child care re-opening.</li> </ul>	38
	A405 – Child Care Supervisor Network – Capacity Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated to include information on the Qualifications Upgrade Program (<a href="http://www.ecegrants.on.ca">www.ecegrants.on.ca</a>)</li> </ul>	42
	A406 – Wage Enhancement / Home Child Care Enhancement Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated to indicate that licensed child care centres and home child care agencies that are newly opened, expanded or with staffing changes that would result in entitlement exceeding the notional allocation are eligible to apply for wage enhancement/home child care enhancement grant funding in the same year the program begins, expands or changes. Previously, new centres/agencies were only eligible to apply the following year.</li> <li>Licensees opening in the current fiscal year are asked to estimate the number of hours to be worked.</li> </ul>	45
	A406 – Wage Enhancement / Home Child Care Enhancement Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updates to wage cap and wage enhancement/home child care enhancement grant amount.</li> </ul>	45-47
	Fee Stabilization Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section removed. Funding ended March 31, 2019.</li> </ul>	N/A



SECTION	DESCRIPTION	CHANGES MADE	PAGE
<b>Section 4: Ontario Works Child Care</b> – applicable to child care only	Reporting Requirements – Formal Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates to formal child care data elements to remove per age group data elements.</li> </ul>	75
<b>Section 5: First Nations Child and Family Programs</b>	Allocations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced flexibility between Child and Family Program funding and Child Care Transformation funding to support child care re-opening costs</li> </ul>	79
	Supporting Early Learning and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>(NEW)</b> Sub-section created to provide additional information on how child and family programs can support early learning and development.</li> </ul>	79
	Making Connections for Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>(NEW)</b> Sub-section created to provide additional information on how child and family programs can facilitate stronger relationships within their community and assist parents/caregivers access services and supports.</li> </ul>	89-90
	Staffing Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates to Staffing Requirements language.</li> </ul>	82-83
	RECE Exemption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates to encourage one RECE in all programs by April 1, 2023. First Nations to document reasons for exemptions.</li> <li>• Updates to clarify individuals who may be exempt from RECE exemption provision.</li> </ul>	83
	Grand- Parenting Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates to grand-parenting provision, including clarity on individuals who may be exempt from grand-parenting provision.</li> </ul>	84
	Qualifications Upgrade Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>(NEW)</b> Sub-section created to provide additional information on the Qualifications Upgrade Program (<a href="http://www.ecegrants.on.ca">www.ecegrants.on.ca</a>)</li> </ul>	84-85
	Eligible Expenditures – Ongoing Operating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on close-ended leases as an eligible expense.</li> </ul>	86

SECTION	DESCRIPTION	CHANGES MADE	PAGE
<b>Section 6: Safe Restart Funding</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="675 216 808 254">• (NEW)</li> </ul>	94-98
<b>Throughout guideline</b>	File Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="675 378 1289 520">• <b>(NEW)</b> Clarifying language included throughout guideline highlighting 6-year retention period for financial and services records.</li> </ul>	

