



Provider Supports Subcommittee of the Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC)

Date: May 21, 2025

Time: 9 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Welcome and Introductions

Provider Supports Executive Committee member David Mayer welcomed members and completed introductions.

Review of Meeting Materials

Provider Supports Executive Committee member David Mayer led the group in the review of meeting materials.

March 19, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Feedback Loop

Agency Updates

Meeting Minutes

- Do you have an update on the Provider Access to a Community Equivalent (PACE)?
 - Let's talk about that in the context of some recent legislation that's passed, and how we fold that into the conversation related to staff qualifications.

Feedback Loop

- The Provider Credential Search tool is not a very good resource. It's only helpful if you are looking for a particular person. We need better resource listing.
 - We will connect with our Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) team on this and follow up.
- How will HCA and DCYF support access to developmental services for children with special needs who are in child care settings after age 3? (Many children still need services before entering preschool or kindergarten.)
 - Once a child turns three, part of that responsibility is with the school district, but we will follow up.

Agency Updates

- Can DCYF consider mobile fingerprinting units for home-based providers or those with limited transportation, especially those caring for medically fragile children?
 - We have considered that, but our current vendor does not offer that service. We are hoping to revisit this in the future.
- Please reach out to dcyf.communityengagement@dcyf.wa.gov with any follow up questions.

Early Learning and Licensing Remarks

DCYF Assistant Secretary of Licensing Ruben Reeves, and Assistant Secretary of Early Learning Nicole Rose provided a summary of the 2024 Community Child Care Forum action items. Child Care Deputy Senior Administrator Debbie Groff, followed with an update on the 2025 Community Child Care Conversations.

DCYF Rule Making Webpage

Capacity Waivers for Family Home Child Care Providers
2024 Community Child Care Forums Summary Report

2024 Community Child Care Forums

- Legislation had previously created an internal review panel with DCYF licensing staff and child care providers to review cases. Can providers be included in the Internal Review Committee process?
 - There is statute on this. The statute reads that that community review panel would review things that were non-health and safety related Washington Administrative Codes (WACs). Because our WACs that are non-health and safety typically fall to technical assistance and first-time forgiveness, they haven't risen to the level of noncompliance needing a review. If first-time forgiveness goes away and the non-health and safety items show up on an inspection report, then we will start working with providers on reviewing those cases. We still have the names of folks who were interested, and we will be reaching out to ensure that we follow through with that statute.
 - How will we know that our name is on the list?
 - DCYF gathered a list of interested providers. We can certainly revisit that list for future roll out.
- If a staff member is out of date on their bloodborne pathogens that might connect to 3 or 4 different WACs, and that same compliance issue gets listed 3 or 4 times on the monitoring visit reports.
 - WA Compass is currently working on this issue. Hopefully by the end of next fiscal year, there will be an update so that when they make a citation, their observation will be for that particular regulation.
 - I will make sure to provide an update at our next provider support meeting.
- Is DCYF considering the development of a survey that allows providers to give feedback on their experiences with licensors?
 - It was created and now exists. Your licensor should send it out after a monitoring visit.
 - The survey is sent out automatically after a Monitoring Visit inspection. So, if you have not had a Monitoring Visit inspection yet, you would not have received the survey. That email will be sent to the email listed on the Account and to the Primary Contact email associated with the account.

2025 Community Child Care Conversations

- In person gatherings are currently being scheduled and dates will be posted on the [Community Child Care Conversations webpage](#).
- Please reach out to dcyf.communityengagement@dcyf.wa.gov with any follow up questions.

Licensing Dispute Process

DCYF WA Compass Product Owner Michele Sampilo and Child Care Deputy Senior Administrator Debbie Groff gave an overview of the disputes process within the WA Compass system.

WA Compass Provider Portal

- My account says, 'No Inspection Reports available.' Is that normal?
 - If you don't see any inspection reports under that section, that means that you don't have any that are actively in progress at the time. If you receive an email saying you have an inspection report that needs review, then there will be a report in your account, and you can dispute anything that is listed in the noncompliance section.
- How long do providers have to fill out the dispute form?
 - Disputes are only available for 10 business days.

- Is there a way to create a process to give a new licensee access to the program's provider portal automatically when there is a transfer of leadership? Right now, that is a very manual process
 - Currently, there is not if there is a change of director. The licensor should be involved to ensure the individual meets requirements, etc.
 - Correct, on the MERIT end, the licensor is able to make all the adjustments after the new director is verified, but then the provider typically needs to email the provider portal to say those changes have been made. Can the licensor add the provider portal to their list of contacts when adjusting the system in terms of primary contact, access to facility tab, etc.?
 - The licensor can and should be making that update in the system when they are aware of that change and not putting that on the provider to reach out to make the update.
- For assistance with the WA Compass Provider Portal, please contact Provider Portal Support (dcyf.providerportal@dcyf.wa.gov or 866-627-8929).

Insurance Rates in Child Care

DCYF Regulatory and Legal Administrator Emily Arneson provided an update regarding the rising cost and limited availability of liability insurance for child care providers.

S2502 Property & Casualty Market Report on Feasibility of Joint Underwriting Association for Childcare Services | Office of the Insurance Commissioner

- Is there a way to remove the Risk Descriptions (Serious, Short-Term, etc.) and instead just list the number of days required to fix the issue? I think the language makes many things seem more serious than they are.
 - I'm taking notes on all suggestions and will look into that.
- What would happen if a licensor came and the provider doesn't have insurance? Is there a waiver in place or something?
 - It is a requirement to have liability insurance. It is also in statute (RCW 43.216.700 Day care insurance) so it's the law that child care providers need insurance so we cannot provide any waivers.
 - Is it required for family homes?
 - The requirement is homeowner's insurance.
- It would be very helpful if DCYF could provide a standard form or template that child care providers can share with insurance agencies. This could explain the specific liability insurance requirements for licensed providers in Washington. Many of us struggle to explain what is needed, and having an official document could save time and reduce confusion.
 - I will look into that.
 - Family homes can opt out of liability insurance. DCYF provides a Family Home Child Care Liability Insurance Form.
- It would be good for the Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) study to include a state-backed insurance pool. Other states are doing that due to insurance coverage being unavailable in climate disaster areas.
 - I think that is the hope for this if it went forward with a joint underwriting association. What do you mean by state-backed?
 - The state being involved means that providers are not the guarantors. I feel like child care providers are not resourced well enough to be self-insured and that's essentially what a risk pool is for childcare providers.
 - I will look into what other states are doing.

- Here is a good article on those state backed plans, called 'FAIR plans' and it provides the states that offer this.
- I'm trying to add an additional license for an Outdoor Nature Based (ONB) center program. I'm awaiting offers from two agents but have been turned down by one already. Of course, the insurance agents want the license first and the licensor wants insurance first.
 - That should be able to be solved at the license level. We can send something to the insurance company so that they can issue the insurance.
- Some of us are worried that by not having enough children on subsidies in our care our insurance might get cancelled even though we have children in care that are private pay. It doesn't seem fair or just. There are many families that are no longer eligible for subsidized care and others just can't afford the co-pays.
 - We can connect and make sure this is communicated to the OIC study.
- When would be a good time for you to come back to Provider Supports and have more discussion?
 - The study will be done in November, so certainly after that or after the OIC submits their report to the legislature.
- Will OIC reach out to DCYF to hear from providers for their study?
 - Yes, they have said they will need assistance with contacting providers and gathering information.
 - If a provider has had their insurance cancelled, should they reach out to you?
 - I don't know how OIC will be selecting their pool, but yes, I can certainly create a list of people and give that to them.
- Who is doing this study?
 - It will be a contractor through OIC. They currently have a request for proposals on their website which closes next week. Once a company is selected, I can pass along contact information for anyone who would like to be contacted by them.
- Please reach out to Emily Arneson (emily.arneson@dcyf.wa.gov) with any follow up questions.

Early Learning Legislative Update.

DCYF Assistant Secretary of Early Learning Nicole Rose and Government Affairs Policy Advisor Courtney Parker provided an update on early learning legislation.

DCYF Government Affairs Webpage

Licensed Family Home Cost of Care Rate Enhancement FAQs

- Is the Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) program affected by any budget changes?
 - Yes that was included in SB 5752, and more information can be found in the May 14, 2025 End-of-Legislative Session Update Webinar Slides and Recording.
- Can you explain the savings by removing something about "hold harmless"?
 - For example, if the rate a provider was being paid right now was \$30 a day but the 2024 market rate survey said for that child age in that region should have been \$25 a day, there's savings assumed by taking that rate down. In the past, what we would have done is continued to pay at that higher rate. But there was a policy decision made here to bring everybody to the 85th percentile when that is implemented.
 - Are you saying that if the provider's rate is lower than subsidy, the provider will be paid the lower private pay rate?
 - This doesn't change the piece around if your private pay rate is lower than the subsidy rate. What changes is if you are being paid a subsidy rate of \$30, and that is higher than what the 2024 market rate survey says for that child, age and

region, that payment will be brought down to what the market rate says for that child, age and region.

- Can you explain how that happens?
 - There are a few rates and regions where we are seeing this occurring. We will follow up with specific examples.
- What if they are currently eligible and expecting another child that will arrive after July 1? Would the second child be eligible?
 - They would need to notify us and go through the eligibility process.
 - Is that as soon as they know they are pregnant or after the baby is born?
 - It's when they need care. We are working on communication for all of these changes.
- Is the 12 month eligibility change effective July 1?
 - The savings are assumed that it will be implemented on July 1. However, we have a very old legacy data systems to determine eligibility and it takes us some time to make changes. It is likely not until March 2026, but it is a bit complicated.
- What is the percentage of the increase of parent co-payments?
 - We are working on a table with the changes and will follow up on this.
- Regarding the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) and taking back slots, are you not filling them but will hold them until you have funding? Or are we starting all over again with the number that's filled?
 - ECEAP is not slated to become an entitlement until 2030-2031. DCYF does not hold onto those slots; the legislature has taken them back.
- What impact will the removal of seasonal child care funding have on families who rely on care during agricultural or summer work periods?
 - There will be no impact if they are eligible for regular Working Connections Child Care (WCCC).
- I saw that \$300,000 in funding was provided for DCYF to contract with a licensed child care center for a Child Care Mental Health Pilot Program. I would strongly recommend that future pilots include the intersection of mental health and disability. Will DCYF consider including children with disabilities in the scope of future mental health pilot programs?
 - That funding was actually vetoed because there weren't enough resources in order to implement that. I hear the need to consider the intersection of mental health and disability, and behavioral health needs moving forward. However, at this point in time, there is not additional funding to do pilots or anything like that. That is not within this budget.
 - DCYF is trying to maintain some core services and making sure that the dollars that remain really are going to as many direct services as possible. This is something that we are focused on in the agency.
- Related to workgroup (experienced based competency) mentioned with HB 1648: will this address the micro-credential option (which seems to have disappeared)?
 - I think it will be a worthy discussion in the 1648 work group around what micro-credentials look like and how we might take experience into consideration. We had paused on some of that, while looking at the foundational staff qualifications requirements. However, we will continue to look into this as we do the staff qualifications work group.
- Please reach out to Courtney Parker (courtney.parker@dcyf.wa.gov) and Nicole Rose (nicole.rose@dcyf.wa.gov) with any follow-up questions.

Closing Remarks/Adjourn

- The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 16, 2025.