

Ohio Career Pathways Level

A common system for Ohio early care and education professionals to measure professional growth, recognize accomplishments, and support career advancement.



Overview

The **Career Pathways Level (CPL)** provides a common system for all Ohio early care and education professionals to quantify their professional growth and accomplishments to define and assist with professional advancement.

A professional's CPL is determined based on the following:

- Formal education
- Experience in the field
- Ongoing professional development

An individual's CPL is calculated by the Ohio Professional Registry (OPR) and maintained in a professional's profile. Once earned, a CPL is maintained until the professional increases their level based on additional formal education, experience, or professional development.

There are six levels included in the CPL. Each of the levels can be achieved by meeting specific education requirements, or by meeting a combination of education requirements, experience in the field and ongoing professional development.

CPL Level	Option One	Option Two	Option Three
One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High School Diploma and Ten hours of Ohio Approved professional development 		
Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High School Diploma and CDA 	High school diploma and one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career Tech Education Certificate 45 hours of Ohio Approved professional development and one year of experience 30 hours of Ohio Approved professional development and two years of experience 	
Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AA in ECE or related degree 	AA in unrelated degree or 60 completed semester hours of college coursework* and one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45 hours of Ohio Approved professional development and one year of experience 30 hours of Ohio Approved professional development and two years of experience 	CDA and one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45 hours of Ohio Approved professional development after initial obtainment of CDA and one year of experience 30 hours of Ohio Approved professional development after initial obtainment of CDA and two years of experience
Four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BA in ECE or related field 	BA in unrelated field and one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45 hours of Ohio Approved professional development and one year of experience 30 hours of Ohio Approved professional development and two years of experience 	AA in ECE or related field and one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60 hours of Ohio Approved professional development and three years of experience 45 hours of Ohio Approved professional development and four years of experience
Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MA in ECE or related field 	BA in related field or MA in unrelated field and one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45 hours of Ohio Approved professional development and one year of experience 30 hours of Ohio Approved professional development and two years of experience 	BA in unrelated field and one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60 hours of Ohio Approved professional development and three years of experience 45 hours of Ohio Approved professional development and four years of experience
Six	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ph.D. or higher in ECE or related field 	MA in related field and one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45 hours of Ohio Approved professional development and one year of experience 30 hours of Ohio Approved professional development and two years of experience 	MA in unrelated field and one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60 hours of Ohio Approved professional development and three years of experience 45 hours of Ohio Approved professional development and four years of experience

* Coursework must be completed with a grade of C or higher from an accredited university.

Formal Education

There are two categories of formal education that are considered in determining an individual's CPL - Related degrees and Unrelated degrees. Professionals will submit an official transcript to the Ohio Professional Registry (OPR) using the "Education" tab of their professional profile to verify the completion of Related and Unrelated degrees. The degree must be from an accredited college or university.

The related degrees include:

- ECE or related degrees
 - » Child Development
 - » Early Childhood Education
 - » Human Ecology
 - » Child and Family Community Studies
 - » School Counselor
 - » Physical Education
 - » Early Intervention (ECE or Special Education)
 - » Family Studies
 - » Human Development
 - » Elementary Education
 - » Middle or Secondary Education
 - » Elementary Intervention
 - » Curriculum and Instruction
 - » **Degrees where the individual has completed 12 semester or 18 quarter hours of child development coursework, with a grade of C or better or pass if pass/fail course**

Experience

Years of experience are recognized for the time that individuals work in the field. When determining years that can count toward experience, the individual must be at least 18 years of age when completing the work or field experience, unless they are enrolled in an Early Childhood JVS/Career Tech Ed course at the time of completion.

A year of experience includes an average of 15 hours/week for 12 months. If an individual worked less than 12 months, the year of experience will be pro-rated. Example: An individual who works 15 hours/week in a program that operates for nine months would receive credit for $\frac{3}{4}$ of a year of experience.

Examples include:

- Direct work and field experiences with young children birth – 13 years of age in a regulated organization/agency or early care and education setting
- Direct evidence-based services for children birth-13 years of age who have developmental delays or disabilities and their families
- Direct home visiting services using an evidence-based or promising-practice model
- Direct mental health services to children birth – 13 years of age and their families
- Supervision, leadership, or management of an early care and education program
- Program coordination, development or regulation
- Training, instruction, or technical assistance provided to early care and education programs
- Evaluation or research in the field

Professionals will document their years of experience in their OPR Profile using the “Employment” tab.

Choose Employer Type Choose Program Add Role(s)

Employer Name: Ohio Department of Children and Youth (DCY)
Employer Name: Xjfs Test Center3 - 2230028095
County: Ross
License Number: 2230028095

Add Role

Select a Role Start Date What is your hourly wage?
 I prefer not to answer

How many Hours per Week How many Months per Year

i Due to the upcoming Career Pathways Level (CPL) changes (effective July 1, 2026, per DCY), the following fields are no longer optional: Hours per Week and Months per Year. The fields are now required to ensure accurate calculation of your employment experience for your CPL Level. You must update the hours per week and months per year for all of your open/active employment roles in the fields provided. Be sure to end-date any roles that are no longer current so your information stays accurate.

Add Role

Select a Role

How many Hours per Week **i** How many Months per Year

i If your weekly hours fluctuate in this role, report the average whole number of hours from the last month. For example, Week 1: 10 hours; Week 2: 22 hours; Week 3: 20 hours; Week 4: 20 hours - Enter 18 hours in this field. For the purpose of your Career Pathways Level calculation, only eligible roles with an average of 15 or more hours per week will be included. Hours under 15 will not count unless you have two or more eligible roles at the same time that together total at least 15 or more hours. If there is more than one active eligible role in a time period, only one will be counted.

How many Months per Year **i**

i If your program is open fewer than 12 months per year, or if you worked in this role/program less than 12 months per year, your experience will be pro-rated. For example, if your program is only open 9 months this would result in a .75 proration, if your program is open for 3 months, it would result in .25 proration.

Ohio Approved Professional Development

Ohio Approved (OA) professional development can be found in the Ohio Professional Registry (OPR). Once completed and verified, OA training will automatically be populated into an individual's professional profile and included in the calculation of the CPL.

Early Childhood Education and related college coursework at an accredited college or university may be counted as Ohio Approved training. One Semester hour of college coursework is equivalent to 15 hours of OA training. One Quarter hour of college coursework is equivalent to 10 hours of OA training. Professionals will submit an official transcript to the Ohio Professional Registry (OPR) using the "Education" tab of their professional profile to verify the completion of college coursework.

Appeal Process

If a professional believes that they should be placed at a different level than the one assigned in the OPR they may submit additional education, training, or documentation of experience to support their request to the OPR for review. Any requests for a review or an appeal are to be submitted to appeals@occr.org. The OPR director, in conjunction with a Department of Children and Youth (DCY) representative, will evaluate the review/appeal request. If additional documentation is required, the OPR Director and DCY representative will evaluate documentation submitted and respond with the results of the review to the professional within 10 business days.