

# **Child Care Staff Classification Services: A Guide to Classification and School Age Approval**



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## CONTENTS

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Contents.....	2
Introduction.....	3
Applying for a Classification or School Age Approval.....	3
Qualifications for Classification / School Age Approval.....	3 & 4
Experience in Child Care.....	5
Orientation for Staff Working in Licensed Child Care Facilities.....	5
Early Childhood Education Training in Nova Scotia.....	5
Early Childhood Education Training Institutions.....	6
Application Process for those who have completed ECE training in Nova Scotia.....	7
Training from Outside Nova Scotia.....	8
Application Process for those who have completed training outside Nova Scotia and for those seeking School Age Approval.....	9
Submitting the Application.....	10
Processing the Application.....	10
When You Disagree.....	10
Reporting a Change.....	11
Replacement Certificates.....	11
Maintaining your Classification / School Age Approval.....	12
Professional Development.....	13
Contact Information.....	13

*Child Care Staff Classification Services is a program administered by Early Childhood Development Services, Department of Community Services.*

## Introduction

Classification is the process for reviewing training and determining eligibility towards one of four designations for employment in a licensed child care facility or family home day care agency. School-Age Training Approval is the process for reviewing training and determining eligibility for employment in a licensed school age program. Classification or School-Age Approval is an official recognition of staff qualifications that meet the training requirements of Regulation 37 of the *Day Care Act and Regulations*.

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## Applying for a Classification or School-Age Approval

Under the *Day Care Act and Regulations*, staff working directly with children in a licensed child care facility must have a Classification or School-Age Approval. Recognition is obtained through Child Care Staff Classification Services. Individuals apply for recognition of training by completing an application form and submitting proof of a relevant qualification according to the criteria listed below.

## Qualifications for Classification / School-Age Approval

**Please note:** *In the context of the Day Care Regulations, reference to early childhood programming includes infant, toddler, preschool and school age children.*

To be eligible for a *Classification Level* the applicant must meet one or more of the following training requirements:

- *Entry Level Classification* - completion of the Orientation for Staff Working in Licensed Child Care Facilities. The orientation is for child care staff working directly with children and who do not meet the qualification for any of the following Classification Levels.
- *Level 1 Classification* - has completed partial training in early childhood education defined as:

- a) completion of the Orientation for Staff Working in Licensed Child Care Facilities, and
    - Completion of a minimum of 3 post-secondary courses in the following subject areas: a course in child development; early childhood programming; behaviour guidance, and
    - Completion of guided workplace experience, or
  - b) completion of a one year certificate program in early childhood education from an approved training program, or
  - c) has been granted equivalency status, as per section 21A(5) of the Day Care Regulations (N.S. Reg.1989).
- *Level 2 Classification* - completion of a 2-year diploma at an approved post-secondary program in
    - a) early childhood education, or
    - b) an area of study that qualifies a person to plan and deliver early childhood education programming for children, or
    - c) a one year early childhood education certificate obtained before May 31, 2000 from a training program in early childhood education, as defined in section 21(4) of the Day Care Regulations (N.S. Reg.1989). These programs include the former Saint Joseph Children's Centre, Early Childhood Education Training Program; level 4 of the former Child Development Services Pre-School Program provided in conjunction with the Nova Scotia Teachers' College. Other programs include the Child Care Attendant program and the Early Childhood Studies program previously offered at Nova Scotia Community College locations.
  - *Level 3 Classification* - completed the following at an approved post-secondary training institution
    - a) an approved bachelor's degree program in early childhood education or an area of study that qualifies a person to plan and deliver early childhood programming for children, or
    - b) the requirements for a *Level 2 Classification* in addition to completion of a bachelor's degree program.

To be eligible for *School-Age Training Approval* the applicant must meet one or more of the following training requirements:

- *School-Age Training Approval* - has completed the Orientation for Staff Working in Licensed Child Care Facilities and the following at an approved post-secondary training institution
  - a) a bachelor's degree program in early or elementary education, or

- b) a post secondary credential that qualifies a person to plan and deliver developmentally appropriate programming for school age children.

## **Experience in Child Care**

Child Care Staff Classification and School-Age Training Approval are reviewed based on academic qualifications only. Experience in child care is valuable and can be assessed for post-secondary credit through an academic institution. Request for credit based on what has been learned from experience is called *Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition (PLAR)*. Some training institutions may offer *PLAR*. To inquire about *PLAR* contact a post-secondary institution approved to deliver the early childhood education program.

## **Orientation for Staff Working in Licensed Child Care Facilities**

(leading to Entry Level Classification)

The Orientation for Staff Working in Licensed Child Care Facilities is a series of informational modules and activities. According to Reg 37(6), staff working directly with children who do not meet the regulated training requirements must complete the orientation within one year of their date of employment. The orientation is also required as a pre-requisite to Level 1 training and for School-Age Training Approval.

The delivery of the Orientation is administered by Child Care Connection, Nova Scotia. For registration and delivery details visit <http://www.cccns.org/orientation/home.htm>

## **Early Childhood Education Training in Nova Scotia**

Training that qualifies a person for each level of classification is offered in Nova Scotia. Professional development, degree and diploma programs are available via classroom study, online, and distance delivery. Refer to the list of Nova Scotia post-secondary institutions on the following page for contact information regarding approved early childhood education programs.

**Important Note:** Before taking any coursework/training programs not listed in this Guide (with the intention of obtaining classification/school-age approval), it is recommended that you contact Child Care Staff Classification Services to verify whether the training program will be recognized towards classification.

## Early Childhood Education Training Institutions

For training leading to a Level 1, 2 or 3 Classification, or for an assessment of a credential for a transfer of credit, contact any of the following approved training institutions:

Mount Saint Vincent University  
166 Bedford Highway  
Halifax, NS B3M 2J6  
(902) 457-6255  
[www.msvu.ca](http://www.msvu.ca)

Nova Scotia College of ECE  
6208 Quinpool Road, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Halifax, NS B3L 1A3  
(902) 423-7114  
[www.nscece.ca](http://www.nscece.ca)

Institute for Human Services Education  
Suite #1 60 Lorne Street  
Truro, NS B2N 3K3  
(902) 893-3342  
[www.inst-hse.ca](http://www.inst-hse.ca)

Nova Scotia Community College  
236 Belcher Street  
Kentville, NS B4N 0A6  
(902) 491-4911 (in metro)  
1-866-679-6722 (toll-free)  
[www.nsc.ca](http://www.nsc.ca)

Island Career Academy  
721 Alexandra Street  
Sydney, NS B1S 2H4  
(902) 564-6112  
[www.islandcareeracademy.ns.ca](http://www.islandcareeracademy.ns.ca)

Nova Scotia Community College  
372 Pleasant Street  
Yarmouth, NS B5A 2L2  
(902) 491-4911 (in metro)  
1-866-679-6722 (toll-free)  
[www.nsc.ca](http://www.nsc.ca)

Nova Scotia Community College  
1 Main Street  
Springhill, NS B0M 1X0  
(902) 491-4911 (in metro)  
1-866-679-6722 (toll-free)  
[www.nsc.ca](http://www.nsc.ca)

Universite Sainte-Anne  
1695, Route 1  
Church Point, NS B0W 1M0  
(902) 648-2048  
[www.usainteanne.ca/education-a-la-petite-enfance](http://www.usainteanne.ca/education-a-la-petite-enfance)

## **Application Process for those who have completed ECE training in Nova Scotia**

*If you have graduated from an ECE training program in Nova Scotia, have completed the Orientation for Staff Working in Licensed Child Care Facilities, or have completed training for a Level 1 Classification, complete the **Information to Recognize Classification** Form found as a link from the Classification web page <http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/training/ClassificationforStaff.html>*

### Section 1 - Give your details

- Complete all information including your name, previous name(s), full permanent address (including postal code) and other contact information. Please print clearly.

### Section 2 – Check the level for which you are applying

- Mark with a check the classification level for which you are applying.
- If you are applying for Entry Level, attach a copy of your Orientation for Staff Working in Licensed Child Care Facilities completion certificate.
- If you are applying for Level 1, attach a copy of your transcript and workplace experience letter from the training institution, as well as a copy of your Orientation for Staff Working in Licensed Child Care Facilities completion certificate if you do not have an Entry Level Classification.
- If you are applying for a Level 2 or 3, attach a copy of your credential.

### Section 3 - Sign the declaration and consent

- Sign your name and date the declaration. By signing the application form, you are stating that the information you are providing is true and complete to the best of your knowledge. Your signature authorizes Child Care Staff Classification Services to review your qualifications, enter your information in the Classification database, and issue a Classification certificate.

*Applicants seeking School-Age Training Approval complete the Application for Classification / School Age Approval (ECDS-818) form and follow the application process on page 9 of this Guide.*

## Training from Outside Nova Scotia

Relevant credentials obtained outside Nova Scotia may be eligible for classification or school age training approval.

### **Applicants with certification from another jurisdiction in Canada:**

If your educational credentials have been reviewed and you have been issued certification to work in licensed child care in another Canadian jurisdiction (Yukon, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland), you may apply for classification in Nova Scotia without having to submit official transcripts for review. Complete the **Application for Classification / School Age Approval (ECDS-818)** form found as a link from the Classification web page.

### **Applicants with international credentials:**

If you have a relevant international credential, it is advised that an international credential assessment accompany the application. For a list of international credential assessment agencies visit [www.cicic.ca/415/credential-assessment-services.canada](http://www.cicic.ca/415/credential-assessment-services.canada)

Apply to Child Care Staff Classification Services using form ECDS-818

- Include the result of your international credential assessment
- Apply with program and course descriptions as well as instructional hours. Translation required.
- Program information will be reviewed in comparison to the Nova Scotia Standards for Early Childhood Education Training Programs.
- Upon review the applicant may be required to complete additional coursework and/or further practicum experience.
- Applicants with international credentials are required to complete the Orientation for Staff Working in Licensed Child Care Facilities as an introduction to regulated child care in Nova Scotia.

As an alternative to this process applicants may choose to have their credential evaluated by a Nova Scotia training institution approved to deliver an early child education program, as listed in this Guide.



## **Application Process for those who have completed training outside Nova Scotia and for those seeking School Age Approval**

Applicants seeking Classification or School-Age Training Approval complete the **Application for Classification / School Age Approval (ECDS-818)** form found as a link from the Child Care Staff Classification web page.

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/training/ClassificationforStaff.html>

### Section 1 - Give your details

- Complete all information including your name, previous name(s), full permanent address (including postal code) and other contact information. Please print clearly.
- Indicate if you are certified to work in childcare in another Canadian jurisdiction. If so, include a copy of your certification document.

### Section 2 - Check the level or approval for which you are applying

- Mark with a check the classification level or school age approval for which you are applying. Descriptions of the training qualifications for each level are included in this Guide.

### Section 3 - Describe your education

- Mark with a check all *relevant* training completed including post-secondary courses, certificates, diplomas, degrees.
- Identify the name of your program of study, length of the program, name of your post-secondary institution and location.

### Section 4 - Sign the declaration and consent

- Sign your name and date the declaration. By signing the application form, you are stating that the information you are providing is true and complete to the best of your knowledge. Your signature authorizes Child Care Staff Classification Services to review your qualifications, enter your information in the Classification database, and issue a Classification or School-Age Approval.

### Section 5 - Have you attached all supporting documents?

- Mark with a check the documents you will be attaching to the application form.
- Documentation to verify the information identified in section 3 must be attached to the application. Official transcripts may be sent directly from the educational institution or attached to the application form. Photocopies or faxed copies of transcripts will not be accepted. You may be asked to supply official course descriptions with transcripts at the request of Child Care Staff Classification Services.

## **Submitting the Application**

Application forms and accompanying documentation are to be forwarded to Child Care Staff Classification Services by mail or hand-delivered to the address provided in this Guide. Faxed/emailed applications are not acceptable. An application with an original signature must be provided before a review can take place.

## **Processing the Application**

- Upon receipt of your application package, it will be reviewed to ensure that the application is complete and that all required documentation is included. If the submission is incomplete, an attempt will be made to notify you, using the contact information provided.
- If your application is complete, your documentation is reviewed.
- If the review determines that you are eligible for a classification or school age approval, you will be assigned a registration number. This number is unique to you and remains the same even if your name or classification change. A certificate indicating your Classification Level or School-Age Training Approval will be sent to you by mail.
- If the review determines that your application is insufficient to meet any of the qualifications for a Classification or School Age Approval, this will be communicated to you in a status letter.
- The review process may require four to six weeks to complete.

## **When you disagree**

Applicants for Classification or School-Age Training Approval may disagree with the decision made by Child Care Staff Classification Services. When this happens, the concern may be addressed through an internal review process.

1. The applicant should contact the Coordinator, Child Care Staff Classification Services to seek resolution to the matter of concern.
2. A request for review may be made in writing to Child Care Staff Classification Services Review Committee, clearly identifying the matter of concern and including any documentation to support the request.
3. The Review Committee will consider the file and request to ensure that decisions are consistent with legislation, regulations and policy. Recommendations based on this review will be made.
4. The applicant will receive a response in writing, signed by the Director, Early Childhood Development Services.

## Reporting a change:

Changes that should be reported to Child Care Staff Classification Services include the following:

- Official name
- Mailing address
- Replacement certificate
- Documentation to increase your classification level
- If you have acquired additional information that may impact the result of your review, you may request an upgrade to your training status. Complete the **Request for Change of Information (ECDS-817)** form found as a link from the Classification web page.

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/training/ClassificationforStaff.html>

1. Provide your registration number.
2. Select the type of change you are requesting.
3. Provide the details for the change you are requesting.
4. Sign the request for a change.
5. Attach supporting documentation if you are applying to increase your Classification Level. If this documentation results in a change, a new Classification or School Age Approval will be mailed to you. If your submission does not result in a change, a letter stating this will be sent to you.

## Replacement Certificates

Replacement certificates will only be printed upon a signed request from the applicant. Complete the **Request for a Change of Information (ECDS-817)** form found as a link from the Classification web page.

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/training/ClassificationforStaff.html>

- Provide your registration number
- Check off the box requesting a replacement certificate
- Ensure that your contact information is up to date
- Sign the request for a change
- Mail your request to the address on the form

## **Maintaining Your Classification / School Age Approval:**

According to Regulation 38, staff with a Classification or School Age Approval must provide proof of completion of at least thirty hours of *professional development to enhance skills and knowledge specific to early childhood care and education*, every three years from issuance of the Classification or School-Age Training Approval. The process takes place as follows:

1. Approximately 30 months after the issue of the Classification or School Age Approval, an electronic reminder (letter where required) will be forwarded to you. On completion of your 30 hours of professional development, complete the Proof of Continuing Education form that will be found as a link from the Classification web page.
2. Provide your registration number and current personal contact information. Describe your professional development and provide copies of transcripts for course completion and/or workshop certificates. Sign the declaration and consent and send all documents to the address on the application form.
3. Documentation is reviewed. If you have completed 30 hours of professional development relevant to early childhood education in the past three years, a letter is returned to you indicating your professional development is approved for another three years. If no documentation is received, or professional development is incomplete, a letter is returned to you indicating an incomplete status and identifying potential cancellation of Classification or School Age Approval if proof of the required hours of professional development is not provided.
4. Child Care Staff Classification Services will maintain a record of professional development hours for each classified/approved staff member in the classification database.

## Professional Development

*Why is professional development important?*

Professional development (PD) helps early childhood professionals in all roles progress along diverse career pathways that build and reward increasing knowledge and skills. PD is based on a person's individual development plan and is intended to build upon existing competencies, interests and knowledge. PD helps to ensure that individuals stay in touch with current information and best practices in the field of early childhood education.

*What is professional development?*

- In-service training including conferences and workshops; education both formal and continuing; seminars including formalized mentoring and coaching.
- Learning opportunities that enhance skills and knowledge that reflect the individual's plan for work with and on behalf of young children and their families.
- Learning opportunities related to professional work in one of the general areas of child development, family support, programming, guiding behavior, health, safety, nutrition, special needs, communication, administration.

For more information and links to professional development opportunities throughout Nova Scotia visit: [www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/training/ProfessionalDevelopment.html](http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/training/ProfessionalDevelopment.html)

## Contact Information

Child Care Staff Classification Services  
Department of Community Services  
PO Box 696  
5675 Spring Garden Road  
Halifax, NS  
B3J 2T7

Phone: (902) 424-3207

Fax: (902) 424-0708

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/training/ClassificationforStaff.html>