

VPK

VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN

Provider Manual



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Physical Location & Mailing Address:

ATTN: VPK

8443 Baymeadows Road, Suite 1

Jacksonville, FL 32256

ECS website:

www.ecs4kids.org

◆◆◆Important recent changes◆◆◆

Instructor Requirements
Effective July 1, 2014, all lead teachers holding a CDA or FCCPC credential must complete the Standards for Four Year Olds Course in addition to the Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors course.
Insurance
Private VPK providers are now required to submit documentation of their general liability insurance, automobile insurance (if applicable), and workers' compensation (if applicable).
POP
If you were previously eligible to register your own VPK children for your facility, but do not meet the most recent Kindergarten Readiness Rate (summer and/or school year), you will not be eligible to register children for the following school year. You will also be required to choose an improvement plan that follows set deadlines that must be met in order to be approved for VPK.
VPK Assessment Kits
Each VPK provider is required to administer the VPK assessment for children enrolled in each of their VPK program types (summer and/or school year) and record that data on the Bright Beginnings web site. If you did not receive an assessment kit and/or a letter from the Department of Education with your log in information, please notify ECS immediately.
Transfers/Reenrollments
VPK parents are only able to transfer/reenroll their child in a VPK program of the same program type one time if they qualify by good cause or extreme hardship (as defined in Rule 6M-8.210).
Instructor Changes
All instructor changes should be submitted using the VPK Instructor Change Form. In order to process and approve any changes, all applicable fields must be completed and accompanied by all applicable supporting documentation. An updated OEL-VPK Form 11A is also acceptable for making instructor changes.
Absences on the last day(s) of the month
<u>Effective immediately</u> , if a child is absent on the last day(s) of the month please indicate if the child will be returning to your VPK program. If there is no note that the child will be returning, VPK will terminate the child's enrollment in your program until we hear otherwise.

ECS has established the following VPK deadlines keeping the anticipated implementation of ELIS in mind and to help ensure that we are able to honor our commitment to providing providers and parents with the best service possible.

2014-15 VPK Program Participation Deadlines

(The participation deadlines are for all VPK providers, regardless of whether you wish to receive the advance payments or not)

All VPK Providers must be fully approved at least 14 calendar days before your anticipated start date.

For example: If your anticipated start date is August 18, 2014, you must be fully approved at August 4, 2014 at the latest.

If you are not approved at least 14 calendar days before your anticipated start date, then your start date must be changed.

For example: Your program was fully approved on August 18, 2014, the earliest your program may start is September 1, 2014.

2014-15 VPK Program Advance Payment Deadlines

****Advanced payment deadlines are subject to change per OEL policy****

If you have chosen to receive the VPK advance payment, the deadlines are as follows:

To receive the August advance payment:

1. Must be fully approved by no later than June 16, 2014 **AND**
2. Your completed original child enrollment paperwork (e.g. VPK certificates of eligibility and/or pilot project paperwork) received in our central office no later than June 30, 2014.

To receive the September advanced payment:

1. Must be fully approved by no later than July 14, 2014 **AND**
2. Your completed original child enrollment paperwork (e.g. VPK certificates of eligibility and/or pilot project paperwork) received in our central office no later than July 31, 2014.

To receive the October advanced payment:

1. Must be fully approved by no later than August 11, 2014 (or two weeks before your anticipated start date, whichever is sooner) **AND**
2. Your completed original child enrollment paperwork (e.g. VPK certificates of eligibility and/or pilot project paperwork) received in our central office no later than August 29, 2014.

***Please note that deadlines apply throughout the year
and not just for August***

List of Frequently Asked Questions & Answers

Attendance

How do we fill out my attendance rosters? In accordance with OEL VPK policy, ECS bases payment on actual days attended for the VPK program. The days attended are determined by the attendance roster. Using the key provided in the bottom left-hand portion of the attendance roster, fill out the roster IN BLUE OR BLACK INK (no pencil) as follows:

- *Mark "X" for a child who attended that day.
- *Mark "A" for absences. If instructional days are not marked, a revised roster will be requested with absences indicated by an "A".
- *Mark "T" on the day of termination (if a child is terminated during the month), this day and the days following will not be paid.
- * [If a child is absent on the last day\(s\) of the month please indicate if the child will be returning to your VPK program. If there is no note that the child is returning to your program, VPK will terminate the child's enrollment in your program until we hear otherwise.](#)
- *Do not mark anything on days that you do not hold VPK instructional hours, for example, a holiday, or a Saturday or Sunday. These days will not be paid.
- *Do not leave instructional days blank on the roster. A VPK Specialist will call and request a revised roster in order to process it for payment.

When is an absence payable? Per the Uniform Attendance Policy for Funding the VPK Program implemented August 25, 2009, each child will be paid for up to 20% of absences based on the time the child attended. *See following 'Reimbursement' section for further information regarding the 80:20 attendance policy.*

What is considered an excused absence? The revised Uniform Attendance policy does not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences and documentation of absence (e.g. mommy notes) are no longer required.

When do we receive our attendance rosters? Your VPK attendance rosters, Parental Choice Certificates (PCC, if applicable) and final payment detail for the previous month will be mailed on or before the third Monday of each month.

For example: May 2014 rosters, PCCs, etc. will be mailed on or before April 19, 2014.

We have a child who is on our School Readiness/subsidized rosters and VPK rosters; can we just turn in one roster? No, because School Readiness and VPK are two different programs with two different funding streams, two different rosters are required. However, only one sign in & out sheet is necessary for that child.

What do we need to include with our VPK rosters, besides the marks of attendance? Only the provider's signature is *required* directly on the rosters. However, your program is required to keep a sign in & out sheet, as well as the VPK Parental Choice Certificate for each child. While these forms are *not required* to be turned in every month they will be periodically monitored and should be kept on file for at least 5 years from the child's last date of attendance.

If we do not receive the attendance rosters, what do we do? Contact the VPK Department at Episcopal Children's Services Central office. The telephone number is (904) 726-1500 or 1-800-238-3463.

Where do we send completed attendance rosters? Mail the original rosters to:

Episcopal Children's Services
Attn: VPK
8443 Baymeadows Rd, Suite 1
Jacksonville, Fl 32256

If you fax in your rosters by the second business day, the originals must ALSO be received in our office by the 10th business day of the month.

When do we send in our completed attendance rosters? We need to receive rosters by the **SECOND** business day of the every month. If some unforeseen circumstances arise and you are unable to turn in your rosters on time, please contact the VPK Department as soon as possible. We are able to accept faxed copies for processing but must receive the originals before actual payment is made.

If we do not receive your rosters by the second business date of the month, we are not able to guarantee payment for those days.

Our VPK program does not operate during the weekend; do we need to mark the days? No, if the child only attends Monday through Friday, only mark those days. Please leave the weekends (Saturday and Sunday) blank, therefore preventing any confusion while the roster is being processed for payment.

If a child is not on the roster, what do we do? If you have a child who is not on your roster but you have received a certificate and confirmation number for that child, simply write the child's **legal** name on a blank line on the roster and fill in any information pertinent to the child. If you do not have any room for this, a blank roster is available on our website (www.ecs4kids.org) or by contacting the VPK Department. Be sure to review your Final Provider Reimbursement Report promptly to ensure you have been paid for that child.

*****Note: You cannot be paid for time a child spends in your program prior to the certificate of eligibility being issued. *****

What is a Parental Choice Certificate (PCC)? A Parental Choice Certificate or OEL-VPK 03 (S or L) is the form that the parent/guardian is required to sign every month to verify their child(ren)'s attendance for the prior month. These forms are sent to you by ECS (either yearly or monthly, depending on which version you use) and must be kept on file for at least 5 years from the child's last date of attendance. ECS will request these documents at various times throughout the year to complete attendance monitorings and/or as supporting documentation should an attendance discrepancy arise. Please make sure you are using the forms with the OEL logo and not AWI.

What is the difference between the long & short version of the PCC? There are two different versions of the PCC available for use.

You may use the OEL-VPK 03S (short form) if you record the child's daily attendance using one of the following methods:

- A. A paper sign-in or sign-out log that records the date, child's name, and signature of the parent or other person dropping off or picking up the child to, or from, the VPK site; OR
- B. An electronic attendance-tracking system that records the date, child's name, and electronic signature, card swipe, entry of a personal identification number, or similar daily action taken by the parent or other person dropping off or picking up the child to, or from, the VPK site.

You must use the OEL-VPK 03L (long form) if you record the child's daily attendance using a method other than the methods described in the OEL-VPK 03S paragraph (e.g. instructor records daily attendance using a roll book). Note: Before the parent signs the OEL-VPK 03L you must record the child's monthly attendance on the form or attach documentation to the form which shows the child's monthly attendance.

For additional guidance on proper completion of the PCC please see the Program Monitoring portion below.

Are we required to have our own VPK attendance policy? Yes, VPK policy requires that each provider give a copy of its VPK attendance policy, in writing, to the parent or guardian of each child upon enrollment of the child in the VPK program. ECS has sample attendance policies available if so desired. It is not required that you use our samples, they are simply tools to assist you.

Reimbursements

What are the current VPK reimbursements rates/allocations? '12-'13 & '13-'14 VPK allocations are included below.

The Governor/Florida Legislature approves the VPK allocations every year and ECS is not made aware of any changes until they are fully approved and released. Once the new allocations have been approved and released (typically this happens every June), ECS will update them on all relevant documents as well as our website. If these rates have not been updated, it means that they have not yet been approved and released by the Governor/Florida Legislature.

July & August 2012 & June 2013 Summer allocations (effective 07/01/12)

County Name	Rate based on FTE	Program hours	Hourly rate
Baker	1982.04	300	6.60
Bradford	1972.72	300	6.57
Clay	2015.06	300	6.71
Nassau	2008.58	300	6.69
Putnam	1953.67	300	6.51
St Johns	1998.04	300	6.66

2012-13 School Year allocations (effective 07/01/12)

County Name	Rate based on FTE	Program hours	Hourly rate
Baker	2331.29	540	4.31
Bradford	2320.33	540	4.29
Clay	2370.13	540	4.38
Nassau	2362.51	540	4.37
Putnam	2297.93	540	4.25
St Johns	2350.11	540	4.35

July & August 2013 & June 2014 Summer allocations (effective 07/01/13)

County Name	Rate based on FTE	Program hours	Hourly rate
Baker	1979.81	300	6.59
Bradford	1970.49	300	6.56
Clay	2012.83	300	6.70
Nassau	2006.35	300	6.68
Putnam	1951.65	300	6.50
St Johns	1995.61	300	6.65

2013-14 School Year allocations (effective 07/01/13)

County Name	Rate based on FTE	Program hours	Hourly rate
Baker	2328.67	540	4.31
Bradford	2317.71	540	4.29
Clay	2367.51	540	4.38
Nassau	2359.88	540	4.37
Putnam	2295.54	540	4.25
St Johns	2347.26	540	4.34

When do we receive our VPK payment each month? VPK payments/reimbursements are made on or before the first of every month, however if funds are received earlier ECS will make payment upon receipt.

How many holidays are reimbursed? Since VPK payments are based on actual days attended, holidays are not reimbursable.

How are advanced payments calculated? Advance payments (formerly known as prepayments) will be paid at 95% of the hourly rate of the anticipated monthly payment for each child, not 100%.

The 95% is calculated by multiplying your county's VPK allocation by 95%.

FOR EXAMPLE

XYZ Learning Center's county VPK allocation is \$4.00,
their Advance Payment would be calculated at \$3.80.

XYZ Learning Center has 4 VPK children

Has a 3 hours per day VPK program

Calendar shows 20 VPK days for October

Their Advance Payment for October would be \$912

$20 \text{ (VPK days)} \times 3 \text{ (VPK hours/day)} = 60 \text{ (total VPK hours for October)}$

$60 \times \$3.80 \text{ (95\% of normal VPK allocation)} \times 4 \text{ children} = \912

If all children had perfect attendance for October XYZ's actual payment would be \$960.

$60 \text{ (total VPK hours for October)} \times \$4.00 \text{ (actual VPK allocation)} \times 4 \text{ children} = \960

XYZ would receive the \$48 with their December Advanced Payment.

$\$960 \text{ (actual payment)} - \$912 \text{ (Advance Payment)} = \48

The '13-'14 School Year Advance Payment allocations for each county served by ECS are as follows:

Putnam: $\$4.25 \times 95\% = \4.04

St Johns: $\$4.35 \times 95\% = \4.13

Clay: $\$4.38 \times 95\% = \4.16

Nassau: $\$4.37 \times 95\% = \4.15

Baker: $\$4.31 \times 95\% = \4.09

Bradford: $\$4.29 \times 95\% = \4.08

What if our program is not approved by the advance payment deadline? If your program is not approved by the advanced payment deadline you will NOT receive an advanced payment for that month. Instead your program will be paid based on a child's actual attendance as reflected in your VPK attendance rosters.

What happens if we do not have any/all of our completed original child enrollment paperwork (e.g. VPK Certificates of Eligibility (COE) and/or Pilot Project paperwork) in your office by the advance payment deadline? If you do not have at least 4 completed VPK COEs in our office by the deadline you will NOT receive an advanced payment for those children. Instead you will be paid for a child’s actual attendance as reflected in your VPK attendance rosters.

What does “Opting out of the advance payment” mean and is it required? Opting out of the VPK advanced payment process is *completely voluntary*. Opting out of the advanced payment means that you do not receive an advanced payment for a child, instead you will only be paid for days that a child actually spends in your program. Once payment has started, this option cannot be changed.

When is the advance payment reconciled? The advance payment is reconciled after we process your attendance rosters each month and any reconciliation is added or subtracted from your next advance payment. Once payment has started, this option cannot be changed.

Advance Payment → Rosters Processed → Advance Payment made +/- reconciliation from rosters
(Notice that there is a month in between the advance & reconciliation needed for processing & invoicing)

Month class is held	Advance Payment made	Rosters processed & invoiced	Reconciled against Advance
August	Before the 1 st day of class	September	October
September	Before Sept 1 st	October	November
October	Before Oct 1 st	November	December
November	Before Nov 1 st	December	January
December	Before Dec 1 st	January	February
January	Before Jan 1 st	February	March
February	Before Feb 1 st	March	April
March	Before March 1 st	April	May
April	Before April 1 st	May	June
May	Before May 1 st	June	July
June	Before June 1 st	July	August
July	Before July 1 st	August	September

For example:

Episcopal Family Child Care Home (program start date 08/24/10)
 Total of August Advance = \$2,000 (received 08/23/10)
 August rosters due & processed = September 2, 2010
 August rosters show provider is due an additional \$150
 Total of October Advance = \$3,000

Total October payment = \$3,150 (October Advance + August reconciliation & made before Oct 1st)

Episcopal Children’s Services pays providers in accordance with state requirements. Please note that the Office of Early Learning may update its payment policy at any time. If a change should occur, we will notify you immediately. We understand that the VPK payment process can be confusing. Please contact the VPK Department if further explanation is needed.

If we choose to opt out of the advanced payment process, how will we be paid? You will still receive your actual payments on or before the first of every month. However, your August payment will be made before October 1st; your September payment will be made before November 1st, etc.

Month class is held	Rosters processed & invoiced	Payment received
August	September	Before October 1 st
September	October	Before November 1 st
October	November	Before December 1 st
November	December	Before January 1 st
December	January	Before February 1 st
January	February	Before March 1 st
February	March	Before April 1 st
March	April	Before May 1 st
April	May	Before June 1 st
May	June	Before July 1 st
June	July	Before August 1 st
July	August	Before September 1 st

What is included with my payment information? Each Final Provider Reimbursement Report (*see example on the next page*) will be mailed out after the completed attendance rosters are processed, usually on or before the 3rd Monday of every month. This report explains the actual payment made for each child for the month and any adjustments for prior periods.

Example (*see the Final Provider Reimbursement Report on the next page*)

Episcopal Family Child Care Home’s January actual is calculated by processing the January attendance roster and any corrections submitted from November & December.

- This is considered an actual amount, because it is what should have been paid based on January’s enrollment & attendance.
- The amount can vary from your advance payment amount if a child terminates from your program, a child’s absences required monthly 80:20 adjustments, or if corrections from November or December are included.
- In this example, the January roster indicated that three children required 80:20 adjustments. If there were adjustments for previous months, additional reports with different “child care for period” would be included.

Sample Final Provider Reimbursement Report

Vendor #: ECSPCCH
 Episcopal Family Child Care Home

EPISCOPAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES - VPK
 8443 BAYMEADOWS RD, SUITE 100
 JACKSONVILLE, FL 32256
 Final Provider Reimbursement Report

This report is mailed out to providers on or before the 5th Monday of every month. This provider would have received this report after January 18, 2010.

FL ** GS CENTER, SUBCONT ** VOLUNTARY PRE-K (VPK) Reporting Period: 01/01/2010 - 01/31/2010

Class ID	Child	Family Size/Income	Eligibility Activity	Case Level	Days Absent	Days Reimbursed	Provider Rate	Gold Seal Rate	Parent Fee	Gross Reimb.	Gold Seal Cost	Less Fees	Net Reimb.
Child Care For Period: 01/01/2010 - 01/31/2010 — <u>January Actual</u>													
AF09 XXXX-XX-	Smith, Johnny		VOLUNTARY PRE-K	PR4	0	4	HR Days 0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
				PR4	12	12	FEE Hours 4.70	0.00	0.00	56.40	0.00	0.00	56.40
				PR5	4	14	HR Days .00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
				PR4	42	42	FEE Hours 4.70	0.00	0.00	197.40	0.00	0.00	197.40
				PR4	11	18	HR Days 0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
				PR4	18	18	FEE Hours 4.70	0.00	0.00	253.80	0.00	0.00	253.80
				PR5	0	18	HR Days .00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
				PR5	54	54	FEE Hours 4.70	0.00	0.00	253.80	0.00	0.00	253.80
				PR5	5	18	HR Days .00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
				PR5	54	54	FEE Hours 4.70	0.00	0.00	253.80	0.00	0.00	253.80
				PR4	0	18	HR Days .00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
				PR4	54	54	FEE Hours 4.70	0.00	0.00	253.80	0.00	0.00	253.80
Classroom AF09 Totals: 20 90 90 HR Days 270 HR Hours													
TOTALS FOR PERIOD: 20 90 Days = 78 days x 5 kids 1269.00 0.00 0.00 1269.00													
78 days x 5 kids x 5 hours per day = 270 Hours													

Vendor #: ECSFCCH
 Episcopal Family Child Care Home
 ** GS CENTER, SUBCONT **
 EPISCOPAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES - VPK
 8443 BAYMEADOWS RD, SUITE 100
 JACKSONVILLE, FL 32256
 Final Provider Reimbursement Report

Reporting Period: 01/01/2010 - 01/31/2010

==> Adjustments For Period: 01/01/2010 - 01/31/2010 <==

Class ID	Child	Family Size/Income	Eligibility Activity	Care Level	Days Absent	Days Reimbursed	Provider Rate	Gold Seal Rate	Parent Fee	Gross Reimb.	Gold Seal Cost	Less Fees	Net Reimb.
AF09 XXXX-XX		2 0	VOLUNTARY PRE-K	PR5	0	0	.00	.00	.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Smith, Johnny		Adjustment Reason MONTHLY 80/20 VPK ATTENDANCE ADJUSTMENT		-1.5	4.70	.00	.00	.00	-7.05	0.00	0.00	-7.05
AF09 XXXX-XX		3 0	VOLUNTARY PRE-K	PR5	0	0	.00	.00	.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Smith, David		Adjustment Reason MONTHLY 80/20 VPK ATTENDANCE ADJUSTMENT		-27.75	4.70	.00	.00	.00	-130.43	0.00	0.00	-130.43
AF09 XXXX-XX		2 0	VOLUNTARY PRE-K	PR5	0	0	.00	.00	.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Jones, Nicole		Adjustment Reason MONTHLY 80/20 VPK ATTENDANCE ADJUSTMENT		-5.25	4.70	.00	.00	.00	-24.68	0.00	0.00	-24.68
Nicole's January 80/20 Attendance Calculation Classroom AF09 Totals: 0 0 HR Days 0.00 -162.16 0 0 HR Hours -34.5 TOTALS FOR PERIOD: 0 0 Days 0 Days -34.5 Hours ALL PERIODS: 20 90 Days 235.5 Hours Total January hours Nicole attended: 39 (13 days x 3 hours per day) Nicole's total hours absent: 15 (5 days x 3 hours per day) Allowable hours paid: 39 hours / 8 = 48.75 hrs 54 hours - 48.75 hours = 5.25 hours that could not be paid for Nicole for January													
										0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
										-162.16	0.00	0.00	-162.16
										-162.16	0.00	0.00	-162.16
										1106.84	0.00	0.00	1106.84

What is the 80:20 attendance rule? Florida law mandates that no more than 20% of the total payment to a VPK program on behalf of a child be for absences. This means that in those cases where a child's absences do not exceed 20% of the days attended, you will receive payment for all of the days the child is absent from your program.

- ❖ A child is considered to have attended a whole day of VPK if they attend any part of the day.
- ❖ Payment calculation does NOT include days before a child's first day of attendance in VPK or days after a child's last day of attendance in VPK.
- ❖ Absences hours paid are based on how many hours a child attends a VPK program.
- ❖ Absences can be for any reason (no notes are collected or needed)

When & how is the 80:20 calculated? The 80:20 attendance calculations are applied monthly and at the end of each VPK class and is calculated using the below formula:

$$\text{Time attended} / 0.8 = \text{total hours to be paid to provider}^*$$

The total hours to be paid to a provider cannot exceed the instructional hours established for that program (i.e., cannot be greater than 540 hours for the school year or 300 hours for the summer program).

Example of monthly reconciliation calculation

(This example uses *Nicole Jones* information in the above *Final Provider Reimbursement Report*)

Episcopal Family Child Care Home
VPK hours per day: 3
Provider's instructional days in January: 18
Provider's total instructional hours in January: 54 (18 days x 3 hours)
Total hours Nicole was absent in January: 15 (5 days x 3 hours)
Total January hours Nicole attended: 39 (13 days x 3 hours)
Allowable hours paid: $39 / .8 = 48.75$ hours

$54 \text{ hours} - 48.75 \text{ hours} = 5.25 \text{ hours}$ that could not be paid for Nicole in January

You will notice that the 1st entry on the January Final Provider Reimbursement Report for Nicole shows her as receiving payment for the full 54 hours for January and a second entry/adjustments adjust the -5.25 hours not payable in January.

In the above example 3 children had monthly 80:20 adjustments (see page 14) for January. If, at the end of this VPK class, each child's absences did not exceed 20%, the provider will receive payment for the adjustments above. These payments will be detailed in your Final Provider Reimbursement Report with the reason code: YEARLY 80:20 ATTENDANCE ADJUSTMENT FOR [applicable month].

Why did OEL choose the formula it did for calculating allowable payments? OEL had to create a formula that would ensure each child's total payment was in compliance with the 80% attendance to 20% absence ratio required in statute. Based on discussions with multiple partners and analysis of existing VPK attendance and absence data, OEL determined that this formula would accurately implement the language the Legislature passed.

Will we still be paid for 20% of absences of 540 hours if a child does not start on my 1st day of VPK and/or does not attend the last day of our VPK program? No for two reasons, the first being that we are not able to pay for any days before a child's first date of attendance or after their last date of attendance. Secondly, we are only able to pay for 20% of absences of a child's attendance in your program. If a child only attends 300 hours at your program, only 20% of absences of 300 hours is payable.

Are we allowed to charge a parent for excessive absences (i.e. absences over the 20%)? No, VPK policy states that providers may not require payment of a fee or charge for services provided for a child enrolled in the VPK during a period reported for funding purposes. Charging parents for absence days in excess of the VPK attendance rule or those absence days permitted by the provider's attendance policy per month is not permissible.

If we do not get correctly reimbursed for a child, what do we do? Complete a Payment Correction Request form (found on our website) and submit it to the VPK Department. The VPK Department will research the request and inform you, in writing, of their findings. All payment correction requests must be submitted in writing to ECS *within 60 days of the original due date of the roster*.

If your payment correction is received by the second business day of the month, then we will process it with that month's rosters.

- If the payment correction request is payable, then the money will be included with your next payment and you will receive a Final Payment Detail for the item.
- If the payment correction request is NOT payable; you will receive a denied reimbursement letter explaining why ECS could not make the correct at that time. If you feel that the payment correction request was incorrectly denied please contact the VPK Department for further information.

What is the VPK Provider Verification Process and when does it happen? Per OEL policy, every VPK provider must verify the annual cumulative attendance of each child enrolled in their VPK program, which certifies the paid hours of attendance of each child enrolled for the program year. ECS may NOT pay any VPK provider their final payment of the program until this final verification is received.

The Provider Verification reports will be sent out after we process your final month's attendance rosters. The timeline for the 2013-2014 program year is:

Last month of VPK	Month your last rosters will be processed in	Provider Verification Reports will be sent out	Reports due back to ECS
May	June	On or before June 16 th	On or before June 30 th
June	July	On or before July 14 th	On or before July 31 st
July (for Summer providers only)	August	On or before August 18 th	On or before August 29 th
August (for Summer providers only)	September	On or before September 15 th	On or before September 30 th

Please also note that if you fail to notify ECS of any errors contained on the VPK Provider Verification Report, we are under no obligation to accept changes made to the KRR website during their Provider Verification Process.

Why do we have to verify all our children at the end of every year? Each child's attendance and how they are paid throughout the year is how we track whether or not they will count towards your Kindergarten Readiness Rate (KRR). Please see KRR section below for more information.

ECS strongly recommends that you reconcile your VPK payments each month when you receive Final Provider Reimbursement Reports.

Child Enrollments/Terminations/Transfers

Are we allowed to charge parents any additional fees for the VPK program?

Providers are not allowed to charge *ANY* additional fees for the VPK program. This includes, but is not limited to, supply fees, registration fees, enrichment activities, etc. A provider may choose to charge for transportation, but the transportation of children cannot be included in the VPK program hours.

Providers are able to ask for supply donations but you are not allowed to require that parents pay a supply fee or bring supplies to VPK.

Are we allowed to require parents to enroll in wrap-around services as a condition of enrollment or continued enrollment in VPK? No, a provider may not require a parent to enroll their child in wrap-around services as a condition of enrollment or continued enrollment in VPK.

What do we tell a parent that would like to enroll in VPK? Please direct all parents interested in VPK to our [VPK Department at \(800\) 238-3463](#). We will be able to inform the parent of all the necessary documentation and enrollment dates.

We have a parent of a five year old, who does not feel that their child is ready for kindergarten; is this child eligible for VPK? No, the law does not allow flexibility in the determination of age. When the child becomes eligible for kindergarten, or is admitted into kindergarten the child is no longer eligible for VPK funding. Likewise, if a child has not turned four years of age by September 1st of that school year, then that child is not eligible for VPK during the school year or summer program that immediately follows.

If a child was born between September 2, 2008 and September 1, 2009, they are eligible to participate in either the 2013 -2014 School Year Program (540 hours) or the 2014 Summer program(300 hours).

If a child was born between September 2, 2009 and September 1, 2010, they are eligible to participate in either the 2014 -2015 School Year Program (540 hours) or the 2015 Summer program(300 hours).

If a child was born between September 2, 2010 and September 1, 2011, they are eligible to participate in either the 2015 -2016 School Year Program (540 hours) or the 2016 Summer program(300 hours).

That being said, just because the child is not eligible for VPK funding does not mean that they cannot attend your program on a private pay basis. OEL policy does allow for providers to have blended VPK classrooms (classrooms that contain both VPK & Non-VPK children), however the child will still count towards your total VPK ratio.

How do we obtain a confirmation number for child(ren)? Once ECS has fully approved you to be a VPK provider for that program year, you will fax and/or mail your children's original VPK certificates of eligibility (COE) to the VPK Department. When ECS has received these original completed COEs, we will be able to actually enroll those children in your VPK program and issue each child a confirmation number that is unique to that child and your program. The confirmation numbers will be sent to you (*due to confidentiality reasons we are not able to email this information to you*). We recommend that you also maintain a copy of each child's COE for your records.

Do we have to mail in all my children's original Certificates of Eligibility (COE) at the same time? No and given the early deadlines required to receive the advanced payment it is best NOT to wait. *ECS recommends that you submit the bulk of your COEs as soon as you are approved and have at least four.* This will allow us to enroll at least some children in your program and for you to receive the advance payment for them (should they be enrolled by the previously listed deadlines).

Can we still accept children in our program after the 1st day of classes? Yes, however, if a child begins your program after the 1st day of class(es), a Delayed Enrollment form must be submitted with their original VPK certificate of eligibility before they may be enrolled in your program. A child may enroll in your program if at least 10% of instructional hours remain in the year (for a 3 hour per day program that is roughly 1 month).

If a child has stopped attending our program, what do we do? Please submit a “Child Termination” form or contact the VPK Department to discuss the termination of that child. Also, please mark the roster with a “T” on the first day the child stopped attending your program.

****Note: If you dismiss a child from your VPK program for any reason you are required to inform us in writing of why the child was asked to leave & their last day of attendance.****

What happens if we dismiss a child from our VPK program? If you dismiss/terminate a child from your program you are required to notify us in writing and specify the reasons that the student was dismissed with an effective date.

We have a child that is always late, doesn’t show up, etc. Are we able to dismiss them from our program? The OEL created VPK uniform attendance policy is for payment purposes only. Parents are required to follow your attendance policy (which you are required to give them at the beginning of the VPK year). If parents are not following your attendance policy then you are able to dismiss their child from your program; however you are required to inform us in writing of the reasons for dismissal. For your convenience, ECS has created the ‘Child Termination/Withdrawal’ form (available on our website) that you can use for these types of situations.

It has come to our attention that some providers and parents have the misunderstanding that ECS terminates children from the VPK program as a result of excessive absences and non-attendance. We would like to make it clear that ECS does not terminate children from the VPK program once they are initially determined eligible. We ask that you ensure the information you provide to your parents explains this clearly.

What is the procedure for transferring a child to another classroom (within my VPK program with the same physical location)? If you transfer a child from one classroom to another the OEL-VPK 06 (Classroom Transfer Form) is required. This form can be found on the ECS web site, www.ecs4kids.org.

What is the procedure for transferring a child to another facility? If a parent would like to transfer their child, they must first contact the VPK Department, to see if this is still an option. Parents are only allowed to transfer their child one time during the program year if they meet certain criteria in accordance with Rule 6M-8.210. ECS cannot pay for any days before a VPK transfer is approved.

We have a parent that would like to transfer to our program, but they have attended VPK in another county/coalition. What do they need to do? The required procedure for a child transferring from a county/coalition not serviced by ECS is almost exactly the same as a child transferring facilities within the county/coalition. They must first contact the ECS VPK Department, to see if this is still an option. *If* transferring is still an option, and because we must retain documentation of the child’s VPK eligibility for our own records, the parent will need to complete VPK paperwork with ECS. All this will be explained to the parent when they contact ECS’ VPK Department.

What happens if our enrollment drops below four children? After the initial advance payment for a class, the provider does not violate the minimum class size if fewer than four VPK students remain enrolled for the class. However, if a VPK class is composed of four or fewer VPK students, the provider may not dismiss any student from the class unless:

1. The provider documents in writing the student's noncompliance with the applicable conduct or attendance policies of the provider AND
2. The provider submits the documentation to Episcopal Children's Services no more than three business days after the student is dismissed.

Program Details (applications, educational credentials, etc.)

What is the earliest we can submit our applications for the next program year? We can start accepting application for the coming program year every January 1st.

- We began accepting applications for the 2014-2015 program year on January 1, 2014.
- We will begin accepting applications for the 2015-2016 program year on January 1, 2015.

Due to the somewhat complex nature of the VPK application process we highly encourage providers to apply for the new year as early as possible, however we understand that is not always plausible to apply for VPK this early.

What forms must be submitted & approved prior to beginning our VPK program?

- *Original signed & completed OEL-VPK 10 with supporting documentation
- *Original signed & completed OEL-VPK 11A & B with supporting documentation
- *Original signed & completed VPK Classroom Capacity Form
- *Original signed & completed OEL-VPK 20 (Statewide Provider Agreement)
- *Completed VPK Calendar Worksheet
- *Signed VPK Provider Manual Acknowledgement form (the last page of this document)
- *Documentation of General Liability, Automobile Insurance, and Workers' Comp

To assist you in this process ECS has also created an OEL-VPK 10&11A&B checklist, which lists all required documentation & helpful hints for completing the forms correctly, this document is not required for submission.

What is a Provider Agreement? A provider agreement, OEL-VPK-20, is an agreement between the Coalition and you, the provider, agreeing to observe the policies of the Coalition & the Office of Early Learning since you are receiving funds from the OEL through the Coalition. *This must be received BEFORE we are able to begin processing your VPK applications.*

Do we have to submit a VPK application every year? Yes, VPK is voluntary for both parents and providers so the only way that ECS knows that you plan on participating is when you complete the application process *every year*. Additionally, the provider applications were created to only cover one program type (School Year or Summer) and program year.

We are a returning VPK provider do we have to submit all supporting documentation every year? If your VPK staff is all the same and nothing has changed or been updated then we can simply copy the necessary items from your previous file. We will send you a letter if any items are missing (or didn't copy clearly), expiring or if you are approved.

How long will it take for us to become an approved VPK provider? How early should we submit our application? VPK policy requires that ECS respond to every VPK application within 30 calendar dates of receipt. In this response you will be informed if you are approved to offer VPK OR if any additional information is required. Additionally, ECS requires that VPK providers be fully approved *at least* 2 weeks before their anticipated start date. There are a number of variables that go into approving a VPK program and the earlier you submit your paperwork the better. It is NOT uncommon for the whole approval process, submission to approval, to take 6 weeks or more.

We do not have all the supporting documentation to accompany our OEL-VPK 10 and/or 11A&B, should we wait until we have everything before submitting our paperwork? You can, but it is not required or advisable especially if you are new to the VPK program. ECS will not be able to approve your VPK program until all required documentation is received but given the time necessary to process applications it is best to submit your applications & the supporting documentation that you do have as early as possible.

Our program will not be open/ready to start VPK until the middle of the year, is this too late to do VPK? It is almost never too late in the year to become a VPK provider. While a majority of VPK providers begin their program around the public school start dates, this is not required. As long as you are approved at least 2 weeks before your anticipated start date and are able to include the 540 hours before June 30th, you can begin your program at any time.

Our program has already started and we would like to split our 2 classes of 18 children each to 3 classes of 10 children each. Can we still do that?

Changing from 2 classes of 18 to 3 classes of 10 (or any similar combination) would mean that you would have to open a 'new' VPK classroom (regardless of whether the teacher and/or student have been with your program). The 'new' classroom could not start until it has been approved by ECS and must contain a new 540 hour calendar (for the school year program) or 300 hour calendar (for the summer program).

Are we able to add a VPK classroom in the middle of the year? Yes, you may start a new VPK classroom at just about any time during the program year. Just remember that the start date cannot be before the class is approved and it must contain the necessary 540 hours (for the school year program) or 300 hours (for the summer program).

What happens if we are approved for a VPK classroom but it never begins? This is not a problem, you will simply need to complete the 'VPK Classroom Closure form' found on the ECS website and submit it to the VPK Department.

How do we inform you of changes to our VPK program? Any changes made to your VPK program *must* be immediately reported to ECS along with the proper updated forms & supporting documentation. If you have any questions about the proper procedure or what needs to be submitted please contact the VPK Department.

A VPK Instructor Change Form with supporting documentation must be submitted if there is a change to instructor, assistant instructor, or any other information captured on the OEL-VPK 11A.

If there is a change in director then an OEL-VPK 10 (provider program application), OEL-VPK 11A&B (classroom applications), OEL-VPK 20 (Statewide Provider Agreement) and ECS VPK Provider Manual Acknowledgment form must be completed.

Important note: Once your program has started you may NOT be able to make changes to your Classroom hours or Holiday schedule.

What is the teacher-to-student ratio for the school year program? For the summer program? Each VPK class must have a minimum of 4 VPK children to begin (school year & summer). There must be at least 1 credentialed instructor for every 11 children and a credential instructor & assistant if there are 12-20 children (per Senate Bill 2120). No school year classrooms may contain more than 20 children (VPK & Non-VPK).

For the summer program there must be at least 1 credentialed instructor for every 12 children. No summer classrooms may contain more than 12 children (VPK & Non-VPK).

Can I have blended classroom (VPK & Non-VPK children)? Yes, a VPK provider may organize a VPK class as a blended class, instructing children enrolled in the VPK program together with children not enrolled in the program. However the following requirements must be met:

- b. There must be at least 4 VPK children to start the classroom
- c. All children will be counted towards your total ratio (1:11 or 2:20 for the school year program and 1:12 for the summer program)
- d. The class may not be organized in such a way that prevents you from implementing a developmentally appropriate curriculum.

Are we able to instruct two of our VPK classes as one group? Yes, VPK policy does allow for you to instruct two or more VPK classes as one group in a single classroom, however each class must maintain proper ratios at all times. This rule also does NOT allow a provider to exceed a teacher-to-student ratio, square footage per child, licensing requirements or any other state or local requirements.

What are the insurance requirements? Effective July 1, 2013 with the passing of HB 7165, private providers are required to submit documentation of their general liability insurance, automobile insurance (if pre-k children are transported), and workers' comp (where required by law). Liability insurance must meet the following requirements:

- *Coverage/Occurrence must be at least \$100,000
- *General Aggregate Coverage must be at least \$300,000
- *Coalition as an Additional Insured **AND** Certificate holder
ELC of North Florida
8443 Baymeadows Road, Suite 1
Jacksonville, FL 32256

****Note: If you do not transport pre-k children and/or are not required to carry workers' comp, please request attachment 1 from the VPK Department.****

What is the VPK endorsement on my director's credential and do I need it? At this time, if your director's credential was issued in 2007 or later, then you are required to have the VPK endorsement on your director's credential. To receive the VPK endorsement on your director's credentials you will need to:

1. Complete the Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors (located on the DCF training website)
2. Complete the VPK Specific Competencies, also known as the VPK Director's Credential Endorsement Course (located on the DCF training website)
3. Complete the Standards or Four Year Olds, also known as Standards 2011 (a list of this training can be found on www.myflorida.com/childcare).
4. Follow the instructions on the DCF training web site (<http://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/child-care/director-credential>) for submitting the application and documentation for getting the endorsement added to your credential.

Simply taking the VPK Director's Credential Endorsement course does NOT mean that your director's credential is VPK endorsed. You must complete all the steps listed above.

Do directors need a current Level II background clearance? Yes, All VPK staff including directors will be required to have current Level II background clearances (as defined by the Office of Early Learning).

What is a Level II background clearance as defined by the Office of Early Learning and who is required to have it? The Level II includes the following:

- ✓ FDLE background clearance (dated within the last five years) **AND**
- ✓ FBI background clearance (dated within the last five years) **AND**
- ✓ DCF Affidavit of Good Moral Character

ALL VPK staff are required to have the completed Level II background screenings before they can be in the VPK classroom.

What are the educational requirements for a lead instructor and assistant for the School Year program? There are no educational requirements for an assistant VPK instructor; however a lead VPK instructor must have one of the following:

- NECC (aka National CDA) or FCCPC (aka Florida Child Care Professional Certificate, Birth-Five)**

AND

Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors & Standards for Four Year Olds

OR (one of the following)

- A bachelor's or higher degree in early childhood education, prekindergarten or primary education, preschool education, or family and consumer science, **OR**
- A bachelor's or higher degree in elementary education, **if the prekindergarten instructor has been certified to teach children any age from birth through 6th grade, regardless of whether the instructor's educator certificate is current, OR**
- An associate's or higher degree in child development, **OR**
- An associate's or higher degree in an unrelated field, at least 6 credit hours in early childhood education or child development, and at least 480 hours of experience in teaching or providing child care services for children any age from birth through 8 years of age, **OR**
- An educational credential approved by the DOE as being equivalent to or greater than an educational credential described above.

***NECC & FCCPC are good for five years from the issue dates unless otherwise noted; some certificates do expire after three years. We can accept a copy of DCF staff verifications for NECC & FCCPC only if expiration dates are listed. School Age FCCPC is not acceptable; it must be Birth-Five.*

If any of the Level II or educational credential expires before your program end date, you must send in a renewal plan before your program and/or changes can be approved.

For example: Jill Doe is applying to be a VPK provider in the 2010-11 VPK program year. Her program will run 08/23/10-06/14/11 and Jill's VPK teacher's FBI clearance is set to expire on 10/05/10 A renewal plan must be submitted to ECS before approval. Template renewal plans are available upon request.

What qualifies a lead instructor and assistant for the Summer program? There are no educational requirements for an assistant VPK instructor; however a lead VPK instructor must have one of the following:

- A **valid** Florida Educator Certificate **OR**
- A bachelor's or higher degree in early childhood education, prekindergarten or primary education, preschool education, or family and consumer science, **OR**
- A bachelor's or higher degree in elementary education, if the prekindergarten instructor has been certified to teach children any age from birth through 6th grade, regardless of whether the instructor's educator certificate is current.

Our program uses VECHS for obtaining background clearances; can we use these for VPK?

No, VPK is NOT able to accept any VECHS (Volunteer and Employee Background Checks) background clearances. VECHS FBI results do not go through DCF and these results will not include seals & expunged records or hot files (hot files show if the person is wanted, has an injunction, or is on probation).

How do we get out VPK staff FDLE/FBI clearances? You would use the Live Scan method.

Live Scan is an inkless process of capturing digital images of fingerprints and palm prints and electronically transmitting them to FDLE & FBI. More information, including vendors, can be found at <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/admin/backgroundscreening/>.

Can we use another program's ORI number for Live Scan? No, programs are not able to share ORI numbers. ECS previously understood that ORI numbers could be shared between non-public school locations; however DCF has confirmed that each provider must have their own ORI number.

We hired a VPK instructor that was working for the local public school district. Can we use their school district background clearances? No, once employment has been terminated with the school district their background clearances are no longer valid. You will need to complete new background clearances for these individuals.

Do we have to follow our county's public school calendar? No, you are required to create your own VPK schedule that also:

- Meets the 540 School Year/300 Summer Instructional hours requirement
- Start date is:
 - i. School Year: Not more than 14 days before Labor Day or before your county's uniform start date, whichever is earlier.
 - ii. Summer: Not before May 1st
- End date is:
 - i. School Year: On or before June 30th
 - ii. Summer: Not on or after your county's public school uniform start date for the next regular program year.
- The total VPK days times VPK hours must equal exactly 540 (or 300 for the Summer program) hours and the total number of VPK days must divide equally by 540 (or 300 for the Summer program).

Program Monitoring

How often will our VPK program be monitored? ECS will conduct an on-site monitoring at least once each program year per program type (e.g. if you offer the school year & summer program you will have a monitoring during each session). The monitoring visit will be unannounced; however for security purposes we will notify you (either by phone or e-mail) that we will be visiting your program in the coming weeks.

ECS is also monitored by its contractor (the Early Learning Coalition of North Florida) several times during each fiscal year to ensure accurate child/provider eligibility has been established and accurate payments have been made. Because of this, ECS may also request your attendance documentation at various times throughout the year.

What can we expect during our VPK monitoring? Your monitoring is broken up into two different portions, the on-site monitoring visit and the attendance monitoring portion.

During the on-site visit we will:

- A. Request COPIES of:
 - i. Parental Choice Certificates for specific children (*these children are randomly selected by ECS*)
 - ii. The selected children's sign in/out sheets (*if you are using the short form*)
 - iii. Your VPK attendance policy
- B. Observe in your VPK classroom(s). We are looking to see:
 - i. That the teachers in your classroom(s) match the ECS approved applications
 - ii. That the class(s) are within proper VPK ratio
 - iii. That your room meets the VPK Standards requirement

Will we receive a summary/report of the monitoring? Yes, after the on-site monitoring we will process the collected information and send out a letter.

If there are findings, we will offer technical assistance and request a corrective action plan (on program letter head) detailing how you will correct it for the future.

What is considered a finding? A finding can include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- Your classroom being out of ratio (per VPK policy)
- Teacher changes in which ECS was not immediately notified of
- Unapproved subs in the VPK classroom
- PCC not completed properly (e.g. being signed too early or not being signed at all, boxes not being completed, not being dated by the parent, etc.)
- Not having a VPK attendance policy

A finding does not necessarily mean that ECS will require the return of funds. We realize that mistakes will/do happen and, in certain instances, do allow for a certain percentage of errors. ECS' only goal is to ensure that your program is aware of OEL's position so that no funding will be lost in the future.

What is the correct procedure for completing the Parental Choice Certificates (PCC)? All versions of the PCCs must be signed:

- ✓ By the parent/guardian with full signature and date
- ✓ On the last instructional date of the month or within the first two weeks of the new month.
- ✓ Be dated with the Month/Day/Year

It can be considered a finding if a PCC is signed too early. Signing before the end of the month means that the parent is only verifying that the child attended up until the date signed. Should an attendance discrepancy or attendance monitoring arise only dates on or before the date signed are eligible for payment.

It is not considered a finding if a PCC is signed late in the month (e.g. August's attendance is signed in late September or after). It is considered a best practice, however, and encouraged to have the PCC signed within the first two weeks of the following month at the latest as it helps to ensure accurate completion. If a PCC is signed after the following month (e.g. August's attendance is signed anytime in October or after) please note the extenuating circumstances and technical assistance will be provided.

*****PCCs should NOT be dated for the parent, this is considered a finding.*****

Helpful hints for proper completion of the Long form:

Before the parent signs the OEL-VPK 03L you must record the child's monthly attendance on the form or attach documentation to the form which shows the child's monthly attendance, we are looking for accuracy.

Helpful hints for proper completion of the short form & sign in/out sheets:

The parent/guardian's FULL signature (initials, nicknames, mom/dad, etc. are NOT acceptable signatures) is required.

Are there any tools available to us to ensure our program's compliance? Yes, in addition to contacting the VPK department, the OEL-VPK 20 (Statewide Provider Agreement), this ECS VPK Provider Manual and OEL website are excellent reference points to keep your program in compliance with all VPK policies and procedures. Familiarizing yourself with all available tools is the best way to run an excellent VPK program.

Kindergarten Readiness Rate

What is the Kindergarten Readiness Rate (KRR)? The Florida Department of Education (DOE)/State Board of Education is required by law to calculate a kindergarten readiness rate very year for each VPK provider of either the School-Year or Summer program. The VPK Kindergarten Readiness Rate measures how well a VPK provider prepares four-year-olds to be ready for kindergarten based upon Florida's VPK Education Standards. The VPK Standards describe what four-year-old children should know and be able to do by the end of the VPK experience. Kindergarten Readiness Rates as well as further information can be found on their website, <http://vpk.fldoe.org>.

What information is used to calculate the readiness rate? Your readiness rate is based on scores of children who tested ready on both the ECHOS and FAIR, substantially completed VPK (attended 70% of the total program) and who are screened upon entry into kindergarten. The screening is administered by the district public schools for all public school kindergarten students. Children who participated in VPK and attended a non-public school for kindergarten are also provided the opportunity to participate in the screening.

Will we have a chance to verify the children included in our KRR? Yes, you will have a number of opportunities to verify the children that attended your VPK program. At the end of every program year ECS will send you a VPK Provider Verification Report (*further information about the verification report can be found in the above Reimbursement section*). This report lists all the children that have attended your program for that program year and the number of hours, absences, etc. that you were paid. If the report contains any discrepancies then you will need to notify ECS immediately, so that the situation can be researched and corrected, if applicable. You will also be given an opportunity to verify your children on the Kindergarten Readiness Rate website (<http://vpk.fldoe.org>).

Please note that if you fail to notify ECS of any errors contained on the VPK Provider Verification Report, we are under no obligation to accept changes made to the KRR website.

When are the KRR posted? The exact time line of the verification process, release of rates, etc. varies each year but exact dates for the current year can be found on the KRR website (the time line is on the home page down the right hand side).

The typical timeline is:

1. ECS Provider Verification Process (May-August, depending on your program end date)
2. DOE KRR website Provider Verification process (late Fall)
3. Release of Preliminary rate (January-February)
4. Release of Final KRR (February-March)

What is a Provider on Probation (POP)? This is a VPK provider whose readiness rate does not meet the minimum rate set annually by the State Board of Education. POPs will be notified by mail and will be required to acknowledge receipt of this designation online.

We have been designated as a POP. What do we need to do now? Please visit the Kindergarten Readiness Rate website (<http://vpk.fldoe.org>) to complete the Provider Acknowledgement form and to submit an Improvement Plan.

Once the final rates are released staff will be contacting all POPs to help walk them through the process and offer any assistance the provider may require.

What is ECS grievance policy? A copy of the grievance policy can be found on the ECS website under Provider Services or by contacting ECS directly.

We have a question not addressed in this packet, who do we contact for further information? If you have a question about VPK and it is not addressed in this packet, please contact the VPK Department. This manual was created to help you as a VPK provider, so please let us know if you have any comments, suggestions, etc.

VPK Forms available at www.ecs4kids.org

Program registration forms

- OEL-VPK 10 & 11 Checklist: (created by ECS) reference tool used to assist you with completing applications, not required for approval.
- OEL-VPK 10: Provider Program Application: (created by OEL), original completed form & supporting documentation required for approval. ***
- OEL-VPK 11A&B: Provider Classroom Applications: (created by OEL), original completed form & supporting documentation required for approval. ***
- VPK Classroom Capacity Form: (created by ECS), original completed form should be submitted with initial provider application. This form should also be submitted during the program year if the provider needs to updated their capacity for a given classroom. ***
- OEL-VPK 20: Statewide Provider Agreement: (created by OEL), original completed form required for approval. ***
- ECS VPK Provider Manual including the Acknowledgment form: (created by ECS), manual created to assist VPK providers with policies and procedures, original form not required for submission
- 2014-15 Provider Agreement-Amendment 1: Opt out of prepayment (created by ECS), original completed form required if you use to opt out of the prepayment process. ***
- 2014-15 Provider Agreement Attachment 1: (created by ECS) reference tool created to accompany the Statewide Provider Agreement, should be included with the agreement.
- 2014-15 Provider Agreement Attachment 2: (created by ECS) reference tool created to accompany the Statewide Provider Agreement, should be included with the agreement if applicable.
- 2014-15 VPK School Year Calendar Worksheet (created by ECS): used to inform ECS of your non-instructional days, original not required for submission.
- VPK Calendar Worksheet (created by ECS): used to inform ECS of your non-instructional days, original not required for submission.
- VPK Instructor Change Form (created by ECS): used to inform ECS of any permanent instructor changes that need to be made with applicable documentation. Changes must be approved by ECS prior to being used. ***
- Substitute Instructor Form (created by ECS): used to inform ECS of substitutes that may be used with applicable documentation. Substitutes must be approved by ECS prior to being used.

Attendance/Reimbursement forms

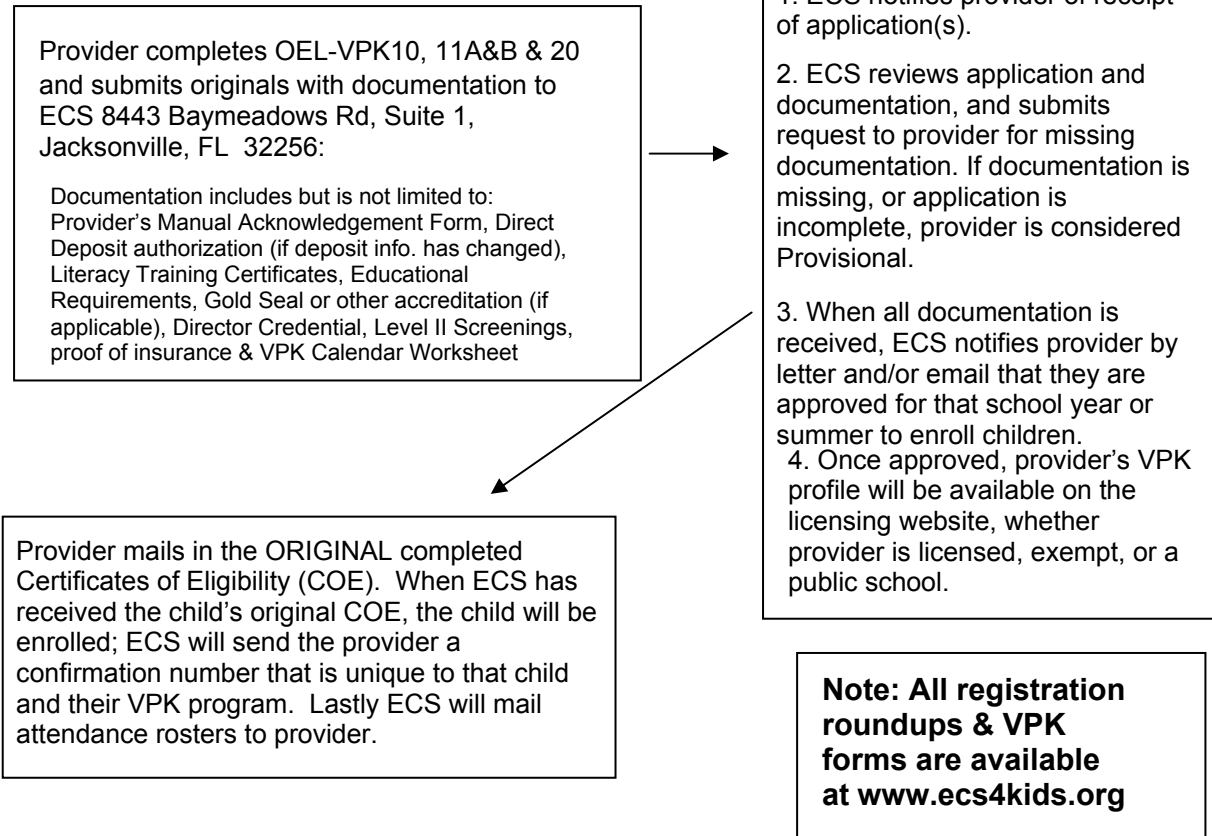
- Blank Student Attendance/Parental Choice Certificate: Short form (created by OEL) Form sent to you at the beginning of every year that parents used to verify their child's attendance at the end of every month. You are required to keep the original on file and a copy may be requested by ECS at any time.
- Blank Student Attendance/Parental Choice Certificate: Long form (created by OEL) Form sent to you every month with your rosters that parents used to verify their child's attendance at the end of every month. You are required to keep the original on file and a copy may be requested by ECS at any time.
- Blank Attendance roster (created by ECS): used by provider if you mistakenly left a child off your roster, original required for submission. ***
- VPK Payment Correction Request (created by ECS): used if you believe you were paid incorrectly for a child, original not required for submission.

Enrollment/Transfer/Termination forms

- Delayed Enrollment form (created by OEL): original completed form required for any child that does NOT begin VPK on your first day. ***
- VPK Child Termination form (created by ECS): to be used to inform us of any child terminations, original not required for submission.

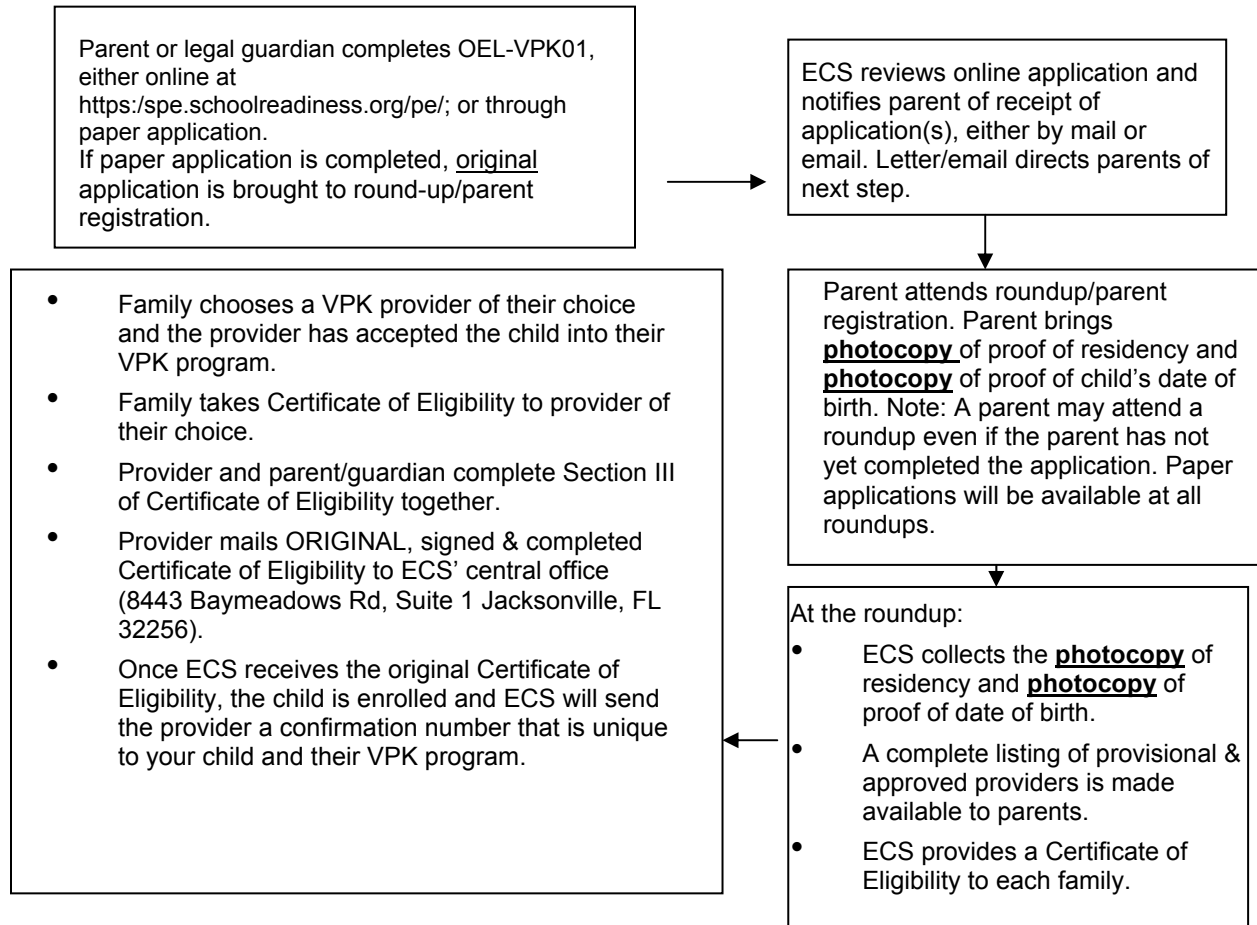
*** Denotes items where the ORIGINAL documents ARE REQUIRED for submission to ECS

VPK Provider Application Process



Revised by ECS 03.02.10

VPK Child Enrollment Process



ACCEPTABLE PHOTOCOPIES OF PROOF OF AGE & RESIDENCY FOR CHILDREN
APPLYING FOR VPK

*****NOTE:** OEL VPK Policy requires that the Parent/Guardian with whom the child LIVES be the one to complete the necessary VPK paperwork. If you are not the child's parent, then a PHOTOCOPY of proof of Guardianship is also required***

What PHOTOCOPY of proof of age should I bring?

We are allowed to accept as Date of Birth (DOB) documentation:

- A duly attested transcript of the child's birth record (birth certificate) Note: birth certificate must be an official document
- A duly attested transcript of a certificate of baptism or other religious record accompanied by an affidavit sworn to by the parent.
- A life insurance policy on the child that has been in force for at least 2 years.
- A passport or certificate of arrival in the United States showing the age of the child.
- An immunization record indicating the date of birth, signed by a public health officer or by a licensed practicing physician.
- A valid military dependent identification card
- If none of the evidential documents listed above can be produced, an affidavit of age sworn to by the parent, accompanied by a certificate of age signed by a public health officer or by a licensed practicing physician which states that the physician has examined the child and believes that the age as stated in the affidavit is substantially correct may be accepted.

What PHOTOCOPY of proof of CURRENT PHYSICAL residence should I bring?

The document must:

1. Include the parent's name

2. Include the *parent's current physical address*

3. MATCH the address listed on the VPK application

4. NOT be a Post Office Box

5. Be one of the items listed below

- Recent/current (within 60 days of child application completion) utility bills (if mailed to a P.O. Box, it will normally also contain the service address, if NO service address is listed then we are NOT able to accept it as proof of current physical residency)

NOT Acceptable: Cell phone, credit card of any kind, doctor's bill, bank statement, mortgage statements/closing papers, anything NOT in the parent's name or that doesn't list a service address.

Acceptable: Electric, water, sewage, gas, cable, satellite or land line phone bills in the parent's name with the service address listed.

- Pay stub (must be within 60 days of child application completion)
- Residential rental agreement or receipt from rental payment (must be current and not expired)
- *Current* Government documents (e.g. FL ID / Driver's License or property tax assessment showing homestead exemption)
- Military order showing that the child's parent is a service member in the US Armed Forces and is assigned to duty in Florida when the child attends the VPK program (e.g., permanent change of station)
- **If none of the evidential documents listed above can be produced, an affidavit of residency sworn to by the parent, accompanied by a letter from a landlord or property owner which confirms that the child resides at the address shown in the affidavit may be accepted.** If none of the evidential documents listed above can be produced for a homeless child, a letter from a homeless shelter or affidavit sworn to by the child's parent may be accepted to document residency showing that the child is homeless and resides in Florida.

***** COPY MACHINES MAY NOT BE PROVIDED AT ROUND-UPS/PARENT REGISTRATIONS*****

Useful Websites

Episcopal Children's Services:

www.ecs4kids.org

(Local parent & provider VPK information/forms, as well as information on other services we offer)

Early Learning Coalition of North Florida

www.elcnorthflorida.org

(The Coalition that contracts with ECS to provide various child care and early learning services in Clay, Nassau, Baker, Bradford, Putnam & St Johns counties.)

DCF Child Care Training Information Center (CCTIC): (888) 352.2842

<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/childcare/training.shtml>

(Manages exam scheduling for required training course and evaluates credential applications including but not limited to issuing the VPK director's endorsement, Florida Child Care Professional Certificates (FCCPC), director's credentials)

Department of Children & Families (DCF) Child Care Information

www.myflorida.com/childcare/

(Information pertaining to licensing, training requirements, forms & applications, etc. Clicking on "Online Courses" will take you to the "Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors", this and most other online classes are no longer free.)

<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/admin/backgroundscreening/>

(Important information regarding Level II background screening processes.)

Florida Department of Education VPK websites:

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlyLearning/>

(Important VPK information including kindergarten readiness rate, emergent literacy, performance standards, etc.)

<http://vpk.fldoe.org>

(Website listing VPK providers' Kindergarten Readiness Rates.)

Florida Office of Early Learning (OEL) website:

<http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/>

(Here you will find VPK forms & policies.)

Northeast Florida Training Calendar

www.nefltraining.org

(The consolidation of training activities from various agencies in Northeast Florida published on a quarterly basis.)

ECS VPK Provider Manual Acknowledgement Form

I, _____, hereby acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the ECS VPK Provider Manual. I will keep it on hand as a reference tool if I have any questions, and if I ever have questions that are not covered in this packet, I know that I can contact the VPK Department during regular business hours at the numbers or email addresses that were provided in the manual.

I understand that VPK policies and procedures can and will change throughout the program year and ECS will notify me of any changes as soon as possible. Because immediate notification of program changes is essential to running a successful VPK program I request that changes be sent to me at the email or fax number listed below.

Provider Signature

Date

Printed name of VPK Program

Email address

Fax Number

Email address OR Fax number are required

(Original form NOT required by ECS for submission)