



August 4, 2023

Child Care Manual Procedure Letter No. 163

TO: All Child Care Manual Holders

FROM: Matt Damschroder, Director

SUBJECT: Ohio PROMISE - Inclusive Child Care

Background

Ohio PROMISE is a new statewide initiative that will Promote Resources, Opportunities, and Meaningful Inclusion through Support and Education. This initiative is focused on increasing access for children with special needs through new:

- Professional development to prepare and support professionals;
- A program designation to create awareness for families; and
- Services and supports for programs and families for necessary equipment.

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) is contributing Supplemental Discretionary Funds awarded through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to support the inclusive child care services and supports.

Professional Development – Professional Early Childhood Inclusion Credential

The Professional Early Childhood Inclusion Credential (PECIC) has been created to raise the level of awareness, knowledge, competency, and increase the confidence of professionals caring for the needs of children with disabilities/differing abilities and creating an inclusive environment. More details about obtaining the inclusion credential can be found on the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association (OCCRRA) [website](#).

Program Designation - Inclusive Child Care Program

Beginning August 7, 2023 the Inclusive Child Care Program (ICCP) designation will be awarded to programs who meet eligibility requirements. The ICCP designation is available to all private pay and publicly funded ODJFS licensed child care centers and family child care homes; approved day camps; certified in-home aides; and Ohio Department of Education (ODE) preschool and school-age programs.

Programs with the ICCP designation will be identified on the *Ohio Search for Early Care and Education Programs* webpage (childcaresearch.ohio.gov), in the Fall of 2023, to assist families in locating inclusive child care.

Program Services and Supports

ICCP Designation Support

Financial support is available through a pilot program to assist a limited number of ICCP



designated child care programs. Funds can be used for implementing supports such as improving inclusive child care programming, assisting with operating expenses, additional staff expenses, or the purchase of adaptive or specialized equipment. This pilot program will assist the State in determining the additional resources necessary to support programs in increasing access for children with special needs.

ICCP Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for the designation, programs must ensure that staff obtain at least a Level 1 of the PECIC, as outlined in the chart below. PECIC staff at eligible programs are to serve as a peer resource for all other staff within the program.

Program Type	Staff Required to Obtain the PECIC
ODJFS Child Care Center and Approved Day Camp ODE Preschool and School-Age	Administrator & One Lead Teacher/Counselor
ODJFS Family Child Care Home (Type A & Type B) Certified In-Home Aide	Provider

A one-time payment of \$15,000 will be issued to the first 50 programs awarded the ICCP designation. Eligible programs include ODJFS licensed child care centers and ODE licensed preschools (except for preschool special education programs).

Additionally, the first 50 family child care (FCC) home providers that are awarded the ICCP designation will be issued a one-time payment of \$2,500.

These one-time payments will be issued in October 2023.

ODJFS Grandfathered ICCP Designated Programs

ODJFS child care centers and FCC programs that provided publicly funded child care (PFCC) for children with special needs at the 100% enhanced payment rate from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 will automatically be awarded the ICCP designation for the period of one year. These programs do not have to meet the eligibility criteria listed above for the first year of the ICCP designation.

Grandfathered programs will receive a one-time payment in August 2023, as outlined below. These programs are not eligible for the one-time payments distributed to the first 50 programs who earn the ICCP designation.

Child Care Center	\$20,000.00
Family Child Care Home Provider	\$2,500.00

How To Apply for the Designation

Beginning on August 7, 2023, programs may apply for the ICCP designation by submitting the JFS 00600 "Application for Inclusive Child Care Program (ICCP) Designation and Funding



Agreement." The ICCP designation is in place for one year from the date of approval. All programs must reapply every year. Failure to follow the requirements of the ICCP designation could result in designation removal.

Family Support

Additional funds will be made available in the Fall to support access to inclusive child care for children with special needs and their families while they go to school or work. More information on these additional supports will be forthcoming in an additional manual procedure letter.

Questions

Please contact OCCRRA at 1-877-547-6978, option 1 with any questions about the OPR and obtaining the PECIC.

Please contact the Child Care Policy Help Desk at 1-877-302-2347, option 4, or at childcarepolicy@jfs.ohio.gov for all other questions.