Policy FAQ

Policy Title:	Interim Income Eligible CCFA Policy Advisory
Policy Number:	CCFA-26-01
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Effective Date:	January 1, 2026
Policy Link:	EEC CCFA-26-01 Interim Income Eligible CCFA Policy_ADVISORY

OVERVIEW

This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document answers questions asked during the '2025 CCFA Regulation Change Information Sessions' held for Family Access Administrators (FAAs) in December 2025 and January 2026.

Slides from the presentation have been emailed to the listserv and will also be posted on the CCFA Hub: Hub for Child Care Financial Assistance Programs Changes | Mass.gov

Any additional questions should be sent to: EECSubsidyManagement@mass.gov

FAQ

Q. Will CCFA and KinderWait be updated to reflect these policy changes?

A. All CCFA and KinderWait changes reflecting the January 7, 2026 Interim Income Eligible CCFA Policy Advisory are effective and live.

Q. Will EEC be releasing updated forms with this policy advisory?

A. EEC Forms will be updated as part of the full policy and procedure overhaul process happening in 2026. Until then, Family Access Administrators should implement the effective policy regardless of information provided on forms.

INCOME ELIGIBILITY: State Median Income (SMI) CHANGES

Q. Will the maximum SMI threshold increase?

A. The regulations have raised the initial authorization to 85% SMI, but the maximum income remains at 85% SMI at this time.

Q. Will there be communication to families about the change in SMI threshold?

A. EEC will not issue a press release about the SMI changes. Family Access Administrators should work with and counsel families on their eligibility for child care financial assistance. Families can be directed to the EEC website for additional information on eligibility.

INCOME ELIGIBILITY: NON-COUNTABLE INCOME

Q. The policy says income from a minor child is not a countable income source. Please define minor child.

A. "Minor'' shall mean any person under eighteen years of age [*See* M.G.L c. 4, § 7, cl. 48].

Q. Is Short Term Disability, PFMLA/FMLA, and Worker's Compensation countable or non-countable income?

A. Short Term Disability, Paid Family Medical leave, and Worker's Compensation are countable sources of income. For any other questions about countable/non-countable income sources, please reach out to: EECSubsidyManagement@mass.gov

WAITLIST: PRIORITY CODES

Q. Is Substance Abuse still a waitlist priority status?

A. No, Substance Abuse is no longer a waitlist priority status (it is still a service need).

WAITLIST: OFFERING FUNDING

Q. Should Family Access Administrators (FAAs) change the way that they are offering funding to families?

A. There is no change to the current process for offering funding. FAAs should pull families based on the needs of their community, available space in their program, and/or open contracted seats.

Q. If a search for families is run in KinderWait based on the priority, will the families "at or below 50% SMI" show up?

A. No, not all families will appear. Only families with the "at or below 50% SMI" priority code already entered in Kinderwait will display. Family Access Administrators should sort by both priority code and the waitlist date (to identify eligible families without the code assigned, yet).

SCHOOL YEAR AGE-OUT: EXTENDING AUTHORIZATION

Q. How does this affect authorizations that have already been processed with children who reached the maximum age before January 1, 2026?

A. The effective date for this policy is January 1, 2026. The age-out during the school year applies to children whose birthdays occur after January 1, 2026.

Q. Will families with children 'aging out' be notified prior to a possible extension?

A. Family Access Administrators (FAAs) will notify a family that their authorization can be extended during the timeframe that is initiated by the 60-day reauthorization window. During this time, the FAA should process any changes reported by the family, verify that the family wants to extend their authorization, and let the family know that upon completion of the reauthorization process, they will not be able to change their minds.

Q. Is it the responsibility of the family or the Family Access Administrator (FAA)/Provider to request the authorization extension?

A. After the FAA has discussed the extension with the family, it is the FAAs responsibility to initiate and request the extension of the authorization by submitting a help desk ticket.

Q. Does this policy apply to 'school closure only' placements?

A. The school-year age-out authorization extension policy applies to any child that reaches the maximum eligibility age during the school year.

Q. When the family has younger children in the household, will the authorization be extended until the end of the school year for all of the children in the household? When will the authorization renew for the younger kids?

A. The master authorization for the family will be extended to June 30th at which time the reauthorization process will occur.

Q. Does the child who is aging out during the school year need have an active placement in order to extend the family's master authorization?

A. No. The placement does not need to be active to extend the authorization.

Q. How far in advance of the authorization end date do Family access Administrators (FAAs) need to submit a help desk ticket to extend the authorization to June 30th ?

A. FAAs should submit the help desk ticket to request the extension of the authorization to June 30th as soon as possible after hearing from the family (after the 60-day notice letter is sent) that they wish to extend the authorization.

Q. What if the family says they don't want to extend their authorization?

A. If the family chooses not to extend their authorization end date, then the date shall not be extended and reauthorization will proceed for the family, excluding the child who "aged-out."

Q. What if the family says they don't want to extend their authorization and at the end changes their mind?

A. Once the reauthorization has been completed, the extension cannot be processed.

Q. Do FAAs have to submit any documentation with the ticket requests?

A. No documentation is required when requesting an authorization extension for a child aging out

Q. The school year is different for different schools. Does the "school year" mean for the town the child attends?

A. Yes, when considering if a child is aging out "during the school year" Family access Administrators shall use the school calendar for the school the child attends.

Q. How will children on a DCF contract be impacted by the age-out policy and extension of authorization? Will they be able to continue their contract or will we need to request a 9s voucher?

A. Children on a DCF contract will generally not be impacted by the age-out policy or authorization extension. For example, a 13-year-old would not experience an "age-up" change between placement groups and their authorization may be extended under the existing type (contract or voucher).

If, during the reauthorization the child must be transitioned to a voucher due to the provider being over their DCF 10% flex pool seats, the child would be eligible for an extension under the voucher.

Q. Are FAAs still able to process referrals for DCF and DTA children seeking summer camp who will turn 13 prior to the summer that do not have a school placement?

A. Yes. Authorizations for 12-year-olds may continue to be processed, including for children with a DCF or DTA referral who are seeking summer camp and do not yet have a school placement. Voucher authorizations may be issued without a placement; however, authorizations for contracted seats must continue to include a placement.

Children who are 12 at the time of authorization remain eligible for a full 12-month authorization, including through the end of summer, when applicable. If a child ages up during the school year and the family's authorization would otherwise end before the close of the school year, the authorization must be extended through June 30, even if this results in more than 12 months of eligibility.