

PROGRAM AND APPLICATION GUIDE

This guide identifies the eligibility requirements for the **Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Wage Subsidy Program** and gives you important information on how to complete the application.

Questions? Contact us at 1.877.489.2687 ext. 3689 or ecewagesubsidy@ourtrust.org.

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PROGRAM GUIDE

WHAT IS THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR WAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAM?

This program helps strengthen the ECE workforce by providing a \$2 per hour wage subsidy to enhance the wages of eligible ECEs employed by licensed child care facilities in the Columbia Basin Trust [region](#) (Basin).

The program aims to address the shortage of qualified ECEs in the Basin, and helps Basin residents access safe and affordable child care to enable their employment, which is identified in the Columbia Basin Management Plan (2020-2022) as a desired outcome of the strategic priority, *Support for Business Renewal*. Learn more about the Columbia Basin Management Plan [here](#).

For more information, call toll free 1.877.489.2687 ext. 3689 or email ecewagesubsidy@ourtrust.org. This program is administered by College of the Rockies.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Eligible Applicants include non-profit and for-profit providers of licensed child care in the Columbia Basin Trust region (ourtrust.org/map) with the following designations:

- Group Child Care
- Multi-Age Child Care
- Preschools
- In-Home Multi-Age Child Care

Facilities designated as Family Child Care, School Age Care, Occasional Child Care, Registered License-Not-Required Care, License-Not-Required Care and In-Child's-Own-Home Care are not eligible.

Please refer to the [Childcare BC Webpage](#) for clarification on licensing designations.

IS THERE AN APPLICATION DEADLINE AND WHEN WILL I KNOW IF MY APPLICATION IS APPROVED?

Eligible Employers must submit an application by **October 21, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. PT / 3:00 p.m. MT** and will receive notification of approval/decline approximately eight weeks after the deadline.

Contribution Agreements will be entered into with approved Employers for a 12-month period, from approximately January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022.

Applications for new, eligible facilities that become licensed *after* the October 21, 2021 deadline will be considered on first-received, first-served basis and contribution agreements will be entered into with approved Employers for eligible hours ending December 31, 2022. If you

intend to open a licensed facility in 2022, contact us at 1.877.489.2687 ext. 3689 or email ecewagesubsidy@ourtrust.org.

WHAT ARE THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS?

Employee Criteria

Eligible ECEs must:

- be a resident of the Columbia Basin Trust [region](#);
- hold a valid Early Childhood Educator, Infant and Toddler Educator, and/or Special Needs Educator certificate issued by the BC ECE Registry;
- be in good standing with the BC ECE Registry;
- be employed or self-employed on a full-time, part-time or casual basis by an eligible licensed child care facility; and
- spend more than 50% of their working hours at the licensed facility providing direct care and supervision to children enrolled.

Employer Criteria

Eligible employers must:

- be a licensed child care facility (eligible designations listed above) in good standing with the Ministry of Children and Family Development;
- be in good standing with the BC Corporate Registry (if the Employer is a non-profit society or registered business);
- be located in the Columbia Basin Trust [region](#);
- have a WorkSafeBC account in good standing (WorkSafeBC coverage is required for all Employers with employees and is recommended for Employers that do not have employees):
 - if you currently have WorkSafeBC coverage, you must provide a clearance letter with your application. Get the form [here](#); and
 - if you don't have WorkSafeBC coverage and have employees, you must obtain and send proof of coverage before receiving the Wage Subsidy. Register [here](#).
- be receiving a wage subsidy of at least \$2/hour from a source other than the Trust; and
- continue paying ECEs their previously received wage, plus the \$2 wage subsidy, to enhance the ECE's existing wage.

WHAT COSTS ARE INELIGIBLE?

Wage Subsidies cannot be applied to the following:

- sick time, unpaid or paid leaves from the facility, vacation time, or any other non-worked time;
- ECEs that only care for their own children;
- ECEs working as Supported Child Development consultants or support workers;

- ECEs that spend more than 50% of their time working in an administrative role and not directly with children; and
- ECE Assistants (ECEAs) and Responsible Adults.

ECEAs looking to complete their ECE qualifications should apply for funding through the Trust's [ECE Training Wage Program](#).

HOW MUCH CAN I APPLY FOR?

Eligible Applicants can apply for a one-year subsidy to enhance ECE wages by \$2 per hour, plus 15% mandatory employment related costs (MERCs). The one-year subsidy will be estimated based on each ECE's expected hours per week (which, for full-time employees, should not typically exceed 40 hours/week) multiplied by the number of weeks worked per year (less vacation and facility closure times).

Quarterly online reports will be required to verify actual hours worked each month. The wage subsidy cannot be applied to paid or unpaid leave, sick time, vacation time, or other *non-worked time.

*The wage subsidy can be used towards statutory holiday pay as it has not been included in the MERCs calculation below.

HOW MANY ECEs PER FACILITY ARE ELIGIBLE?

The program will prioritize providing wage subsidies for the number of ECEs required by licensing and will consider additional ECEs employed by the facility on a case-by-case basis. The program also considers geographic distribution of wage subsidies in its funding decisions.

MANDATORY EMPLOYMENT RELATED COSTS CALCULATION

Employers must pay MERCs with the \$2/hour wage subsidy, including Employment Insurance, Canada Pension Plan, WorkSafeBC and other mandatory benefits (excluding statutory holiday pay). MERCs will be calculated using a maximum flat rate of 15 per cent (for a total wage subsidy of \$2.30/hour).

REPORTING, PAYMENTS AND MONITORING

- If your application is successful, you will enter into a contribution agreement with College of the Rockies and receive a wage subsidy for eligible ECE hours for a 12-month period, from approximately January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022.
- Eligible ECEs will submit a signed declaration form confirming participation in the program.
- We will monitor Employers through a virtual meeting or phone call.

- The first payment will advance up to 80% of the total approved wage subsidy, less wage subsidies approved for vacant position(s), which will not be advanced until the vacancies are filled.
- The final 20% installment will be released at the end of the 12-month period upon submission of satisfactory reporting and adjusted to reflect actual eligible hours worked.
- Employers must keep accurate payroll records for all participating ECEs.
- Quarterly online reports will be required to verify the number of eligible hours worked during the reporting period and to ensure ECE certifications continue to be in good standing with BC ECE Registry.
- Final claims and reporting requirements must be submitted by January 31, 2023.

If your application is successful, we will provide you with further details on claims, payment and reporting processes.

WHAT IF MY STAFF OR STAFFING NEEDS CHANGE THROUGHOUT THE CONTRACT PERIOD?

ECEs approved to receive the wage subsidy, including new ECEs hired to fill vacancies or create new child care spaces during the funding term, will be required to submit a declaration form confirming participation in the program.

Submission of online quarterly reports will be required by each Employer to:

1. confirm the number of eligible hours worked during the reporting period; and
2. verify that participating ECE certifications remain in good standing with BC ECE Registry.

Should staffing or operational changes occur throughout the funding term that may result in hours exceeding the approved wage subsidy (such as an increase in operating hours or an unexpected creation of new child care spaces), Employers will be required to notify the College of the Rockies and an increase may be considered to ensure the subsidy is reflective of actual eligible hours worked.

HOW DO I APPLY?

For all eligible, licensed facilities:

1. Review the application instructions described in the final section of this guide prior to filling out the application form.
2. Use the [worksheet](#) to develop your application offline if you so choose.
3. Complete the online application from at ourtrust.org/ece-wage-subsidy-program/ by **Thursday, October 21, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. PT/3:00 p.m. MT.**

For new facilities expected to open after October 21, 2021:

1. Email ecewagesubsidy@ourtrust.org to indicate when you expect to meet all eligibility requirements outlined above and open your facility.
2. Depending on the date of your facility's expected opening, you may be provided access to the application form and invited to apply once all eligibility requirements can be met.

WHEN WILL I KNOW WHEN MY APPLICATION IS APPROVED?

You will receive an e-mail confirming approval/decline of your application approximately eight weeks following the deadline.

Note:

- College of the Rockies, Columbia Basin Trust and their agents shall not be obligated in any manner to any applicant whatsoever.
- College of the Rockies and Columbia Basin Trust reserve the right to fund all or none of any application submitted.
- Approved Employers must enter into an agreement with College of the Rockies and commit to submitting quarterly reports and maintaining accurate payroll records for submission to the College of the Rockies if requested.
- Registered societies and companies must be in good standing with BC Corporate Registry and Online Services.

Reminders:

- Don't forget to upload an electronic copy your WorkSafeBC Clearance Letter with your online application (unless not yet covered by WorkSafeBC).

APPLICATION GUIDE

USING THE ONLINE APPLICATION FORM

The Trust's online application system allows you to apply to various programs offered by the Trust. You will need to create an account to access application forms, save drafts and submit completed forms. Here are some tips for using the system:

- When logged in you can only work on one draft application per program. You must submit an application before you can begin another application within that specific program. Submitted applications can be edited up until the deadline.
- Drafts and submissions can be viewed once you have logged in.
- To ensure that your edits are saved, click the **Save Draft** button at the bottom of each page often, especially before navigating away from the page.
- **DO NOT CLICK YOUR BROWSER'S BACK BUTTON**: your application form will not auto-save and you will lose your work. However, the application form will auto-save when you click the **Next** and **Previous** buttons to navigate between pages.



- Keep your entries precise and clear. It is important to note that space in some sections is limited. Space allotment is identified in each section.
- You may only upload supporting documents that are either PDF or picture formats (JPG, GIF, PNG, BMP). More information is found in the section for Supporting Documents.
- You have the option to use a worksheet to prepare your application entries and/or collaborate with others involved in your project. The worksheet is a Word document and will not be accepted as your application to the program. All of the questions you will be asked on the online application form are included on this worksheet.

COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM QUESTIONS

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Organization/Business Legal Name

Enter the full legal name of your organization.

BC Registry Incorporation/Registration or Business Number (if applicable)

Registered non-profits and businesses must be in good standing with the BC Registry Services. Enter your number here.

Organization Type

Select the organization type that best describes your business or organization.

What regional district does your organization reside in?

Choose the applicable regional district from the drop-down menu.

Can your organization receive payment in the Organization Legal Name listed above?

Choose yes or no. If no, indicate to whom a cheque should be made payable.

By submitting this application, I acknowledge the following:

The personal information requested is collected under the authority of section 26(c) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA) and will be used by Columbia Basin Trust (the "Trust") for registration, reporting, and evaluative purposes relating to the ECE Wage Subsidy Program. The collection, use and disclosure of personal information is subject to the provisions of the FOIPPA. Any questions regarding such may be directed to: privacy@ourtrust.org or FOIPPA Inquiries, Senior Manager, Information Services, Columbia Basin Trust, Suite300, 445-13 Ave., Castlegar, BC, V1N 1G1, 1.800.505.8998.

FACILITY INFORMATION

If your organization operates more than one child care facility, complete one application per facility.

Facility Name

List the operating name of your facility as it appears on your Community Care Facility License.

Facility License Number

Enter your license number as it appears on your Community Care Facility License. You will be required to upload a copy of your Community Care Facility License to the Supporting Documents section of the Application.

Project Location

Select the geographical location of the facility from the drop-down menu.

Year facility began operation Enter the year.

Is your facility unionized? Select yes or no.

Are staff at your facility currently receiving a wage subsidy of at least \$2/hour from a source other than the Trust?

Select yes or no. You must be receiving a wage subsidy of at least \$2/hour from a source other than the Trust to be eligible.

Primary Employer Contact Information

Provide the Employer name/contact info for the person who can be contacted about your application or throughout the contract period if your wage subsidy application is successful.

Total maximum licensed capacity

Enter your maximum licensed capacity as per your Community Care Facility License.

Enter maximum capacity per license type

Complete the table provided to address the following three questions.

1. How many child care spaces is your facility currently licensed to operate for each of the eligible license types?
2. What is the minimum number of qualified ECEs required to meet ECE to child ratio requirements as per the Child Care Licensing Regulation? (Only include required ECEs. Do not include ECE Assistants or Responsible Adults.)
3. Does your facility consistently operate at or close to maximum capacity? Yes/No

If you answered no to any of the questions above regarding operating at maximum capacity, is this due to challenges associated with recruiting and retaining qualified ECEs?

Select yes or no and explain why your facility is not operating at full capacity and when/if you expect to begin operating at full capacity.

Are you employing more ECEs than the minimum requirement as per licensing?

Select yes or no. The program will prioritize wage subsidies for the number of ECEs required by licensing and will consider additional ECEs employed by the facility on a case-by-case basis.

If you are employing several part-time ECEs whose combined hours equal the required child to ECE ratio for your operating hours, you can answer no to this question.

If you employ more ECEs than what is required by licensing (i.e., your ECE to child ratio is higher than what is required) answer the questions below.

If yes, how many additional ECEs are employed and how many hours do they work each week?

Indicate how many additional ECEs you are employing beyond the minimum licensing requirements and how many hours they each work in an average week.

If yes, why do you employ more ECEs than the minimum required?

Provide an explanation as to why your facility currently employs more ECEs than required by licensing. Indicate whether this a temporary or permanent strategy your organization utilizes to deliver child care.

Do you provide extended hours of care (before 6:00 a.m. or after 7:00 p.m. at night)?

Select yes or no.

Days your facility operates each week

Select which days your facility is open.

Hours of operation (to/from)

Indicate your standard opening and closing hours.

Number of weeks the facility operates per year

Does your facility close for holidays, spring break or over the summer? Indicate how many weeks your facility is open, excluding planned closures.

WAGE SUBSIDY REQUEST AND CALCULATION

Current ECEs

To calculate your requested one-year wage subsidy for January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022, start by entering the requested information for each of your currently employed ECEs, which will auto-calculate their prospective subsidy.

ECE 1

Full-time or part-time position? Choose from Dropdown. Full-time is defined as working 30 hours or more each week.

Hourly rate

What is the ECE's current base rate (before receiving any wage enhancements)? Employers will be expected to continue paying ECEs their rate, plus the \$2 wage subsidy (and any other wage enhancements), to enhance the ECE's existing wage.

of hours per week ____ **x # weeks/year** ____ = **Wage subsidy estimate:** ____

Enter the number of hours the ECE is typically scheduled to work each week and the number of weeks they typically work each year (less vacation time and planned facility closures). Be as accurate as possible. The wage subsidy estimate will auto-calculate based on your entries.

ECE Certificate/Registration #

Enter the ECE's certificate/registration number. This will be used to verify that the ECE certification is valid.

ECE Certificate/Registration Expiry Date

Position spends more than 50% of their time working directly with children

Select yes or no. To be eligible, the ECE must spend more than 50% of their time directly caring for children.

Click the **+Add** button to add another row.

ECE Vacancies

Are you planning to add more ECE positions to this facility or fill current vacancies in 2022?

Select yes or no. This excludes ECEs you may hire to replace/address turnover of current ECEs listed above.

If yes, choose the following option(s) indicating why you intend to add more ECEs:

- Currently operating under capacity
- Planning to add new child care spaces to this facility in 2022
- Other (please explain)

If you indicated the facility is currently operating under capacity, what is the status of your recruitment process? (175 words max)

Indicate how long your facility has been operating under capacity and how long you have been trying to recruit for the role. What steps are you taking to fill the role and when do you expect it to be filled?

If you indicated you are planning to add new child care spaces, complete the table provided.

How many and what type of new licensed child care spaces will your project create?

If you indicated you are planning to add new child care spaces, what is the status of your expansion plans and when do you expect to open the new spaces at this facility? (175 words max)

Tell us about your plans to create new child care spaces at your facility and how you plan to achieve it. Where will they be located? What are the anticipated capital expenses (e.g., renovations or upgrades and equipment) and how do you expect to cover those costs?

ECE 1 Vacancy

To calculate your requested subsidy for vacancies in which you expect to fill in 2022, enter the requested information for each of the prospective positions.

Full-time or part-time position? Choose from Dropdown. Full-time is defined as working 30 hours or more each week.

Expected start date When do you expect the new ECE to start? Be as accurate as possible.

Expected hourly rate What will the ECE's starting rate be (before receiving any wage enhancements)?

of hours per week _____ **x # work weeks in 2022*** _____ = **Wage subsidy estimate:** _____
Ensure # work weeks in 2022 aligns with your expected start date and excludes vacation time and facility closures for the employment period.

Click the **+Add** button to add another row.

Based on the information entered above, your requested wage subsidy will be calculated as follows:

Requested Wage Subsidy for January 2022 – December 2022	
Current ECEs	<i>Auto-populate from above</i>
ECE Vacancies	<i>Auto-populate from above</i>
Total Requested	<i>Current ECEs + ECE Vacancies</i>
Total Requested with MERCS	<i>Total Requested x 15% MERCS</i>

WORKSAFEBC COVERAGE

Do you have general commercial liability coverage? Select yes or no. If Yes, enter the amount of coverage.

Do you have WorkSafeBC coverage?

Yes – Enter the Account Number

No – I will obtain WorkSafeBC coverage prior to receiving the wage subsidy.
WorkSafeBC coverage is required for all applicants with employees.

N/A – I am the owner and do not have employees and do not intend to acquire WorkSafeBC.
WorkSafeBC coverage is recommended for owners that do not have employees.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

You are required to submit the following documents with your application:

- Community Care Facility License; and
- WorkSafeBC Clearance Letter (required if have coverage).

List what you are submitting. Click the **+Add** button to add another row.

You may upload up to six supporting documents.

- Before uploading your supporting document, ensure the file name is clear and

identifies the content.

- File size may not exceed 3MB per document, and a total of 10 MB for all uploads.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Is there anything else you would like to add that has not already been mentioned? (220 words)

Include anything else you would like to add. Be sure it is something that has not already been addressed in this application.

FINAL STEPS

What is the main, and first, way you heard about this program? [you may choose one]

- Trust Staff
- Trust Website
- Email or Our Trust monthly Newsletter
- Newspaper article/story
- Newspaper advertisement
- Online advertisement
- Online news story
- Radio advertisement
- Word of mouth
- Social Media
- Other [blank text entry]

Would you like to receive email correspondence from the Trust?

- Yes [enter email address]
- No

Does your organization have social media accounts? *Share your account names and we can connect.*

- Facebook:
- Twitter:
- Instagram:
- Linked in:

How do you like to receive news and hear about updates from the Trust? [choose as many as applicable]

- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Our Trust Monthly

- Website
- Email from staff
- Newsprint
- Online news
- Other – please list

DECLARATION

I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the applicant organization and declare that:

- a) I have read and understood the information in this application and the 2021/22 Early Childhood Educator Wage Subsidy Program Guide.
- b) The information I have provided in this application is true, accurate and complete in every respect.

I acknowledge that:

- c) If any of the information described above is false or misleading, the applicant may be required to repay some or all the financial assistance that may be approved by the College of the Rockies.
- d) The College of the Rockies, Columbia Basin Trust and its agents shall not be obligated in any manner to any applicant whatsoever and reserve the right to fund all or none of any application submitted.
- e) By submitting this application, I hereby acknowledge that the College of the Rockies and Columbia Basin Trust may disclose this application, and the information contained herein—including but not limited to name, location and the amount and nature of any related funding—to the public, individuals or any other entity to the extent allowed by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA).
- f) I further agree that the College of the Rockies and Columbia Basin Trust may proactively disclose to the public my name and location and the amount and nature of funding granted.
- g) Any questions regarding such may be directed to: FOIPPA Inquiries, Senior Manager, Information Services, Columbia Basin Trust, 300–445 13 Avenue, Castlegar, BC, V1N 1G1, 1.800.505.8998.

I have read and agree to the declaration above.

* I Agree

Date

Applicant Name and Title