Chapter 110-425 WAC
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

(Formerly: Chapter 170-100 WAC)

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WAC

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LEGAL BASIS, PURPOSE, DEFINITIONS, AND NONDISCRIMINATION

WAC 110-425-0010 Legal basis for the early childhood education and assistance program (ECEAP). The legal basis for the department's ECEAP is RCW 43.216.525.

[Statutory Authority: 2025 cc 109, 412, 253, RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, 43.216.513, and 43.216.525. WSR 26-07-024, s 110-425-0010, filed 3/9/26, effective 4/9/26. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, and 43.216.525. WSR 19-03-041, § 110-425-0010, filed 1/8/19, effective 2/8/19. WSR 18-14-078, recodified as § 110-425-0010, filed 6/29/18, effective 7/1/18. WSR 06-18-085, recodified as § 170-100-010, filed 9/5/06, effective 9/5/06. Statutory Authority: Chapter 28A.215 RCW. WSR 06-13-046, § 365-170-010, filed 6/16/06, effective 7/17/06. Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.34A.060. WSR 88-18-039 (Order 88-04), § 365-170-010, filed 8/31/88. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.63A.060. WSR 87-04-007 (Order 87-02), § 365-170-010, filed 1/23/87.]

WAC 110-425-0020 Purpose. ECEAP provides preschool education, family support, and health and nutrition services to low-income three- and four-year-old children to promote school success.

[Statutory Authority: 2025 cc 109, 412, 253, RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, 43.216.513, and 43.216.525. WSR 26-07-024, s 110-425-0020, filed 3/9/26, effective 4/9/26. WSR 18-14-078, recodified as § 110-425-0020, filed 6/29/18, effective 7/1/18. WSR 06-18-085, recodified as § 170-100-020, filed 9/5/06, effective 9/5/06. Statutory Authority: Chapter 28A.215 RCW. WSR 06-13-046, § 365-170-020, filed 6/16/06, effective 7/17/06. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.63A.060. WSR 99-19-176, § 365-170-020, filed 9/22/99, effective 10/23/99; WSR 87-04-007 (Order 87-02), § 365-170-020, filed 1/23/87.]

WAC 110-425-0030 Definitions. The following definitions apply to this chapter:

"Children allowed for enrollment" means children that the department may permit to be enrolled in ECEAP as outlined in RCW 43.216.512, but who are not entitled to as outlined in RCW 43.216.556.

"Children eligible for enrollment" or "eligible children" means the same as defined in RCW 43.216.505.

"Comprehensive" means the same as defined in RCW 43.216.505.

"Department" means the Washington state department of children, youth, and families.

"Early childhood education and assistance program (ECEAP)" means Washington state's prekindergarten program that prepares three- and four-year-old children from families furthest from opportunity for success in school and in life.

"ECEAP contractors" means organizations that provide ECEAP services under a signed contract with the department.

"ECEAP providers" means organizations that provides site level, direct, and high-quality ECEAP services under the direction of an ECEAP contractor.

"Eligible providers" means the same as described in RCW 43.216.515.

"Indian children" means for:

(a) ECEAP sites run by sovereign tribal nations, the same as defined by the tribe and submitted to the department.

(b) Nontribal ECEAP providers serving tribal children, including tribal nonprofit providers, the same as defined in WAC 110-110-0010.

"Performance standards" means the most current release of the ECEAP performance standards as incorporated into the ECEAP contract, which are accessible on the department's website.

"Sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression (SOGIE)" means distinct identifiers everyone has. LGBTQIA+ is a subdistinction within SOGIE self-identifiers. SOGIE includes LGBTQIA+ as well as heterosexual, cisgender, and nonquestioning individuals.

"State median income (SMI)" means the annual income figure the census bureau publishes yearly based on family size.

[Statutory Authority: 2025 cc 109, 412, 253, RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, 43.216.513, and 43.216.525. WSR 26-07-024, s 110-425-0030, filed 3/9/26, effective 4/9/26. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.216.505, 43.216.512, 43.216.5052, and 2021 c 199. WSR 24-12-042, § 110-425-0030, filed 5/30/24, effective 7/1/24. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.216.512, 43.216.525, 43.216.540, and 43.216.555. WSR 19-24-014, § 110-425-0030, filed 11/21/19, effective 12/22/19. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, and 43.216.525. WSR 19-03-041, § 110-425-0030, filed 1/8/19, effective 2/8/19. WSR 18-14-078, recodified as § 110-425-0030, filed 6/29/18, effective 7/1/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.215.070 and chapter 43.215 RCW. WSR 16-01-098, § 170-100-030, filed 12/16/15, effective 1/16/16. Statutory Authority: Chapter 43.215 RCW. WSR 07-20-034, § 170-100-030, filed 9/25/07, effective 10/26/07. WSR 06-18-085, recodified as § 170-100-030, filed 9/5/06, effective 9/5/06. Statutory Authority: Chapter 28A.215 RCW. WSR 06-13-046, § 365-170-030, filed 6/16/06, effective 7/17/06. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.63A.060. WSR 99-19-176, § 365-170-030, filed 9/22/99, effective 10/23/99. Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.34A.060. WSR 88-18-039 (Order 88-04), § 365-170-030, filed 8/31/88. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.63A.060. WSR 87-04-007 (Order 87-02), § 365-170-030, filed 1/23/87.]

WAC 110-425-0035 Nondiscrimination. ECEAP providers must not deny services to or discriminate against children, families, and individuals:

(1) By following chapter 49.60 RCW; and

(2) On the basis of SOGIE, family configuration, or public assistance recipient status.

[Statutory Authority: 2025 cc 109, 412, 253, RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, 43.216.513, and 43.216.525. WSR 26-07-024, s 110-425-0035, filed 3/9/26, effective 4/9/26.]

FUNDS AND SERVICE DELIVERY

WAC 110-425-0040 Allocating or awarding funds. (1) Eligible organizations must complete the following to become an ECEAP contractor:

(a) Complete the application process established by the department; and

(b) Enter into a contract or interlocal agreement with the department if they are a successful applicant.

(2) The department will award available funds to successful applicants on a competitive basis consistent with the amount allocated by the legislature.

[Statutory Authority: 2025 cc 109, 412, 253, RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, 43.216.513, and 43.216.525. WSR 26-07-024, s 110-425-0040, filed 3/9/26, effective 4/9/26. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, and 43.216.525. WSR 19-03-041, § 110-425-0040, filed 1/8/19, effective 2/8/19. WSR 18-14-078, recodified as § 110-425-0040, filed 6/29/18, effective 7/1/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.215.070 and chapter 43.215 RCW. WSR 16-01-098, § 170-100-040, filed 12/16/15, effective 1/16/16. WSR 06-18-085, recodified as § 170-100-040, filed 9/5/06, effective 9/5/06. Statutory Authority: Chapter 28A.215 RCW. WSR 06-13-046, § 365-170-060, filed 6/16/06, effective 7/17/06. Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.34A.060. WSR 88-18-039 (Order 88-04), § 365-170-060, filed 8/31/88. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.63A.060. WSR 87-04-007 (Order 87-02), § 365-170-060, filed 1/23/87.]

WAC 110-425-0050 Use of funds. ECEAP contractors:

(1) Must provide comprehensive early education and family support services free of charge to enrolled families; and

(2) May use:

(a) ECEAP funds of last resort for enrolled children's:

(i) Medical;

(ii) Dental;

(iii) Nutrition; or

(iv) Mental health services; and

(b) Up to 15 percent of the total amount awarded for program administrative costs.

[Statutory Authority: 2025 cc 109, 412, 253, RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, 43.216.513, and 43.216.525. WSR 26-07-024, s 110-425-0050, filed 3/9/26, effective 4/9/26. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, and 43.216.525. WSR 19-03-041, § 110-425-0050, filed 1/8/19, effective 2/8/19. WSR 18-14-078, recodified as § 110-425-0050,

filed 6/29/18, effective 7/1/18. WSR 06-18-085, recodified as § 170-100-050, filed 9/5/06, effective 9/5/06. Statutory Authority: Chapter 28A.215 RCW. WSR 06-13-046, § 365-170-070, filed 6/16/06, effective 7/17/06. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.63A.060. WSR 99-19-176, § 365-170-070, filed 9/22/99, effective 10/23/99. Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.34A.060. WSR 88-18-039 (Order 88-04), § 365-170-070, filed 8/31/88. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.63A.060. WSR 87-04-007 (Order 87-02), § 365-170-070, filed 1/23/87.]

WAC 110-425-0060 Comprehensive service delivery. ECEAP contractors must:

(1) Develop and provide the following comprehensive services to enrolled children and their families:

(a) Early childhood education;

(b) Family support to help families overcome the extreme stresses of poverty by improving focus, planning, and decision making;

(c) Parent involvement, including:

(i) Options for participation in their children's classrooms;

(ii) Program policy decisions;

(iii) Service delivery system development; and

(iv) Parent education and training; and

(d) Health screenings, including information and referrals for:

(i) Medical;

(ii) Dental;

(iii) Nutrition; or

(iv) Mental health;

(2) Comply with their contract, performance standards, and policies when providing services; and

(3) Obtain written approval from the department before implementing exceptions to the:

(a) Rules in this chapter;

(b) ECEAP contracts;

(c) Performance standards; or

(d) Policies.

[Statutory Authority: 2025 cc 109, 412, 253, RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, 43.216.513, and 43.216.525. WSR 26-07-024, s 110-425-0060, filed 3/9/26, effective 4/9/26. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, and 43.216.525. WSR 19-03-041, § 110-425-0060, filed 1/8/19, effective 2/8/19. WSR 18-14-078, recodified as § 110-425-0060, filed 6/29/18, effective 7/1/18. WSR 06-18-085, recodified as § 170-100-060, filed 9/5/06, effective 9/5/06. Statutory Authority: Chapter 28A.215 RCW. WSR 06-13-046, § 365-170-07005, filed 6/16/06, effective 7/17/06.]

ELIGIBILITY AND ENROLLMENT

WAC 110-425-0070 Date of birth verification. ECEAP contractors and providers must verify children's dates of birth for the purposes of enrollment using one of the following documents that includes their date of birth:

(1) A document listed in RCW 43.216.528;

(2) Certificate of Indian blood;

(3) Tribal enrollment card; or

(4) A document approved by the department.

[Statutory Authority: 2025 cc 109, 412, 253, RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, 43.216.513, and 43.216.525. WSR 26-07-024, s 110-425-0070, filed 3/9/26, effective 4/9/26. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, and 43.216.525. WSR 19-03-041, § 110-425-0070, filed 1/8/19, effective 2/8/19. WSR 18-14-078, recodified as § 110-425-0070, filed 6/29/18, effective 7/1/18. WSR 06-18-085, recodified as § 170-100-070, filed 9/5/06, effective 9/5/06. Statutory Authority: Chapter 28A.215 RCW. WSR 06-13-046, § 365-170-07010, filed 6/16/06, effective 7/17/06.]

WAC 110-425-0080 Children eligible for enrollment. Children are eligible for ECEAP enrollment:

(1) If they meet the definition of an eligible child as outlined in RCW 43.216.505; and

(2) Until they begin kindergarten.

[Statutory Authority: 2025 cc 109, 412, 253, RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, 43.216.513, and 43.216.525. WSR 26-07-024, s 110-425-0080, filed 3/9/26, effective 4/9/26. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.216.512, 43.216.525, 43.216.540, and 43.216.555. WSR 19-24-014, § 110-425-0080, filed 11/21/19, effective 12/22/19. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, and 43.216.525. WSR 19-03-041, § 110-425-0080, filed 1/8/19, effective 2/8/19. WSR 18-14-078, recodified as § 110-425-0080, filed 6/29/18, effective 7/1/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.215.060, 43.215.070 and chapter 43.215 RCW. WSR 14-14-055, § 170-100-080, filed 6/26/14, effective 7/27/14. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.215.020, 43.215.070, and 2010 c 231. WSR 10-20-059, § 170-100-080, filed 9/27/10, effective 10/28/10. WSR 06-18-085, recodified as § 170-100-080, filed 9/5/06, effective 9/5/06. Statutory Authority: Chapter 28A.215 RCW. WSR 06-13-046, § 365-170-080, filed 6/16/06, effective 7/17/06. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.63A.060. WSR 99-19-176, § 365-170-080, filed 9/22/99, effective 10/23/99. Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.34A.060. WSR 88-18-039 (Order 88-04), § 365-170-080, filed 8/31/88. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.63A.060. WSR 87-04-007 (Order 87-02), § 365-170-080, filed 1/23/87.]

WAC 110-425-0083 Enrolling allowed and early entry children. ECEAP providers may enroll children:

(1) Allowed for enrollment in ECEAP as outlined in RCW 43.216.512; or

(2) Who qualify for early entry in ECEAP as outlined in RCW 43.216.513.

[Statutory Authority: 2025 cc 109, 412, 253, RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, 43.216.513, and 43.216.525. WSR 26-07-024, s 110-425-0083, filed 3/9/26, effective 4/9/26. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.216.512, 43.216.525, 43.216.540, and 43.216.555. WSR 19-24-014, § 110-425-0083, filed 11/21/19, effective 12/22/19.]

WAC 110-425-0084 Duration of enrollment and allowance of dual enrollments. ECEAP contractors and providers:

(1) Must not simultaneously enroll children in ECEAP and:

(a) Head start; or
(b) Transition to kindergarten; and
(2) May:
(a) Reprioritize enrolled children returning for a new school year against newly enrolling children when slots are limited;
(b) Allow dual enrollment of children in ECEAP who are served by school district special education; and
(c) Use head start duration funds to increase the length of the ECEAP preschool day when federal funds are provided to ECEAP contractors for this purpose.

[Statutory Authority: 2025 cc 109, 412, 253, RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, 43.216.513, and 43.216.525. WSR 26-07-024, s 110-425-0084, filed 3/9/26, effective 4/9/26. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.216.512, 43.216.525, 43.216.540, and 43.216.555. WSR 19-24-014, § 110-425-0084, filed 11/21/19, effective 12/22/19.]

WAC 110-425-0085 ECEAP prioritization system. (1) The department will establish and manage the ECEAP prioritization system based on priority points attributed to all children who are eligible or allowed for enrollment.
(2) ECEAP contractors and providers must prioritize children for funded and available ECEAP slots when:
(a) They have a list of children who are eligible or allowed for enrollment; and
(b) The children meet the ECEAP priority points requirement on the department's website.

[Statutory Authority: 2025 cc 109, 412, 253, RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, 43.216.513, and 43.216.525. WSR 26-07-024, s 110-425-0085, filed 3/9/26, effective 4/9/26. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.216.512, 43.216.525, 43.216.540, and 43.216.555. WSR 19-24-014, § 110-425-0085, filed 11/21/19, effective 12/22/19.]

WAC 110-425-0087 Contractor slots for children who exceed the SMI eligibility. The department:
(1) Will:
(a) Maintain statewide limits of slots for children that exceed SMI eligibility. Limits are set at:
(i) Ten percent of the total statewide enrollment for children that meet criteria in RCW 43.216.505; or
(ii) Twenty-five percent for ECEAP sites operated by sovereign tribal nations; and
(b) Determine the number of slots annually for children who exceed the SMI eligibility based on:
(i) The contractors' size, enrollment history, and to provide flexibility to fill classes in rural areas; and
(ii) Eligibility as outlined in:
(A) RCW 43.216.505;
(B) RCW 43.216.512; and
(C) RCW 43.216.513;
(c) Document the number of annual slots available for children who exceed the SMI eligibility in the early learning management system for ECEAP contractors; and

(d) Consider the following when reviewing requests for additional slots for children that meet eligibility enrollment criteria using the department's prioritization system outlined in WAC 110-425-0085:

(i) ECEAP enrollments have not reached the statewide limits of children eligible for enrollment; or

(ii) The requesting ECEAP contractors':

(A) Need to fill slots to fully enroll a class to verify access to services for eligible children;

(B) Community need for additional flexibility to serve additional children; and

(iii) The presence of unserved eligible children; and

(2) May adjust the number of annual slots when slots are reallocated between ECEAP contractors.

[Statutory Authority: 2025 cc 109, 412, 253, RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, 43.216.513, and 43.216.525. WSR 26-07-024, s 110-425-0087, filed 3/9/26, effective 4/9/26. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.216.512, 43.216.525, 43.216.540, and 43.216.555. WSR 19-24-014, § 110-425-0087, filed 11/21/19, effective 12/22/19.]

WAC 110-425-0088 Statewide limits on enrollment for allowed and early entry children in ECEAP. The department will maintain the ECEAP statewide limit for allowed and early entry children as outlined in:

(1) RCW 43.216.505;

(2) RCW 43.216.512; and

(3) RCW 43.216.513.

[Statutory Authority: 2025 cc 109, 412, 253, RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, 43.216.513, and 43.216.525. WSR 26-07-024, s 110-425-0088, filed 3/9/26, effective 4/9/26.]

STAFF REQUIREMENTS

WAC 110-425-0090 ECEAP requirements for staff coverage, hiring, and position qualifications. ECEAP contractors and providers:

(1) Must:

(a) Maintain adequate staff to comply with the ECEAP performance standards and contract requirements;

(b) Hire and employ staff who meet the qualifications for their position;

(c) Place newly hired individuals not meeting the minimum qualifications for their role on a professional development plan to fully meet the qualifications within five years from the date of hire;

(d) Monitor progress on all professional development plans and document adequate yearly progress to meet the required qualifications; and

(e) Verify:

(i) Employees with unsupervised access to children have passed a background check as outlined in chapter 110-06 WAC;

(ii) Other individuals associated with ECEAP contractors or providers that meet the definition of "subject individual" and who may have unsupervised access to children have passed a background check, as outlined in chapter 110-06 WAC;

(iii) ECEAP lead teachers have an associate or higher degree in early childhood education or equivalent approved by the department;

(iv) ECEAP assistant teachers have a Washington state early childhood education initial certificate or equivalent approved by the department;

(v) ECEAP family support staff have one of the following qualifications:

(A) An associate or higher degree with the equivalent of 30 college quarter credits that may be included in the degree or in addition to the degree, in any of the following:

(I) Human development;

(II) Human services;

(III) Family support;

(IV) Social work;

(V) Early childhood education;

(VI) Child development;

(VII) Psychology; or

(VIII) Another field directly related to their job responsibilities; or

(B) A department-approved credential from a comprehensive and competency-based program that increases knowledge and skills in providing direct family support services to families;

(vi) ECEAP health advocates have one of the following:

(A) Employment as an ECEAP family support aide or health aide in the same agency before July 1, 2014;

(B) The equivalent of 12 college quarter credits in family support, public health, health education, nursing, or another field directly related to their job responsibilities; or

(C) Meet the current qualifications for an ECEAP family support specialist;

(vii) ECEAP health consultants have one of the following:

(A) A license in Washington state as a registered nurse or physician; or

(B) A bachelor's or higher degree in any of the following:

(I) Public health;

(II) Nursing;

(III) Health education;

(IV) Health sciences;

(V) Medicine; or

(VI) Related field;

(viii) ECEAP nutrition consultants have one of the following qualifications:

(A) Registered dietitian credentialed through the commission on dietetic registration; or

(B) Washington state certified nutritionist as outlined in chapter 18.138 RCW;

(ix) Infant and early childhood mental health consultants have one of the following:

(A) A license by the Washington state department of health as a:

(I) Mental health counselor or mental health counselor associate;

(II) Marriage and family therapist or marriage and family therapist associate;

(III) Social worker or social worker associate;

(IV) Psychologist;

(V) Psychiatrist; or

(VI) Psychiatric nurse;

(B) An agency affiliated or certified counselor with a master's degree in counseling, social work, or related field approved by the Washington state department of health;

(C) Credentialed by the Washington state office of the superintendent of public instruction as a school counselor, social worker, or psychologist; or

(D) A mental health professional recognized by the tribe and submitted to the department for ECEAP sites operated by sovereign tribal nations. If a mental health consultant is not available to provide services at least once a month, programs must use other licensed mental health professionals or behavioral health support specialists certified and trained in their profession or recognized by their tribal government to verify mental health supports are available; and

(x) ECEAP coaches have the following:

(A) Bachelor's degree:

(I) In early childhood or related field; or

(II) An equivalent approved by the department;

(B) A minimum of two years working with young children in a group setting; and

(C) Experience as an early learning coach, consultant, mentor, or trainer; and

(2) May accept equivalent degrees and certificates from other states and countries to meet the ECEAP staff qualifications.

[Statutory Authority: 2025 cc 109, 412, 253, RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, 43.216.513, and 43.216.525. WSR 26-07-024, s 110-425-0090, filed 3/9/26, effective 4/9/26. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.216.065, 43.216.512, and 43.216.525. WSR 19-03-041, § 110-425-0090, filed 1/8/19, effective 2/8/19. WSR 18-14-078, recodified as § 110-425-0090, filed 6/29/18, effective 7/1/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.215.070 and chapter 43.215 RCW. WSR 17-01-083, § 170-100-090, filed 12/16/16, effective 1/16/17; WSR 15-24-040, § 170-100-090, filed 11/20/15, effective 1/1/16. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.215.060, 43.215.070 and chapter 43.215 RCW. WSR 14-14-055, § 170-100-090, filed 6/26/14, effective 7/27/14. WSR 06-18-085, recodified as § 170-100-090, filed 9/5/06, effective 9/5/06. Statutory Authority: Chapter 28A.215 RCW. WSR 06-13-046, § 365-170-095, filed 6/16/06, effective 7/17/06. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.63A.060. WSR 99-19-176, § 365-170-095, filed 9/22/99, effective 10/23/99.]