



Early Learning  
Coalition of the  
Big Bend Region

**Provider Forum  
February 2018**



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# Staff Introductions



# Presentation Posted

Today's presentation will be posted on our website no later than March 9, 2018.

[www.elcbigbend.org/Providers/Provider-Meetings](http://www.elcbigbend.org/Providers/Provider-Meetings).



# Agenda

- Legislative Update
- New SR Forms for Parents
- One Year Eligibility
- Provider Rates
- Fees and Co-Payments
- Co-Payment Receipts
- Common Co-Payment Questions
- Reviewing Reimbursement Details
- Child Transfers
- Reporting Child Absences
- Reporting Changes
- Provider Closures & Contract Terminations
- VPK Temporary vs. Emergency Closures
- Expired Contract Documents
- Children Not Using Services
- VPK Assessment Period 3
- New Statewide Provider Portal
- CCR&R Update
- SR Health & Safety
- Background Screening
- 2018- 2019 Contract Deadlines
- Contracting is Optional
- Performance Funding Program
- Warm Line
- ELC Events
- Questions, Concerns and Comments



# Legislative Update

- The 2018 Florida Legislative Session is scheduled to end on March 9, 2018.
- The house and the senate are responsible for developing the budget. So far:
  - The house has increases in SR, senate has increases in VPK;
  - Continuation funding for PFP;
  - Both increase T.E.A.C.H budget;
- Significant substantive bills:
  - HB 1091, SB 1254- Establishes provider performance requirements, establishes increased payments based on performance, child assessment optional (increased payment), redefines service priorities. Includes \$6m in additional funding to collect “baseline” performance data.
  - HB 1175, SB 1532- Authorizes ELC to refuse a VPK or SR contract to any provider with a Class 1 violation from DCF. Does not mandate, provides the option.



# Legislative Update cont.

- Early learning is now a bi-partisan issue. Members from both parties are willing to support investments.
- Major emphasis on quality and accountability.
- ELCs and providers should expect increased requirements related to participation in the SR and/or VPK programs.
- Multi-year implementation.
- This is our opportunity to reinforce the importance of what we do and the impact it has on the children we serve.



# New SR Forms for Parents

- Most SR forms for parents have changed as of 02/12/18.
  - The Provider Transfer Request form, dated 08/24/16, remains the same.
- Providers should discard all old parent forms. ELC case managers will give parents the new forms needed.
- ELC has stopped uploading the Terms and Conditions to your SR Eligibility folder.
- The most common forms can be found on ELC's website (Parents >General Forms): <https://www.elcbigbend.org/Parents/General-Forms>.



# One Year Eligibility

- Families now receive one (1) year eligibility, but if parents fail to meet SR requirements and deadlines during that year, ELC will terminate their services before their one year eligibility period ends.
- ELC notifies providers of early terminations.
- Appointments:
  - During the interview parents schedule their next appointment, which is about 2 weeks before their one year eligibility period ends.
  - The ELC gives parents a document with their appointment date and time, as well as their last date of services.
  - ELC's appointment software emails parents reminders 1 week before their appointments.
- ELC staff, parents, and providers must obey School Readiness law, which states after ELC terminates services, the parent must reapply for SR services.





# Provider Rates

- Providers must designate a private pay rate for every age and care level served.
- If a provider fails to enter a rate for an age or care level in their SR contract, children will not be enrolled and the provider will not receive payment.
- Providers are unable to update rates in the middle of a payment cycle; rate changes will be processed monthly, after reimbursement closes.
- **You must** contact your contract case manager if you are making a rate change.



# Fees & Co-Payments

Per the School Readiness contract, providers are required to:

- Provide parents a list of all fees charged either before, or at the time of, enrollment; due dates must be included.
  - Providers are prohibited from charging any fees not listed.
- Collect parent co-payments within 10 days of the due date, by law.
- Provide monthly notification of overdue balances within 15 days of the due date.
- Provide parents a receipt for each co-payment made and keep copies of receipts given.
- Provide ELC with a current accounting record and copy of co-payment receipts upon request, and/or during on-site monitoring.



# Co-Payment Receipts

Issuing accurate receipts and keeping a record of all payments will keep the parent on track with the balance owed and may help avoid, or settle, financial disputes with parents. Be sure to document any outstanding balance on receipts.

- Receipts must include:
  - Parent Name
  - Child/Children Names
  - Amount Collected
    - Clearly identify what was paid: parent co-pay amount (per child), differential between provider rate and ELC reimbursement rate, any other fees collected.
    - Document any discount given
    - Coverage period for which the receipt is issued
    - Date receipt issued to parent



# Common Co-Payment Questions

- **Where can I find the assessed parent co-payment?**
  - On your provider portal roster and the SR certificate.
- **What does it mean when ELC's assessed parent co-payment is zero?**
  - Providers cannot charge, or collect, a parent co-payment.
  - Providers may charge the differential and any other previously communicated fees for services, such as transportation.
- **When ELC changes a parent co-payment, how will I know?**
  - A new SR certificate is uploaded to your provider portal.



# Reviewing Reimbursement Details

- Both the School Readiness and VPK contract state:  
*“Reimbursement Summary Review. PROVIDER agrees to review the reimbursement summary provided with the monthly reimbursement statement. PROVIDER agrees to report to COALITION any discrepancy, overpayment, or underpayment within sixty (60) calendar days of transmission of the reimbursement summary”*
- It is your responsibility to review your reimbursement detail each month.
- Failure to notify ELC of a discrepancy, overpayment, or underpayment in a timely manner will result in an adjustment going back to the beginning of the occurrence of the error.
- Not reporting an issue does not mean the ELC will not find the issue during file monitoring.



# Child Transfers

- Parents must request transfers ahead of time.
- The ELC does not back date child enrollment dates.
- The ELC reviews transfer requests within 2 business days.
- **IF** the ELC approves a transfer request, a new SR certificate is uploaded to the provider portal.
- **No SR certificate means no payment.**



# Reporting Child Absences

- Law requires providers report to the ELC and DCF by the end of the next business day when a child, 0 – 5 years of age, under DCF Protective Investigation (PI) or Protective Services (PS):
  - Is absent for one (1) day with no contact from the parent or guardian by the end of the day **OR**
  - Has had seven (7) consecutive excused absences, regardless of parent/guardian contact.
- Law requires providers report to the ELC solely when any SR child is absent during the child's regularly scheduled attendance with no contact from the parent for:
  - 5 consecutive days during a calendar month **OR**
  - 10 days total during a calendar month.
- Report all absences to the ELC by completing the online absence report form, found on our website: (Providers >Report an Absent Child) <https://www.elcbigbend.org/Providers/Report-an-Absent-Child>.
- Report absences to your county's DCF contact listed at the bottom of the form.



# Reporting Changes

- As of 2017-2018 most changes to your SR or VPK contract require a contract amendment. There are also additional documentation providers must complete when changes are made.
- Changes to contract documents in the provider portal are not automatically approved.
- You must contact your contract case manager if there is a change to your program.
- Failure to give proper notification could result in a delay of reimbursement, contract suspension or contract termination.
- Any change to a provider's EIN or SSN, or a provider's type (move from registered to licensed, etc.) will result in a new contract; communicate changes in advance to your contract case manager.

**YOU MUST COMMUNICATE OWNERSHIP CHANGES, PROVIDER TYPE CHANGES, OR PLANS TO CEASE OPERATING AT LEAST 30 DAYS IN ADVANCE!**





# Provider Closures and Contract Terminations

- The ELC is required to notify families of impending provider closures and contract terminations, as well as the families' need to submit completed Provider Transfer Forms to the ELC as a result of these closures and contract terminations.
- The ELC does not retract the notification sent to families if the provider's situation changes.



# VPK Temporary vs. Emergency Closures

- Section 6M-8.204 of Florida Administrative Code specifies that a temporary closure is only considered an emergency closure if a state of emergency is declared by federal, state or local officials for the area in which the provider is located.
  - This rule allows ELC to pay VPK providers for a total of 5 instructional days, per program year, lost due to temporary emergency closures.
  - An example of this would be emergency closures due to Hurricane Irma this past September as a state of emergency was declared by Governor Scott.
- A temporary closure due to non-emergency circumstances is any unplanned closure when a state of emergency has not been declared by federal, state, or local officials.
  - VPK providers must revise the VPK program calendar to make up instructional hours lost due to the closure.
  - VPK program calendars can only be changed twice each program year for a non-emergency situation.



# VPK Temporary vs Emergency Closures

- Many providers follow local school district weather closure policies. A school district choosing to close when no official state of emergency declaration has been issued, is not considered an emergency closure.
- The VPK contract has specific notification procedures for unplanned closures.
  - If a provider fails to modify a VPK program calendar as required, or fails to comply with the deadlines for submission of notifications, the provider is ineligible to receive payment for those closures and forfeits the opportunity to revise its schedule to restore the lost instructional hours.
- If you have an emergency or unplanned closure you must notify your contract case manager as soon as possible.
  - Notifying other departments, or waiting to submit notification until attendance processing, may prevent you from being paid accurately for the closure.



# Expired Contract Documents

- It is the provider's responsibility to keep contract documents current.
  - This includes DCF license, registration, religious exemptions, background screens, accreditation certificates, VPK director and instructor credentials, and insurance certificates.
- Failure to provide current documentation will result in financial consequences and may result in contract termination.



# Children Not Using Services

- Law requires the ELC to contact parents and providers when parents do not use child care for the following reasons:
  - The child was never enrolled at a provider **OR**
  - The child is enrolled with a provider, but never attended **OR**
  - The child has stopped attending (frequent absences with no parent contact).
- Parents are contacted via email address on file, multiple times; Providers are contacted via the provider portal's SR Eligibility folder by way of an uploaded memo which includes a list of affected children.
- Please do not tell parents their SR services are okay, or that you will the contact the ELC for them.
- The ELC terminates a child's services when a parent/guardian does not respond to the ELC by the deadline given.



# VPK Assessment: AP3 is Coming!

- VPK Assessments for Assessment Period 3 (AP3) must be administered within the last 30 calendar days of your VPK program. This includes non-instructional days.
- Assessments must be entered and submitted in the Bright Beginnings online system within 15 calendar days of last day of your VPK program.
- Failure to administer and submit assessment results on time will result in loss of eligibility to deliver a VPK program for a period of five years.



# New Statewide System Coming Soon

- ELC is launching the Statewide Provider Portal in March 2018.
- All CCR&R Updates must be completed in the new portal.
- 2018-2019 SR and VPK Contracts will be completed in the new portal, including summer 2018 VPK contracts.
- A webinar is scheduled for March 8<sup>th</sup> to address the new statewide portal; be on the lookout for an email with registration information.
- Attendance will continue to be completed in the current provider portal, until further notice.
- Any changes or updates to your 2017-2018 SR and VPK contracts must occur in the existing provider portal through June 30, 2018.



# Child Care Resource & Referral Update

- You are required by law and your School Readiness and/or VPK contract to complete an annual Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) update that provides information about your program. The ELC provides this information to families seeking child care.
- Beginning March 2018 there is a new process for completing the annual CCR&R update.
- Providers will create an account for the new Statewide Provider Portal and complete their provider profile.
- The provider profile is the “gateway” to provider contracts and serves as the CCR&R update.
- Failure to complete the CCR&R update will result in withholding of reimbursement and prevent you from completing any 2018-2019 contracts.







# School Readiness Health & Safety

- All School Readiness providers must pass the DCF pre-contract inspection prior to a School Readiness contract being approved.
  - This applies to **existing providers** and new providers.
  - This applies to **ALL** provider types; even if you are not licensed by DCF, you must receive an annual School Readiness inspection.
- As of April 2017 all staff must complete pre-service training prior to being left unsupervised with children.
- Links to Health & Safety Handbooks and Checklists are available on ELC's website & link section of the Dashboard in the portal.



# Background Screening

- As of July 1, 2016, all providers & provider staff must be screened through DCF's Background Screening Clearinghouse.
- Background screens are valid for 5 years.
- It is the provider's responsibility to keep background screens current.
- ELC cannot accept non-clearinghouse screens for VPK contract purposes.

# 2018-2019 Contract Deadlines

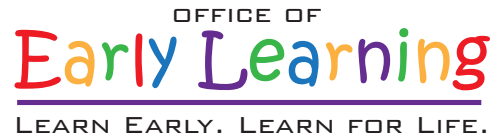
- If you wish to offer Summer 2018 VPK, please email [contracts@elcbigbend.org](mailto:contracts@elcbigbend.org) to inform us of your intent to contract no later than **April 1, 2018**.
- Summer VPK contracts are due **April 30, 2018**.
- School Readiness 2018-2019 contracts are due **April 30, 2018**.
  - \*ELC cannot approve a School Readiness contract until your School Readiness Health & Safety inspection has been completed by DCF.
- Fall 2018-2019 VPK contracts for providers wishing to begin in August are due **May 31, 2018**.
- Fall 2018-2019 VPK contracts for providers wishing to begin in September are due **June 30, 2018**.
  - \*Your VPK contract must be approved prior to ordering a VPK assessment kit.
  - \*You must order your VPK assessment kit 30 days before the planned start date of your VPK program.



# Contracting is Optional

- A provider who is unable or unwilling to comply with the terms of the School Readiness or VPK contract should not contract with the ELC.
- Contracting to provide School Readiness or VPK services is optional. Entering in to a contract with the ELC indicates you agree to uphold all contractual requirements and are aware there are consequences for non-compliance.





# Performance Funding Project

Providers interested in applying for OEL's 2018-2019 Performance Funding project should check the OEL Performance Funding website in May 2018 for application information:

[www.floridaearlylearning.com/school\\_readiness/early\\_learning\\_performance\\_funding\\_project.aspx](http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/school_readiness/early_learning_performance_funding_project.aspx).



# WarmLine

Early Detection = Lasting Results

Do you have a concern about a child's development, behavior or overall health?

If so, contact the Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region, Inc. (ELC).

The ELC provides a complimentary service to address and appropriately handle these types of concerns. A new WarmLine form is now available on ELC's website at: [www.elcbigbend.org/Providers/Screening-and-Assessment](http://www.elcbigbend.org/Providers/Screening-and-Assessment).



*Save the Date*

ELC's 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Early Childhood Conference

June 9, 2018

Donald L. Tucker Civic Center at Florida State University



FRED ROGERS CENTER  
for early learning and children's media  
at Saint Vincent College

# ELC Outreach Events Calendar

## April 2018

April 7th– **50th Annual Springtime Tallahassee Parade**– 10:30am Downtown

April 13th– **Community Wide Screening Day**– Children’s Medical Services

April 13th-15th– **Word of South Festival**– Cascades Park– April 14th- All Day ELC Tent

## May 2018

First week in May-Date TBD– **2nd Annual Provider to Provider**

May 10th – Mayor’s Family First Week- **Community Summit on Children**

## June 2018

June 9th– **10th Annual Provider Conference**



# Save the Dates







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**Thank you for coming and  
have a safe trip home.**



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