

Enhanced Support Worker Program Guidelines

June 2017

Purpose

This guideline will assist early learning and childcare operators/administrators and parents/guardians to understand their responsibilities with respect to the Enhanced Support Worker Program (ESWP) and to complete necessary forms, as required.

Goals

The Enhanced Support Worker Program provides funding for early learning and childcare facilities to pay for support worker time for children with disabilities and additional needs who require an enhanced support worker to participate in the activities of the child care facility.

The Enhanced Support Worker Program is intended to:

- Increase the accessibility of early learning and childcare for children with disabilities and additional needs;
 - Support the labour force activities of families with children with disabilities and additional needs.
-

Eligibility

For a preschool aged child to be eligible for Enhanced Support Worker funding the following must apply:

- The parent(s)/guardian(s) work(s) or attend(s) school/training;
- The child must be enrolled in a licensed early learning and childcare facility;
- The child's initial application must demonstrate a high need for support services including a profile of 25 or more on section three of the application.

For a school aged child to be eligible for Enhanced Support Worker funding the following must apply:

- The parent(s)/guardian(s) work(s) or attend(s) school/training;
- The child must be 12 or under unless turning 13 during the school year;
- The child must be enrolled in a licensed early learning and childcare facility;

The child's initial application must demonstrate a high need for support services including a profile of 25 or more on section three of the application.

Factors Determining Need and Support

The following factors will be used to assess eligibility and establish support levels for Enhanced Support Worker funding:

- Child's support needs/functional challenges;
- Child's family day care needs;
- Child's day care setting needs.

Application Process

An application or confirmation of participation form must be submitted each program year in order to be considered for this enhanced support worker funding.

NEW: There are two forms to choose from when applying for enhanced support worker funding:

1. If a child is already in the program and has a profile of 36 or higher on the 2016-2017 application form complete the Confirmation of Participation Form 2017-2018.
2. If a child has not been in the program or has a profile of 35 or less on section on the 2016-2017 application form, complete the Application Form 2017-2018.

Contact the program consultant if you need to clarify which category the children are in presently receiving Enhanced Support Worker funding at your facility.

NEW: For this September the application cycle will be for seven months, September 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018. This is to align the program financing with the EECD/GNB fiscal budget. A new application will be available in February for funding from April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019.

Funding cannot be back paid and additional hours should not begin prior to notification of acceptance to this program.

Applications and confirmation of participation forms are e-mailed or mailed to all licensed early learning and childcare facilities. The appropriate form must be returned by the due date set by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

The application form or confirmation of participation form must be completed and signed by an authorized representative of the early learning and childcare facility AND a parent/guardian of each eligible child for whom the Enhanced Support Worker funding is requested.

Funding Conditions and Accountability

The early learning and childcare facility is notified in writing once Enhanced Support Worker funding is approved, deemed ineligible or if the child is eligible and has been placed on the waitlist. If approved the notification includes a funding notice with a breakdown of the monthly funding for the child.

Operators are required to provide the child's parent/guardian with a copy of the funding notice and the letter of agreement.

Funding cannot be back paid and additional hours should not begin prior to notification of acceptance to this program.

Once approved, funding is disbursed to the approved early learning and childcare facilities on a monthly basis.

It is the responsibility of the early learning and childcare facility operator to locate and hire an enhanced support worker once an application is approved.

In September 2017 the salary will remain \$13.52 plus 10% of weekly salary provided for administrative costs (EI, CPP, Vacation Pay) for a total of \$14.87.

An early learning and childcare facility can receive a maximum of 20 hours of funding per week for a school aged child and a maximum of 35 hours of funding per week for a preschool child for a support worker through the Enhanced Support Worker Program.

The maximum funding per week for all children (including school aged children) during the summer months, one week at Christmas and March break is 35 hours per week. There are no additional hours given to school aged children for professional development days or storm days.

Funding must be spent during the funding period, from September 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019, and must be provided in wages to an enhanced support worker to work in the room with the child for whom the application was submitted.

Early learning and childcare administrators must maintain up-to-date records of Enhanced Support Worker funding spending and what hours are used for each child accessing the program.

NEW: A Monthly Reporting Process will be implemented September 1, 2017. The goal of this process is to identify unused hours more quickly, in order to reassign them to another child on the waitlist. A Monthly Monitoring Form must be filled out each month.

At any time, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development may request additional information of when Enhanced Support Worker hours are used for any particular child.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development reserves the right to audit early learning and childcare facilities receiving Enhanced Support Worker Program funding. Noncompliance to the program guidelines or misuse of funds will result in the termination of funding. The early learning and childcare will be required to repay in full the amount of funds disbursed to the facility and to respond to other recommendations detailed by the department.

Leaves

If a child will be absent from the early learning and childcare facility for more than 5 consecutive days the operator must notify the program consultant, decisions on continued funding or placing the Enhanced Support Worker Program funding on hold until the child returns will be made in accordance with the situation.

When a family is on vacation or a child is on extended leave for sickness or other reasons an on hold status is recommended. On hold status cannot exceed a three month period.

If the parent goes on maternity or paternity leave their situation will be reviewed and for exceptional circumstances, the funding for the Enhanced Support Worker Program can continue for seventeen weeks after the maternity/paternity start date. At seventeen weeks the Enhanced Support Worker Program will terminate. During the parent's maternity/paternity leave, application for the child to receive part time support worker hours can be made through Developmental Child Care.

Termination of Service

NEW: If a child who is a recipient of Enhanced Support Worker funding is discharged from an early learning and childcare facility, the operator must notify the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development of the discharge within 24 hours so that funding can be terminated.

Funding cannot be transferred from one child to another without the authorization of the program consultant.

If reimbursement for unused hours is necessary the cheque must be sent within one week of discharge.

If a parent leaves or is terminated from his/her employment, school or training, funding from the Enhanced Support Worker Program will terminate immediately if the early learning and child care received two weeks' notice, if not, two weeks from the end date of his/her employment/school or training.

Focus On Inclusion

To demonstrate commitment to providing inclusive childcare for families who have a child with a disability/additional need operators are highly encouraged to access the Focus on Inclusion Program through the New Brunswick Association for Community Living (NBACL)

The contact information is:

Anglophone

Kristi Ewart, Manager of Early Learning and Family support

(506) 444-2402

kewart@nbacl.nb.ca

Francophone

Tina Lizotte, Early Learning Inclusion Facilitator

(506) 737-4498

elifedmundston@nbacl.nb.ca

Waiting List

Once all funding within a program year's budget is allocated, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will start a waiting list for children who apply to the program and are eligible for enhanced support worker funding.

Children who are placed on the waiting list will remain on the list until funding is available, or until the end of the program year. Children on the waiting list are prioritized according to need.

Contacts

Inquiries on the program should be directed to the program consultant for the Enhanced Support Worker program at the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development at (506) 453-2852.
