



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care

POLICY	
EEC Essentials 2.0 Training Requirements	All staff in EEC-licensed and Funded Programs
Effective Date: May 8, 2024	

BACKGROUND

Through this policy statement, the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) seeks to outline the EEC Essentials training requirements (named “EEC Essentials 2.0”) for early childhood educators required by the Federal Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG). These training packages will provide the EEC workforce with foundational knowledge pertaining to health, safety and child development topics thereby creating a common base of understanding among early educators in child care programs. This policy statement seeks to outline the training requirements, the educators to whom it applies, how it may be accessed and the timeframe for compliance and monitoring.

AUTHORITY

606 CMR 7.00 sets forth the standards that support high quality early education and care programs that reflect the diversity of the Commonwealth; strengthen families; and help children learn and grow physically, socially, emotionally, and educationally. These regulations apply to all programs providing non-residential services to children younger than 14 years old outside their own homes, regardless of the care setting or the age of the children served. 606 CMR 7.11 authorizes the Department to mandate the EEC Essentials training package for all programs, including Family Child Care, Small Group and School Age, and Large Group and School Age Child Care.

The **Child Care and Development Block Grant** (CCDBG) is the federal law that authorizes the *Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)*, which is the primary source of federal funding for EEC. CCDBG requires educators, program directors, interns, and all program staff who have direct access to children to be trained in specific health and safety topics (e.g., EEC Essentials). As part of these requirements, staff need to take the updated EEC Essentials 2.0 by June 30, 2025.

In addition, EEC Licensing Regulations authorizes the Department to mandate the EEC Essentials training package for all programs, including Family Child Care, Small Group and School Age, and Large Group and School Age Child Care.

POLICY STATEMENT

All educators and administrators working in EEC-licensed or funded programs are required to complete the EEC Essentials 2.0 training package. In family child care (FCC) programs, the FCC licensee, certified assistants, and regular assistants, must complete the training package. Providers in In-Home Non-Relative homes are required to complete the training package.

All staff that are included in the count for the maintenance of licensing ratios and group size must complete the entire package, regardless of the frequency that they work. This includes volunteers, interns, and substitutes that are counted in ratio.

In addition, all applicable staff will be required to take an **annual EEC Essentials Refresher package**.

In programs offering transportation services, **drivers and monitors** will still be required to complete the Transporting Children module, available independently from the packages.

The Program Administrator or FCC Licensee must have a personnel record for each program staff member that contains proof of completion of the training package.

Training Requirements

All applicable staff must complete the appropriate training package prior to working in EEC-licensed or funded programs.

All applicable staff must complete the appropriate EEC Essentials Refresher package annually.

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 for Early Childhood 2.0”. 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 for ASOST programs 2.0”. It eliminates the 2 infant-focused trainings. This package should take approximately 10 hours.

In programs offering transportation services, drivers and monitors will still be required to complete the Transporting Children module via the [StrongStart Learning Management System \(LMS\)](#) yearly. This course is available independently from the packages.

Note that the First Aid and CPR overview training is **not** an approved First Aid or CPR Training Course and will not result in First Aid or CPR certification. This training cannot be taken in lieu of

a First Aid and CPR certification. All group and school age educators will still need to complete First Aid certification within six months of employment and maintain current certification thereafter consistent with EEC regulations and policies. Family child care licensees and certified assistants cannot care for children without current First Aid and CPR certification, in accordance with EEC policy.

Training Access

As of April 22, 2024, the EEC Essentials 2.0 package is available online on EEC's [StrongStart Learning Management System \(LMS\)](#).

Professional Development Credit

Completion of the EEC Essentials 2.0 package will count toward the required professional development training hours the first time it is taken.

Completion of the EEC Essentials Refresher course will count towards the required professional development training hours the first time it is taken.

COMPLIANCE

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.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information can be found in the EEC Essentials Policy Advisory and the EEC Essentials FAQ at <https://www.mass.gov/guides/eecs-strongstart-online-professional-development-system>.