



**Early Childhood Development Services**

**Continuing Education Program**

**Terms and Conditions**

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## **Terms and Condition Overview**

The objective of the Continuing Education Program is to enhance the ability of child care programs to recruit and retain their staff by:

- Increasing the affordability of training to child care staff working in a licensed child care facilities and family home day care agencies.
- Encouraging child care staff to pursue training by addressing cost barriers.
- Providing opportunities for child care staff who do not have their Early Childhood Education (ECE) diploma/undergraduate degree to work towards this credential.
- Enabling child care staff to further their education and enhance their skills, specifically in the areas of special needs, administration, accounting and human resources.

## **Program Description**

The Continuing Education Program is available to child care staff working in licensed child care facilities and family home day care agencies who wish to pursue further education in the field of early childhood.

The Program is available for continuing education courses taken part-time while working in a licensed child care facility and family home day care agency.

Each applicant can qualify for:

- up to a maximum of \$1000.00 per year if employed part-time or
- up to \$5000.00 per year if employed full-time.

Applicants will be required to accumulate 750 or 1500 hours of work in a licensed child care facility or family home day care (FHDC) agency (within a yearly period) depending on the cost of the course.

If the applicant attends the class during paid working hours, the facility or the FHDC agency will be eligible for reimbursement for the hours a substitute was required.

## **Eligibility Criteria**

In order to receive Continuing Education Program funding, the following criteria must be met:

- The applicant must be currently working with children or families in a licensed child care facility or FHDC agency, for at least six months prior to the start date of the course.
- Eligible child care staff includes teachers, directors, assistant directors, special needs teachers and family home day care consultants. Family home day care providers are not eligible.
- Staff who have an ECE credential can take any approved course.
- Staff who do not have their Early Childhood Education (ECE) credential, must take courses towards obtaining their ECE diploma/ undergraduate degree or Level 1 classification.
- The courses must be taken towards obtaining an ECE diploma, undergraduate degree, post diploma, certificate, Level 1 classification or a certificate of completion related to the child care/early learning, business, administration, human resources or leadership.
- Professional Development Workshops under 20 hours per workshop are not eligible for reimbursement. For more information, please visit our website at: <http://gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/ProfessionalDevelopment.html>
- Courses must be successfully completed with verification provided by the institution.
- Start date of the course must be after the applicant has been employed in a licensed child care facility or family home day care agency for six months.
- Courses are subject to approval by the Department.

## **Program Timelines**

The Continuing Education Program was initiated April 1, 2008 and will end March 31, 2016.

Courses for credits commenced in September 2015 or January 2016 will be funded through March 31, 2016. If in the event the courses/program completion date is not until June 30, 2016; funding will be made available.

## **Process for Course Pre-Approval**

All courses must be taken from an approved Early Childhood Education program as listed in these Terms and Conditions or from a Continuing Education Program Approved Course List from other programs or institutions. The list will be maintained and posted on the Department of Community Services, Early Childhood Development Services website at:

[www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/continuingeducation.html](http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/continuingeducation.html)

If the applicant is interested in taking a course and the course is not on the approved list, the applicant must apply for course pre-approval.

If the applicant takes the course before approval is received, there is a risk that the course will not be reimbursed if it is deemed not eligible.

## **Required Documentation**

The applicant requesting course pre-approval will be required to complete a Continuing Education Program Course Pre-Approval form.

Once the pre-approval form is received by the Department, the course will be reviewed to determine if the course is eligible for approval.

Applicants who wish to take a course(s) outside of Nova Scotia must provide evidence that the course is not available in Nova Scotia.

## **Contact Information**

The Continuing Education Program Course Pre-Approval form can be obtained from the Department of Community Services, Early Childhood Development Services website at:

[www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/continuingeducation.html](http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/continuingeducation.html)

Applicants requiring additional information about the course pre-approval process are requested to contact the Coordinator, Family Home Day Care and Early Childhood Education, Department of Community Services, Early Childhood Development Services by email at [creamek@gov.ns.ca](mailto:creamek@gov.ns.ca).

## **Approved Training Institutions/Programs**

Institute for Human Services Education (IHSE), Early Childhood Education  
Mount Saint Vincent University, Child & Youth Study  
Nova Scotia Community College, Early Childhood Studies  
Nova Scotia College of Early Childhood Education  
Island Career Academy

## **Submission of the Course Pre- Approval Form**

Completed Continuing Education Program Course Pre-approval forms should be mailed to:

Coordinator, Family Home Day Care & Early Childhood Education  
Early Childhood Development Services  
Nova Scotia Department of Community Services  
P.O. Box 696  
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2T7

Applicants will be notified, in writing, of the Department's approval of their Continuing Education Program Course Pre-approval application.

## **Application Process for Course Reimbursement**

### **Required Documentation**

Applicants are required to complete a Continuing Education Program Application for Course Reimbursement form (each course requires one application) and attach the following supporting documents:

- Evidence from the training institution that the course was successfully completed. This must be in a form of a letter or official transcript issued by the training institution.
- Receipts for the cost of the course tuition, text books, and mandatory materials specifically required for the course.

The cost of the tuition can not be carried over from one eligible year to another.

### **Application Deadline**

Applications for Continuing Education Program Course Reimbursement must be submitted within 30 days of the completion of the course. Each course requires a separate application.

### **Contact Information and Assistance with the Application**

The Early Childhood Education Application for Course Reimbursement form may be obtained from the Department of Community Services, Early Childhood Development Services website at:

[www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/continuingeducation.html](http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/continuingeducation.html)

Applicants requiring additional information about the Continuing Education Program are requested to send their questions to Coordinator, Family Home Day Care & Early Childhood Education, Early Childhood Development Services [creamek@gov.ns.ca](mailto:creamek@gov.ns.ca)

## **Submission of the Application Package**

Completed applications and supporting documents must be mailed to:

Coordinator, Family Home Day Care & Early Childhood Education  
Early Childhood Development Services  
Nova Scotia Department of Community Services  
P.O. Box 696  
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2T7



## **Application Review and Approval Process**

### **Applications checked for completeness**

After the application form and supporting documents are received by the Department, they will be reviewed to ensure that the application form has been properly completed and supporting documents contain all required information.

If the application form or supporting documents are incomplete, the applicant will be contacted by telephone or letter to request the missing information.

It will be the responsibility of the applicant to provide the missing information in order for the application to be reviewed.

### **Applicant Eligibility**

Applicants are considered eligible for the Continuing Education Program if:

- They currently work with children or families in a licensed child care facility or FHDC agency.
- They have worked a minimum of six months in a licensed child care facility or FHDC agency in Nova Scotia prior to the start date of the course.
- They have completed the approved course successfully.
- They commit to work in a Nova Scotia licensed child care facility or FHDC agency for 750 or 1500 hours depending on the amount reimbursed and the hours of work (part or full time).
- The total amount requested in the fiscal year does not exceed the annual eligible maximum amount of reimbursement (\$1000.00 - \$5,000.00) (Refer to the Reimbursement Process page 11).

Reimbursement will be subject to the applicant fulfilling the commitment to work in a Nova Scotia licensed child care facility or FHDC agency as outlined in the Reimbursement Process.

## **Course Tuition and Materials**

The following expenses are eligible to be reimbursed for the course:

- The cost of the course tuition and registration,
- Text books,
- Mandatory course materials for the course.

If course books and/or materials are not included in the course tuition, original receipts must be provided for reimbursement.

## **Travel Allowance**

If an applicant is taking a course at a location that is further than 100 km away from their home and there is no option for the course to be available at a closer facility, a fixed travel allowance of \$250 will be provided per course.

## **Payment for Substitutes**

If the applicant is required to attend classes during work hours, an allowance will be provided to the child care facility or FHDC agency for the hours required for a substitute. The facility/FHDC agency will be eligible to receive \$10.00 per hour to pay for the time that the applicant was attending a course. This will only cover time taken for the course and not for any practicum or study time.

The facility/FHDC agency will be reimbursed on a quarterly basis.

## **The Annual Eligible Amount**

The annual eligible maximum amount is \$1000.00 for part-time employees and \$5000.00 for full-time employees within the fiscal year (1 April – 31 March).

If the applicant reaches the maximum amount of the reimbursement, they can not apply for further reimbursement until the beginning of the new fiscal year. The courses must be completed within the fiscal year.

Funding allocations are subject to Departmental budget availability.

## **Notification of Approval/Denial**

Following the review of the application, the applicant will be notified by letter if their Continuing Education Program Application for Course Reimbursement was approved.

Payment for the course reimbursement will follow under separate cover.

## **Reimbursement Process**

The applicant will be reimbursed once the Application for the Course Reimbursement is approved.

Applicants who are reimbursed for eligible courses must commit to continue working in a licensed child care facility or FHDC agency in Nova Scotia for the required period of time immediately following the reimbursement.

### **Accumulated Hours Requirement**

#### **Full Time Employment**

The applicant must be working more than 120 hours per month to be considered full-time.

If the applicant is working full-time at the time of application, the following will apply:

- The annual eligible maximum amount is \$5000.00 within the fiscal year (1 April – 31 March).
- If this is the applicant's first course and the reimbursement is less than \$1000.00, the applicant will be required to work 750 hours. This should be completed in approximately six months from the date of reimbursement. (Working full time at 37.5 hours per week it would be 20 weeks or 5 months).
- If this is the applicant's first course and the reimbursement is between \$1000.00 and \$5000.00, the applicant will be required to work 1500 hours which must be completed in one year from the date of reimbursement. (Working full time at 37.5 hours per week would be 40 weeks or 10 months)
- If the applicant applies for subsequent courses after she/he has accumulated required work hours for the previous reimbursement, the same rules apply as for the first course reimbursement requirements.
- The applicant may also apply for the subsequent courses even though they did not accumulate the required hours. However the accumulation will restart from the latest reimbursement date. The required work hours will be determined by the total of the previous reimbursement and the current amount for that fiscal year. If the total reimbursement is less than \$1000.00, the applicant will be required to work 750 hours. If the total reimbursement is more than \$1000.00, the applicant will be required to work 1500 hours.
- If the applicant applies for the first course reimbursement in the new fiscal year but did not accumulate the required number of hours for the previous year, the current

required accumulation of hours will be whichever is the higher number of required hours. The accumulation of hours will restart from the date of new reimbursement.

### **Part-Time Employment**

The applicant must be working between 70 and 120 hours per month to be considered part-time.

If the applicant is working part-time at the time of application the following will apply:

- The annual eligible maximum amount is \$1000.00 within the fiscal year (1 April – 31 March).
- If this is the applicant's first course, she/he will be reimbursed up to \$1000.00 per year. The applicant will be required to work 750 hours which should be completed in approximately 12 months from the date of the last reimbursement. The 750 hours will apply to the subsequent courses as long as the total amount of the reimbursement is less than \$1000.00 per fiscal year.
- If the applicant applies for subsequent courses after she/he has accumulated required work hours for the previous reimbursement, the same rules apply as for the first course reimbursement requirements.
- The applicant may also apply for the subsequent courses even though they did not accumulate the required hours. However the accumulation will restart from the current reimbursement date. The required work hours will be determined by the total of the previous reimbursement and the current amount for that fiscal year.

### **Request Letters**

A Worked Hours Request Letter will be sent to the applicant six months after the last reimbursement for the 750 hours required or after one year for the 1500 hours. This letter requests the Accumulated Hours Report.

Applicants will not be reimbursed for the subsequent courses if they have not fulfilled the accumulated hours as outlined.

The applicant is responsible to keep track and obtain confirmation of their hours worked from their new employer should they change employers (use Section 2 of the Continuing Education Program Application for Course Reimbursement form).

It is the responsibility of the applicant to notify the Coordinator, Family Home Day Care & Early Childhood Education of any changes to their address or contact information.

## **Accountability Process**

### **Accumulated Hours Report**

When the applicant is reimbursed for a course they are required to report their hours worked in a Nova Scotia licensed child care facility or FHDC agency. These hours are reported using the Accumulated Hours Report. The template for this report can be found on the Department of Community Services website at:

[www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/continuingeducation.html](http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/continuingeducation.html)

The Accumulated Hours Report **must** be sent when the required hours are accumulated.

The Department will send an Accumulated Hours Report to the applicant requesting that the applicant reports the hours to demonstrate the commitment was fulfilled. This report will be sent six months or one year after the last reimbursement depending on the amount of the reimbursement.

Please submit the complete report to:

Coordinator, Family Home Day Care & Early Childhood Education  
Early Childhood Development Services  
Nova Scotia Department of Community Services  
P.O. Box 696  
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2T7

## **Repayment Process**

If the applicant fails to fulfill the required commitment to work in a licensed child care facility or FHDC agency for the required hours without reasonable cause, the applicant must repay the reimbursement.

The amount due and payable to the Department will be based on the total reimbursement received within 6 months from the last reimbursement date.

Thirty(30) days after the Worked Hours Request Letter is sent, should no response be received, a letter will be sent to notify the applicant of the repayment obligations.

If the applicant is no longer working in a licensed child care facility of family home day care agency prior to accumulation of the required number of hours, written notice must be forwarded to the Coordinator, Family Home Day Care & Early Childhood Education with the arrangements for repayment of the reimbursement.

## **Appendix A – Definitions**

For purposes of these Terms and Conditions the following definitions apply:

- “Department”** refers to the Department of Community Services.
- “Fiscal year”** refers to the provincial government business year which runs for the twelve months from April 1<sup>st</sup> of any given year until March 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year.
- “Working hours”** refers to week days (Monday to Friday).
- “ECE”** refers to Early Childhood Education.
- “Family Home Day Care Agency”** refers to a business or organization registered with the Registry of Joint Stock Companies that is licensed under the Family Home Day Care Program Regulations to approve and manage family home day care in accordance with its family home day care program.
- “Part-time employee”** refers to employee who is working 70-120 hours per month
- “Full-time employee”** refers to employee who is working more than 120 hours per month
- “ECE credential”** refers to Level 2 or Level 3 classification.