

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE CIRCULAR

Date: November 25, 2025

CIRCULAR NUMBER: ELCC-2025-05

To: All licensed child care facilities, Early Learning and Child Care Division

Subject: The Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Recruit-Back Incentive

Effective Date: November 25, 2025

Type:	☐ Policy	☒ All Facilities	☐ Action Required
	☐ Procedure	☐ Centres	☒ Information Only
	☐ Licensing	☐ Nursery Schools	
	☒ Financial	☐ Family/Group Homes	
	☐ Subsidy		

This circular is to advise all licensed early learning and child care facilities of The ECE Recruit-Back Incentive, available to support the recruitment of trained Early Childhood Educators (ECE).

The ECE Recruit-Back Incentive provides eligible ECEs with a grant of \$5,000 to return to work full-time in a Manitoba licensed non-profit early learning and child care centre or licensed home.

The ECE Recruit-Back Incentive supports Manitoba's non-profit early learning and child care facilities in recruiting passionate and skilled ECEs, incentivizing individuals that have left Manitoba's licenced early learning and child care sector to return to full-time work. Funding for The ECE Recruit-Back Incentive is provided under the Canada-Manitoba Canada-Wide ELCC Agreement.

Eligibility and Selection

The ECE Recruit-Back Incentive is available for:

- ECE II and ECE IIIs who have not worked in a Manitoba licensed non-profit early learning and child care centre or licensed home for at least two consecutive years, , and have returned, or are committed to returning on or after June 1, 2025, to full-time employment in a Manitoba licensed non-profit early learning and child care centre or licensed home (this will be verified by the employer as part of the application process).

To qualify for The ECE Recruit-Back Incentive, the applicant must also be:

- Classified as an ECE II or ECE III in Manitoba.
- Committed to working full-time for at least two consecutive years in a Manitoba licensed non-profit early learning and child care centre or licensed home after being approved for the incentive.
- A Canadian citizen or permanent resident.

To receive grant funding, eligible applicants must have their employment and start date on or after June 1, 2025 as an ECE II or ECE III verified by the employer.

The ECE Recruit-Back Incentive is designed to improve recruitment efforts for Manitoba's child care workforce and builds on recruitment and retention efforts to support the child care sector in hiring and retaining trained staff, such as the increases to the ELCC Wage Grid and Wage Grid Supplement.

Application Requirements and Processing

Applicants must complete two steps to receive the incentive.

Step 1) Determine eligibility:

Applicants must submit a completed The ECE Recruit-Back Incentive Application to determine their eligibility

All applicants will be notified of the status of their application and informed of their eligibility by the email provided on the application. Applicants who are eligible will be advised by the department.

NOTE: Applicants unsure of when they last worked in Manitoba's licensed early learning and child care sector or their classification level can contact eceincentive@gov.mb.ca

Step 2) Confirm employment in an eligible Manitoba licensed non-profit early learning and child care centre or licensed home:

Eligible applicants must notify the Department of Education and Early Childhood Learning at eceincentive@gov.mb.ca after finding employment in a Manitoba licensed non-profit early learning and child care centre or licensed home. Applicants are encouraged to advise their employer of their incentive application.

Employment details provided by the applicant on this application will be verified and confirmed by the department and with the centre director or home-based license holder.

To support the application process, applicant employment information must be up-to-date in Child Care Online - Record of Child Care Employee (RCCE) or Record of Child Care Resident/Staff (RCCR).

Application Deadline

Applicants must submit the ECE Recruit-Back Incentive Application by the deadline of January 1, 2027, to be considered for eligibility.

Funding Distribution

Funding is provided over two installments for eligible ECE IIs or ECE IIIs.

Funding will be distributed to the applicant's centre director or home-based license holder when the employment requirements of this funding are confirmed as follows;

- The first installment will be paid after three months of full-time employment in a Manitoba licensed non-profit early learning and child care centre or licensed home;
- The second installment will be paid a year after the first installment, or a year and three months after the first day of full-time employment in a Manitoba licensed non-profit early learning and child care centre or licensed home.

* The applicant **does not** need to apply for the second installment of the incentive; funds will be distributed according to the date of employment provided by the centre director or home-based license holder. Incentive recipients may receive their second installment after the incentive application period closes.

Facilities should distribute funding to eligible applicants within three weeks of receipt of payment.

Implementation Resources

For more information about The ECE Recruit-Back Incentive, including Frequently Asked Questions visit: www.manitoba.ca/ecerecruitback.

Register for the following webinar. An email invitation will be sent separately.

- Wednesday, December 10, 2025, from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

If you have any further questions regarding the information in this circular, please email ECEincentive@gov.mb.ca or call 204-945-0776 (toll free: 1-888-213-4754).