

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE CIRCULAR

Date: May 3, 2024

CIRCULAR NUMBER: ELCC-2024-05

To: All funded child care centres and nursery schools

Subject: Rate Increases for Base Operating Grant / Wage Grid Supplement and 2024/25 ELCC Wage Grid - CENTRES

Effective Date: April 1 and July 1, 2024

Type:	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> All Facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Required
	<input type="checkbox"/> Procedure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Funded Centres	<input type="checkbox"/> Information Only
	<input type="checkbox"/> Licensing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Funded Nursery School	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Financial	<input type="checkbox"/> Family/Group Homes	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Subsidy		

This circular is to advise all funded early learning and child care (ELCC) centres (including nursery schools) about:

- 1) An increase to the base operating grant rates effective April 1, 2024.
- 2) An increase to Wage Grid Supplement being applied to the overall revenue effective July 1, 2024 and the next steps for implementing the 2024/25 ELCC Wage Grid (see Appendix A).

Manitoba and Canada recognize that access to child care is a priority for Manitoba families. Investing in the growth and stability of the ELCC workforce is critical to increasing access to more affordable, high-quality child care spaces across the province.

As announced on May 3, 2024, Manitoba and Canada are providing a total funding contribution of \$8.97 million to support a 5 percent increase to the base operating grant amount effective April 1, 2024 and another \$10.9 million in total funding to support an increase to the Wage Grid Supplement effective July 1, 2024 for all funded infant, preschool, school age and nursery school spaces. This increase provides a 2.75 percent increase to the overall revenue (Operating Grant, Reduced Parent Fee Revenue Grant and parent fees) and supports a 2.75 percent increase to the *Starting Point* and *Target* wages on the Wage Grid.

The Wage Grid is a key initiative as part of a larger workforce strategy. The increases to the ELCC Wage Grid are designed to improve recruitment and retention efforts for a qualified child care workforce, thereby supporting our commitment to expand the system by 23,000 spaces by 2026.

To further this work, KPMG has been contracted to support the department in developing a more comprehensive framework for wages and benefits in the future, which will include engagement with stakeholders in the ELCC sector.

The annual operating grant rates are made up of the base operating grant amount and the Wage Grid Supplement amounts:

1) Base Operating Grant Rate

A five percent increase to the base operating grant rates will be provided retroactively to April 1, 2024. It is targeted for use towards operational expenses, administrative costs and programming support, and will help support the board of directors of non-profit centres and nursery schools in their efforts to balance their facility’s budget.

2) Wage Grid Supplement to the Operating Grant

Funded facilities receive a Wage Grid Supplement as additional funding included as part of their operating grant to support increased wages. The supplement increase was calculated based on the unit funding model to provide a 2.75 percentage increase to the overall revenue (Operating Grant, Reduced Parent Fee Revenue Grant and parent fees).

Effective July 1, 2024, a 2.75 percent increase will be provided as a third increase to the Wage Grid Supplement. This increase also supports a 2.75 percent increase to the *Starting Point* and *Target* wages included on the new Wage Grid. The additional funding provided as the Wage Grid Supplement is targeted to increase wages in facilities that employ staff and to increase the provider’s income in child care homes that do not employ staff.

Maximum Annual Operating Grant Rates by Space Type

(Base Operating Grant + Wage Grid Supplement = Total Operating Grant)

Annual Amount per Approved Funded Space *			
Type of Space	As of March 31, 2024	April 1, 2024 to June 30, 2024	July 1, 2024
Centres			
Infant	15,267	\$15,957	\$16,610
Preschool	6,090	\$6,344	\$6,667
School Age	2,669	\$2,769	\$2,940
Nursery School			
1 to 5 sessions per week	1,778	\$1,841	\$1,966
For each additional session up to 10 per week	356	\$368	\$393

* Amounts based on 12 months of operation

ELCC Wage Grid Overview

With the aim of developing equitable and common wages across the province for each employee classification and position as outlined in Manitoba's Action Plan under the Canada-Wide Agreement, Manitoba released ELCC Wage Grids in 2022 and 2023. Wage Grid Supplements were provided and applied to operating grants to support the implementation of increased wages.

The increased Wage Grid Supplement will assist facilities in meeting or exceeding the original *Target* wages for majority of the positions/classifications, therefore, both the *Starting Point* and the *Target* wages on the 2024/25 Wage Grid have been increased by 2.75 percent to set a more ambitious goal for average wages.

The Wage Grid provides guidance to the non-profit ELCC sector in developing equitable and competitive salary scales across employee positions/classifications. As facilities operate as independent businesses, their boards of directors are responsible for establishing wages.

The Wage Grid is intended to support facilities to increase wages for staff within their own levels and steps for each position/classification on a facility's salary scale. This approach preserves the authority of boards while ensuring consistent and better wages are provided to the ELCC workforce. The levels and steps should not fall below the *Starting Point* wage and should support employees being paid on average, at or above the *Target* wage.

Next steps for Boards of Directors

As the employer, the board of directors is responsible for the development of the facility's salary scale for employees, from frontline staff to directors.

The 2024/25 ELCC Wage Grid provides a new *Starting Point* for the lowest hourly wage an employee of that position/classification should receive in a funded facility and new *Target* wages. The *Target* provides average wages for each position/classification, which facilities should be working towards over the next couple of years.

To implement the Wage Grid increase, boards of directors should:

- Review position descriptions, roles and responsibilities to account for and include positions not specified on the ELCC Wage Grid, e.g. Administrative Roles.
- Review and compare your facility's current salary scale to the hourly wages listed in hourly wage columns titled *Starting Point* and *Target* in 2024/25 Wage Grid.
- Review the increased Wage Grid Supplement being provided as part of the Operating Grant effective July 1, 2024 to confirm the increased amount of funding that is to be applied to increasing wages in your facility.
- Adjust your salary scale accordingly.
- Adjust your budget to reflect the increased operating grant revenue and increased costs for proposed staff wages.
- Review and approve your revised salary scale and budget according to your facility's bylaws, policies and procedures.
- Provide payment to employees at your facility's new salary levels effective July 1, 2024.

Reporting Requirements

The increased revenue received from the operating grant increase (Base Operating Grant increase and Wage Grid Supplement increase) and the increased expenditures for staff wages must be demonstrated in your next annual operating budget submission and your annual financial statements.

Operating Grant Payments

- The retroactive payment for the April 1 increase will be issued by the end of May 2024.
- The increase to the Wage Grid Supplement effective July 1 will be applied in advance and therefore will be included in the July 1 payment.
- The new operating grant rates will be used to calculate grant funding for centre operating budgets submitted and assessed after the mass re-assessment of grants has been implemented.

Implementation Resources

- For additional information, please review *Rate Increases for Base Operating Grant / Wage Grid Supplement and 2024/25 ELCC Wage Grid - Frequently Asked Questions* available at: https://www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/pubs/circulars/elcc_2024_05_faq.pdf.
- Register for one of the following webinars. An email invitation will be sent separately.
 - Thursday, May 16 2024, from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.
 - Thursday, May 16, 2024, from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.
- The 2024/25 Wage Grid, effective July 1, 2024 is available at: www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/students_workforce/wage_grid.html.
- Online Tool-Kit for Board of Directors - Wage Grid Implementation: www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/centres_homeproviders/centrebased_childcare/financial_management.html#toolkit.
- For a copy of circulars, FAQs or to view past webinar sessions, visit at: www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/childcare_news/current_circulars.html.
- Learn more about ELCC initiatives, and Manitoba’s action plans under the agreements with Canada at www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/actionplan.html.

If you have any further questions regarding the information in this circular, please email Child Care Information Services at cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca with the subject line “Operating Grant/Wage Grid” or call 204-945-0776 (toll free: 1-888-213-4754).

Thank you for your ongoing dedication as we work towards continued improvements to better support the ELCC workforce and to advancing the quality and responsiveness of ELCC services in Manitoba.

Early Learning and Child Care Division

Appendix A

2024/25 Early Learning and Child Care Wage Grid		
Positions/Classification	Hourly Wage	
	Starting Point	Target
Director ECE III		
151-200 Spaces	\$36.81	\$37.85
51-150 Spaces	\$33.06	\$33.43
50 Spaces or Less	\$29.75	\$30.03
Director ECE II		
151-200 Spaces	\$34.57	\$34.57
51-150 Spaces	\$31.01	\$31.42
50 Spaces or Less	\$27.90	\$28.15
Assistant Director		
ECE III	\$29.66	\$30.05
ECE II	\$26.76	\$27.02
Supervisor		
ECE III	\$28.17	\$28.43
ECE II	\$25.43	\$25.69
Frontline Staff		
ECE III	\$24.31	\$24.42
ECE II - 2 plus years experience	\$22.79	\$22.90
ECE - Entry Level	\$21.30	\$21.47
CCA (with 40-hour course)	\$17.51	\$17.64

Definitions

To see the sections of the Child Care Regulation referred to below, visit <https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/current/pdf-regs.php?reg=62/86>.

CCA (with 40-hour course): a person who has been issued a certificate as a Child Care Assistant under Categories of Certificates Section 3.1 and has completed a 40-hour course related to early childhood education, as required under Staff Qualifications Section 7(11.1) for centre employees or under Licence Application Section 22(1) (g) for family child care homes and Licence Application 35(2) (m) for group child care homes.

ECE II - Entry Level: a person who has been issued a certificate as an Early Childhood Educator (ECE) II under Categories of Certificates Section 3.1, with less than 2 years' work experience as an ECE II.

ECE II - 2+ years experience: a person who has been issued a certificate as an ECE II under Categories of Certificates Section 3.1, with more than 2 years' work experience as an ECE II.

ECE III: a person who has been issued a certificate as an ECE III under Categories of Certificates Section 3.1.