



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Department of Early Education and Care

<b>Holding a Certificate of Eligibility for Funding</b>	<b>Field Operations – Funded Programs</b>
Effective Date: August 5, 2019 Updated: April 2, 2020	

### POLICY STATEMENT

In 2014, the Federal Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Reauthorization Act became law. This law reauthorized Federal funding of the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), which is used primarily to provide States, Territories, and Tribes with funding for subsidized child care for low income families. The CCDBG Reauthorization included multiple changes to various requirements regarding the provision of child care. These changes were required in order to ensure that children are receiving care in the safest and highest quality environment possible.

In order for the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) to properly monitor and oversee early education and care programs that receive funding for subsidized child care that operate outside of EEC's licensure requirements (hereinafter, "Funded Programs"), EEC has developed a process whereby Funded Programs maintain a Certificate of Eligibility for Funding. **Through this policy, EEC sets forth the process for obtaining a Certificate of Eligibility for Funding, and the rules and responsibilities for a Funded Program that holds a Certificate of Eligibility for Funding.**

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#### **Process for Obtaining a Certificate of Eligibility for Funding:**

Funded Programs must use the Licensing Education Analytic Database ("LEAD") system to process an application for a Certificate of Eligibility for Funding. User links to register in LEAD can be requested for Designated Administrators of eligible programs by contacting the Funded Program Monitor in the appropriate EEC regional office. Funded Programs will be phased in to the LEAD system with support from an assigned Funded Program Monitor. The Funded Program Monitors will work closely with Funded Programs to ensure that their applications are processed in a timely fashion and will be the EEC staff responsible for monitoring Funded Programs.

Funded Programs will be required to complete the application by entering information about the program, including but not limited to staffing assignments, total capacity, estimated square footage, and other programmatic information. Once the application is complete and has been submitted, the Funded Program will receive two emails with required documentation, including:

- A Background Record Check Consent Form for the Designated Administrator;
- A Tax Certification Form.

Once all requested documentation has been submitted, the Funded Program Monitor will review the application in LEAD to ensure that all necessary information has been received and that the Designated Administrator has been deemed suitable after completion of a Background Record Check. As soon as all requirements for certification are met, a Certificate of Eligibility for Funding will be issued to the Funded Program.

### **Holding a Certificate of Eligibility for Funding:**

In order for a Funded Program to process billing and receive payment of subsidies through EEC's Child Care Financial Assistance ("CCFA") system, the Funded Program must hold a valid Certificate of Eligibility for Funding. The Certificate of Eligibility for Funding shall be valid for two years for a Center-Based Funded Program (Public School, Private School, Parochial School). The Certificate of Eligibility for Funding shall be valid for three years for an informal caregiver.

Holding a Certificate of Eligibility for Funding means that the Funded Program understands and agrees to the following:

- The Funded Program will adhere to EEC's Health and Safety Requirements for Funded Programs, as well as all policies, procedures, and technical assistance provided by EEC;
- The Funded Program will be visited at least once annually by a Funded Program Monitor to determine compliance with health and safety standards;
- The Funded Program will be listed on EEC's Consumer Education Website as a Funded Program that is subject to monitoring and health and safety requirements by EEC; and
- All visit and any investigation information will be published on the Funded Program's page on the Consumer Education Website.

### **Phased-In Approach:**

Due to the fact that EEC is implementing monitoring of Funded Programs beginning on October 1, 2019, EEC will allow for a phased-in approach in an effort to work closely with Funded Programs. As a result, Funded Programs that have received payment for serving children receiving subsidy prior to October 1, 2019 will not immediately be required to hold a Certificate of Eligibility for Funding to continue to receive payment. EEC will allow for sufficient time for Funded Programs to work through the LEAD process to receive a Certificate of Eligibility for Funding. **Funded Programs that have not received payment to serve children receiving subsidy prior to October 1, 2019 will be required to receive a Certificate of Eligibility for Funding before they are able to receive payment.**

**Withdrawing a Certificate of Eligibility for Funding:**

A Funded Program that no longer wishes to be subject to the EEC Health and Safety Requirements, including background record checks, may elect to withdraw their Certificate of Eligibility for Funding. A Funded Program that withdraws their Certificate of Eligibility for Funding will no longer be able to receive payment for subsidized child care. By withdrawing their Certificate of Eligibility for Funding, a Funded Program will no longer be “funded”, meaning that they will not be posted on the Consumer Education Website and will not be monitored by EEC.