

Saskatchewan Early Childhood Educator Exemption Guide for Child Care Centre Boards and Employees

Early Childhood Educators play an important role in creating and implementing quality early learning and child care programs. Saskatchewan requires educators working in licensed child care centres for 65 hours or more per month to hold an Early Childhood Educator (ECE) certification from the Ministry of Education.

Saskatchewan has three levels of ECE certification:

- Early Childhood Educator I (ECE I)
- Early Childhood Educator II (ECE II)
- Early Childhood Educator III (ECE III)

When an employee does not have training in early childhood education to satisfy an ECE level, the child care centre board is required to apply to for a training exemption on behalf of the employee. A child care centre employee on a training exemption must continuously complete courses until an ECE level is achieved.

Child care centre boards are encouraged to read the *Saskatchewan Early Childhood Educator Certification Guide* to familiarize themselves with training required of centre employees to achieve each ECE level, as well as the training pathways for ECE certification.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Training requirements for child care staff can be found in *The Child Care Regulations, 2015*. These requirements pertain to employees providing child care services, child care centre supervisors and child care centre directors. Child care centre boards, as licensees of the facility, must ensure that training requirements are met.

All employees **providing child care services** in a centre for 65 hours or more per month are required to hold a minimum of an ECE I certification. There are no training requirements for employees providing child care services who work 64 hours or less per month, although certification is encouraged. A **child care centre director** is required to hold an ECE III and a **child care centre supervisor**, who acts in the place of a director when the director is absent, is required to hold a minimum of an ECE I.

Child care centre boards are also required to ensure that a proportion of all child care centre employees are certified as ECE IIs and ECE IIIs. A minimum of 30 per cent of employees providing child care services for 65 hours or more per month are required to be certified ECE IIs, while 20 per cent are required to be certified ECE IIIs. The child care centre director and supervisor can be included in calculating these proportions.

PURPOSE OF TRAINING EXEMPTIONS

Child care centre boards may not be able to hire an employee(s) that meets the above training qualifications. In this case, a board may apply for a training exemption on behalf of a child care centre employee. A training exemption allows a board to hire an employee who does not meet training requirements, but who is committed to achieving an ECE certification level by completing courses or a program in early childhood education.

There are three key components to an exemption, which are highlighted on the Early Childhood Educator Training Exemption application form.

- 1. Declaration by both the child care centre employee and child care centre board.** The employee and the child care centre board chairperson sign the exemption to demonstrate their commitment to following the education plan (in the case of the employee), and meeting the staffing requirements outlined in child care legislation (in the case of the child care centre board).
- 2. Training Plan.** The employee completes the training plan, identifying a minimum of six credit units in early childhood education courses to be completed within twelve months of the date on the exemption application form. An employee must **continuously** be registered in courses until a certification level is achieved.
- 3. Enrolment Verification.** Proof of registration in the courses identified on the education plan must be attached to the training plan.

Employees on exemptions are actively and continuously taking courses to complete an ECE level. Child care centre boards monitor employees' progress as they fulfill their education plans.

The above components are common to all training exemption applications. For first exemption applications made on behalf of centre directors, a letter stating the reasons the board has been unable to hire a qualified person must also accompany the application.

APPLICATION STEPS

All exemptions should be submitted one month in advance of the start date of the course(s) identified on the education plan.

Exemptions on Behalf of Employees Providing Child Care Services (Including Supervisors)

Step 1. Complete the Saskatchewan Early Childhood Educator Training Exemption Application, which can be found online at www.saskatchewan.ca/government/education-and-child-care-facility-administration/become-an-early-childhood-educator. Employees and child care centre boards jointly complete this form in collaboration with the child care centre director.

Step 2. Attach enrolment verification for each course identified on the education plan.

Step 3. Mail or email the application form to:

Saskatchewan Ministry of Education
Early Years
Attention: ECE Certification Office
2nd Floor, 2220 College Avenue
REGINA SK S4P 4V9
Email: ececertification@gov.sk.ca

Exemptions on Behalf of Child Care Centre Directors

Step 1. Complete the Saskatchewan Early Childhood Educator Training Exemption Application, which can be found online at www.saskatchewan.ca/government/education-and-child-care-facility-administration/become-an-early-childhood-educator. Child care centre boards jointly complete this form with the child care centre director.

Step 2. A first application for a director exemption must be accompanied by a letter stating the reasons the board has been unable to hire a qualified person. Exemption reapplications for the same director do not require a letter.

Step 3. Attach enrolment verification for each course identified on the education plan.

Step 4. Mail or email the application form to the child care centre's Early Learning and Child Care Consultant.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION – ECE CERTIFICATION OFFICE

If you have questions about ECE training exemptions, please contact the Ministry of Education's ECE Certification Office by email at ecercertification@gov.sk.ca or by calling 306-787-7467.