

# Early Childhood Provider Call

## Meeting Minutes

December 15, 2022 – 1:30pm

### Caitlin Gleason, Associate Secretary, Early Childhood Support (ECS)

Caitlin welcomed everyone and thanked them for joining today's call. This call was recorded for transcription purposes and to enter any questions into the chat.

Please take a moment to sign up for emails at this link [tinyurl.com/EarlyChildhoodDE](https://tinyurl.com/EarlyChildhoodDE) to receive early childhood communications directly to your inbox. Pass this on to your colleagues so they can sign up too!

The Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) & the Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL) offices will be closed on the following days:

- December 23, 2022
- December 26, 2022
- December 30, 2022
- January 2, 2022

### **Governor's Budget**

DDOE will know the Governor's budget at the end of January 2023, this will help the Early Childhood Support team make informed choices on how to spend that money directly supporting our workforce. This will be the main topic of the February 16, 2023 provider call.

### **Developmental Screenings**

The Delaware Department of Education requested an amendment to [HB202](#) on Developmental Screenings to reflect requirements federal requirements around parental consent. This will allow us to finalize developmental screening regulations to go along with the Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL) regulations. We anticipate that it will be available for public comment in the spring of 2023. Regulation revisions are anticipated to be final by July 2023, which is the implementation requirement for [HB202](#).

OCCL/Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) will continue monitoring and looking for compliance around [HB202](#)/developmental screenings. However, OCCL/DDOE will not be citing non-compliance until one year after implementation of finalized developmental screening regulations.

Technical assistance for any questions, direct you to trainings, and help with implementation has already begun! Email [jenny.grady@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:jenny.grady@doe.k12.de.us) for support.

### **Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Act Implementation ([HB222](#))**

The Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL) appreciates your desire to be proactive regarding the recent changes to Delaware Code made by the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Act. The Act increased the amount of lead poisoning screenings required for children from one screening at around 12 months to two screenings to be ordered at around 12 months and 24 months. To meet these new requirements, OCCL's DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers, Regulation 41 was changed to increase the number of blood lead screenings required within a Child's Health Appraisal form.

This regulation change was previously explained at the trainings OCCL presented on the new regulations and in the email sent to all providers on June 3, 2022.

OCCL/DDOE created regulations around child blood lead testing based on the legislation that was passed for implementation. However, implementation guidance from OCCL/DOE has not been finalized because Delaware Public Health (DPH) is still finalizing their regulations to be submitted for public comment in the Register of Regulations.

Current child care regulations (Center: #41A; Family/Large Family: #23A) require "proof of a blood lead screening for children at or around age 12 months." OCCL/DOE continues to review children's files to ensure the 12 month lead screening has been completed.

Starting in January 2023, OCCL/DDOE will not cite as non-compliant if a second blood lead screening at or around 24 months has not been performed. When DPH regulations are finalized, OCCL will amend child care regulations to reflect the requirement in this area. Providers will be informed and guidance provided in advance of any non-compliant citation with this second blood lead test.

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Until DPH regulations are finalized and OCCL has amended its regulations and given adequate notice for monitoring, OCCL will only monitor that Child Health Appraisals contain proof of one blood lead test for each child ages 12 months and older. Please Do NOT disenroll children who may be lacking two lead screenings.

As a result of your feedback, OCCL is seeking additional guidance from DPH to ensure clarity for everyone involved. OCCL will provide you with additional guidance as soon as possible. We appreciate your understanding as we all work to help support the health and safety of children.

### Health and Safety Training

All staff, substitutes, and volunteers working at least 5 days or 40 hours per year to complete OCCL's approved Health and Safety Training for Child Care Professionals as part of the orientation to comply with the Child Care and Development Block Grant, rather than permitting the early childhood administrator to create their own version of that required training.

Link to the Health & Safety training on DIEEC - it is second from the bottom on the list:

<https://dieecpd.org/registry/calendar/online>

### Other OCCL Regulations

For currently licensed family and large family child care homes the following regulations take effect **February 01, 2023** (All family child care programs were emailed in early June with the changes):

- Adult volunteers who are present for at least five days or 40 hours per year must complete OCCL's approved Health & Safety Training for Childcare Professionals (certificate required) (13 I)
- A written release of children procedure must be added to the parent handbook that includes monitoring the entrance of the home or phone, email, or other communication methods used by the home to ensure the child is released from care when requested by the parent, guardian, or authorized release person (20 B)

Any questions can be directed to their licensing specialist.

### Westside Family Healthcare – Health Insurance Marketplace

Staff are still available to help with open enrollment. Because of the inflation reduction act, more people qualify for help purchasing quality health insurance. Four out of five people can find a plan for \$10.00 a month or less after subsidies. You can also check out these resources, which includes the phone number for Westside Family Healthcare staff:

[Small Business Toolkit](#) which includes:

- Cover page to explain how to use the toolkit and contents
- Letter of Introduction for Employees
- How to Schedule an Appointment with a Certified Assister Flyer
- Partner Email Content
- Westside Family Healthcare Enrollment Services Flyer
- Westside Family Healthcare Patient Services Flyer

[Special Enrollment Period Flyer](#)

[Patient Services Flyer](#)

[Infographic Special Enrollment](#)

### Survey Results

Information that was collected from two surveys:

- From the Office of Early Learning regarding Child Care Professionals, which closed on December 15, 2022
- From deaeyc to understand the needs of the workforce

The workforce data collected will be shared after January 2023 to make better decisions on how DDOE is spending money for scholarships, bonuses etc.

**The Child Care Bonus Program** [www.delawareece.com](http://www.delawareece.com)

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DDOE is planning on offering a 2<sup>nd</sup> round of child care bonus program that will be tied to the professional registry. If you already received the 1<sup>st</sup> round bonus and created a profile, you will need to login and fill out a few more fields. If you did not receive the 1<sup>st</sup> round of the bonus, you'll still be eligible.

More information regarding the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the child care bonus will be available in early 2023 with anticipation of the application being open around March 2023.

If you did receive a bonus payment this year, since it was taxable income, you will need to login to the portal [www.delawareece.com](http://www.delawareece.com) for your 1099. You should also be receiving an email as well regarding this, so be on the lookout for that. The 1099 will come from the WELS Foundation, LLC.

If you have questions about your tax documents, please reach out to the Child Care Bonus Help Desk, available Monday through Friday, 8am to 7pm and Saturday, 9am to 5pm. Email [support@welsfoundation.org](mailto:support@welsfoundation.org) or call (302) 549-4212 for Help Desk support.

### **Thomas Hall, Director, Delaware Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS)**

The Purchase of Care (POC) Program continues to waive the family co-pay and we will be doing that through at least April 2023.

Child care providers can bill for up to fifteen (15) absent days in the month for any child that attends at least one (1) day during the month. Absent days can be the result of the following:

- Need for the child to be out
- The providers need to close the classroom(s)
- Their facility to meet quarantine and isolation requirements

The 15 absent days will be in effect through June at this time.

Providers will be given at least two-month notice should the copays no longer be waived. This is actually part of the legislation discussion right now of what the long term will be.

DHSS is leading a work group with partners from DDOE, early education professionals, other advocates for the determination payment verification of special needs children in the POC program. Hoping to have proposed regulations by February 2023.

**This meeting recording can be found [HERE](#)**

### **★ UPCOMING PROVIDER CALLS ★**

2023 Provider Call Meeting Dates click [HERE](#)

*Please add these dates to your calendar*

February 16, 2023 at 1:30pm

April 20, 2023 at 1:30pm

June 22, 2023 at 1:30pm

August 17, 2023 at 1:30pm

October 19, 2023 at 1:30pm

December 14, 2023 at 1:30pm

As the dates get closer a reminder email will go out along with the WebEx link