



Early Learning Coalition of the Nature Coast

Serving Citrus – Dixie – Gilchrist – Levy – Sumter Counties

Early Learning Provider Recruitment/Expansion Program

Recognizing population growths for children birth to five in each county serviced by the Early Learning Coalition of the Nature Coast, it is important to support initiatives to recruit new early care providers to increase the number of quality early care programs offered to children. The Provider Recruitment/Expansion Program also supports existing early learning providers seeking funds to increase capacity and serve more children in a quality early learning environment.

In accordance with Coalition-approved Early Learning Program Operating Procedures (ELPOP) all providers have the opportunity to contract with the Coalition to provide quality, safe environments that promote social, emotional, and academic success.

The Coalition is committed to providing the necessary resources to recruit child care facilities and those interested in opening a child care facility in order to offer more opportunities to parents/caregivers for parental choice. To further this commitment, the Coalition through this program will assist established centers to increase capacity to serve more children which continues to provide parents/caregivers many choices when choosing a quality early learning environment.

Early Learning Provider Recruitment Plan

Coalition staff will actively contact established child care facilities including FCCHs to provide information on the benefits of serving as an early learning provider. In addition, staff will work collaboratively with the Department of Children & Families and Workforce Development Boards in targeting those interested in opening a child care facility.

New Early Learning Providers

Staff will meet with the potential early learning provider to provide the following information:

- Provide an orientation presentation outlining the history of the Coalition and the Early Learning Program
- Review the School Readiness Provider Agreement and/or the Statewide Provider Agreement (AWI-VPK-20) with potential early learning provider (May be completed by the service provider)
- Review the Health & Safety Pre-Assessment (May be completed by the service provider)
- Review Coalition-approved provider observation tool
- Review student assessment process
- Review Early Learning Provider Recruitment/Expansion Program Application, and assist the provider in completing the application

Once this visit is completed, the Coalition or the service provider will conduct the Coalition-approved Health & Safety Pre-Assessment as applicable. In addition, the provider must certify compliance with program agreement requirements.

The score earned on the Health & Safety Pre-Assessment, the application information, and staff observation will determine the needs of the provider. The Advisory Council will review recommendations from staff based on the information contained in the Health & Safety Pre-Assessment or the Department of Children and Families licensing inspection, the provider recruitment application and staff observation.

Currently Contracted Early Learning Providers

If an early learning provider is currently contracted with the Coalition to provide early learning services (VPK or School Readiness), the provider is eligible to apply for provider recruitment funds. To qualify for this quality initiative program, the provider must target expanding services to increase the capacity of children served. The following procedures will apply:

- Coalition staff will review current capacity of the early learning provider
- Coalition staff will document the anticipated increase based on an interview with facility director/owner
- Coalition staff will conduct an observation visit and document the potential needs based on the area(s) being expanded
- Coalition staff will review the early learning providers observation reports, as applicable, conducted by the service provider to verify compliance

Allowable costs for this program may include but not limited to:

- Furniture to support the new learning environment
- Resource materials (i.e. books, dramatic play, crayons, paint, manipulative items, curriculum and other items necessary to support the new learning environment)
- Fencing
- Outdoor play equipment used for the development of gross motor
- Fees that are associated with the increase in capacity (impact fees or other types of fees paid to support the new learning environment)
- Literature (books and furniture to support literacy activities)

ALL providers must comply with Coalition and legislative requirements as stated in the provider agreement. Failure to comply may result in the elimination of participation in Coalition funded quality initiative programs (as stated in Quality Initiative Funding Procedures and Provider Agreement Termination/Reinstatement Procedures).

Important Note: All funds allocated under this program must be used to enhance the early care environment for children and maintain compliance with Coalition-approved policies & procedures. Funding for quality programs does not include capital improvements or transportation and may require match funding by provider. Funding amounts will be approved by the Advisory Council. Non-compliance with this program and/or termination of the school readiness/VPK contract with the Coalition and/or the service provider within 1 year of the contract period will result in repayment of funds.

Director/Teacher Credentials (Please provide a listing of all instructors and their certifications)
(If more space is needed please list on a separate sheet)

Name: _____ Certifications: _____

Name: _____ Certifications: _____

Name: _____ Certifications: _____

Name: _____ Certifications: _____

Name: _____ Certifications: _____

Name: _____ Certifications: _____

Please list curricula that you intend to use or are currently using: _____

Completed applications and all accompanying materials must be submitted to Coalition staff two weeks before an Advisory Council for review. Refer to the Provider Recruitment Program Guidelines for further detail. Applications will be reviewed by local Advisory Councils according to program guidelines. For questions or assistance, call Ingrid Ellis at (352) 563-9939 or Tonya Hiers at (352) 490-5855.

Applicant MUST include a copy of their W-9 form as part of the application.

Please send completed application and documentation to:

Citrus & Sumter Applications:
Early Learning Coalition of the Nature Coast
Attn: Ingrid Ellis
1564 N Meadowcrest Blvd
Crystal River, FL 34429

Tri-County Applications:
Early Learning Coalition of the Nature Coast
Attn: Tonya Hiers
122 North Main Street
Chiefland, FL 32626

Applicant's Signature

Date

For Coalition use only

Received by: _____ Date submitted: _____

**Provider Recruitment/Expansion
Coalition Staff Checklist**

New Providers:

Date orientation completed _____ Conducted by _____

Provider Agreement review date _____ Conducted by _____

Health & Safety Pre-Assessment review date _____ Conducted by _____

Provider observation tool review date _____ Conducted by _____

Student assessment process review date _____ Conducted by _____

Application review date _____ Conducted by _____

Existing Providers:

Current capacity _____ Proposed capacity _____

Observation visit - date completed _____

Comments based on observation visit: