

# PACE – Provider Access to a Community Equivalent

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Get to Know the PACE – Provider Access to a Community Equivalent

**Q: What is the community-based training pathway?**

**A:** The community-based training, now known as PACE – Provider Access to a Community Equivalent, is an equivalent option to meet licensing education requirements for early learning roles that require an initial or short certificate (assistant teachers, lead teachers, and family home licensees).

**Q: Why is this training now called PACE?**

**A:** Now that this is an official program, DCYF is renaming the program to distinguish this pathway. Formerly known as the community-based training pathway, PACE will be available starting in 2022.

**Q: Why is there a training equivalent?**

**A:** DCYF worked with many stakeholders after the negotiated rulemaking for WAC 110-300. Community members expressed a desire to have a community-based training option to meet the new education requirements. The work from the Equivalents Workgroup (2018 – 2019) continued the momentum for a training pathway. In April 2020, HB 2556 was passed and guided the development of the community-based training pathway, now known as PACE. For more information online, go to [http://lawfilesexet.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2019-20/Pdf/Bills/Session Laws/House/2556-S.SL.pdf?q=20200714144807](http://lawfilesexet.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2019-20/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/House/2556-S.SL.pdf?q=20200714144807).

**Q: What does PACE consist of?**

**A:** PACE is a training series that builds on required training and includes:

- Child Care Basics
- Enhancing Quality of Early Learning (Years 1 and 2)
- PACE Modules – After completing these foundational trainings, providers will complete the two modules in PACE and On-the-Job Learning. To learn more about how On-the-Job Learning is part of this pathway, review the publication *PACE Program Overview* (EPS\_0071) online at [www.dcyf.wa.gov/publications-library/eps\\_0071](http://www.dcyf.wa.gov/publications-library/eps_0071).

**Q: When will this be available?**

**A:** The pilot concluded in June 2021. DCYF is working on expanding the availability and capacity for this equivalent option. This training option will start being available in late January 2022.



**Q: How long will it take me to complete PACE?**

**A:** Early learning providers who choose to use PACE to meet their education requirement will have five years from their date of hire or promotion to complete PACE. Providers are able to go at their own pace and can complete it at their own time. The total for the training pathway is:

- Child Care Basics – 30 hours
- Enhancing Quality of Early Learning – 20 hours
- Additional PACE In-service Training – 40 hours
- On-the-job Learning - 30 hours

**Q: What languages will PACE be available in?**

**A:** It will be available in English, Spanish, and Somali.

**Q: How will PACE be available?**

**A:** PACE will be available in person and online.

**Q: What can I do while I wait for the PACE modules to be available?**

**A:** While the newly developed PACE modules won't be available until late January 2022, early learning providers can make sure they are eligible for this option by checking their role in MERIT. Providers can complete Child Care Basics and EQEL before starting the PACE modules.

**Q: Will MERIT tell me if I am eligible to complete the community-based training equivalent?**

**A:** In October 2021, the MERIT qualifications dashboard will be available. There, providers will be able to select the option they choose to meet their qualifications requirement. If you are eligible for this training option, you will be able to make this election in your dropdown box.

**Q: Is PACE available for everyone?**

**A:** No, PACE is only available for the early learning roles that require the initial or short certificate. This includes family home licensees, lead teachers, and assistant teachers. PACE is not available to meet the ECEAP Performance Standards and is not eligible for Early Achievers Professional Development points.

## Training

**Q: Does PACE count toward annual in-service hours?**

**A:** Yes, participating in PACE trainings will count toward annual in-service training requirements.

**Q: Do I need to complete EQEL if I was hired before Aug. 1, 2019?**

**A:** If you were hired before Aug. 1, 2019, and you wish to complete PACE for your education requirement, EQEL will need to be completed as it is part of this training model.

## For More Information

**Q: How do I know this pathway is best for me?**

**A:** It is important that you choose the pathway that is best for your goals. You can use the *Guide to Professional Development Plans (PDP) for Early Learning Providers* to learn more about each option.

**Q: Who do I contact to get more information?**

**A:** If you need additional assistance, please reach out to our MERIT Workforce Registry Support Team.

Email: [merit@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:merit@dcyf.wa.gov)

Phone: 1-866-482-4325, option 5