



## Early Learning Coalition of the Nature Coast

Serving Citrus – Dixie – Gilchrist – Levy – Sumter Counties

**Date:** July 1, 2010  
**Subject:** Coalition Reminders/Updates/Policy Changes Effective FY 2010-11

During the Provider Retreat on June 24, 2010, Coalition staff reviewed updates and policy changes effective FY 2010-11.

The following information is provided as an overview of updates and policy changes. It is **critical** that all providers review this information and contact the Coalition office if further clarification is needed.

### **School Readiness Provider Agreement, effective July 1, 2010**

On June 30, 2010, School Readiness Provider Agreements effective since July 2008 expired. Effective July 1, 2010, providers wishing to serve children residing in Citrus, Dixie, Gilchrist, Levy, and Sumter Counties must have a new provider agreement in place.

Significant changes to the new provider agreement language include:

#### **School Readiness Provider Program**

Additional language in Attachment 1, in reference to School Readiness services provided to children birth – kindergarten to include the following areas:

- School Readiness skills
- Healthy and safe environment
- Curriculum
- Staff development
- Ratios
- State licensing requirements

Provider implementation of these changes will be monitored during provider observations, beginning FY 2010-11. **Providers are strongly encouraged to review the additions and changes contained in the “Program” section of the new School Readiness provider agreement.**

#### **Administration**

Effective July 1, 2010, providers are required to utilize the Coalition’s approved **sign in and out sheet** (attached to this Provider Alert) or utilize an individual reporting process with the same information. The records must include parent signatures of child attendance on a daily basis. Documentation must include the following: The provider name, the child’s legal name, month and year, the date and time the child arrives and departs, the signature of the person responsible for dropping off and/or picking up the child and daily emergency contact number. The record must include School Readiness children only.

A sample sign in and out sheet intended for children who are transported to and from school in the course of the day is also attached to this Provider Alert.

**If providers do not use the attached form(s) they must have their self- developed form approved by their local ELCNC Client Services Manager, prior to use.**

Reminder: Monthly attendance rolls must be submitted to the Coalition no later than the **second (2<sup>nd</sup>)** day of the month following the service month, by 5: 00 pm. Sign in and out sheets must be submitted no later than the **seventh (7<sup>th</sup>)** working day of the month following the service month, by 5: 00 pm.

### **SCHEDULE AND DESCRIPTION OF DELIVERABLES**

Effective July 1, 2010, changes to contract deliverables will be effective in the following areas:

- Submission of attendance documentation by 5: 00 pm on the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) working day of the month following service delivery (100% effective 7/1/10)
- Reporting of unexcused child absences in excess of five (5) days (100% effective 7/1/10)

### **Please Note:**

Providers wishing to serve children residing in Citrus, Dixie, Gilchrist, Levy, and Sumter Counties FY 2010-11 forward, who have **NOT** yet signed/completed a new agreement and submitted all required documentation, should contact the Coalition's Contract Department (Crystal River office) immediately for further guidance. Telephone (352) 563-9939 ext 228, 230, or 223.

### **ELCNC School Readiness/Eligibility/Reimbursement Policy Changes Effective 7/1/10**

#### **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)**

Under the US government "Stimulus Bill" 2009, the FL state government streamed funding to Coalitions due to ARRA. **ARRA funding CEASES effective July 1, 2010.** Families currently served under ARRA, who remain eligible for services, will be transferred to the School Readiness funding stream.

The Coalition was able to enroll several families under the act who were receiving unemployment benefits in FY 2009-10. Eligibility ceased for these families effective June 30, 2010. The Coalition is not authorized to serve these families with School Readiness funds.

#### **Termination for Past Due Parent Fees**

Historically, when ELCNC-211 Child Attendance Notice (termination for past due parent fees) was submitted by a provider, Client Services Counselors filed the document and sent ELCNC-273 Reimbursement Procedure Notice of Termination for Child Care Services for Past Due Fees/ Non Attendance Parent Notice to the parent, and care was "suspended" until the provider fees were paid in accordance with policy. The new policy language requires Client Services Counselors to TERMINATE the family from the School Readiness program twenty (20) CALENDAR DAYS from the provider's signature date on the Child Attendance Notice. A ten (10) day notice of termination is given subsequent to the twenty (20) days; in this way, termination occurs thirty **(30) days** after notice of non-payment was received from the provider. If the provider is paid in full by the parent after notice of termination is issued and before termination occurs, the termination will be rescinded, upon receipt of ELCNC-211 Child Attendance Notice,

with the reinstatement section of the form completed by the provider. Alternatively, the provider may submit ELCNC-201 School Readiness Program Provider Transfer Form-Zero Balance if the balance owed is paid and a provider transfer is anticipated. **The policy of termination after thirty (30) days will not be applied to children under Protective Investigation/Protective Supervision.**

#### **Child Attendance the Day Before and the Day After a Holiday**

ELCNC policy language in 2009-10 required that the day before and the day after a holiday cannot be marked "N" when the provider is claiming reimbursable days before and after a holiday. **Effective July 1, 2010, the requirement for children to attend their child care facility the day before and the day after a holiday will be discontinued.**

#### **Children of Kindergarten Eligibility Age**

Historically, ELCNC has honored parent requests for a child who is kindergarten-eligible by age, to remain full time in the School Readiness program during that school year, if documentation can be obtained from an appropriate source (e.g. doctor's statement) recommending delayed entry into the public school system. Effective July 1, 2010, full time School Readiness **WILL NOT** be authorized for a child eligible for kindergarten by age.

Effective July 1, 2010, children eligible for kindergarten will be transferred to the school-age care level on the first day of kindergarten in accordance with the school calendar of the county of the school they are attending.

#### **Health Records - Non-Licensed Providers**

Effective FY 2010-11, non-licensed providers will be required to certify receipt of completed, current physical and immunization records of School Readiness children under the age of kindergarten entry to the Coalition, within 30 days of child enrollment. Further guidance in regard to this process will be provided.

#### **Provider Reimbursement Rate Changes - Gold Seal Reimbursement**

Although a difficult decision, in May/June 2010, the Administrative Committee recommended, and the Board voted in favor of, a revision to the Gold Seal program. The decision was to **discontinue** Gold Seal reimbursements for **school-age** children, effective **July 1, 2010**.

The Coalition will continue to maintain reimbursement at Gold Seal rates for children birth to kindergarten entry attending School Readiness facilities within the Coalition's five county service area.

School Readiness children of any age attending child care sites outside Citrus, Dixie, Gilchrist, Levy, and Sumter Counties **will not** be reimbursed at Gold Seal rates from July 1, 2010 forward.

A revised Provider Daily Payment Rate Schedule, effective July 1, 2010 is attached to this Provider Alert.

#### **Reminders/Clarification**

##### **Child Absences and Absence Documentation**

There was some discussion at the Provider Retreat on June 24<sup>th</sup> with regard to School Readiness child absence/documentation required for School Readiness reimbursement in the event of a child's absence beyond three (3) days in a month. Clarification of ELCNC policy is as follows:

Reimbursement will be authorized for no more than a total of three (3) absences per calendar month per child except in the event of extraordinary circumstances, in which case the Coalition's Executive Director or designee (management level employee) will provide written approval for payment based on written documentation provided by the parent justifying the excessive absence for up to an additional seven (7) days. Examples of extraordinary circumstances include the following:

- Hospitalization of the child or parent with appropriate documentation.
- **Illness requiring home-stay as documented by the parent or legal guardian for a maximum of three (3) days per month. The remaining allowable four (4) days must be documented by a medical professional.**
- Death in the immediate family with appropriate documentation, (i.e. obituary, death certificate).
- Court ordered visitation with appropriate documentation, (i.e. court order).
- Unforeseen documented military deployment or exercise of the parent(s).

**Total monthly reimbursed absences will not exceed ten (10) calendar days.**

**Parent Fee Reporting - Protective Investigation/Protective Supervision**

In the event that families under Protective Investigation/Protective Supervision do not pay their assessed parent fees, the provider should note the non-payment on their Provider Quarterly Report. The unpaid amount(s) will be factored in to the percentage of parent fees paid by Coalition staff.

**Provider Meetings**

The Coalition will continue to schedule **bi-monthly** provider meetings during FY 2010-11. The Coalition will communicate with providers through the Provider Alert system between meetings. Providers are encouraged to attend all meetings, in person or via tele-conferencing (if available) as important information is shared. The FY 2010-11 provider meeting schedule is as follows:

<b>Citrus County</b>	<b>Tri County</b>	<b>Sumter County</b>
August 24, 2010	August 26, 2010	August 24, 2010
October 26, 2010	October 28, 2010	October 26, 2010
December 14, 2010	December 2009 (none)	December 14, 2010
February 22, 2011	February 24, 2011	February 22, 2011
April 26, 2011	April 28, 2011	April 26, 2011
<b>Provider Retreat:</b>	<b>Provider Retreat:</b>	<b>Provider Retreat:</b>
TBA	TBA	TBA

The Citrus County provider meetings will be located at the Coalition's office at 1560 North Meadowcrest Blvd, Crystal River, FL 34429. The meetings will begin at 10: 00 am.

The Tri-County provider meetings will be located at the Coalition's office at 212 North Main Street, Chiefland, FL 32626. The meetings will begin at 10:00 am.

The Sumter County provider meetings will be located at the Wildwood Country Resort, 5604 Heritage Blvd, Wildwood, FL 34785. The meetings will begin at 6:30 pm.

*Note: Location, date and time of provider meetings may be subject to change. In the event a change is necessary, providers will be informed via Provider Alert or communication by telephone, fax or mail.*

**ELCNC Client Services- Office Information/Hours of Operation**

ELCNC Client Services will be available in accordance with the following FY 2010-11:

<b>Citrus County</b>	<b>Tri County</b>	<b>Sumter County</b>
ELC Nature Coast	ELC Nature Coast	ELC Nature Coast
1560 N Meadowcrest Blvd	212 N Main Street	114 N Jumper Drive
Crystal River, FL 34429	Chiefland, FL 32626	Bushnell, FL 33513
Telephone (352) 563-9939	Telephone (352) 490-5855	Telephone (352) 793-5430
Hours of Operation:	Hours of Operation:	Hours of Operation:
Mon, Wed, Thur, Fri 8:00 am - 5:00 pm	Monday-Friday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm	Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri 8:00 am – 5: 00 pm
Tue 8: 00 am -7:00 pm		Thur 8:00 am-700 pm

*Note: Hours of operation may be subject to change. In the event a change is necessary, providers will be informed via Provider Alert or communication by telephone, fax or mail.*

**Coalition offices will be closed in recognition of the following holidays:**

Independence Day – Monday, July 5, 2010	Christmas Day – Thursday, December 23, 2010
Labor Day – Monday, September 6, 2010	New Year’s Day – Friday, December 31, 2010
Veterans Day – Thursday, November 11, 2010	Martin Luther King Jr – Monday, January 17, 2011
Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, November 25, 2010	Good Friday – Friday, April 22, 2011
Day After Thanksgiving – Friday, November 26, 2010	Memorial Day – Monday, May 30, 2011
Christmas Eve – Friday, December 24, 2010	

**Board Meetings, FY 2010-11**

August 4, 2010
October 6, 2010
December 1, 2010
February 2, 2011
April 6, 2011
June 1, 2011

**Administrative Committee Meetings, FY 2010-11**

July 28, 2010	January 26, 2011
August 25, 2010	February 23, 2011
September 22, 2010	March 23, 2011
October 27, 2010	April 27, 2011
November 24, 2010	May 25, 2011
December 22, 2010	June 22, 2011

**Advisory Council Meetings, FY 2010-11**

<b>Citrus County</b>	<b>Tri County</b>	<b>Sumter County</b>
July 12, 2010	July 16, 2010	July 14, 2010
September 13, 2010	September 10, 2010	September 8, 2010
November 15, 2010	November 19, 2010	November 10, 2010
January 10, 2011	January 14, 2011	January 12, 2011
March 14, 2011	March 11, 2011	March 9, 2011
May 9, 2011	May 13, 2011	May 11, 2011