



**Early Learning and Child Care
Continuing Education Program**

Terms and Conditions

**2024–2025
(Expires March 31, 2025)**

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Terms and Conditions Overview

The objective of the Continuing Education Program is to enhance the ability of regulated child care and Pre-primary to recruit and retain staff by:

- Increasing the affordability of training for staff and family home child care (FHCC) providers working in regulated child care centres, licensed FHCC agencies, and the Pre-primary program;
- Encouraging child care, Pre-primary staff, and approved FHCC providers to pursue training by removing cost barriers;
- Providing opportunities for child care, Pre-primary staff, and approved FHCC providers who do not have their Early Childhood Education (ECE) training to work towards a credential.

*Please note that definitions for terms used can be found at the end of this document.

Program Description

The Program is available to applicants who are working and taking courses part-time towards an early childhood education credential.

Each applicant may qualify for reimbursement of:

- up to a maximum of \$1000.00 per year if working part-time; or
- up to \$5000.00 per year if working full-time.

Once an applicant working on a part-time basis has completed their ECE Training, they must complete 750 hours of work within 12 months in regulated child care centres, the Pre-primary program, or approved FHCC program.

If the applicant is working on a full-time basis, they must complete 1500 hours of work within 12 months in regulated child care centres, the Pre-primary program, or approved FHCC program.

Failure to complete the required hours of work will result in a requirement to repay the amount reimbursed to the Department.

Eligibility Criteria

To receive Continuing Education Program funding for the 2024–2025 fiscal year, the following criteria must be met:

- The applicant must be a permanent resident of Nova Scotia (temporary foreign workers, international students, or any person in Canada on a temporary resident visa do not qualify).

- The applicant must be staff working directly with children as an early childhood educator, a director or assistant director, inclusion staff, FHCC agency consultant, or FHCC provider approved by a licensed FHCC agency.
- The applicant must complete the courses on a part-time basis towards obtaining:
 - Level 1 course work and guided work experiences (approved for a Level 1 classification)
 - ECE diploma (approved for a Level 2 classification)
 - Bachelor of Applied Arts in Child & Youth Study Degree (BA [CYS]) at Mount Saint Vincent University (approved for a Level 3 classification)
 - The Early Childhood Administrator—Continuing Education Certificate Course at Mount Saint Vincent University
 - Early Childhood Leadership Training Program at the Nova Scotia Community College
 - Leadership en petite enfance at Université Sainte-Anne
- All courses must be completed from one of the following approved Early Childhood Education training institutions:
 - CBBC Career College, Early Childhood Education
 - Jane Norman College, Early Childhood Education
 - Mount Saint Vincent University, Bachelor of Applied Arts (Child and Youth Study)
 - Nova Scotia Community College, Early Childhood Education
 - Nova Scotia College of Early Childhood Education
 - Island Career Academy, Early Childhood Education
 - Université Sainte-Anne, Early Childhood Education
- For reimbursement, courses must be successfully completed with verification provided by the institution.
- Professional Development Workshops are not eligible for reimbursement.
- The applicant will be eligible for reimbursement upon agreeing to fulfill the commitment to work in a Nova Scotia regulated child care or Pre-primary program, or a FHCC approved by a licensed FHCC agency as outlined in the Reimbursement Process on page 5.
- The applicant must submit the Continuing Education Program Application for Course Reimbursement form and all required documents within **60 days** of completion of the course (refer to Application Process for Course Reimbursement, below).

Eligible Expenses

The following expenses are eligible to be reimbursed for the course:

- The cost of the course tuition

- Textbooks that are mandatory for the course

If course textbooks are not included in the course tuition, original receipts (proof of payment) must be provided for reimbursement.

The Annual Eligible Amount

The annual eligible maximum amount is \$1000.00 for part-time employees and \$5000.00 for full-time employees for course tuition and textbooks, within the fiscal year (April 1—March 31).

If the applicant reaches the maximum amount of the reimbursement, they cannot apply for further reimbursement until the beginning of the new fiscal year. If the course is not completed within the fiscal year, it will be subject to the Terms and Conditions and budget availability of the subsequent fiscal year and at the discretion of the Department.

Funding allocations are subject to departmental budget availability.

Program Timelines

Eligible applicants may apply for reimbursement until March 31, 2025, subject to Departmental budget availability.

Program information for 2024–2025 can be found on our website at: www.ednet.ns.ca/ece/training

Application Process for Course Reimbursement

Required Documentation

Applicants must complete a Continuing Education Program Application for Course Reimbursement form and attach the following supporting documents:

- Evidence from the training institution of successful course completion. This must be in a form of a letter issued by the training institution or a copy of an official transcript.
- Receipts for the costs paid for course tuition and textbooks.

The cost of the tuition cannot be carried over from one eligible year to another.

Application Deadline

Applications, and all required documents for Continuing Education Program Course Reimbursement, must be submitted within **60 days** of the completion of the course per the course end date.

Contact Information and Assistance with the Application

The Early Childhood Education Application for Course Reimbursement form can be found on our website at: <http://www.ednet.ns.ca/earlyyears/pd/ContinuingEducation.shtml>

Applicants requiring additional information about the Continuing Education Program are requested to contact: ECetraining@novascotia.ca

Submission of the Application Package

Completed applications and supporting documents must be emailed to ECetraining@novascotia.ca or mailed to:

Continuing Education Program
Early Learning and Child Care Branch
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
PO Box 578
Halifax, NS B3J 2S9

Application Review and Approval Process

Applications checked for Completeness

The Department will review the application to ensure that the application form has been properly completed and supporting documents contain all required information.

If the application form or supporting documents are incomplete, the applicant will be contacted by telephone or email to request the missing information.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide the missing information for the application to be processed.

Notification of Approval/Denial

Applicants will be notified by email if their Continuing Education Program Application for Course Reimbursement is approved or denied.

Payment for course reimbursement will follow notifications for approved applicants.

Reimbursement Process

The applicant will be reimbursed once the Application for Course Reimbursement is approved. Payment will be issued by cheque and mailed to the applicant's home address.

Applicants who are reimbursed for eligible courses must commit to continue working in a regulated child care or Pre-primary program, a licensed FHCC agency, or FHCC program approved by a licensed FHCC agency in Nova Scotia for the required period of time, as set out below, immediately following completion of their program.

Accumulated Hours Requirement

Full-Time Employment

The applicant must be working 120 hours or more per month in a regulated child care or Pre-primary program, or in a licensed FHCC agency or approved FHCC program to be considered a full-time employee.

If the applicant is working full-time at the time of application, the following will apply:

- The annual eligible maximum amount is \$5000.00 within the fiscal year (April 1—March 31). The applicant will be required to provide proof of completion of 1500 hours of work as an early childhood educator within 12 months of the date of successfully completing the full requirements for obtaining an ECE diploma/degree.
- If the applicant requires a break in their studies for such events as maternity leave, bereavement, illness, divorce, etc., the applicant will be required to request a change of date in completion of the diploma or degree program. Approval for further reimbursements will be at the discretion of the Department.
- If the applicant changes ECE programs (i.e. from an ECE Diploma Program to MSVU's (BA [CYS])), they may continue to apply for reimbursements until they complete the program.

Part-Time Employment

The applicant must be working between 70 and 119 hours per month in a regulated child care or Pre-primary program or in a licensed FHCC agency or approved FHCC program to be considered part-time.

If the applicant is working part-time at the time of application, the following will apply:

- The annual eligible maximum amount is \$1000.00 within the fiscal year (April 1—March 31).
- The applicant will be required to provide proof of completion of 750 hours of work as an early childhood educator within 12 months of the date of successfully completing the full requirements for obtaining an ECE diploma/degree.
- If the applicant requires a break in their studies for such events as maternity leave, bereavement, illness, divorce, etc., the applicant will be required to request a change of date in completion of the

diploma or degree program. Approval for further reimbursements will be at the discretion of Department.

- If the applicant changes ECE programs (i.e. from an ECE Diploma Program to MSVU's (BA [CYS])), they may continue to apply for reimbursements until they complete the program.

Accountability Process

Continuing Education Program Accumulated Hours Report

Following the completion of their diploma/degree, recipients of Continuing Education funding must submit the **Accumulated Hours Report** form to report on their hours worked in a Nova Scotia regulated child care or Pre-primary program, or in a licensed FHCC agency or approved FHCC program.

The Continuing Education Program *Accumulated Hours Report* must be submitted by the applicant within 12 months after last reimbursement for the required 750 or 1500 hours. Submission of this form is the responsibility of the applicant. The *Accumulated Hours Report* form can be found on our website at <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/earlyyears/pd/ContinuingEducation.shtml>

If the applicant is unable to continue their studies, they have 6 months or 1 year (depending on their accumulated total reimbursed) to complete the return of service hours to avoid repayment. The applicant is required to notify the Department of changes in their enrollment status (i.e. part-time to full-time, etc.) or withdrawal from their academic program.

The applicant is responsible for keeping track and obtain confirmation of their hours worked from their new regulated child care employer, Pre-primary employer or family home should they change employers (use Section 2 of the Continuing Education Program Application for Course Reimbursement form).

It is the responsibility of the applicant to notify the Department of any changes to their address or contact information.

The *Accumulated Hours Report* **must** be sent within the required time frame

by email: ecetraining@novascotia.ca

by mail:

Continuing Education Program
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
Early Learning and Child Care Branch
PO Box 578
Halifax, NS B3J 2S9

Repayment Process

If the applicant fails to work the required number of hours in a regulated child care or Pre-primary program or FHCC program affiliated with a licensed FHCC agency within the required time frame without reasonable cause as determined by the Department, the applicant must repay the reimbursement.

The amount due and payable to the Department will be based on the total reimbursement received.

If the applicant is no longer working in a regulated child care or Pre-primary program or FHCC program affiliated with a licensed FHCC agency prior to having accumulated the required number of hours, written notice must be forwarded to the Department with the arrangements for repayment of the reimbursement.

If the applicant does not repay the reimbursement as required, the applicant cannot apply for reimbursement under this program in the future. Funds may be subject to recovery through debt collection or other legal options available to the Department.

Taxable Benefits

Depending on the applicant's personal situation, the reimbursement may or may not be a taxable benefit. The Department is not able to advise on the possible tax or other financial implications of the reimbursement.

For more information, applicants are advised to contact Canada Revenue Agency at: www.canada.ca

Appendix A—Definitions

For purposes of these Terms and Conditions, the following definitions apply

Department	refers to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.
ECE	refers to Early Childhood Education.
ECE Credential	refers to successful completion of an approved early childhood (ECE) academic or educational diploma or degree program.
Family Home Child Care Agency	means an agency licensed under the Early Learning and Child Care Act to approve and manage FHCC in accordance with its family home day care program.
Family Home Child Care Provider	refers to a person who is approved by a FHCC Agency to provide a FHCC provided in the person’s home.
Fiscal year	refers to the provincial government business year which runs for the twelve months from April 1st of any given year until March 31st of the following year.
Full-time employee	refers to an employee who is working 120 or more hours per month.
Full-time student	refers to a student registered in an approved training institution who is enrolled on a full-time basis as defined by the institution.
Part-time employee	refers to an employee who is working 70–119 hours per month.
Part-time student	refers to a student registered in an approved training institution who is enrolled on a part-time basis as defined by the institution.
Pre-primary Program	refers to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development’s Pre-primary programs delivered through Regional Centres for Education and the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial across Nova Scotia.
Regulated Child Care Program	refers to a licensed child care facility, family home child care agency and family child care homes under the Early Learning and Child Care Act.