

Early Achievers COVID-19 Updates

Temporary Suspension of Timeline Requirements

Gov. Inslee's Proclamation 20-31, which put a hold on Early Achievers timeline requirements beginning March 26, 2020, is set to expire September 1, 2020. This proclamation:

- Temporarily waives and suspends specific statutes related to Early Achievers in order to minimize barriers for early learning programs.
- Lifts the Early Achievers timeline requirements for registration, Level 2 and rating through September 1, 2020.

What to Expect When Timelines Resume

- Early learning programs that missed ECEAP or subsidy timeline requirements while the proclamation was in effect will have 30 days from the end of the proclamation to meet their timeline requirement.
- Early learning programs must enroll in Early Achievers to meet the registration milestone.
- Early learning programs must submit their Application for Level 2 to meet the Level 2 milestone.
- Early learning programs must submit an **Early Achievers Request for On-Site Evaluation (EAROSE)** to meet the rating milestone.
- Data collection will continue to be on hold through the end of 2020. A submitted EAROSE will still be required to maintain subsidy timeline requirements and current ratings, even though no data collection is happening at this time.

Reimagining Early Achievers

Looking ahead at how Early Achievers can best support early learning programs in providing quality care to the children and families they serve, we are working with participants and partners to reimagine Early Achievers and develop a coaching, data collection and rating process that:

- Further individualizes approaches to supporting and recognizing early learning programs' quality improvement efforts.
- Maintains an active role in addressing issues of equity and systemic racism within the early learning system.
- Values and incorporates the input of the participants.

We are committed to communicating with early learning programs throughout this process and will strive to provide advance notice, clear instructions, and work to offer a flexible approach before data collection resumes sometime in 2021.



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

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Eligibility and Provider Supports | Approved for distribution by Rachael Brown-Kendall, QRIS Administrator

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I have been closed for several months and my enrollment is very low. My rating milestone is approaching. Should I still submit my [Early Achievers Request for On-Site Evaluation \(EAROSE\)](#)?

A: Yes! Submitting an EAROSE prior to your initial rating milestone will allow you to continue accepting subsidy and allow those early learning programs who have not passed the 30-month time limit to continue receiving the 2% tiered subsidy reimbursement.

For early learning programs approaching their rating expiration, a submitted EAROSE will prevent program ratings from expiring and allow rated subsidy early learning programs to continue receiving tiered reimbursement and Quality Improvement Awards.

Q: I missed my rating milestone and would like to begin accepting subsidy again, but am unable to rate because data collection is on hold. Is there any way for me to become eligible for subsidy authorizations at this time?

A: We want all early learning programs to have a path to subsidy eligibility and all families to have access to quality care despite the current hold on data collection and rating. As of July 22, 2020, early learning programs that are ineligible to accept subsidy because of a missed rating milestone can restore their subsidy eligibility by submitting their [Early Achievers Request for On-Site Evaluation \(EAROSE\)](#) and remain in the data collection queue.

An EAROSE submission after the rating milestone allows programs that fall under this category to accept subsidy again, however it does not reinstate tiered reimbursement or Quality Improvement Awards until the early learning program has received an eligible rating.

Q: I have submitted my EAROSE and am in the rating queue. What should I do to prepare for rating?

A: DCYF and Early Achievers recognize that both early learning programs and the families they serve have been confronted with unprecedented challenges during these uncertain times. Going forward, Early Achievers will look different, including the standards and the tools and methods we use to assess quality. We recommend that all early learning program staff use this time to practice self-care and implement trauma-informed, healing centered practices to support children and families. We encourage you to continue working with your Early Achievers coach focusing on developmentally appropriate practice, teacher-child interactions and engaging learning environments.

Q: I have been working toward a Level 4 rating but am concerned I won't be able to meet some of the standard requirements due to closure/low enrollment during the state of emergency.

We understand that procedures, program records and child files may all be impacted by the pandemic. Going forward, Early Achievers will look different, including the standards and the tools and methods we use to assess quality. We will engage partners and participants to help shape changes to Early Achievers. As we engage with participants and partners to develop this process, we will also solicit input from providers to create an implementation plan that allows participants time to prepare for the change in data collection processes and acknowledges the shift in priority and practice that many sites had to make during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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