



## **Early Childhood Development Services**

# **Early Childhood Education Assistance Program**

### **Terms and Conditions**

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## Terms and Conditions Overview

The objective of the Early Childhood Education Assistance Program (ECEAP) is to enhance the ability of child care programs to recruit and retain staff by:

- providing affordable training to individuals wishing to pursue a career in child care; and
- increasing the number of early childhood trained educators (ECE diploma/undergraduate degree) working in licensed child care.

### Program Description

The purpose of the Early Childhood Education Assistance Program is to enhance the ability of child care programs to recruit and retain staff by providing financial support to individuals interested in pursuing a career in Early Childhood Education (ECE).

The intent of the Early Childhood Education Assistance Program is to provide assistance with the **cost of the tuition and course materials only**. Other costs such as living expenses and travel must be covered by the student.

The Early Childhood Education Assistance Program provides a debt reduction incentive to eligible graduates of an ECE diploma/ undergraduate degree program. Graduates must graduate from an approved ECE training institution and who have received a student loan through the Nova Scotia Student Assistance program for their education.

Each applicant can qualify for up to a maximum of \$5000 in funding for each year of attendance at the ECE diploma/ undergraduate degree institution for which a student loan was received up to maximum of four years. Applicants will be required to accumulate 1500 hours per year of reimbursement up to the numbers of years of the program (i.e. two year diploma or four year undergraduate degree). These hours must be accumulated working in a Nova Scotia licensed child care facility or Family Home Day Care (FHDC) agency.

Payment will be made by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to the Nova Scotia Student Assistance program with the Department of Labour and Advanced Education on behalf of the successful applicant.

If the applicant received both Nova Scotia and Canada Student loans, the payment will be made to the Nova Scotia Student loan first. If there is no balance on the Nova Scotia Student loan for the years eligible, the remaining portion of the payment will be made to the Canada Student loan.

## **Program Timelines**

The Early Childhood Education Assistance Program was initiated April 1, 2008 and ended December 31, 2016.

The participants who are already enrolled in the program, will continue to receive the reimbursements upon submission and approval of the Early Childhood Education Assistance Program Accumulated Hours Report.

Approved applicants who graduated in 2016 from a diploma program will receive reimbursement for two years of study, i.e. until 2018.

Approved applicants who graduated in 2016 from Mount St. Vincent University will receive reimbursement for 4 years of study, i.e. until 2020.

## **Reimbursement Process**

**Applicants are directly responsible for the administration of the loan payments within the Nova Scotia Student Assistance program.**

**Applicants are also responsible for applying for any programs that the Nova Scotia Student Assistance program offers, e.g. interest relief.**

Reimbursement will be made to the Nova Scotia Student Assistance program on behalf of the applicant after the required number of hours has been accumulated. For every **1500 hours** worked within a one year period, a payment of a lesser of **\$5000.00** or the amount of the loan will be made to the applicant's student loan for that year.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will provide the applicant with confirmation of the payments made on their student loan from the Early Childhood Education Assistance Program.

Funding allocations are subject to Departmental budget.

## **Accumulated Hours**

Applicants will be required to accumulate 1500 hours per year of reimbursement.

If the applicant completed a full-time two year training program, they must work 1500 hours every year for two years to be reimbursed for the two year program.

If the applicant completed a full-time four year training program, they must work 1500 hours every year for four years to be reimbursed for the four year program.

Applicants are required to report their hours worked in a Nova Scotia licensed child care facility or FHDC agency using the Accumulated Hours Report (the Report). Template will be provided.

The Accumulated Hours Report must **only** be sent when 1500 hours are accumulated.

The Report should be sent to:

Coordinator, Family Home Day Care & Early Childhood Education  
Early Childhood Development Services  
Early Years Branch  
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development  
PO Box 578  
Halifax, NS B3J 2S9

When the 1500 hours reported for that year are received by the Department, the loan reimbursement for that year will be sent to the Nova Scotia Student Assistance program. The Report must be sent by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month for the payment to be made before the end of that month.

The applicant is responsible for keeping track and obtaining confirmation of completed hours of work from their employer if they change their place of employment.

**It is the responsibility of the applicant to notify the Coordinator, Family Home Day Care and Early Childhood Education of any changes to their address or contact information.**

## **Failure to Accumulate the Required Hours**

**If the applicant fails to accumulate 1500 hours within one year of the eligibility date, the following will apply:**

- **Two year ECE diploma program**
  - an additional six months will be given to accumulate the required hours.
  - the applicant will have 18 months from the Application Eligibility date to accumulate 1500 hours.
  - only one reimbursement will be paid instead of the two reimbursements for two years of the loan.

Applicants who fail to meet the accumulated hours requirements, forfeit a year of Early Childhood Education Assistance Program eligibility.

**Example:**

Accumulated Hours Report deadline	Report received by deadline	Reimbursement applied to loan	Report received at 18 months	Reimbursement applied to loan
July 15, 2015	No	None	January 15, 2017	Only <b>one</b> payment for 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> year

- **Four year ECE undergraduate degree program**

- an additional 6 months will be given to accumulate the required hours.
- the applicant will have 18 months from the Application Eligibility date to accumulate 1500 hours.
- only one reimbursement will be paid for the first and second year of the loan.
- if the applicant fails to accumulate 1500 hours in the third year of the program an additional 6 months will be given.
- the applicant will have 18 months from the last reimbursement date to accumulate 1500 hours.
- only one reimbursement will be paid for the third and fourth year of the loan.

Applicants who fail to meet the accumulated hours requirements, forfeit up to two years of Early Childhood Education Assistance Program eligibility.

**Example:**

Accumulated Hours Report deadline	Report received by deadline	Reimbursement applied to loan	Report received at 18 months	Reimbursement Applied to loan	Report received by January 15, 2014	Report received at 18 months	Reimbursement Applied to loan
July 15, 2015	No	None	January 15, 2017	Only <b>one</b> payment for 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	No	July 15, 2018	Only <b>one</b> payment for 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> year

## **Cancellation of Participation in the *Early Childhood Education Assistance Program***

The Department will cancel the applicant's enrollment from the Early Childhood Education Assistance Program if:

### **Two year ECE Diploma program:**

- The applicant fails to send the Accumulation Hours Report within 18 months from the Application Eligibility date.
- The applicant fails to accumulate 1500 hours within 18 months from the Application Eligibility date.
- The applicant fails to send any communication to the Department regarding their participation status in the Early Childhood Education Assistance Program within 18 months of the Application Eligibility date.

### **Four year ECE Undergraduate Degree program:**

- The applicant fails to send the Accumulation Hours Report within 18 months from the Application Eligibility date or within 18 months from any anniversary date of the eligibility date.
- The applicant fails to accumulate 1500 hours within 18 months from the Application Eligibility date or within 18 months from any anniversary date of the eligibility date.
- The applicant fails to send any communication to the Department regarding their participation status in the program within the 18 months of the Application Eligibility date or within 18 months from any anniversary date of the eligibility date.

## **Applicant's Loan Payments**

Payment will be made to the Student Assistance program on behalf of the applicant. In a situation where the outstanding loan amount is less than the amount reimbursable, the Department will issue a cheque to the applicant for the difference.

## **Taxable Benefits**

Depending on the applicant's situation, Early Childhood Education Assistance Program may or may not be a taxable benefit.

For more information, please contact the Student Assistance program at the Department of Education at: <http://studentloans.ednet.ns.ca> and Canada Revenue agency at: [www.cra.gc.ca](http://www.cra.gc.ca)



## Appendix A – Definitions

“**Accumulated hours**” refers to the number of hours accumulated while working in a licensed Nova Scotia child care or FHDC agency;

“**Application Eligibility date**” refers to the date application was received by the Department;

“**Coordinator**” refers to Coordinator Family Home Day Care and Early Childhood Education;

“**Department**” refers to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

“**Director**” refers to the Director of Early Childhood Development Services

“**Fiscal Year**” refers to the provincial government business year which runs for the twelve months from 1 April of any given year until 31 March of the following year;

“**Full-time training ECE diploma/ undergraduate degree program**” refers to course load which is at least 60% of a full course load an applicant must take during the regular academic year. For example: If 5 courses are considered a full course load, then 3 courses are 60 per cent ( $3/5 \times 100 = 60$ );

“**Reimbursement**” refers to the payment made by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to the Nova Scotia Student Assistance on behalf of the applicants;

“**Student loan**” refers to the loan obtained from the Nova Scotia Student Assistance.