

EEC Essentials 2.0 FAQs

Table of Contents

StrongStart Learning Management System (LMS) and Technical Questions	1
Training – Required Participants	4
Training Policy Questions	6
Training Content Questions	7
Monitoring and Compliance	8

StrongStart Learning Management System (LMS) and Technical Questions

Q. Where are the EEC Essentials 2.0 located?

The EEC Essentials are housed in EEC’s **StrongStart Online Professional Development System (SSPDS)**, which is a web-based Learning Management System (LMS) for early educators. The LMS that offers and tracks EEC courses, including self-paced courses such as the EEC Essentials 2.0 courses, as well as instructor-led courses.

Q. What is a Learning Management System (LMS)?

Learning Management Systems are used to deliver, track and report online training activities. Training may be self-directed, facilitated by an instructor or a combination of the two.

The required *EEC Essentials* course are all self-directed.

Q. How do I register for an account and log into the system?

Here are the steps for you to access the system and create your account:

- Go to the URL: <https://strongstart.eoe.mass.gov>
- Click the **Login** button in the top left corner to create your account
 - Click to Accept Release Statement
 - Complete the registration process

Q. How do I enroll in a self-paced course?

Here’s how to enroll in self-paced training (self-paced courses will have a computer monitor icon above the course title):

1. Open the **Course Catalog** in StrongStart from the left navigation menu
2. Select the title of the course you want to take
3. Select **Get Item**
4. Select **In Cart (Checkout)**
5. Select **Finish** to enroll

6. When you are ready to begin, select the course title from your Dashboard, then select the first module.

Q. How do I enroll in an instructor-led course?

Here's how to enroll in instructor-led training (instructor-led courses will have a calendar icon above the course title):

1. Open the **Course Catalog** in StrongStart from the left navigation menu
2. Select the title of the course you want to take
3. Scroll down to the bottom and select **Click here to view the __ available date(s)**
4. Select **Register for this Scheduled Event**
5. Select **In Cart (Checkout)**
6. Select **Finish**

Q. What is a Professional Qualifications Registry (PQR) Number?

A PQR number is the unique identifying number received after registering in EEC's Professional Qualification Registry. PQR registration is required for all program staff annually.

Q. How do I find my PQR number?

Users can log into EEC's Single Sign In at https://www.eec.state.ma.us/SSI_V2/ProfileSetup/LoginUN.aspx and click on the "Professional Qualifications Registry" application. The PQR number is listed next to your name in the upper left corner.

If located in a center-based program, the director should have the PQR summary sheet on file.

A brief video tutorial can be viewed at <https://360.articulate.com/review/content/5c4329ac-3455-450e-88f4-b6f606dd65c6/review>

If you cannot find your PQR number, please call the contact center at 617-988-6600.

Q. I have more than one PQR number. Which one should I use?

Staff should not have more than one PQR number or Single Sign In account. If a user has more than one account, please put in a helpdesk ticket at <https://massgov.service-now.com/eec>.

Q. Do I still need to keep my PQR active?

Yes. All Staff working directly with children must register in the PQR and continue to keep their PQR in an "active" status.

Q. Is there sound/audio in the self-paced courses?

Yes. You will need your speakers or headphones to listen to the narration.

Q. I forgot my SSPDS login/username. How can I get into the system?

On the login page, there are links to enable users to recover their username and reset password.

These processes use the email address which was provided when the StrongStart account was created. If you no longer have access to that email address, please contact StrongStart Support:

StrongStartPDS@mass.gov

Be sure to provide your name, birthdate, and PQR# and indicate the new email address that you would like associated with your account.

PLEASE DO NOT CREATE A NEW ACCOUNT!

Q. What is the difference between My Dashboard and the Course Catalog?

Once you have logged into the system, you will land on **My Dashboard**.

This page displays the trainings that you are currently enrolled in and provides access to your Learning History, the Video Library, your Profile and StrongStart Reference documents.

You always have the option of returning to **My Dashboard**, by using the link in the left-side menu.

The **Course Catalog** displays all trainings currently offered by EEC via the LMS. The Catalog functions like an Ecommerce site, where you can search for courses, read the descriptions and objectives, and then self-enroll.

Q. Can I take the EEC Essentials training modules on my phone or tablet?

Yes, the SSPDS is compatible with Android and iOS mobile devices (Smart Phone, iPad, or Tablet) as well as desktop and laptop computers.

All you need is a stable connection to the Internet and a current version of a commonly used internet browser. Supported browsers include Microsoft Edge, Chrome, Firefox, and Safari.

Q. How do I print a certificate after I have completed the EEC Essentials 2.0 training package?

The LMS will present you with the option to view and print a certificate of completion after you complete the training package.

When you complete the course and exit, you will see this message:

Congratulations! You have completed all required sections of this course.

You will also see a link to the right to **View Certificate**.

Click the link and then click to View as PDF at the top of the next pop-up window. After a few seconds, the full image of your certificate will appear in a new window. Click on the Printer Icon in the top right corner. If you are using an iPhone or iPad, click on the "share" icon to save, send or print.

Q. Does each module have its own certificate?

No. You must complete all the course modules in the EEC Essentials 2.0 training package.

Q. Can I print my certificate later or reprint my certificate?

Yes, the certificates of completion are available to view and print from your **Learning History**.

Here's how:

- Login to the LMS
- Click on **Learning History** in the left-side menu

- Find the course from the list of completed courses
- Click the click to **View Certificate**
- Click near the top of the page to **View as PDF**

The specific steps for printing will vary depending on the system you are using.

[Click here for additional information.](#)

Q. I enrolled in the wrong training in the SSPDS. Is it possible to drop a training after enrolling?

Yes, it is possible to drop a course from **My Dashboard**. Click the course title in your Dashboard to access the content detail page as if you were going to launch the course. Then click on the red **Drop this Course** link in the upper right corner.

When you click on this link, you will get this message: "Dropping this cannot be undone and will be reflected on your student record. Are you sure you want to drop this course?" Click OK.

Q. Can I go back to review a training module that I already completed?

Yes, you can go back to review a training module that you have completed. Here's how:

- Go to **Learning History** (click the link in the left-side menu)
- Scroll through your list to the course you'd like to reopen
- Click the title of the course
- This brings you to the page where the course was launched in the first place
- Click on the Module title you wish to review

Note that reviewing a course will not result in a new certificate.

Training – Required Participants

Q. Why do I need to take these new trainings?

These trainings are a federal requirement of The Child Care and Development Block Grant of 2014 (or CCDBG), the primary federal source of early childhood funding. Their purpose is to support early childhood educators in key content areas to protect a child's health and safety while in care.

Q. I took the original EEC Essentials 12-course training package. Do I need to take the EEC Essentials 2.0 training package?

Yes.

Q. What trainings do I need to take?

- **Drivers** need to take "Transporting Children", a one-hour training module.
- **All Staff working directly with children** and counted in ratio need to complete the new *EEC Essentials 2.0* course.
- There are two packages of EEC Essentials 2.0. Staff will enroll and complete the applicable package according to their program type.

- All applicable staff in **early childhood programs (center-based and family child care)** will enroll in and complete the 13-course package labeled “EEC Essentials 2.0 for Early Childhood”. *This package should take approximately 12 hours.*
- All applicable **Afterschool and Out-of-School (ASOST)** time staff will enroll in and complete the 11-course package labeled “EEC Essentials 2.0 for ASOST programs. *This package should take approximately 10 hours.*

Q. Do Program Administrators need to take the training?

Yes.

Q. Do substitutes who work occasionally (and are counted in ratio when they work) need to take the training?

Yes. Any staff counted in ratio must take the training.

Q. Do volunteers need to take the training?

Volunteers who are counted in ratio must take the training.

Q. Do bus monitors (not drivers) need to take the Transportation course?

Yes.

Q. Drivers do not have a PQR number. What should they use in place of the PQR number for registration?

Drivers may use the code “1111” in place of the PQR number when registering in the SSPDS.

Q. Do Family Child Care (FCC) Licensees need to take the training?

Yes, as all staff working directly with children need to complete the new *EEC Essentials* course.

Q. Do FCC Certified Assistants and Regular Assistants need to take the training?

Yes, as all staff working directly with children need to complete the new *EEC Essentials* course.

Q. Do FCC System staff need to take the training?

No, FCC System staff (Home Visitors, PD/QRIS support staff, etc.) do not need to take the training. It is, however, highly recommended that they take the training so they can support their FCC educators.

Q. In Head Start, where there are also family service and support staff, do they all need to take the training, or just the education department?

Per the policy, anyone who works directly with children and program administrators must take the training.

Q. Can new staff start work in a program before completing the *EEC Essentials 2.0* course?

All staff are required to complete the EEC Essentials 2.0 course package that is appropriate for their program type before working with children in a program.

For Family Child Care providers and assistants, the EEC Essential 2.0 training package needs to be completed prior to licensure. Additionally, certification of current training in CPR and first aid is also required prior to licensure.

Q. What is the date by which staff need to complete the EEC Essentials 2.0?

All staff are required to complete the EEC Essentials 2.0 course package by June 30, 2025.

Training Policy Questions

Q. Where is the policy?

The training policy can be found on EEC’s website at <https://www.mass.gov/SSPDS>.

Q. What if I took an EEC-approved course on any of these topics already or I took the original EEC Essentials?

All Staff working directly with children need to complete the *EEC Essentials 2.0* course by June 30, 2025. This includes staff that may have taken training on one or more of these topics in the past. These are requirements from the Federal Government.

Q. Is there a requirement to take the EEC Essentials trainings annually?

There will be a shorter package of trainings called the EEC Essentials Refresher that will be required annually. EEC anticipates they will be available in April 2025 on the StrongStart Learning Management System.

Q. I don’t work with infants. OR I work in a program which serves infant children, but I don’t work in an infant classroom. Do I need to take “Infant Safe Sleep Practices” and “Shaken Baby Syndrome”?

All staff in early childhood center-based or FCC programs must complete all of the *EEC Essentials 2.0* training modules, including the “Infant Safe Sleep Practices” and “Shaken Baby Syndrome”. Staff in ASOST programs will complete the EEC Essentials 2.0 for ASOST programs, which does not include the 2 infant-focused courses.

Q. Do the EEC Essentials 2.0 training modules replace EEC’s legacy regulatory trainings?

Yes, Several of the *EEC Essentials 2.0* training modules replaced EEC’s legacy training offering in that area. These include:

- Nutrition and Choking;
- Safe Sleep Practices;
- Look before You Lock;
- Drivers Transportation Training
- Medication Administration.

Q. Does the training count towards EEC licensing training hour requirements?

Yes, completion of the *EEC Essentials 2.0* training package via EEC’s LMS will count toward the required yearly professional development training hours the first time it is taken.

Q. Can any of the trainings count towards EEC licensing training requirements in diverse learners?

No, none of these trainings count towards EEC licensing training requirements in diverse learners.

Q. If we contract with an outside bus company who is responsible for making sure bus drivers do the transportation training?

The program is responsible for making sure that their contracted transportation has completed the training.

Q. The driver we have is from the public-school system for a child who receives services. Do we need to have him/her take the transportation module? What if the bus company won't comply?

The transportation module must be completed by any contractors for transportation on behalf of the program. Although EEC does not have direct oversight of transportation companies, if they do not comply, EEC may take action against the program.

Training Content Questions

Q. What training topics are included in the *EEC Essentials* Course?

The *EEC Essentials* course includes a module on each of the following topics:

- Protecting Children from Abuse and Neglect (Mandated Reporter Training),
- Emergency Response,
- Introduction to First Aid and CPR,
- Food Safety,
- Hazardous Materials,
- Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases,
- Introduction to Child Growth and Development,
- Medication Administration,
- Missing Child Prevention,
- Transporting Children Safely,
- Physical Premises Safety,
- Safe Sleeping Practices, and
- Shaken Baby Syndrome.

Note that ASOST educators will not need to take the last two infant-focused trainings in their package.

Q. How long does each *EEC Essentials* training module take to complete?

The version for educators in center-based and FCC programs should take approximately 12 hours. The version for educators in ASOST programs should take approximately 10 hours. The actual time to complete depends on how much time the learner devotes to reviewing the resources available as part of the module.

Q. I completed the Child Development online module in the LMS; will that certify me as a teacher?

No, the Child Growth and Development course that teachers are required to complete for certification is a college level course of 3 credits or more.

Q. Does this replace the mandatory 51A training?

Yes.

Q. Does it replace the CPR renewal which is required once a year even if certified for two years?

No. There has been no change to current CPR and 1st Aid certification requirements.

Q. Is the “First Aid and CPR Overview” training different than obtaining a First Aid or CPR certification?

Yes, the “First Aid and CPR Overview” is a new federally required training that provides an overview of the topic but does not result in certification. EEC’s regulatory requirements regarding CPR and First Aid certification have not changed. First Aid and CPR certifications must still be completed in-person and according to license-required timeframes.

Monitoring and Compliance

Q. How will EEC be monitoring my compliance with completing these trainings?

Program Director(s)/FCC Licensees must maintain a personnel record for each program staff member/FCC Assistant showing proof of completion of the required training package. Starting July 1, 2025, EEC licensing staff will begin monitoring to determine if the *EEC Essentials 2.0* training requirements have been completed.

Q. How do I prove I have taken the courses?

Upon completion of the *EEC Essentials 2.0* course, please print your certificate and submit the printed certificate to your program administrator or director, who needs to add your certificate to their program file/personnel record, for monitoring purposes.

Q. Do we still need to record these trainings in the PQR portal for each staff or do the two portals communicate with each other?

This training does not need to be listed in the Professional Qualification Registry (PQR). The training will be captured on each person’s SSPDS transcript (available in their learning history).

Q. If staff don’t complete the *EEC Essentials 2.0* training requirements by June 30, 2025, what does that mean for our program?

Starting July 1, 2025, EEC licensing staff will begin monitoring to ensure that the *EEC Essentials 2.0* Training requirements and annual *EEC Essentials Refresher* training have been completed a year later. A program’s failure to ensure that each program staff member/assistant working directly with children and counting in the program’s staff-child ratio has completed the training package may result in citations of non-compliance.