Guide to Data at the Department of Early Education and Care

Contents

1. Overview

About the Department of Early Education and Care

The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is the lead agency for early education and care services in the Commonwealth. "Early education and care" includes formal programs for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school age children during out-of-school time; group homes; foster care and adoption placement agencies; residential schools for children with special needs; and programs in informal settings such as home visiting, and community-based family engagement networks.

EEC licenses approximately 9,000 child care programs, residential facilities, and foster care/adoption placement agencies that have the capacity to serve an estimated 230,000 children. On a daily basis, EEC supports financial assistance for an average of 58,000 children from low-income or at-risk families to attend a high-quality family or group child care program.

EEC also provides technical assistance to licensed programs on complying with safety and best practice standards and assists programs in advancing to higher levels of quality through a system of standards and support, including professional development for nearly 100,000 early educators in the workforce.

About this Guide

This guide is intended to serve as a resource to researchers, advocates, and others interested in EEC data by providing an overview of **commonly requested** EEC data elements and the general process for submitting a data request. This guide is not designed to cover all the data elements that may exist, but rather to share information on the data that are often requested and available through the data request process. It is also not intended for requestors interested in obtaining a specific record (e.g., incident report or specific provider licensing information). If you are looking for information on a specific record, please file a Public Records Request. Individuals seeking a copy of their EEC professional certificate should not submit a data request, but should instead direct this request via email to eecprofdev@mass.gov.

EEC publishes commonly requested data about licensed and funded providers on the agency's website. If you are looking for data not available on the website, please review this guide for more information about EEC data elements, and submit a data request via the GovQA platform.

2. Commonly Requested Data

This guide outlines the **most commonly requested** data elements broken down by the categories listed below.

    a. General descriptive data on early education and care providers in Massachusetts (some data elements are updated online)

    b. Data from the Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) grant

    c. Data from the Commonwealth's Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA) system

    d. Data from the Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA) waitlist system

EEC also occasionally receives data requests that focus on professional qualifications, licensing visits and compliance, licensing transactions, and other early education and care-related areas. While details

about these data are not included in this guide, information on these data elements can be requested using the data request process detailed at the end of this guide.

2a. General Descriptive Data on Early Education and Care Providers

Data requestors looking for descriptive information on child care providers frequently request the data elements listed below. **Some data elements listed below are included in the publicly available data set and updated regularly**.

- Basic child care provider information
  - Name
  - Provider ID (commonly referred to as P#)
  - Address
  - Phone #
- License first issue date
- Provider Close Date
- Provider type

  - Licensed programs (find additional information on licensed programs)
    - Family Child Care
    - Group and School Age Care
  - Funded programs (find additional information on funded programs)
    - Public School
    - Private School
    - Others (e.g.: government, tribal and military child care programs, etc.)
- Licensed capacity
  - Licensed capacity: The maximum number of children the program is licensed to serve at a one time
  - Total licensed capacity: The sum of a program's individual age group capacities
  - Age group classroom capacity
    - Infant (birth - 15 mo.)
    - Infant/Toddler (birth - 33 mo.)
    - Toddler (15 mo. - 33 mo.)
    - Toddler/Preschool (15 mo. - K)
    - Preschool (33 mo.- K)
    - Preschool/School Age (33 mo.- 8yr)
    - Kindergarten
    - Kindergarten/School Age
    - School Age (5 yr-14yr)
    - Multi-Age Group (birth-14 yr.)
- Geographic Region
  - EEC Licensing Region
  - EEC Child Care Financial Assistance Region (EEC Subsidy Region)

- Social Vulnerability Index (SVI): A composite measure developed by the CDC to determine the relative social vulnerability of a specific area. Additional information about the SVI can be found <u>here.</u>
    - Census Tract SVI
    - Zip Code Tabulation Area (ZCTA) SVI

Additional notes related to general descriptive data on early education and care providers

- EEC data systems do not include information linking specific educators to the programs in which they are employed.
- Licensing data elements prior to July 2018 are not readily available.
- EEC cannot provide historical data on capacity by age group. Only data on **current** capacity by age group are available.
- Data on licensed capacity by age group for FCCs and for GSA programs with a licensed capacity 10 or below are not available.
- Summer camps that are licensed by their local board of health do not have EEC provider numbers.
- Classrooms in Group and School Age programs often overlap age groups, so capacity by age will equal total licensed capacity, but it may not equal licensed capacity.
    - Total licensed capacity may not equal licensed capacity if, for instance, the preschool program uses the same space as the after-school school-age program.
    - Both preschool and after school capacities would be listed and counted in total licensed capacity, but both groups cannot be in attendance at the same time because they occupy the same space, so the licensed capacity would be reduced to show this figure.
- Licensed capacity, not total licensed capacity, is the standard used by EEC in reporting capacity.

2b. Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) Grant Data

EEC provides monthly C3 grants to support early education and care providers' day-to-day operational and workforce costs. EEC collects and maintains C3 data from two main sources:

- Monthly applications beginning July 2021
- Bi-annual surveys beginning the fall of 2021

Data requestors looking for C3 grant data frequently request the data elements listed below.

Monthly application data

- Months for which providers received C3 grants
- Amount of C3 funds disbursed overall and by month
- Staffing data
    - Number of full-time employee (FTE) educators employed by role
    - Highest and lowest hourly wage of educators by role (not available for a specific program, but available in the aggregate)
    - Benefits offered (not available for a specific program, but available in the aggregate)

- Monthly enrollment data
  - Total
  - By age
    - Younger than age 1
    - Between 1 and 2
    - Between 2 and 3
    - Between 3 and 4
    - Between 4 and 5
    - Between 5 and 6
    - Between 6 and 10
    - Older than 10

Bi-annual C3 survey data

- Expenditures
  - Amount of grant funds spent by category (e.g.: investments, salary investment, operational costs, past costs)
  - Grant impact (e.g.: impact if funds were no longer available)
- Staffing
  - Number of educators by role
  - Number of educators hired or left in the past 12 months
- Family Access and Enrollment
  - Part-time and full-time enrollment
  - Ability to serve full licensed capacity
  - Factors affecting ability to serve full licensed capacity

Additional notes related to C3 Data

- Survey questions vary from one survey to another. This guide includes some of the most commonly requested data. It does not include all data elements available from surveys administered since the fall of 2021.
- Enrollment data from C3 grant surveys and applications may sometimes exceed licensed capacity and total licensed capacity for a variety of reasons. For example, two part-time children may occupy one full-time slot.
- EEC does **not** currently collect or maintain enrollment data for children in the *private-pay* system beyond the C3 grant applications and surveys. EEC collects and maintains enrollment data on children in the child care financial assistance system. Refer to Section 2c and 2d for more information about child care financial assistance data.
- Bi-annual surveys responses are not available at the individual provider level but can be shared in the aggregate (e.g.: statewide, by region, by provider type, etc.). To minimize the risk of re-identifying the provider, data will be suppressed if cell sizes are too small.

EEC does not disclose sensitive personally identifiable data. If you are a researcher in search of sensitive data related to C3 (e.g., provider level responses to C3 Survey), please refer to Section 3a of this guide.

2c. Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA) System Data

The information described below provides a **sample of commonly requested data** from the Commonwealth's Child Care Financial Assistance system and commonly requested **disaggregation of the data elements**. Additional details on child care financial assistance and eligibility can be found on EEC's website.

Requests for subsidy data typically fall into three main categories:

- Provider-level information:
    - Data on providers *serving* children receiving financial assistance
    - Data on the *number of children* receiving financial assistance *billed by* the provider
- Provider payment associated with the financial assistance system:
    - Daily reimbursement rates: Daily rates that EEC reimburses programs caring for children who receive financial assistance (learn more).
    - Provider payment for serving children receiving financial assistance related to child care services
    - Contract utilization data: Number of contracted child care slots filled who receive financial assistance relative to the provider's contract

- Aggregate data on children and families receiving financial assistance
    - Number of children receiving financial assistance

EEC does not disclose personally identifiable child and family data. If you are a researcher in search of sensitive child-level data, please refer to Section 3a of this guide.

Commonly requested disaggregation of child care financial assistance data

Below is a list of the **most commonly** specified disaggregation of financial assistance data elements:

- Location
    - Entire Commonwealth
    - City
    - County
    - EEC Child Care Financial Assistance region (EEC subsidy region)
    - Zip code
- Timeframe
    - Month(s) and year(s)
    - Time range (quarterly, monthly, yearly)
- Child age group:
    - Infant
    - Toddler
    - Preschool

- o   School Age
- Provider type
  - o   Licensed programs ([breakdown of licensed programs](#))
    - Family Child Care
    - Group and School Age Care
  - o   Funded programs ([breakdown of funded programs](#))
    - Public School
    - Private School
    - Others (e.g.: government, tribal and military child care programs, etc.)
- Type of Financial Assistance
  - o   Voucher: A program or individual who provides child care services pursuant to an EEC voucher agreement
  - o   Contract slot: A licensed or license exempt child care program or family child care system that holds a contract with EEC for the provision of subsidized child care services
- Funding streams/Programs
  - o   EEC Income Eligible program
  - o   Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) Related Child Care program
  - o   Department of Children and Families (DCF) Related Child Care program

Additional notes related to child care financial assistance data

- When specifying timeframes for child care financial assistance data, requestors should note:
  - o   Financial assistance data prior to July 2015 are not readily available.
  - o   Providers may invoice for payments the month after services are rendered. Adjustments to prior months' billing can be posted in a subsequent month, and these adjustments are not limited to the current fiscal year. Most requestors ask for billed data by service month (i.e.: children billed in July 2023).
- Contract slot or voucher placements are subject to license capacity

2d. Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA) Waitlist Data

EEC collects data about children on the centralized waitlist for income eligible families seeking child care financial assistance. Preliminary eligibility is determined when children are added to the centralized waitlist. Once funding is available, full eligibility is determined and children are placed at an eligible child care location chosen by the parent. The information described below lists a sample of commonly requested **waitlist data elements** and commonly requested **disaggregation of these data elements**.

Commonly requested waitlist data elements

EEC frequently receives request for the following waitlist data elements:
- Count of children on the waitlist
- Schedule of care requested (e.g., full-time, part-time)
- Priority status (e.g., child of teen parent, ECE staff priority)
- Special needs status

- Ages of children on the waitlist

EEC does not disclose personally identifiable child and family data. If you are a researcher in search of sensitive child-level data, please refer to Section 3a of this guide.

Commonly requested disaggregation of waitlist data

Waitlist data can be broken down by timeframe and/or other specific characteristics of the programs and children. Below is a list of the most commonly specified characteristics:

- Location
  - Entire Commonwealth
  - City/town
  - EEC Child Care Financial Assistance region (EEC subsidy region)
  - Zip code
- Timeframe
  - Month(s) and Year(s)
  - Time range (quarterly, monthly, yearly)
- Child age

Additional notes related to child care financial assistance waitlist data

- When specifying timeframes for waitlist data, requestors should note:
  - While data on the length of time a child is on the waitlist are available, please note that the duration the child was on the waitlist goes back to the first time the family was placed on the list even that child or other children in the family have come on and off the waitlist since that time.
  - Waitlist numbers can be especially high in September as families are going back to school and putting their children on the waitlist for care, so one month may not be representative of norms for the entire year.
- Data suppression:
  - If the number of children on the waitlist is aggregated by zip code, data will be suppressed for zip codes with small populations of children.
- The centralized waitlist facilitates access for eligible families to receive financial assistance via:
  - An income eligible contracted slot available through a contract provider or their providers, or
  - A voucher available through a local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) which can be used at any provider that has entered into an agreement with a CCR&R to accept families receiving financial assistance.
- Families receiving child care through a referral from DCF or DTA do not need to be added to the centralized waitlist but may be added prior to transitioning to income eligible funding.

3. Submitting a Data Request

3a. Privacy Statement

EEC is committed to ensuring that sensitive data are kept secure and confidential in accordance with state and federal laws. Sensitive data are only made available to third parties that have agreed to the terms of a data sharing agreement with the agency. Even with a data sharing agreement, EEC generally does not share personally identifiable child and family data without consent from the family for the specified purpose.

Additional data that EEC does not typically share without a data-sharing agreement includes:

- Family Child Care provider e-mail addresses
- Individual provider level data from the bi-annual C3 survey responses

If you are a researcher interested in sensitive data, please reach out to the **Policy, Research, and Data Analytics Division**. Please note that the process to seek approval for and develop a data sharing agreement with EEC takes some time, and as a result, we encourage you to reach out to EEC as early in the research process as possible and specify your research timeline. Refer to the "Standard Data Sharing Agreement Template" document for an example of the template.

3b. General Data Request Submission Information

To submit a data request, please use the **GovQA** platform. For questions related to data requests, refer first to the FAQs posted on the GovQA platform. For any other questions not addressed in the FAQ or in this guide, please contact the **Policy, Research, and Data Analytics Division.**

3c. Tips on Successful Data Request Submission

Providing a detailed breakdown of the data you are looking for will allow EEC to fulfill a data request more efficiently. When submitting a data request, please specify the information below.

Specification for all data requests

- Location:
    - E.g.: Entire commonwealth, city, county (not available for waitlist data), financial assistance or licensing region, zip code
- Timeframe
    - Month(s) and year(s)
    - Time range (quarterly, monthly, yearly)
- Provider type (not applicable to waitlist data)
    - All programs
    - Licensed programs (description of licensed programs)
        - Family Child Care
        - Group and School Age Care
    - Funded programs (description of funded programs)
        - Public School

- Private School
- Others (e.g.: government, tribal and military child care programs, etc.)

In addition to specifying the information above, data requestors are encouraged to review Section 2 of this guide to learn more about the types of data elements within each category of data covered in this guide. The list below includes a sample of commonly requested specifications and/or aggregations.

General descriptive data on early education and care providers (See Section 2a)

- If requesting licensed capacity:
    - Specify if you are looking for licensed capacity or total licensed capacity
        - Licensed capacity: The maximum number of children the program is licensed to serve at a one time
        - Total licensed capacity: The sum of a program's individual age group capacities
    - Specify if you are looking for capacity by age group

Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA) system data (See Section 2c)

- Child age group:
    - Infant
    - Toddler
    - Preschool
    - School Age
- Type of financial assistance:
    - Voucher
    - Contract slot
- Funding streams/Programs:
    - EEC Income Eligible program
    - Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) Related Child Care program
    - Department of Children and Families (DCF) Related Child Care program