



Provider Supports Subcommittee

of the Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC)

Agency Updates

Date: July 17, 2025

Education Verification Processes Update

Big improvements are on the way to make education verification faster and more affordable for providers.

Starting July 2025, Cultivate Learning at the University of Washington will take over this work from Centralia College. Even better—**official transcripts will no longer be required** in most cases, helping reduce time and cost for applicants.

For full details, visit the update here: [Education Verification Changes – GovDelivery](#).

Updates from the Early Learning Division

Commerce Early Learning Facilities Funding Opens Sept. 1

The Washington State Department of Commerce Early Learning Facilities (ELF) program will open the 2025–2027 grant application on Sept. 1, 2025. Applications will be accepted through ZoomGrants and are due by 5 p.m. on Oct. 31, 2025.

ELF Grants support organizations to expand capacity for families receiving Working Connections Child Care and/or ECEAP services. Eligible applicants include nonprofits, public entities, tribes, school districts, and for-profit businesses.

These funds support capital projects in various stages of development, including:

- Pre-design
- Pre-development
- Construction, Renovation, and Acquisition
- Maintenance Funding for Health & Safety *
 - **This option is available for licensed and certified for payment only providers.*

Visit [Commerce's ELF website](#) for updates, resources, and to subscribe to receive email alerts.

Communications

List of Early Learning Division newsletters and messages sent out to providers since the last Provider Supports Meeting:

- 7/15/25 – [Early Care and Education Newsletter- July 2025](#)
- 7/9/25 – [Education Verification Processes](#)
- 7/8/25 – [2025-2026 Early Achievers Needs Based Grant Announcement](#)
- 6/20/25 – [Licensed Family Home Subsidy Rate Increase Effective July 1, 2025](#)
- 6/20/25 – [FFN Child Care Providers – Changes to the Child Care Subsidy Program](#)

- 6/18/25 – [Recent Legislative Action Affecting Child Care Subsidy Effective July 1, 2025](#)
 - 6/11/25 – [Early Care and education Newsletter – June 2025](#)
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Rule Making Updates

Rule Making Update - June 18, 2025

Permanent Rules: Licensing Standards for Kinship Caregivers

Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), Licensing Division (LD) filed [WSR 25-12-071](#) to finalize rules regarding the licensing standards for kinship caregivers. This rulemaking also allows the LD to issue child-specific licenses to kinship caregivers and eliminate the need to use non-safety exemptions and waivers to license these homes. This will reduce barriers and improve equity for families applying to be licensed kinship caregivers. The new chapter and related WAC amendments will also provide greater stability and outcomes for children and youth entering foster care.

These rules go into effect Tuesday, July 1, 2025.

Recently Filed Rules: Definition of Abuse or Neglect of Children and Youth

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) Partnership, Prevention, and Services Division, Child Welfare division, and Licensing division revised Chapter 110-30 WAC Child Protective Services and other related rules to align with updates to the definition of “abuse or neglect” in RCW 26.44.020 Abuse of Children that went into effect on July 1, 2025. The notice of intent for permanent rule making for these revisions was filed under [WSR](#) on July 1, 2025.

The emergency rule was filed under [WSR](#) on July 1, 2025.

Learn about WAC updates and DCYF Rule Making

Each time child care rules are updated, DCYF must provide negotiated rule making and a public comment period. We encourage you to be a part of this important process! You can learn more with these resources:

- Participate in Rule Making, subscribe to receive notices, and offer comments on DCYF’s [Rule Making](#) webpage.
- Find current information on [Rule Filings](#).
- Remember to keep your email address updated in the provider portal, and, if you are a Child Care Center, encourage your employees to subscribe individually.

Questions?

For questions about DCYF rules, or to request an alternate format for this information, please contact the DCYF Rules Coordinator at dcyf.rulescoordinator@dcyf.wa.gov.