

ELC Policy Name: Continuity of Operation Plan (“COOP”)-Provider Reimbursement

ELC Policy No.:

Approval Date: 6/8/07

Rev. Date(s): 8/9/16

COA Standards: N/A

Purpose of Policy: To give clear direction regarding the process of supporting providers in the form of temporary monetary reimbursement upon the activation of the COOP to deal with a natural disaster

Statement of Policy: Immediately following a natural disaster, the Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc. (“ELC”) shall take steps to assist early care and education providers in their recovery efforts. These steps may include, but not be limited to, implementing temporary provider payment adjustments and/or redirecting quality initiatives dollars for use in providing disaster relief mini grants.

Board Chair’s Signature: _____ Date Signed: _____

STATEMENT OF PROCEDURE:**Definition(s)**

1. **Board** shall have the same meaning as it does in the ELC bylaws.
2. **Chair** shall have the same meaning as it does in the ELC bylaws.
3. **Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”)** shall have the same meaning as it does in the ELC bylaws.
4. **Client** shall mean the intended recipients of the ELC and/or Office of Early Learning (“OEL”) grant related activities or funding, including, but not limited to the ELC’s Voluntary Pre- Kindergarten (“VPK”) or School Readiness (“SR”) programs and services such as children, parents, and legal guardians.
5. **Contractor** shall mean those eligible licensed entities that contract directly with the ELC to provide School Readiness or Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten services and/or programs in accordance with Florida Statutes and provides monitoring, investigations and/or other oversight functions on behalf of the ELC to Service Providers. For purposes of this policy and procedure, the term “**Contractor**” shall have the same meaning as the term “**lead agency**” or “**subrecipient**” in any statewide agreement(s) created by Office of Early Learning, any other governing state agency or authority for the ELC, any applicable federal or Florida statutes, or within any contract or agreement with a third party concerning VPK or SR services.
6. **Enhanced Field System (“EFS”)** - A data management system used by the Office of Early Learning, the ELC and Contractor(s) to manage the Early Care and Education program.
7. **ELC Staff** means those persons directly employed by the ELC. This definition does not include the Chief Executive Officer for purposes of this policy and procedure.
8. **ELC 2 Contractor** - The contractor chosen by the ELC as a result of its procurement activities to perform Eligibility and Enrollment and Fiscal Administration for the School Readiness, Child Care Executive Partnership, Voluntary Prekindergarten, and Financially Assisted Child Care Programs on behalf of the ELC.
9. **General Counsel** shall mean the primary law firm contracted with the ELC to provide legal and general counsel services to the ELC.
10. **Member(s)** shall have the same meaning as it does in the ELC bylaws.
11. **School Readiness (“SR”) Programs** - The Florida SR Program offers financial assistance to low-income families for early education and care so they can become financially self-sufficient and their young children can be successful in school in the future. The SR program has three specific eligibility requirements:
 - 11.1 Parent(s)/guardian(s) must be working or participating in an educational activity, such as attending college or trade school at least 20 hours per week or a total of 40 hours per week for a two-parent household.
 - 11.2 Gross Income must be at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty level for family size to enter the program.
 - 11.3 Families must pay a copayment for childcare based on income and family size unless waived in accordance with the Child Care Development Fund (“CCDF”) State Plan.

- 12. Service Agreement** - An agreement for service with a Service Provider that defines established criteria for the delivery of an Early Care and Education Program that may include an established rate of payment for a specified unit of service.
- 13. Service Provider** shall mean an eligible public school, private school, or licensed childcare entity that has provider agreement with the ELC and/or a Contractor to provide Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (“VPK”) or School Readiness (“SR”) program services directly to children in Broward County in accordance with Florida Statutes. For purposes of this policy and procedure, the term “**Service Provider**” shall have the same meaning as the term “**Provider**” in any statewide agreement(s) for VPK and SR created by the Office of Early Learning OEL, any other governing state agency for the ELC, any applicable federal or Florida statutes, or within any contract or agreement with a third party concerning VPK or SR services.
- 14. Single Point of Entry (“SPE”)** shall mean the process established in accordance with Florida Statutes that allows parents to access the Child Care Resource and Referral (“CCR&R”) services and to apply for SR and VPK Programs through the family portal. The SPE is the access point for the unified waiting list. If funding is not available, children eligible for the SR program will be placed on the uniform waiting list.
- 15. Single Statewide Information System** – The single statewide information system is a statewide integrated technology system to provide critical information to early learning coalitions, parents, partners and providers. The anticipated benefits of the single statewide information system include, but may not be limited to, the following – (1) streamlined administrative processes for attendance tracking, eligibility processing and provider payments, (2) data sharing opportunities for educators, parents, providers and state agencies and (3) easy online access to child care resources and referral information for early learning programs. The single statewide information system is made up of multiple component units including the Core Module (currently Enhanced Field System), Family Portal and Provider Portal.
- 16. Subcontractor** shall mean agencies, individuals, or organizations with which a Contractor may contract to perform particular areas of the core service components. Subcontractors may not be permitted in all cases and may be subject to the approval of the ELC prior to hire.
- 17. Vendor** shall means a dealer, distributor, merchant or seller who provides the goods and services within business operations; provides similar goods or services to many different purchasers; operates in a competitive environment; provides goods or services that are ancillary to the operation of the federal program; and is not subject to compliance requirements of the federal program. For purposes of this policy and procedure, the term “**Consultant**” shall have the same meaning as the term “**Vendor**”.
- 18. Voluntary Pre-kindergarten Education Program (“VPK”)** - A free educational program that prepares 4-year-olds for success in kindergarten and beyond. Children must live in Florida and be four (4) years old on or before September 1st of the current year to be eligible. The program helps children build a strong foundation using educational materials that fit their developmental needs. Private child care centers (including family child care homes), public schools, and specialized instructional service providers may offer VPK. Parent may choose from one of the following programs:
- 18.1 School-year program – 540 instructional hours. Class size of 20 or fewer students. Instructors must hold a Birth through Five Florida Child Care Professional Credential.
- 18.2 Summer program – 300 instructional hours. Class Sizes of 12 or fewer students. Instructors must hold a bachelor’s degree.

18.3 Specialized Instructional Services Program – Hours vary by instructional service provided. For children with disabilities who have current individual education plans developed by local school districts.

IMPLEMENTATION OF COOP AND CONDITIONAL PAYMENT TO PROVIDERS

In the event Broward County, Florida has been designated as a natural disaster area, has been declared eligible for individual and/or public federal disaster assistance by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (“FEMA”) and the ELC has been approved for disaster relief by Florida’s Office of Early Learning (“OEL”), the ELC shall implement, based on the severity of the disaster, temporary provider payment adjustments and/or the redirection of quality funds for use in implementing provider disaster relief mini grants.

1. The ELC may reimburse Providers serving children receiving financial assistance who are in contractual and statutory compliance from School Readiness funds as directed by OEL when the Continuity of Operations Plan (“COOP”) is in effect and/or as directed by the Office for Early Learning. All COOP-related reimbursements are based on availability of funds if the one of the following shall occur:
 - a. closure is beyond the control of the provider;
 - b. Broward County is closed for emergency purposes for up to 5 days;
 - c. as directed by the Office of Early Learning; or
 - d. business continuation insurance is not available.
2. ELC may reimburse Providers serving children receiving Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten services who are in contractual and statutory compliance and as directed by the OEL who temporarily close due to disaster related damages to their child care facility. VPK Providers may be paid during said closure for a period of up to ten (10) days per disaster.
3. Additional reimbursement to a Provider from the ELC may occur on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Board during and subsequent to the activation of the COOP. The ELC shall not be required to issue any requested reimbursement to a Provider and said consideration shall be in the sole discretion of the Board. To be considered for additional reimbursement by the ELC, the Provider must submit the following documentation:
 - a. Proof of closure must be verified in order for providers to be eligible to receive temporary provider payment adjustments. Proof may include, but not be limited to, pictures of the child care setting damages, DCF inspection report reflecting non-compliance for health and safety infractions caused by the natural disaster, local licensing staff verification as a result of a disaster assessment visit, a certification of closure statement signed and submitted by the provider to the ELC’s Service Provider for eligibility determination and application processing/slot management and payment.

Disaster Relief Mini Grants

Disaster relief mini grants may be awarded for the purpose of helping Providers reopen their child care business and/or replenish damaged early learning materials and equipment that were damaged or destroyed as a result of a natural disaster. The approval, issuance and use of said disaster relief mini grants shall be subject to applicable federal and Florida statutory restrictions

and requirements as well as in accordance with any applicable funding agreement between a governing state agency (such as OEL) and the ELC (“Grant Agreement”). The disaster relief mini grant process may be implemented at the sole discretion of the ELC based on the availability of funds and shall, if allowable in accordance with federal and Florida statutes, follow the guidelines below:

- A. Books, educational toys, playground equipment and minor remodeling, building maintenance and/or repairs needed to re-open the facility or to maintain quality of services to meet state and local child care standards, including applicable health and safety standards will be allowable expenditures.
- B. An improvement or upgrade to a facility that is not specified under the definition or major renovations may, by default, be considered a minor renovation. Therefore, remodeling a facility to its original state and purpose is an allowable expenditure. A facility must be constructed or renovated in a manner that ensures the health and safety of children in care, consistent with applicable federal and Florida statutes. This may include:
 - 1. The purchase of equipment, labor, materials and services necessary for the functioning of the facility. Equipment may include fencing, kitchen equipment, playground equipment, etc.
 - 2. Major renovations include the replacement of roofs, walls, and/or other structural components, carpet, tile, and/or other major building enhancements are unallowable expenditures.
 - 3. The cost of remodeling/upgrades, early learning materials and equipment, minor repairs and other items applied for in disaster relief mini grants must not include amounts recoverable by property insurance.
- C. All providers who are considered for a disaster relief mini grant award from the ELC must provide:
 - 1. Proof of damage including but not limited to, pictures and/or quotes for minor repair/replacement of materials and equipment or goods & services associated with the repair/replacement of facility damage
 - 2. Receipts for all expenditures made with disaster relief mini grant funds
 - 3. A correspondence or document which identifies the following:
 - a. Name of Provider
 - b. Address of damaged facility and/or property
 - c. Name of insurer(s) for damaged facility and/or property
 - d. Date of damage or casualty
 - e. Date of application or filing of claim to insurer(s) of damaged facility or property
 - f. Claim number issued by insurer(s) for reported damaged facility and/or property
 - g. Detailed description of damage to facility and/or property
 - h. Monetary amount of damage reported to the insurer(s) and insurance deductible
 - i. Monetary amount of damage to be paid by the insurer(s)
 - j. Confirmation that Provider’s insurance for facility and/or property was current at time of damage

- k. Identification of third parties other than the Provider's insurer(s) providing, or who will provide financial assistance to the Provider for the damaged facility and/or property
 4. For purposes of this section (Disaster Mini Grants), "natural disasters" shall mean "acts of God" such as hurricanes, tornados, floods, wild fires etc., acts of public enemies (including, but not limited to terrorist related activities), or other similar causes wholly beyond the party's control.
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PARTIES AFFECTED

All school readiness and/or VPK child care providers affected by a natural disaster

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS / FORMS

Disaster Relief Provider Mini Grant Application