



**VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN**

## **Provider Manual**



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## Staff Contact List

ECS Website: [www.ecs4kids.org](http://www.ecs4kids.org)

### Contract Department: VPK Provider Contracts; Applications; and Profiles

904-726-1500

Contract All: ext. 7054

HQ Location: 8649 Baypine Road, Building 7, Suite 300, Jacksonville, FL 32256

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### Reimbursement Department: VPK Provider Payments

904-726-1500

Reimbursement All: ext. 7050

HQ Location: 8649 Baypine Road, Building 7, Suite 300, Jacksonville, FL 32256

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Shivaughn Williams	Provider Services Manager	ext. 2283	<a href="mailto:Shivaughn.Williams@ecs4kids.org">Shivaughn.Williams@ecs4kids.org</a>

### Family Services Department: Family VPK Child Eligibility; Enrollment; Transfers

HQ Office: Jacksonville	8649 Baypine Road, Building 7, Suite 300 Jacksonville, FL 32256	Phone: 904-726-1500 ext. 7050 Toll Free: 800-238-3463
Baker Office	418 8 <sup>th</sup> St., Macclenny, FL 32063	Phone: 904-259-4225
Bradford Office	1080 North Pine St., Starke, FL 32091	Phone: 904-964-1543
Clay Office	1845 Town Center Blvd., Suite 150, Fleming Island, FL 32003	Phone: 904-213-3939
Nassau Office	96042 Loffton Square, Yulee, FL 32097	Phone: 904-432-0009 ext. 2626
Putnam Office	821 State Road 19 South, Palatka, FL 32177	Phone: 386-385-3450
St. Johns Office	5 Clark St., St. Augustine, FL 32084	Phone: 904-770-2565

#### Family Services Management Team:

Mary Catherine Griffin	Family Services Coordinator	<a href="mailto:Mary.Griffin@ecs4kids.org">Mary.Griffin@ecs4kids.org</a>	Phone: 904-726-1500 ext. 2290
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◇◇◇Important Details◇◇◇

**VPK Online Registration**

Parents must register their children for VPK online!  
<https://familyservices.floridagearlylearning.com/Account/Login>

**Provider Portal**

Providers must register for an account and complete a profile in the Provider Portal in order to apply for VPK.  
<https://providerservices.floridagearlylearning.com/Account/Login>

**Insurance**

Private VPK providers are required to submit documentation of their general liability insurance, automobile insurance (if applicable), workers' compensation, and reemployment compensation (if applicable).

**VPK Child Assessments**

Each VPK provider is required to administer the VPK Assessment for children enrolled in each of their VPK program types (summer and/or school year) through Florida's Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) using Star Early Literacy.

**Transfers/Reenrollments**

VPK parents are able to reenroll their children if they qualify by good cause or extreme hardship (as defined in Rule 6M-8.210). This is done through their Family Portal account.

**Director Requirements**

All VPK Directors are required to have a VPK Director Credential or hold a valid certificate in educational leadership issued by the Florida Department of Education. The VPK Director Credential requires the successful completion of the following DEL course trainings: Implementing the Florida Standards in Preschool Classrooms: 3 Years Old to Kindergarten (online VFSP); 0.5 CEUs or (instructor-led SPC3TK); Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors (online VPK, VPKR or VPK21); Mathematical Thinking for Early Learners (online MATH); Language and Vocabulary in the VPK Classroom (online LVPK or LVPK21) and VPK Director Credential Course (online DVPK).

ECS has established the following VPK deadlines to help ensure that we are able to honor our commitment to providing providers and parents with the best service possible.

### **2024-25 VPK Program Participation Deadlines**

(The participation deadlines are for all VPK providers, regardless of whether you wish to receive the advance payments or not)

All VPK Providers must be fully approved at least 14 calendar days before your anticipated start date.

For example: If your anticipated start date is August 12, 2024, you must be fully approved July 29, 2024 at the latest.

If you are not approved at least 14 calendar days before your anticipated start date, then your start date must be changed.

For example: Your program was fully approved on August 12, 2024, the earliest your program may start is September 2, 2024.

### **2024-25 VPK Program Advance Payment Deadlines**

\*\*\*Advanced payment deadlines are subject to change per DEL policy\*\*\*

If you have chosen to receive the VPK advance payment, the deadlines are as follows:

To receive the **August** advance payment:

1. Must be fully approved by no later than June 15, **AND**
2. At least 4 approved certificates of eligibilities entered into the provider portal VPK enrollment tab and submitted for approval **AND**
3. Your completed original child certificates of eligibility received in our central office no later than June 30.

To receive the **September** advanced payment:

1. Must be fully approved by no later than July 15, **AND**
2. At least 4 approved certificates of eligibilities entered into the provider portal VPK enrollment tab and submitted for approval **AND**
3. Your completed original child certificates of eligibility received in our central office no later than July 31

To receive the **October** advanced payment:

1. Must be fully approved by no later than August 15 **AND**
2. At least 4 approved certificates of eligibilities entered into the provider portal VPK enrollment tab and submitted for approval **AND**
3. Your completed original child certificates of eligibility received in our central office no later than August 30

**Please note that deadlines apply throughout the year and not just for August**

## Attendance

**How do I fill out my attendance rosters?** In accordance with DEL VPK policy, ECS bases payment on actual days attended for the VPK program. The days attended are determined by the attendance roster. You will need to sign into the Provider Portal and go to the Attendance tab, Manage VPK Attendance. When enrolling children in the portal you will assign each child a classroom. Attendance will automatically be completed for the classroom and calendar assigned to the class. You will need to click on any days the child was absent to change them from present to absent.

**When is an absence payable?** Per the Uniform Attendance Policy for Funding the VPK Program implemented August 25, 2009, each child will be paid for up to 20% of absences based on the time the child attended. See following 'Reimbursement' section for further information regarding the 80:20 attendance policy.

**What is considered an excused absence?** The revised Uniform Attendance policy does not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences and documentation of absence (e.g. mommy notes) is not needed.

**We have a child who is on our School Readiness/subsidized rosters and VPK rosters; can we just turn in one roster?** No, because School Readiness and VPK are two different programs with two different funding streams, two different rosters are required. However, only one sign in & out sheet is necessary for that child.

**What do we need to include with our VPK rosters, besides the marks of attendance?** Your program is required to keep a sign in & out sheet, as well as the VPK Parental Choice Certificate for each child. While these forms are *not required* to be turned in every month they will be periodically monitored and should be kept on file for at least 5 years from the child's last date of attendance.

**When do we send in our completed attendance rosters?** We need to receive rosters by the **THIRD** business day of every month. If some unforeseen circumstances arise and you are unable to turn in your rosters on time, please contact the Reimbursement Department as soon as possible.

*If we do not receive your submitted rosters by the third business date of the month, we are not able to guarantee payment for those days.*

**Our VPK program does not operate during the weekend; do we need to mark the days?** No, your attendance roster will only allow you to mark/change instructional days based on the VPK Calendar in your VPK Application.

**\*\*\*Note: You cannot be paid for time a child spends in your program prior to the certificate of eligibility being issued.\*\*\***

**What is a Parental Choice Certificate (PCC)?** A Parental Choice Certificate or OEL-VPK 03 (S or L) is the form that the parent/guardian is required to sign every month to verify their child(ren)'s attendance for the prior month. These forms are available at <https://www.ecs4kids.org/programs/vpk/providers/> and must be kept on file for at least 5 years from the child's last date of attendance. ECS will request these documents at various times throughout the year to complete attendance monitoring and/or as supporting documentation should an attendance discrepancy arise. Please make sure you are using the forms with the OEL logo and not AWI.

**What is the difference between the long & short version of the PCC?** There are two different versions of the PCC available for use.

You may use the OEL-VPK 03S (short form) if you record the child's daily attendance using one of the following methods:

- A. A paper sign-in or sign-out log that records the date, child's name, and signature of the parent or other person dropping off or picking up the child to, or from, the VPK site, OR
- B. An electronic attendance-tracking system that records the date, child's name, and electronic signature, card swipe, entry of a personal identification number, or similar daily action taken by the parent or other person dropping off or picking up the child to, or from, the VPK site.

You must use the OEL-VPK 03L (long form) if you record the child's daily attendance using a method other than the methods described in the OEL-VPK 03S paragraph (e.g. instructor records daily attendance using a roll book). Note: Before the parent signs the OEL-VPK 03L you must record the child's monthly attendance on the form or attach documentation to the form which shows the child's monthly attendance.

*For additional guidance on proper completion of the PCC please see the Program Monitoring portion below.*

**Are we required to have our own VPK attendance policy?** Yes, the VPK contract requires that each provider give a copy of its VPK attendance policy, in writing, to the parent or guardian of each child upon enrollment of the child in the VPK program. Per the VPK Contract, the policy must require parents to verify their child's attendance each month on the Parental Choice Certificate. ECS has sample attendance policies available if so desired. It is not required that you use our samples, they are simply tools to assist you. The VPK application requires a copy to be uploaded into the Provider Portal for approval and cannot be amended once it is verified and approved by ECS.

#### Reimbursements

**What are the current VPK reimbursements rates/allocations?** 24-25 VPK allocations are included below.

*The Governor/Florida Legislature approves the VPK allocations every year and ECS is not made aware of any changes until they are fully approved and released. Once the new allocations have been approved and released (typically this happens every June), ECS will update them on all relevant documents as well as our website. If these rates have not been updated, it means that they have not yet been approved and released by the Governor/Florida Legislature.*

**2024-2025 School Year Allocations (Effective 7/1/2024)**

County Name	Rate Based on FTE	Program Hours	Hourly Rate
Baker	\$2,856.60	540	\$5.29
Bradford	\$2,824.20	540	\$5.23
Clay	\$2,937.60	540	\$5.44
Nassau	\$2,986.20	540	\$5.53
Putnam	\$2,829.60	540	\$5.24
St Johns	\$3,013.20	540	\$5.58

**June 2025 Summer Allocations (Effective 7/01/2024)**

County Name	Rate based on FTE	Program Hours	Hourly Rate
Baker	\$2,439.00	300	\$8.13
Bradford	\$2,412.00	300	\$8.04
Clay	\$2,508.00	300	\$8.36
Nassau	\$2,550.00	300	\$8.50
Putnam	\$2,415.00	300	\$8.05
St Johns	\$2,571.00	300	\$8.57

**When do we receive our VPK payment each month?** VPK payments/reimbursements are made on or before the first of every month, however if funds are received earlier ECS will make payment upon receipt.

**How many holidays are reimbursed?** Since VPK payments are based on actual instructional days attended, holidays are not reimbursable.

**How are advanced payments calculated?** Advance payments will be paid at 95% of the hourly rate of the anticipated monthly payment for each child currently enrolled, not 100%.

The 95% is calculated by multiplying your county's VPK allocation by 95%.

**FOR EXAMPLE**

XYZ Learning Center's county VPK allocation is \$4.00,  
their Advance Payment would be calculated at \$3.80.

XYZ Learning Center has 4 VPK children  
Has a 3 hours per day VPK program  
Calendar shows 20 VPK days for October  
Their Advance Payment for October would be \$912  
 $20 \text{ (VPK days)} \times 3 \text{ (VPK hours/day)} = 60 \text{ (total VPK hours for October)}$   
 $60 \times \$3.80 \text{ (95\% of normal VPK allocation)} \times 4 \text{ children} = \$912$



If all children had perfect attendance for October XYZ's actual payment would be \$960.  
 $60$  (total VPK hours for October)  $\times$   $\$4.00$  (actual VPK allocation)  $\times$  4 children =  $\$960$

XYZ would receive the  $\$48$  with their December Advanced Payment.  
 $\$960$  (actual payment) -  $\$912$  (Advance Payment) =  $\$48$

**The '23-24 School Year Advance Payment allocations for each county served by ECS are as follows:**

Baker:  $\$5.18 \times 95\% = \$4.92$   
Bradford:  $\$5.12 \times 95\% = \$4.86$   
Clay:  $\$5.31 \times 95\% = \$5.04$   
Nassau:  $\$5.37 \times 95\% = \$5.10$   
Putnam:  $\$5.11 \times 95\% = \$4.85$   
St. Johns:  $\$5.43 \times 95\% = \$5.15$

**What if our program is not approved by the advance payment deadline?** If your program is not approved by the advanced payment deadline you will **NOT** receive an advance payment for that month. Instead, your program will be paid based on a child's actual attendance as reflected on your VPK attendance rosters.

**What happens if we do not have any/all of our completed VPK Certificates of Eligibility (COE) enrolled by the advance payment deadline?** If you do not have at least 4 completed VPK COEs enrolled by the deadline you will **NOT** receive an advance payment for those children. Instead, you will be paid for a child's actual attendance as reflected in your VPK attendance rosters.

**What if a parent has started the application process, but hasn't been approved? Will I be paid from their child's first day of attendance?** A child is not able to be VPK funded until their online VPK application has been approved. If you choose to allow a child to start without being given a COE first, you risk not being paid for days prior to their approval.

**What does "Opting out of the advance payment" mean and is it required?** Opting out of the VPK advance payment process is *completely voluntary*. Opting out of the advance payment means that you do not receive an advance payment for a child, instead you will only be paid for days that a child actually spends in your program. To opt out, simply indicate that while completing your VPK Contract in the Provider Portal.

**When is the advance payment reconciled?** The advance payment is reconciled after we process your attendance rosters each month and any reconciliation is added or subtracted from your next advance payment. Providers can choose to opt out of receiving this payment. Please contact the Contracts department to initiate the process.

Advance Payment Made + Rosters Processed – Previous Advance Payment = Monthly Payment  
(Notice that there is a month in between the advance & reconciliation needed for processing & invoicing)

Month class is held	Advance Payment made	Rosters processed & invoiced	Reconciled against Advance
August	Before the 1 <sup>st</sup> day of class	September	October
September	Before Sept 1 <sup>st</sup>	October	November
October	Before Oct 1 <sup>st</sup>	November	December
November	Before Nov 1 <sup>st</sup>	December	January
December	Before Dec 1 <sup>st</sup>	January	February
January	Before Jan 1 <sup>st</sup>	February	March
February	Before Feb 1 <sup>st</sup>	March	April
March	Before March 1 <sup>st</sup>	April	May
April	Before April 1 <sup>st</sup>	May	June
May	Before May 1 <sup>st</sup>	June	July
June	Before June 1 <sup>st</sup>	July	August
July	Before July 1 <sup>st</sup>	August	September

**For example, ONLY:**

Episcopal Family Child Care Home (program start date 08/24/24)

Total of August Advance = \$2,000 (received 08/23/24)

August rosters due & processed = September 3, 2024

August rosters show provider is due an additional \$150

Total of October Advance = \$3,000

Total October payment = \$3,150 (October Advance + August reconciliation & made before Oct 1<sup>st</sup>)

**Episcopal Children's Services pays providers in accordance with state requirements. Please note that the Division of Early Learning may update its payment policy at any time. If a change should occur, we will notify you immediately. We understand that the VPK payment process can be confusing. Please contact the Reimbursement Department if further explanation is needed.**

**If we choose to opt out of the advanced payment process, how will we be paid?** You will still receive your actual payments on or before the first of every month. However, your August payment will be made before October 1<sup>st</sup>; your September payment will be made before November 1<sup>st</sup>, etc.

Month class is held	Rosters processed & invoiced	Payment received
August	September	Before October 1 <sup>st</sup>
September	October	Before November 1 <sup>st</sup>
October	November	Before December 1 <sup>st</sup>
November	December	Before January 1 <sup>st</sup>
December	January	Before February 1 <sup>st</sup>
January	February	Before March 1 <sup>st</sup>
February	March	Before April 1 <sup>st</sup>
March	April	Before May 1 <sup>st</sup>
April	May	Before June 1 <sup>st</sup>
May	June	Before July 1 <sup>st</sup>
June	July	Before August 1 <sup>st</sup>

July	August	Before September 1 <sup>st</sup>
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**What is the 80:20 attendance rule?** Florida law mandates that no more than 20% of the total payment to a VPK program on behalf of a child be for absences. This means that in those cases where a child's absences do not exceed 20% of the days attended, you will receive payment for all of the days the child is absent from your program.

- ❖ A child is considered to have attended a whole day of VPK if they attend any part of the day.
- ❖ Payment calculation does NOT include days before a child's first day of attendance in VPK or days after a child's last day of attendance in VPK.
- ❖ Absence hours paid are based on how many hours a child attends a VPK program.
- ❖ Absences can be for any reason (no notes are collected or needed)

**When & how is the 80:20 calculated?** The 80:20 attendance calculations are applied monthly and at the end of each VPK class using the below formula:

$$\text{Time attended} / 0.8 = \text{total hours to be paid to provider*}$$

The total hours to be paid to a provider cannot exceed the instructional hours established for that program (i.e., cannot be greater than 540 hours for the school year or 300 hours for the summer program).

**Example of monthly reconciliation calculation**

(This example uses Nicole Jones information in the above Final Provider Reimbursement Report)

Episcopal Family Child Care Home  
 VPK hours per day: 3  
 Provider's instructional days in January: 18  
 Provider's total instructional hours in January: 54 (18 days x 3 hours)  
 Total hours Nicole was absent in January: 15 (5 days x 3 hours)  
 Total January hours Nicole attended: 39 (13 days x 3 hours)  
 Allowable hours paid:  $39 / .8 = 48.75$  hours

$54 \text{ hours} - 48.75 \text{ hours} = 5.25 \text{ hours}$  that could not be paid for Nicole in January

You will notice that the 1<sup>st</sup> entry on the January Final Provider Reimbursement Report for Nicole shows her as receiving payment for the full 54 hours for January and a second entry/adjustments adjust the -5.25 hours not payable in January.

In the above example 3 children had monthly 80:20 adjustments for January. If, at the end of this VPK class, each child's absences did not exceed 20%, the provider will receive payment for the adjustments above. These payments will be detailed in your Final Provider Reimbursement Report.

**Will we still be paid for 20% of absences of 540 hours if a child does not start on my 1<sup>st</sup> day of VPK and/or does not attend the last day of our VPK program?** No, for two reasons, the first being that we are not able to pay for any days before a child's first date of attendance or after their last date of attendance. Secondly, we are only able to pay for 20% of absences of a child's attendance in your program. If a child only attends 300 hours at your program, only 20% of absences of 300 hours is payable.

**Are we allowed to charge a parent for excessive absences (i.e. absences over the 20%)?** No, VPK policy states that providers may not require payment of a fee or charge for services provided for a child enrolled in the VPK during a period reported for funding purposes. Charging parents for absence days in excess of the VPK attendance rule or those absence days permitted by the provider's attendance policy per month is not permissible.

**If we do not get correctly reimbursed for a child, what do we do?** Complete a Payment Correction Request form (found on our website) and submit it to the Reimbursement Department. The Reimbursement Department will research the request and inform you, in writing, of their findings. All payment correction requests must be submitted in writing to ECS *within 60 days of the original due date of the roster.*

**What is the VPK Provider Verification Process and when does it happen?** Per DEL policy, every VPK provider must verify the annual cumulative attendance of each child enrolled in their VPK program, which certifies the paid hours of attendance of each child enrolled for the program year. ECS may NOT pay any VPK provider their final payment of the program until this final verification is received. The Provider Verification reports will be sent out after we process your final month's attendance rosters. The timeline for the current program year is:

Last month of VPK	Month your last rosters will be processed in	Provider Verification Reports will be sent out	Reports due back to ECS
May	June	On or before June 15 <sup>th</sup>	On or before June 30 <sup>th</sup>
June	July	On or before July 15 <sup>th</sup>	On or before July 30 <sup>st</sup>
July (for summer providers only)	August	On or before August 15 <sup>th</sup>	On or before August 30 <sup>th</sup>
August (for summer providers only)	September	On or before September 15 <sup>th</sup>	On or before September 30 <sup>th</sup>

*Please also note that if you fail to notify ECS of any errors contained on the VPK Provider Verification Report, we are under no obligation to accept changes made to the KRR website during their Provider Verification Process.*

**Why do we have to verify all our children at the end of every year?** Each child's attendance and how they are paid throughout the year is how we track whether or not they will count towards your Kindergarten Readiness Rate (KRR). Please see KRR section below for more information.

*ECS strongly recommends that you reconcile your VPK payments each month when you receive Final Provider Reimbursement Reports.*

Child Enrollments/Terminations/Transfers

**Are we allowed to charge parents any additional fees for the VPK program?**

Providers are not allowed to charge ANY additional fees for the VPK program. This includes, but is not limited to, supply fees, registration fees, enrichment activities, fees to hold spots, etc. A provider may

choose to charge for transportation, but the transportation of children cannot be included in the VPK program hours.

*Providers are able to ask for supply donations but you are not allowed to require that parents pay a supply fee or bring supplies to VPK.*

**Are we allowed to require parents to enroll in wrap-around services as a condition of enrollment or continued enrollment in VPK?** No, a provider may not require a parent to enroll their child in wrap-around services as a condition of enrollment or continued enrollment in VPK.

**What do we tell a parent that would like to enroll in VPK?** Parents are able to register online (<https://familyservices.floridaearlylearning.com/Account/Login>). If a parent needs assistance registering, please direct them to our **Family Services Department** at (800) 238-3463. We will be able to inform the parent of all the necessary documentation, walk them through the process, and/or set up an appointment.

**We have a parent of a five year old, who does not feel that their child is ready for kindergarten; is this child eligible for VPK?** Possibly, depending on their birth date. Effective July 1, 2016, four-year-old children with birthdays from February 2<sup>nd</sup> through September 1<sup>st</sup> will be eligible to enroll in VPK that year or postpone it to the next if they have not started kindergarten and have not previously enrolled in VPK. If the child is admitted into kindergarten, then they would no longer be eligible for VPK funding. Florida law requires children to start school the year the child is six by February 1<sup>st</sup>.

If a child was born between September 2, 2018 and September 1, 2019, they are eligible to participate in either the 2023 -2024 School Year Program (540 hours) or the 24 Summer program (300 hours).

Children born between February 2, 2018 and September 1, 2018 may postpone their VPK participation until the 2023-2024 School Year Program (540 hours) or the 24 Summer Program (300 hours).

If a child was born between September 2, 2019 and September 1, 2020, they are eligible to participate in either the 2024 -2025 School Year Program (540 hours) or the 25 Summer program (300 hours).

Children born between February 2, 2019 and September 1, 2019 may postpone their VPK participation until the 2023-2024 School Year Program (540 hours) or the 25 Summer Program (300 hours).

That being said, just because the child is not eligible for VPK funding does not mean that they cannot attend your program on a private pay basis. DEL policy does allow for providers to have blended VPK classrooms (classrooms that contain both VPK & Non-VPK children), however the child will still count towards your total VPK ratio.

**Can we still accept children in our program after the 1<sup>st</sup> day of classes?** Yes, however, it is important to let the parent know they will not receive the full 540/300 hours of the VPK program.

**If a child has stopped attending our program, what do we do?** Please log in to the Provider Portal and go to your Enrollment Screen. Pick the classroom the child is in. Next to the child's enrollment information there is a terminate enrollment button. Follow prompts to disenroll a child.

**What happens if we dismiss a child from our VPK program?** If you dismiss/terminate a child from your program you are required to notify us in writing through the Provider Portal and specify the reasons that the student was dismissed with an effective date. To do that you will choose a termination reason within the process of terminating the child from your program.

**We have a child that is always late, doesn't show up, etc. Are we able to dismiss them from our program?** The DEL created VPK uniform attendance policy is for payment purposes only. Parents are required to follow your attendance policy (which you are required to give them at the beginning of the VPK year). If parents are not following your attendance policy then you are able to dismiss their child from your program; however you are required to inform us in writing through the Provider Portal of the reasons for dismissal. You can terminate the child's attendance through the provider portal and note the reason in the termination screen.

**It has come to our attention that some providers and parents have the misunderstanding that ECS terminates children from the VPK program as a result of excessive absences and non-attendance. We would like to make it clear that ECS does not terminate children from the VPK program once they are initially determined eligible. We ask that you ensure the information you provide to your parents explains this clearly.**

**What is the procedure for transferring a child to another classroom (within my VPK program with the same physical location)?** To transfer a child from one classroom to the other, you will log in to the Provider Portal and go to the Enrollment tab, Manage VPK Enrollments. Choose the classroom that the child is currently in and pick ' Change Classroom' button. Follow prompts for classroom changes within that screen. Please note, if the child has not received any funding in the original classroom, please choose Never Attended option and enroll the child in the correct classroom.

**What is the procedure for transferring/reenrolling a child to another facility?** If a parent would like to transfer/reenroll their child, they must log into their Family Portal account to start the process and to see if this is still an option. Parents are only allowed to transfer their child if they meet certain criteria in accordance with Rule 6M-8.210. [ECS cannot pay for any days before a VPK transfer is approved in the Family Portal.](#)

**We have a parent that would like to transfer to our program, but they have attended VPK in another county/coalition. What do they need to do?** The required procedure for a child transferring/reenrolling from a county/coalition not serviced by ECS is exactly the same as a child transferring facilities within the county/coalition. They must log into their Family Portal account to start the process and to see if this is still an option. *If* transferring is still an option, they should monitor their Family Portal account for the status of their reenrollment request. Upon approval the parent will need to print out the Certificate of Reenrollment and turn it into the provider for enrollment.

**What happens if our enrollment drops below four children?** After the initial advance payment for a class, the provider does not violate the minimum class size if fewer than four VPK students remain enrolled for the class. However, if a VPK class is composed of four or fewer VPK students, the provider may not dismiss any student from the class unless:

1. The provider documents in writing the student's noncompliance with the applicable conduct or attendance policies of the provider **AND**
2. The provider submits the documentation to Episcopal Children's Services no more than three business days after the student is dismissed.

### **Program Details (applications, educational credentials, etc.)**

**What is the earliest we can request applications for the next program year?** ECS can start initiating applications only if the provider has an active profile for that program year. Providers should have access to the next program year's profile every January 1<sup>st</sup>. The Provider Portal is maintained by the state and therefore any access to the portal can be affected by technical difficulties and/or system updates so this timeline is subject to change without notice.

All applications and profiles must contain the required supporting documents uploaded into the Provider Portal before a provider can be fully approved/certified for the program year.

Due to the somewhat complex nature of the VPK application process we highly encourage providers to apply for the new year as early as possible.

**How do I apply to be a VPK provider?** Potential VPK providers are required to have a Provider Portal account found here, <https://providerservices.floridaeearlylearning.com/Account/Login>. Once an account is registered, the provider will need to complete the Provider Profile and Business section of their record and submit them for activation. ECS will look over the information making sure it matches the supporting documentation uploaded (see documents required for upload below) and activate the account. We will then initiate the VPK APP in the portal for completion. Once the Provider Profile and VPK APP have been certified, the VPK Contract will be initiated. When all three of those steps have been completed and certified you will be an approved VPK Provider!

Provider Profile required VPK documents (please note, if you are a School Readiness Provider, there may be more required documents per the contract):

- \*Documentation of General Liability and Automobile Insurance.
- \*DCF License/Accreditation Certificate/Gold Seal/Religious Exemption Letter
- \*E-Verify Affidavit
- \*IRS Form W-9
- \*Sunbiz Documentation (if applicable)

VPK APP required documents:

- \*VPK Attendance Policy
- \*DCF transcript showing Director Credential
- \*FDLE/FBI DCF Clearinghouse screening
- \*DCF Transcript showing lead teacher or sub qualifications.
- \*DCF Affidavit/Attestation of Good Moral Character (May 2019 version if hired for the 2023-2024 program year).

**What is a Provider Contract?** A provider contract, DEL-VPK-20, is a contract between the Coalition and you, the provider, agreeing to observe the policies of the Coalition & the Division of Early Learning since you are receiving funds from the DEL through the Coalition.

**Do we have to submit a VPK application every year?** Yes, VPK is voluntary for both parents and providers so the only way that ECS knows that you plan on participating is when you complete the application process every year. Additionally, the provider applications were created to only cover one program type (School Year or Summer) and program year.

**How long will it take for us to become a certified VPK provider? How early should we submit our VPK APP?** There are a number of factors that go into certifying a VPK program and the earlier you submit your paperwork the better. It is NOT uncommon for the whole approval process, submission to certification, to take several weeks. In each email correspondence after submission you will be informed if you are certified to offer VPK OR if any additional information is required. Additionally, ECS requires that VPK providers be fully approved *at least 2 weeks* before their anticipated start date.

**We do not have all the supporting documentation to accompany our VPK APP, should we wait until we have everything before submitting our paperwork?** You can, but it is not required or advisable especially if you are new to the VPK program. ECS will not be able to certify your VPK program until all required documentation is received but given the time necessary to process applications it is best to submit your applications & the supporting documentation that you do have as early as possible.

**Our program will not be open/ready to start VPK until the middle of the year, is this too late to do VPK?** It is almost never too late in the year to become a VPK provider. While a majority of VPK providers begin their program around the public school start dates, this is not required. As long as you are approved at least 2 weeks before your anticipated start date and are able to include the 540 hours before June 30<sup>th</sup>, you can begin your program at any time.

**Our program has already started and we would like to split our 2 classes of 18 children each to 3 classes of 10 children each. Can we still do that?** Changing from 2 classes of 18 to 3 classes of 10 (or any similar combination) would mean that you would have to open a 'new' VPK classroom (regardless of whether the teacher and/or student have been with your program). The 'new' classroom could not start until it has been approved by ECS and must contain a new 540 hour calendar (for the school year program) or 300 hour calendar (for the summer program). Classrooms with different start/end dates will be subject to different administration and submission deadlines with respect to VPK Assessment.

**Are we able to add a VPK classroom in the middle of the year?** Yes, you may start a new VPK classroom at just about any time during the program year. Just remember that the start date cannot be before the class is approved and it must contain the necessary 540 hours (for the school year program) or 300 hours (for the summer program). Classrooms with different start/end dates will be subject to different administration and submission deadlines with respect to VPK Assessment.

**What happens if we are certified for a VPK classroom but it never begins?** This is not a problem, simply contact the Contract Department. We will walk you through updating the VPK APP in the Provider Portal.

**How do we inform you of changes to our VPK program?** Any changes made to your VPK program *must* be immediately reported to ECS along with the updated VPK APP & supporting documentation submitted in the Provider Portal. If you have any questions about the proper procedure or what needs to be submitted please contact the Contract Department.

If there is a change in director the Provider Profile AND the VPK APP with supporting documentation must be submitted in the Provider Portal.

**Important note: Once your program has started you may NOT be able to make changes to your Classroom hours or Holiday schedule.**

**Commented [BS1]:** I think it would be good to add in the current process here. Please get with Sarah to review the Rule and current procedures.



**What is the teacher-to-student ratio for the school year program? For the summer program?** Each VPK class must have a minimum of 4 VPK children to begin (school year & summer). There must be at least 1 credentialed instructor for every 11 children and a credential instructor & assistant if there are 12-20 children (per Senate Bill 2120). No school year classrooms may contain more than 20 children (VPK & Non-VPK).

For the summer program there must be at least 1 credentialed instructor for every 12 children. No summer classrooms may contain more than 12 children (VPK & Non-VPK).

**Can I have blended classroom (VPK & Non-VPK children)?** Yes, a VPK provider may organize a VPK class as a blended class, instructing children enrolled in the VPK program together with children not enrolled in the program. However, the following requirements must be met:

- b. There must be at least 4 VPK children to start the classroom
- c. All children will be counted towards your total ratio (1:11 or 2:20 for the school year program and 1:12 for the summer program)
- d. The class may not be organized in such a way that prevents you from implementing a developmentally appropriate curriculum.

**Are we able to instruct two of our VPK classes as one group?** No. It is fine to have two classrooms/groups in the same room; however they should be kept separate to maintain VPK ratio. As always, a provider should adhere to teacher-to-student ratio, square footage per child, licensing requirements or any other state or local requirements.

**What are the insurance requirements?** Private providers are required to upload documentation of their general liability insurance, automobile insurance (if pre-k children are transported), and workers' comp (where required by law). Liability insurance must meet the following requirements:

\*Coverage/Occurrence must be at least \$100,000

\*General Aggregate Coverage must be at least \$300,000

\*Coalition as an Additional Insured **AND** Certificate holder

ELC of North Florida

8649 Baypine Road, Ste. 300, Bldg. 7, Jacksonville, FL 32256

**What is the VPK endorsement on my director's credential and do I need it?** Section 1002.55(3)(g), Florida Statute and Rule 6M-8.610, Florida Administrative Code, now requires that all VPK directors have a VPK Director Credential or hold a valid certificate in education leadership issued by the Florida Department of Education. The VPK Director Credential requires the successful completion of the following DEL course trainings:

- Implementing the Florida Standards in Preschool Classrooms: 3 Years Old to Kindergarten (online VFSP) 5 hours; 0.5 CEUs or (instructor-led SPC3TK) 3 hours; 0.3 CEUs
- Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors (online VPK, VPKR or VPK21) 5 hours; 0.5 CEUs
- Mathematical Thinking for Early Learners (online MATH) 5 hours; 0.5 CEUs
- Language and Vocabulary in the VPK Classroom (online LVPK or LVPK21) 5 hours; 0.5 CEUs
- VPK Director Credential Course (online DVPK) 5 hours; 0.5 CEUs

After completion of all five courses, your transcript should update automatically to show the endorsement. Directors may access more information pertaining to the Director Credential and course registration using the following link :

<https://childcaretraining.myflfamilies.com/studentsite/admin/signin>

**Simply taking the VPK Director's Credential Endorsement course does NOT mean that your director's credential is VPK endorsed. You must complete all the steps listed above.**

**Do directors need a current Level II background clearance?** Yes, All VPK staff including directors will be required to have current Level II background clearances (as defined by the Division of Early Learning).

**What is a Level II background clearance as defined by the Division of Early Learning and who is required to have it?** The Level II includes the following:

- ✓ FDLE/FBI Clearinghouse Screening **AND**
- ✓ DCF Affidavit/Attestation of Good Moral Character

**ALL VPK staff are required to have the completed Level II background screenings before they can be in the VPK classroom.**

**What are the educational requirements for a lead instructor and assistant for the School Year program?** There are no educational requirements for an assistant VPK instructor; however, a lead VPK instructor must have one of the following:

- NECC (aka National CDA) or FCCPC (aka Florida Child Care Professional Certificate, Birth-Five)\*\*
- A bachelor's or higher degree in early childhood education, prekindergarten or primary education, preschool education, or family and consumer science, **OR**
- A bachelor's or higher degree in elementary education, **if the prekindergarten instructor has been certified to teach children any age from birth through 6<sup>th</sup> grade, regardless of whether the instructor's educator certificate is current, OR**
- An associate's or higher degree in child development, **OR**
- An associate's or higher degree in an unrelated field, at least 6 credit hours in early childhood education or child development, and at least 480 hours of experience in teaching or providing child care services for children any age from birth through 8 years of age, **OR**
- An educational credential approved by the DOE as being equivalent to or greater than an educational credential described above.

**\*\*NECC & FCCPC are good for five years from the issue dates unless otherwise noted; some certificates do expire after three years. We can accept a copy of DCF staff verifications for NECC & FCCPC only if expiration dates are listed. School Age FCCPC is not acceptable; it must be Birth-Five.**

#### **What are the VPK Instructor Emergent Literacy and Standards Course Requirements?**

Florida Statutes 1002.55 and 1002.63 F.S., now require that both public school and private provider VPK instructors complete the Early Learning Standards and the 15-hour emergent literacy requirement..

The following Division of Early Learning (DEL) training meets the course requirement for the Early Learning and Developmental Standards and is offered online, virtually and in-person.

- Implementing the Florida Standards in Preschool Classrooms: 3 Years Old to Kindergarten (online VFSP) 5 hours; 0.5 CEUs or (SPC3TK) instructor-led 3 hours; 0.3 CEUs

The following DEL trainings meet the Emergent Literacy course requirements and are offered online, virtually and in-person.

- Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors (online VPK21) 5 hours; 0.5 CEUs
- Language and Vocabulary in the VPK Classroom (online LVPK21) 5 hours; 0.5CEUs
- Phonological Awareness Development for Preschoolers (online VIPA21; in-person and virtual instructor-led PAP21) 5 hours; 0.5 CEUs
- Dialogic Reading: Language and Vocabulary Development for Preschoolers (in-person and virtual instructor-led DRP) 5 hours; 0.5 CEUs
- Book Embedded Vocabulary Instruction: Language and Vocabulary Development for Preschoolers (in-person and virtual instructor-led BEP) 5 hours; 0.5 CEUs
- Scaffolding and Think, Show, Tell, Talk: Language and Vocabulary Development for Preschoolers (in-person and virtual instructor-led STSTP) 5 hours; 0.5 CEUs
- Building a Strong Foundation for Emergent Literacy (virtual instructor-led BSFEL) 5 hours;0.5 CEUs

Successful completion of one of the following courses can also fulfill the emergent literacy course requirements:

- Language and Vocabulary Training Project: Targeted Strand-Coach (virtual instructorled) 28 hours; 2.8 CEUs
- Language and Vocabulary Training Project: Targeted Strand-Teacher (virtual instructorled) 20 hours; 2.0 CEUs
- Language and Vocabulary Training Project: Universal Strand-Coach (virtual instructorled) 20 hours; 2.0 CEUs
- Preschool Language and Vocabulary Professional Development 2022 (Coach) (virtual instructor-led) 28 hours; 2.8 CEUs
- Preschool Language and Vocabulary Professional Development 2022 (Teacher) (virtual instructor-led) 25 hours; 2.5 CEUs
- Preschool Language Development (online) 20 hours; 2.0 CEUs - Flamingo Early Learning
- The Building Blocks of Preschool Literacy (online) 20 hours; 2.0 CEUs - Flamingo Early Learning
- Completion of Competency 1 of the Florida Reading Endorsement
- Structured Literacy Through a Multi-Sensory Approach (online) 20 hours

Teachers may access more information pertaining to the Emergent Literacy and Standards Course Requirement and course registration using the following link :

<http://www.floridaeearlylearning.com/vpk/vpk-providers/professional-development-training>

*If a credential or background screening is due to expire during the program year, it must be renewed and uploaded to the online VPK Application BEFORE expiration to maintain eligibility in the VPK Classroom or as a VPK Director.*

*The Contract Department will note upcoming expirations for your program when your program's VPK Application is certified.*

**VPK Assessment training using Florida's Assessment of Student Thinking (Fast) using Star Early Literacy is also required for VPK instructors for the school year and summer programs. This training is required for VPK Program Instructors who will learn about the Renaissance system, Star Early Literacy test administration procedures and requirements and how to support VPK Program students. More information is available at <https://www.floridaearlylearning.com/vpk/fast>.**

**What qualifies a lead instructor and assistant for the Summer program?** There are no educational requirements for an assistant VPK instructor; however a lead VPK instructor must have one of the following in addition to applicable assessment training:

- A **valid** Florida Educator Certificate (can't be expired and must remain current through the program) **OR**
- A bachelor's or higher degree in early childhood education, prekindergarten or primary education, preschool education, or family and consumer science, **OR**
- A bachelor's or higher degree in elementary education, if the prekindergarten instructor has been certified to teach children any age from birth through 6<sup>th</sup> grade, regardless of whether the instructor's educator certificate is current.

**AND**

- Meet the course requirement for the Early Learning and Developmental Standards course listed above

**AND**

- Meet the 15 hour Emergent Literacy course requirements listed above.

**Our program uses VECHS for obtaining background clearances; can we use these for VPK?** No, VPK is NOT able to accept any VECHS (Volunteer and Employee Background Checks) background clearances. VECHS FBI results do not go through DCF and these results will not include seals & expunged records or hot files (hot files show if the person is wanted, has an injunction, or is on probation).

**How do we get our VPK staff FDLE/FBI clearances?** You would need to go through the Background Screening Clearinghouse. More information, including vendors, can be found at <https://www.myflfamilies.com/services/background-screening>

**We hired a VPK instructor that was working for the local public school district. Can we use their school district background clearances?** No, once employment has been terminated with the school district their background clearances are no longer valid. You will need to complete new background clearances for these individuals.

**Do we have to follow our county's public school calendar?** No, you are required to create your own VPK schedule that also:

- Meets the 540 School Year/300 Summer Instructional hours requirement

- Start date is:
  - i. School Year: Not more than 14 days before Labor Day or before your county's uniform start date, whichever is earlier.
  - ii. Summer: Not before May 1<sup>st</sup>
- End date is:
  - i. School Year: On or before June 30<sup>th</sup>
  - ii. Summer: Not on or after your county's public school uniform start date for the next regular program year.
- The total VPK days times VPK hours must equal exactly 540 (or 300 for the Summer program) hours and the total number of VPK days must divide equally by 540 (or 300 for the Summer program).

VPK FAST Progress Monitoring Assessment

**What is the VPK Assessment?** The VPK Assessment is a mandatory assessment that must be administered to VPK students during the VPK program year. It is aligned with Standards for Four Year Olds and its benchmarks and is designed to be administered by the VPK instructor.

**How do we get the assessments?** Beginning with the 2022-2023 VPK Program Year, the assessments will be completed using Florida's Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) using Star Early Literacy online through the Reanaisance system.

**Is training required?** VPK Assessment training is also required for VPK instructors that will be administering the assessment. For information regarding training, please visit <https://www.floridaearlylearning.com/vpk/fast>.

Failure to comply with the administration AND submission deadlines will result in not being able to offer the VPK program for five years.

**“Progress Monitoring One” (PM1)** is the first thirty (30) instructional days of the VPK class schedule, beginning with the first VPK instructional day.

**“Progress Monitoring Two” (PM2)** is the period of time in a VPK class schedule where at least 40% of the instructional hours have been completed and no more than 60% of the instructional hours have been completed.

**“Progress Monitoring Three” (PM3)** is the last thirty (30) instructional days of the VPK class schedule, ending with the last VPK instructional day.

For summer program PM1 should be completed within the first 10 instructional days and PM3 should be completed within the last 10 instructional days.

Program Monitoring

**How often will our VPK program be monitored?** ECS may conduct an on-site monitoring at least once each program year per program type (e.g. if you offer the school year & summer program you may have a monitoring during each session). The monitoring visit will be unannounced; however for security purposes we will notify you (either by phone or e-mail) that we will be visiting your program in the coming weeks.

ECS is also monitored by its contractor (the Early Learning Coalition of North Florida) several times during each fiscal year to ensure accurate child/provider eligibility has been established and

accurate payments have been made. Because of this, ECS may also request your attendance documentation at various times throughout the year.

**What can we expect during our VPK monitoring?** Your monitoring is broken up into two different portions, the on-site monitoring visit and the attendance monitoring portion.

During the on-site visit we will:

- A. Request to review and obtain COPIES of:
  - i. Parental Choice Certificates for specific children (*these children are randomly selected by ECS*)
  - ii. The selected children's sign in/out sheets (*if you are using the short form*)
  - iii. Your VPK attendance policy
- B. Observe in your VPK classroom(s). We are looking to see:
  - i. That the teachers in your classroom(s) match the ECS approved applications
  - ii. That the class(s) are within proper VPK ratio
  - iii. That your room meets the VPK Standards requirement

**Will we receive a summary/report of the monitoring?** Yes, after the on-site monitoring we will process the collected information and send out a letter.

If there are findings, we will offer technical assistance or request a corrective action plan (on program letter head) detailing how you will correct it for the future.

**What is considered a finding?** A finding can include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- Your classroom being out of ratio (per VPK policy)
- Teacher changes in which ECS was not immediately notified of
- Unapproved subs in the VPK classroom
- PCC not completed properly (e.g. being signed too early or not being signed at all, boxes not being completed, not being dated by the parent, etc.)
- Changing your VPK attendance policy from what was approved with the VPK APP
- Using an outdated version of the form (AWI vs. OEL)

A finding does not necessarily mean that ECS will require the return of funds. We realize that mistakes will/do happen and, in certain instances, do allow for a certain percentage of errors. ECS' only goal is to ensure that your program is aware of DEL's position so that no funding will be lost in the future.

**What is the correct procedure for completing the Parental Choice Certificates (PCC)?** All versions of the PCCs must be signed:

- ✓ By the parent/guardian with full signature and date (staff should **NOT** be dating for the parent).
- ✓ On the last instructional date of the month or within the first two weeks of the new month.
- ✓ Be dated with the Month/Day/Year

It can be considered a finding if a PCC is signed too early. Signing before the end of the month means that the parent is only verifying that the child attended up until the date signed. Should an attendance discrepancy or attendance monitoring arise only dates on or before the date signed are eligible for payment unless a sign in/out sheet can be submitted to support payment.

It is not considered a finding if a PCC is signed late in the month (e.g. August's attendance is signed in late September or after). It is considered a best practice, however, and encouraged to have the PCC signed within the first two weeks of the following month at the latest as it helps to ensure

accurate completion. If a PCC is signed after the following month (e.g. August's attendance is signed anytime in October or after) please note the extenuating circumstances and technical assistance will be provided.

**\*\*PCCs should NOT be dated for the parent, this is considered a finding.\*\***

Helpful hints for proper completion of the Long form:

Before the parent signs the OEL-VPK 03L you must record the child's monthly attendance on the form or attach documentation to the form which shows the child's monthly attendance, we are looking for accuracy.

Helpful hints for proper completion of the short form & sign in/out sheets:

The parent/guardian's FULL signature (initials, nicknames, mom/dad, etc. are NOT acceptable signatures) is required.

**Are there any tools available to us to ensure our program's compliance?** Yes, in addition to contacting the Provider Services department, the DEL-VPK 20 (VPK Statewide Provider Contract), this ECS VPK Provider Manual and DEL website are excellent reference points to keep your program in compliance with all VPK policies and procedures. Familiarizing yourself with all available tools is the best way to run a successful VPK program.

#### Kindergarten Readiness Rate

**What is the Kindergarten Readiness Rate (KRR)?** The Florida Department of Education (DOE)/State Board of Education is required by law to calculate a kindergarten readiness rate every year for each VPK provider of either the School-Year or Summer program. The VPK Kindergarten Readiness Rate measures how well a VPK provider prepares four-year-olds to be ready for kindergarten based upon Florida's VPK Education Standards. The VPK Standards describe what four-year-old children should know and be able to do by the end of the VPK experience. Kindergarten Readiness Rates as well as further information can be found on their website, <https://vpkrates.floridaearlylearning.com>.

**What information is used to calculate the readiness rate?** Your readiness rate is based on scores of children who tested ready on the screening measures, substantially completed VPK (attended 70% of the total program) and who are screened upon entry into kindergarten. The screening is administered by the district public schools for all public school kindergarten students. Children who participated in VPK and attended a non-public school for kindergarten are also provided the opportunity to participate in the screening.

**Will we have a chance to verify the children included in our KRR?** Yes, you will have a number of opportunities to verify the children that attended your VPK program. At the end of every program year ECS will send you a VPK Provider Verification Report (*further information about the verification report can be found in the above Reimbursement section*). This report lists all the children that have attended your program for that program year and the number of hours, absences, etc. that you were paid. If the report contains any discrepancies then you will need to notify ECS immediately, so that the situation can be researched and corrected, if applicable. You will also be given an opportunity to verify your children on the Kindergarten Readiness Rate website (<https://vpkrates.floridaearlylearning.com>).

**When are the KRR posted?** The exact time line of the verification process, release of rates, etc. varies each year but exact dates will be announced once released by DEL. The typical timeline is:

1. ECS Provider Verification Process (May-August, depending on your program end date)
2. DOE KRR website Provider Verification process (late Fall)
3. Release of Preliminary rate (Spring)
4. Release of Final KRR (Late Spring)

**What is a Provider on Probation (POP)?** This is a VPK provider whose readiness rate does not meet the minimum rate set annually by the State Board of Education. POPs will be notified by mail and will be required to acknowledge receipt of this designation online.

**We have been designated as a POP. What do we need to do now?** Please visit the Kindergarten Readiness Rate website (<https://vpkrates.floridaearlylearning.com>) to complete the Provider Acknowledgement form and to submit an Improvement Plan. Once the final rates are released staff will be contacting all POPs to help walk them through the process and offer any assistance the provider may require. During the program year you will also need to update your target area completion dates.

**What is ECS grievance policy?** A copy of the grievance policy can be found on the ECS website under Provider Services or by contacting ECS directly.

**We have a question not addressed in this packet, who do we contact for further information?** If you have a question about VPK and it is not addressed in this packet, please contact the Provider Services Department . This manual was created to help you as a VPK provider, so please let us know if you have any comments, suggestions, etc.



VPK Documents available at [www.ecs4kids.org](http://www.ecs4kids.org)

**Program registration forms**

- o OEL-VPK 20:Statewide Provider Contract: (created by DEL), completed in the Provider Portal.
- o OEL-VPK 20PP:Statewide Provider Contract Attachment for Private Providers: (created by DEL), completed in the Provider Portal.
- o OEL-VPK 20 PS:Statewide Provider Contract Attachment for Public Schools: (created by DEL), completed in the Provider Portal.
- o OEL-VPK 20A: Amendment to Statewide VPK Provider Contract: (created by DEL)
- o ECS VPK Provider Manual: (created by ECS), manual created to assist VPK providers with policies and procedures.
- o Substitute Instructor Form (created by ECS): used to inform providers of VPK sub requirements, also includes a tracking form to be maintained by the provider.

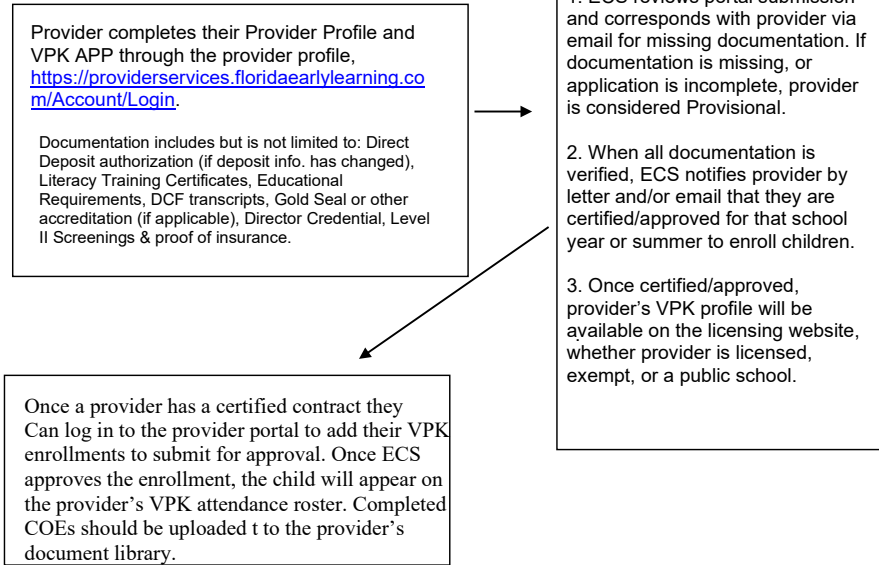
**Attendance/Reimbursement forms**

- o Blank Student Attendance/Parental Choice Certificate: Short form (created by DEL) Form sent to you at the beginning of every year that parents used to verify their child's attendance at the end of every month. You are required to keep the original on file and a copy may be requested by ECS at any time.
- o Blank Student Attendance/Parental Choice Certificate: Long form (created by DEL) Form sent to you every month with your rosters that parents used to verify their child's attendance at the end of every month. You are required to keep the original on file and a copy may be requested by ECS at any time.
  
- o Blank Attendance roster (created by ECS): used by provider if you mistakenly left a child off your roster, original required for submission.
- o VPK Payment Correction Request (created by ECS): used if you believe you were paid incorrectly for a child, original not required for submission.

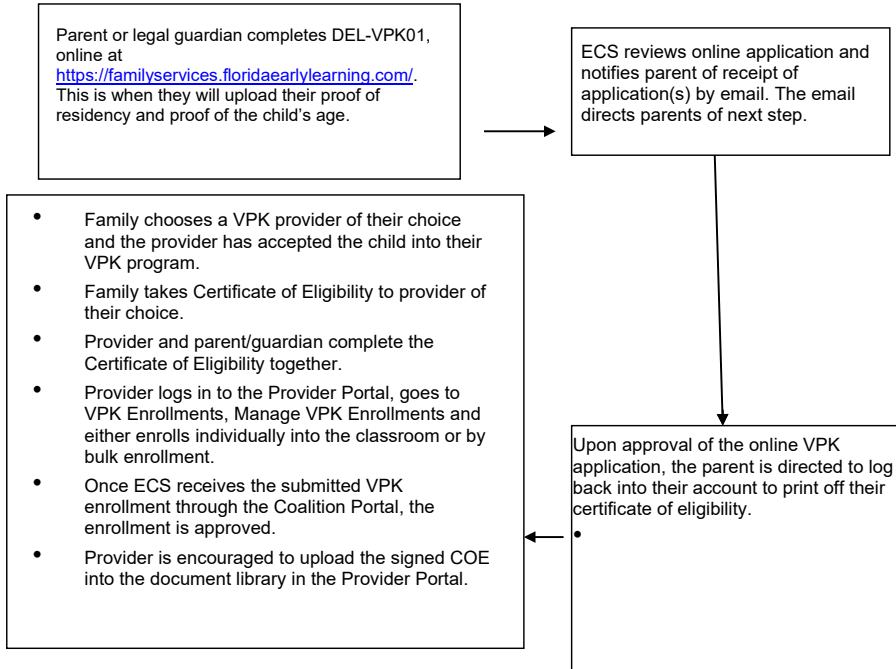
**Termination forms**

- o VPK Child Termination form (created by ECS): to be used to inform us of any child terminations, original not required for submission.

## VPK Provider Application Process



## VPK Child Enrollment Process



## ACCEPTABLE PROOF OF AGE & RESIDENCY FOR CHILDREN APPLYING FOR VPK

### **What proof of age should I upload?**

We are allowed to accept as Date of Birth (DOB) documentation:

- An original or certified copy of the child's birth record filed according to law with the appropriate public officer;
- An original or certified copy of the child's certificate of baptism or other religious record of the child's birth, accompanied by a notarized affidavit stating that the certificate is true and correct, sworn to or affirmed by the child's parent;
- A life insurance policy on the child that has been in force for at least 2 years.
- A passport or certificate of arrival in the United States showing the age of the child.
- An immunization record indicating the date of birth, signed by a public health officer or by a licensed practicing physician.
- A valid military dependent identification card

If none of the evidential documents listed above can be produced, a parent's notarized affidavit of the child's age accompanied by a letter on official letterhead signed by a public health officer or physician stating that the child's age shown in the affidavit is true and correct may be accepted.

### **What proof of CURRENT PHYSICAL residence should I upload?**

The document must:

1. Include the parent's name
  2. Include the *parent's current physical address*
  3. MATCH the address listed on the VPK application
  4. NOT be a Post Office Box
  5. Be one of the items listed below
- Utility bills (if mailed to a P.O. Box, it will *normally* also contain the service address, if NO service address is listed then we are NOT able to accept as proof of current physical residency)
    - **Acceptable:** (electric, gas, water), cable, internet, home or cellular phone bill in the parent's name dated within 12 months of the date the child application is submitted.
    - **NOT Acceptable:** Cell phone, credit card of any kind, anything NOT in the parent's name.
  - Pay stub (dated within 12 months of application submission)
  - Complete residential rental agreement or receipt from rental payment dated within 12 months of the date the child application is submitted.
  - *Current* Government documents (e.g., property tax assessment showing homestead exemption, or FL ID / Driver's License)
  - Military order showing that the child's parent is a service member in the US Armed Forces and is assigned to duty in Florida when the child attends the VPK program (e.g., permanent change of station)
  - Federal government order showing the child's parent is a federal employee assigned to work in Florida when the child attends the VPK program.
  - A Florida Migrant Education Program Certificate of Eligibility (COE) Form from the Florida Department of Education.
  - **If none of the evidential documents listed above can be produced, an affidavit of residency sworn to by the parent, accompanied by a letter from a landlord or property owner which confirms that the child resides at the address shown in the affidavit may be accepted.**

**If none of the evidential documents listed above can be produced for a homeless child,** a letter from a homeless shelter, homeless referral, student residency questionnaire issued by the local school district or notarized statement from the child's parent).

## **Useful Websites**

### **Episcopal Children's Services:**

[www.ecs4kids.org](http://www.ecs4kids.org)

(Local parent & provider VPK information/forms, as well as information on other services we offer)

### **Early Learning Coalition of North Florida**

[www.elcnorthflorida.org](http://www.elcnorthflorida.org)

(The Coalition that contracts with ECS to provide various child care and early learning services in Clay, Nassau, Baker, Bradford, Putnam & St Johns counties.)

### **Provider Portal**

<https://providerservices.floridaearlylearning.com/Account/Login>

(Providers register here to become a VPK provider.)

### **Family Portal- VPK Registration System**

<https://familyservices.floridaearlylearning.com/>

(Parents can log to register for VPK without attending an ECS round up.)

### **DCF Child Care Training Information Center (CCTIC): (888) 352.2842**

<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/childcare/training.shtml>

(Manages exam scheduling for required training course and evaluates credential applications including but not limited to issuing the VPK director's endorsement, Florida Child Care Professional Certificates (FCCPC), director's credentials)

### **Department of Children & Families (DCF) Child Care Information**

[www.myflorida.com/childcare/](http://www.myflorida.com/childcare/)

(Information pertaining to licensing, training requirements, forms & applications, etc. Clicking on "Online Courses" will take you to the "Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors", this and most other online classes are no longer free.)

<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/admin/backgroundscreening/>

(Important information regarding Level II background screening processes.)

### **Florida Department of Education VPK websites:**

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlyLearning/>

(Important VPK information including kindergarten readiness rate, emergent literacy, performance standards, etc.)

<http://vpk.fldoe.org>

(Website listing VPK providers' Kindergarten Readiness Rates.)

### **Florida Division of Early Learning (DEL) website:**

<http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/>

(Here you will find VPK forms & policies.)