



Procedure Letter 39

TO: Early Care and Education Stakeholders

FROM: Kara B. Wentz, Director

DATE: October 7, 2025

SUBJECT: **NEW** Statewide Access to Publicly Funded Child Care or Child Care Choice Voucher Program **AND** the Early Childhood Education Grant

Background

In March 2025, the Department of Children & Youth (DCY) released Procedure Letter 13 ([PL 13](#)) to provide initial guidance on eligibility for early childhood programs. This guidance was expanded in May 2025 with [PL 15](#), which identified 44 “access counties” (or “exception counties”) where families could receive both Publicly Funded Child Care (PFCC) or the Child Care Choice Voucher Program (CCVP) and the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Grant. In counties not included on this list, families eligible for PFCC or CCVP were not offered the ECE Grant.

PL 15 was issued with DCY’s commitment to re-evaluate this structure. Since that time, several important developments have occurred.

- **PFCC payment authorization categories** are changing in less than 30 days. These changes, from Amended Substitute House Bill 96, necessitated a review of how the ECE Grant and PFCC work together.
- DCY received nearly 90 applications for the **ECE Grant Access Expansion** opportunity, and the justifications reinforced the need for broader flexibility. These applications demonstrated that families in all parts of the state would benefit from the option of using both programs.

Purpose

Effective October 7, 2025, DCY is expanding the ability to use PFCC or CCVP and the ECE Grant statewide. Families in all 88 counties can now access either PFCC or CCVP and the ECE Grant, if eligible. Families may combine ECE preschool instruction with PFCC or CCVP hours before and after the preschool session, creating a full day of care and education. However,



families will **not** be able to attend the same program for ECE services and for PFCC or CCVP, and **hours cannot overlap**.

This action will eliminate the need for Access Counties (Procedure Letter 15) and Access Sites and allow families to be authorized for programming based on the needs of the family. Additionally, this change does not impact families already receiving PFCC or CCVP, and ECE Grant at two early care and education programs.

This change reflects DCY's commitment to **doing what is right for children and families**, while also protecting taxpayer dollars and supporting programs and counties. Families will have more choice and continuity of care, programs will be better able to meet local needs, and resources will be used responsibly without duplication.

Building a Stronger Framework

DCY has already made important progress in this direction by advancing a “one application, one door” approach that simplifies how families access services. In addition, enhanced data tracking tools now provide clearer information on children being served across the early care and education landscape, promoting alignment and transparency. Looking ahead, DCY will continue to build on this progress through the development of administrative rules that will provide a concrete framework for the ECE Grant, clarifying expectations, ensuring accountability, and establishing a strong foundation for the future of Ohio's early learning system.

Implementation Guidance

Current PFCC or CCVP Families:

- Families interested in the ECE Grant program can contact their County Department of Job and Family Services caseworker to find out if their preschool-aged child meets the eligibility criteria. Families do not need to submit new information; eligibility can be based on the most recent determination already on file.

Current ECE Families:

- Families interested in the PFCC or CCVP can contact their County Department of Job and Family Services caseworker to find out if their family is eligible for PFCC/CCVP. Families may need to submit a [JFS 07200 Application for Child Care Benefits](#) with any necessary verifications.



New Families:

- For new families not yet known to the system, a completed [JFS 07200 Application for Child Care Benefits](#) will be required to establish eligibility for any Early Care and Education Program, including PFCC, CCVP, or ECE.

DCY will provide additional guidance and technical assistance to **ECE Grantees** and **CDJFS Agencies** during the transition. This support will help ensure consistent understanding and smooth implementation across all programs.

Copays

Copayments may be assessed for families at or above 101% of Federal Poverty Levels (FPL), with each grantee determining a copayment sliding fee scale. When using a sliding fee scale, grantees should not exceed nine (9%) percent of the family’s income. Grantees may also elect to set their sliding fee scale at zero (\$0.00).

DCY encourages ECE grantees to consider, for families receiving PFCC or CCVP in combination with the ECE Grant, not charging a copay since the family is already being assessed one.

Acknowledgements

DCY is committed to collaborating with the grantees and counties to make the ECE Grant program beneficial to families and easy to administer. DCY deeply appreciates your patience, partnership, and feedback as we shape a stronger, more sustainable preschool program for the future.

Questions

Any questions, please contact info@childrenandyouth.ohio.gov.

Rules/Forms

The chart indicates the impacted Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) rules and/or required forms.

OAC Rules	DCY Forms