

**CHILD CARE ELIGIBILITY BY PERMANENCY OUTCOME**

**A child is in out-of-home care (with either a foster parent, non-relative or relative caregiver), under protective supervision of Eckerd and with an open court case. While in out-of-home care, that child is found eligible for School Readiness/Head Start/Early Head Start/Eckerd Early Head Start and is enrolled. What happens to their eligibility if:**

<p><b>**See "UNDERSTANDING YOUR EARLY EDUCATION OPTIONS FOR 0 TO 5 YEAR OLD CHILDREN IN CARE" for a detailed description of each program**</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>School Readiness</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>BOCC and HCPS Head Start/Early Head Start</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Eckerd Early Head Start</b></p>
<p><b>...the child is reunified with their biological parent, but the case is still open with Eckerd and the court?</b></p>	<p>The child remains eligible for School Readiness under the "at-risk" eligibility category, so long as the parent can prove a purpose of care (employed, involved in an educational activity, or disabled). The parent need not meet income-eligibility guidelines while the case is open, as only the child's income is considered. If the reunified parent does not have a purpose of care, they can continue to receive School Readiness for up to three months, but then would no longer be eligible. The parent fee the reunified parent will pay is based on the parent's income and size of the household.</p>	<p>The reunified parent must apply for Head Start/Early Head Start for the child. They must meet criteria (see form at end):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- BOCC programs require: work 20hrs a week, job training or in school full time</li> <li>- HCPS programs <u>do not</u> require the parent to work or be in school or job training.</li> </ul> <p><b>**Tip:</b> If CM is aware reunification is pending, advise the parent to contact child's current Head Start/EHS center and begin working with the Head Start case manager for a smooth transition, to determine eligibility, and to consider transfer to a more convenient Head Start location.</p>	<p>If the child is enrolled in Eckerd EHS, they remain eligible once reunified with their parent.</p>

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<p><b>...the child has been successfully reunified with their biological parent for six months, and the case closes with Eckerd and with the court?</b></p>	<p>If the child care referral is renewed by the CM before the end of the case, the child remains eligible for School Readiness under the “at-risk” eligibility category for the next 12 months.</p> <p>If the child care referral is not renewed before the end of the case or if the parent reaches the end of the 12 months of “at-risk” eligibility, the child remains eligible if the parent continues to have a purpose of care (working, involved in educational activity, or disabled) and meets income-eligibility guidelines based on income and household (must be at 85% SMI on attached Sliding Fee Schedule). At this point, the parent will roll over into the income-eligible category. The parent fee the reunified parent will pay is based on the parent’s income and size of the household.</p> <p><b>**Tip:</b> Parents should always timely recertify with School Readiness so as not to lose it. When it is time to recertify, the parent, child care provider, and Eckerd (while the case is still open) are notified.</p>	<p>Same as #1 for the post placement supervision. The parent would need to apply and meet criteria.</p>	<p>If the child is enrolled in Eckerd EHS, they remain eligible for the program even after the court terminates protective supervision and jurisdiction.</p>
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<p><b>...the child is adopted and the case closes with Eckerd and the court?</b></p>	<p>In order to remain eligible, the adoptive parent would need a purpose of care (employed, involved in an educational activity, or disabled) and meet income-eligibility guidelines based on income and household (must be at 85% SMI on attached Sliding Fee Schedule). The parent fee the adoptive parent will pay is based on their income and size of the household.</p>	<p>The child will continue to meet criteria for the remainder of the program year as the child was previously enrolled as a “foster child”. The following program year the adoptive parent will need to re-apply as the child had a status change and is no longer a “foster child”. The child is now the legal child of the adoptive parent and the adoptive parent will need to meet the income and work/school requirements.</p>	<p>If the child is enrolled in Eckerd EHS, they remain eligible after adoption.</p>
<p><b>...the child is placed in a permanent guardianship with a relative or non-relative and the case closes with Eckerd, but the court retains jurisdiction?</b></p>	<p>In order to remain eligible, the permanent guardian would need a purpose of care (employed, involved in an educational activity, or disabled) and meet income-eligibility guidelines based on income and household (must be at 85% SMI on attached Sliding Fee Schedule). The parent fee the permanent guardian will pay is based on their income and size of the household.</p>	<p>The child will continue to be considered as out of home care (caregiver will need to provide the court paperwork that shows child was placed thru DCF/Eckerd) and eligible for the program.</p>	<p>If the child is enrolled in Eckerd EHS, they remain eligible after being placed in a permanent guardianship.</p>
<p><b>For each program, are there eligibility charts that would help predict whether ongoing eligibility will be found?</b></p>	<p>See attached Florida’s Office of Early Learning Sliding Fee Schedule (as of 7/1/17) and School Readiness Program.</p>	<p>There are no charts for ongoing eligibility, other than the poverty guidelines that change each year. The income guidelines do not apply to “foster care children/out of home care”.</p>	<p>No chart, but the following from the federal standards: Head Start Program Performance Standards 1302.12 HEAD START: (j) Eligibility duration. (1) If a child is determined eligible under this section and is participating in a</p>

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		See attached chart of Program Requirements and Qualifications.	Head Start program, he or she will remain eligible through the end of the succeeding program year <u>except that the Head Start program may choose not to enroll a child when there are compelling reasons for the child not to remain in Head Start, such as when there is a change in the child's family income and there is a child with a greater need for Head Start services.</u> EARLY HEAD START: (2) Children who are enrolled in a program receiving funds under the authority of section 645A of the Act remain eligible while they participate in the program.
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## SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM

### ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR PI/PS/FC AT-RISK CASES

A child at risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation may be eligible for School Readiness financially assisted child care. Clients must provide a valid Child Care Authorization Referral, reside in Hillsborough County, provide required documentation, and meet the following requirements:

**IN HOME:** child from a family under investigation, supervision, or in a diversion program provided by DCF/ contracted community-based provider and who is from a family that is actively participating and complying in DCF-prescribed activities.



**OUT OF HOME RELATIVE/ NON-RELATIVE** child placed in court-ordered custody of a relative/non- relative by DCF contracted community-based provider; child is removed from the home and placed elsewhere.



**FOSTER CARE-** child in foster care protective services under supervision by DCF/ contracted community-based provider; child is removed from the home and placed in foster care

**Ages of Children Served:**0-12yrs based on local coalition priorities #2 (0-8); #5 (9-12);As of 3/31/18 there were 2,239 children enrolled: 1,759 are 0-5 and 480 school aged

**Referral:** Eligibility is not dependent on family income or work requirements and is based on a documented referral from the Department of Children and Family Services or its contracted community-based agencies. provider; authorization period is 60 days or up to 6 months; may be faxed to School Readiness Intake department at 813-744-6753 for review and follow up with the client. If requested, a face to face intake interview is available at the satellite office and designated Family Resource Centers by appointment. A new referral is needed if client recertifies, requests additional hours, adds a child, or does not use the referral within 10 calendar days of issuance. A child may continue to maintain eligibility as long as there is a current and valid referral and care will be authorized for 12-months of funding as long as the referral is renewed during the 12-month authorization of child care funding, child care services will continue in increments defined by the referring agency. Completed and non-processed referrals are returned to referring agencies for their record.

**Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R):** Upon request, clients will receive CCR&R services which includes information on choosing quality child care, computer generated listing of providers based on family's and child needs, and community resources. CCR&R services may be obtained by calling the ELCHC at (813)906-5041 or toll free (877)781-3094 or visiting the website [www.elchc.org](http://www.elchc.org). School Readiness staff are also available to provide CCR&R services during the intake process or by calling (813)744-8941 press#1.

**Documentation Required for Intake:** All SR clients must provide documentation of age; citizenship; residency; parent status; family size; and purpose of care , which is "Protection". The referral is sufficient as documentation, however if " Medicaid-Eligible" status is not checked for citizenship or if there is a discrepancy, client will need to provide proof. Client may have an additional purpose of care such as and may need to provide proof such as:

- ✓ **Education:** Document that an official of the school or institution completes on letterhead or stationery with an official seal stating the number of classroom hours and any lab hours date the semester/training period starts and the date it ends. Online courses are allowable. Screen prints showing student's enrollment status, hours and classes in which enrolled from the educational website are also forms of acceptable documentation.
- ✓ **Employment:** Any of the following documentation will be accepted as proof of earned income
  - \*paystubs- current and consecutive a minimum of 4 weekly, 2 bi-weekly, 2 semi- monthly, or 1monthly; statement signed by the employer that indicates the hours of employment, the rate of pay, and frequency; contract signed for employment that indicates the hours of employment, the rate of pay, and frequency
  - If self-employed- business account ledgers for the last 4 weeks; receipts of earnings for the last 4 weeks from either customers or contractors; or current IRS federal tax return.

**Child Care Provider:** Client may choose any approved School Readiness Program child care provider. Once client has selected a provider, enrollment will be processed immediately and a Child Care Certificate will be issued to the client and provider. If client has not selected a provider, client will be given 10 business days to choose a provider; an additional 5 days will be given if needed. **\*\*\*Note:** Rule 65C-13.030 Standards for Licensed Out-of-Home Caregivers, was revised effective 3/6/2018; "(d) Child care. Child care for children in licensed out-of-home care shall be in a licensed early education or child care program chosen by the caregiver(s). These providers must be participating in the school readiness program through the local early learning coalition. Examples of licensed early education or child care programs include: (1). Gold Seal accredited child care providers or providers participating in a quality rating system; (2). Licensed child care providers ;(3). Public school providers; and; (4). License exempt child care providers, including religious exempt, registered, and non-public schools."

**Parent Copayment:** Copayments will be assessed for all children based on family size and income (earned and unearned)(for Out Home/Foster Care copayment is based only on the child's income). Highest parent fee is assessed for the youngest child, then at 50% for the 2<sup>nd</sup> child, if school aged then is at 75%, If income documentation is not available, the parent fee will be calculated based on the 85% State Median Income (SMI), when verification is provided then parent fees will be reassessed. Copayments may decrease but not increase during the 12-month eligibility period. However, after the initial 12 months parent fees may increase.

**Provider Transfer:** Clients may transfer their child as often as they choose. A client may not transfer to another school readiness program provider until the parent has satisfactorily fulfilled the co-payment obligation by immediate payment of the outstanding co-payment or establishment of a repayment plan. If a client is unable to satisfactorily fulfill the co-payment obligation prior to the transfer, the provider shall attempt to arrange a repayment plan with the at-risk child's parent.

**Recertification:** Prior to the referral ending School Readiness Intake department sends a list to Eckerd in advance (15th and 31<sup>st</sup>) of At Risk families whose referral will soon expire. Eckerd verifies if the referral will be renewed or not and note it on the response column and returns the completed report to the School Readiness staff within 10 days. If the client's referral is renewed the referring agency submits the renewed Child Care Authorization Form to the School Readiness Administration office 10 days prior to the client's eligibility review date, indicated on the report.

- If the referral is renewed, child care services will continue under the current at-risk eligibility (initial purpose for care) until the end of the initial 12 months/subsequent. A Child Care Certificate is issued to both client and provider.
- OR**
- If the referral is not renewed or is terminated by the referring agency and the client:
    - **has a purpose of care**, (employment, educational activities, disability), and income is at or below the allowable 85% SMI maximum income, the client will roll-over to the income eligible category and a Child Care Certificate is issued to both client and provider.
    - **does not have a purpose of care** the parent remains under the current at-risk eligibility and will be given three (3) months to provide documentation to establish a purpose for care under another eligibility category to continue receiving services for the remainder of the initial 12-month authorization period. Purpose for care must be reestablished no later than three (3) months after the initial child care authorization expires or school readiness funding will be discontinued. Family income must be at or below the allowable 85 % SMI maximum income; if not the child care funding will be discontinued.

Before the 12 months eligibility expires, Redetermination by Mail (RBM) packets are mailed to Foster parents one (1) month prior to their referral expiration date /redetermination date. Clients may mail, fax or hand deliver their packets to the Net Park administrative office prior to their redetermination date. The packet is reviewed and if eligible is processed and a Child Care Certificate is issued to both client and provider.

**Reporting Child Absences:**

As mandated by contract with the ELCHC, the Finance department sends a monthly report to Eckerd of At Risk children with any unexcused absence or seven consecutive excused absences. The Intake department sends another monthly report to Eckerd of all At Risk children which were dropped by the child care facility due to absences (for the previous month). Eckerd verifies if the case is open/close and note it on the report's response column, and returns the completed report to the School Readiness staff for follow up with the client to determine if care will continue or terminate.

**Transferring to Other Counties:**

Clients may transfer child care eligibility between counties/coalitions. A new referral will be required from the receiving county; if referral has not been issued then client will be provided a 3 month period to reestablish purpose of care/referral received. For at-risk transfers, the originating coalition should contact the originating referring agency and the receiving coalition should contact the receiving referring agency to ensure that the family's child care referral reflects the transfer.

**Administrative Office:**

**Net Park: 5701 E. Hillsborough Avenue, Suite 2301**

**Tampa, FL 33610**

**Telephone: (813)744-8941 press #1 for School Readiness Program**

press#1: Intake Eligibility/Recertification by Mail

press#2: Appointment Line

**Client Services Satellite Office:**

**North Tampa: 9215 N. Florida Avenue, Suite 101**

**Tampa, FL 33612**

**Telephone: (813)419-5335 -Office Manager**

**(813)419-5391 - Screener**

**Florida's Office of Early Learning SLIDING  
 FEE SCHEDULE Effective 07/01/2017**

DAILY FEE	FPL as indicated unless otherwise noted 85% SMI	Annual Gross Income - Number of persons in Family														
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1.90	0.95	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		6,030	8,120	10,210	12,300	14,390	16,480	18,570	20,660	22,750	24,840	26,930	29,020	31,110	33,200	35,290
4.30	2.15	6,031	8,121	10,211	12,301	14,391	16,481	18,571	20,661	22,751	24,841	26,931	29,021	31,111	33,201	35,291
		12,060	16,240	20,420	24,600	28,780	32,960	37,140	41,320	45,500	49,680	53,860	58,040	62,220	66,400	70,580
5.10	2.55	12,061	16,241	20,421	24,601	28,781	32,961	37,141	41,321	45,501	49,681	53,861	58,041	62,221	66,401	70,581
		15,678	21,112	26,546	31,980	37,414	42,848	48,282	53,716	59,150	64,584	70,018	75,452	80,886	86,320	91,754
5.50	2.75	15,679	21,113	26,547	31,981	37,415	42,849	48,283	53,717	59,151	64,585	70,019	75,453	80,887	86,321	91,755
		18,090	24,360	30,630	36,900	43,170	49,440	55,710	61,980	68,250	74,520	80,790	87,060	93,330	99,600	105,870
6.40	3.20	18,091	24,361	30,631	36,901	43,171	49,441	55,711	61,981	68,251	74,521	80,791	87,061	93,331	99,601	105,871
		20,502	27,608	34,714	41,820	48,926	56,032	63,138	70,244	77,350	84,456	91,562	98,668	105,774	112,880	119,986
6.80	3.40	20,503	27,609	34,715	41,821	48,927	56,033	63,139	70,245	77,351	84,457	91,563	98,669	105,775	112,881	119,987
		22,311	30,044	37,777	45,510	53,243	60,976	68,709	76,442	84,175	91,908	99,641	107,374	115,107	122,840	130,573
7.40	3.70	22,312	30,045	37,778	45,511	53,244	60,977	68,710	76,443	84,176	91,909	99,642	107,375	115,108	122,841	130,574
		24,120	32,480	40,840	49,200	57,560	65,920	74,280	82,640	91,000	99,360	107,720	116,080	124,440	132,800	141,160
10.20	5.10	24,121	32,481	40,841	49,201	57,561	65,921	74,281	82,641	91,001	99,361	107,721	116,081	124,441	132,801	141,161
		29,898	39,098	48,297	57,497	66,696	75,895	85,094	94,293	103,492	112,691	121,890	131,089	140,288	149,487	158,686

Parents receiving hourly care pay up to the part-time fee.  
 Second and all additional children pay a reduced fee.  
 2017 Poverty Level (FPL) effective January 26, 2017



## Hillsborough County Head Start/Early Head Start

3402 N. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Tampa, Florida 33605  
(813) 272-5140

### PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS & QUALIFICATIONS

Thank you for applying with the Hillsborough County Head Start/Early Head Start Program. In order to determine your child's eligibility, the items listed below must be provided along with your application. The completion of this form should not be considered a formal acceptance into the program, but one of the steps in completing the eligibility process. We accept applications throughout the school year for anyone who is interested in enrolling into the Hillsborough County Head Start/ Early Head Start Program.

PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING **REQUIRED** DOCUMENTS ALONG WITH YOUR APPLICATION:

- I. Proof of your child's age (**Birth Certificate, Baptism record, etc.**)  
(Head Start—child must be 4 years old or will turn 3 by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year)  
(Early Head Start—children are enrolled from age 6 weeks and prior to 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday)
  
- II. Verification of **ALL** income received **last year**  
(must meet Federal Poverty Guidelines)
  - Income Tax Form 1040 (*Tax return*)
  - W-2 Form
  - Unemployment Compensation or Worker's Compensation
  - Public Assistance (*i.e. TANF*)
  - Financial Assistance Awards (*i.e. Pell Grant, Housing Supplements*)
  - Documentation of Child Support
  - Income received from Social Security Administration (SSI, SSA, SSD)
  - Self Employment (*1099 Form or a notarized statement indicating # hours worked Weekly and income earned*)
  
- III. Verification of **Employment** or **School Enrollment** or **Job Training** status (Requirement for full day/full year program)
  - Most recent Paystub
  - Written statement from employer on company letterhead (*must indicate Year-to-date income*)
  - Written letter from school (*on school letterhead or document with school seal*)

IF ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS ARE **NOT ATTACHED** TO YOUR APPLICATION, THE PROCESS WILL BE **INCOMPLETE**. Please be advised that **your child's shot record and physical records must be current.** Thank you for your interest in our program!