

Washington State Employment Requirements for Early Childhood Education

There are several positions that require a certificate or degree in Early Childhood Education. The following shows the State of Washington requirements for these jobs.

Child Care Centers

See the Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families [Child Care Providers](#) page for more information.

Center Director, Assistant Director or Program Supervisor

- Pre-Service and Hiring Requirements
 - Background Check
 - Tuberculosis (TB) Test
 - Licensing Orientation (if applicable)
 - Minimum Age: 18
- Full Education: WA ECE State Certificate (47 credits) or equivalent
 - 10 ECE credits (12 or less children)
 - 25 ECE credits (13-24 children)
 - 45 ECE credits (25+ children)
- Training
 - Child Care Basics
 - First Aid/CPR
 - Blood Borne Pathogens
 - Food Handlers (if applicable)
 - Safe Sleep (if applicable)
 - Electronic Attendance training (if applicable)
 - Subsidy Billing (if applicable)

Center Lead Teacher

- Pre-Service and Hiring Requirements
 - Background Check
 - TB Test
 - Minimum Age: 18
 - Hiring Education Requirement: High School Diploma
- Training
 - Child Care Basics
 - First Aid/CPR
 - Blood Borne Pathogens
 - Food Handlers (if applicable)

- Safe Sleep (if applicable)
- Education
 - Full Education:
 - ECE Initial Certificate (12 credits)
 - Short Certificate (20 credits)
 - Or equivalent
 - **Time Allowed from Date of Hire or Promotion**
 - Initial Certificate - By Aug. 1, 2026, or within five years, whichever occurs later.
 - Short Certificate - By Aug. 1, 2028, or within two years from completing Initial Certificate, whichever occurs later.

Center Lead Teacher

- Pre-Service and Hiring Requirements
 - Background Check
 - TB Test
 - Minimum Age: 18
 - Hiring Education Requirement: High School Diploma
- Training
 - Child Care Basics
 - First Aid/CPR
 - Blood Borne Pathogens
 - Food Handlers (if applicable)
 - Safe Sleep (if applicable)
- Education
 - Full Education: WA State ECE Initial Certificate (12 credits) or equivalent
 - **Time Allowed from Date of Hire or Promotion:** By Aug. 1, 2026, or within five years, whichever occurs later.

Family Homes

See the Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families [Child Care Providers](#) page for more information.

Family Home Licensee

- Pre-Service and Hiring Requirements
 - Background Check
 - TB Test
 - Licensing Orientation
 - Minimum Age: 18
 - Hiring Education Requirement: High School Diploma

- Training
 - Child Care Basics
 - First Aid/CPR
 - Blood Borne Pathogens
 - Food Handlers (if applicable)
 - Safe Sleep (if applicable)
 - Subsidy Billing Training (if applicable)
 - Electronics Attendance Training (if applicable)
- Education
 - Full Education:
 - WA State Initial Certificate (12 credits)
 - Short Certificate (20 credits)
 - Or equivalent
 - **Time Allowed from Date of Hire or Promotion:** Initial Certificate – By Aug. 1, 2026, or within five years, whichever occurs later. | Short Certificate – By Aug. 1, 2028, or within two years from completing Initial Certificate, whichever occurs later.

Family Home Lead Teacher

- Pre-Service and Hiring Requirements
 - Background Check
 - TB Test
 - Minimum Age: 18
 - Hiring Education Requirement: High School Diploma
- Training
 - Child Care Basics
 - First Aid/CPR
 - Blood Borne Pathogens
 - Food Handlers (if applicable)
 - Safe Sleep (if applicable)
- Education
 - Full Education: WA State Initial Certificate (12 credits) or equivalent
 - **Time Allowed from Date of Hire or Promotion** – By Aug. 1, 2026, or within five years, whichever occurs later.

Family Home Assistant Teacher

- Pre-Service and Hiring Requirements
 - Background Check
 - TB Test
 - Minimum Age: 18
 - Hiring Education Requirement: High School Diploma
- Training

- Child Care Basics
- First Aid/CPR
- Blood Borne Pathogens
- Food Handlers (if applicable)
- Safe Sleep (if applicable)
- Education
 - Full Education: WA State Initial Certificate (12 credits) or equivalent
 - **Time Allowed from Date of Hire or Promotion** - By Aug. 1, 2026, or within five years, whichever occurs later.

Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)

See the Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families [ECEAP](#) page for more information.

Lead Teacher Serving ECEAP

- Pre-Service and Hiring Requirements
 - Background Check
 - TB Test
 - Show proof of MMR immunization or immunity proof
 - Minimum Age: 18
- Training
 - Natural Disaster and Human-Caused Events
 - First Aid/CPR
 - Blood Borne Pathogens
 - Emergency Procedures
 - Handling and storage of hazardous materials
 - Preventing, Identifying, and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect
 - Prevention and Response to Emergencies to food and allergic reactions
 - Food Handlers (if applicable)
 - Transporting Children
 - Developmental Screening
 - Position Specific Training
 - In-person or online Teaching Strategies GOLD
 - Inter-rater Reliability certification: Preschools, including Dual Language Learners and Children with Disabilities
 - DCYF-determined in-person or online curriculum training)
- Education
 - Full Education:
 - An associate or higher degree in ECE; or

- [DCYF equivalent](#)
- If the best candidate for the position is not fully qualified, the contractor must ensure the newly hired staff person is on a [Professional Development Plan \(PDP\)](#) to fully meet the qualifications of their role within five years from the date of hire

Assistant Teacher Serving ECEAP

- Pre-Service and Hiring Requirements
 - Background Check
 - TB Test
 - Show proof of MMR immunization or immunity proof
 - Minimum Age: 18
- Training
 - Natural Disaster and Human-Caused Events
 - First Aid/CPR
 - Blood Borne Pathogens
 - Emergency Procedures
 - Handling and storage of hazardous materials
 - Preventing, Identifying, and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect
 - Prevention and Response to Emergencies to food and allergic reactions
 - Food Handlers (if applicable)
 - Transporting Children
 - Developmental Screening
- Education
 - Full Education:
 - Initial or higher Washington State Early Childhood Education (ECE) Certificate; or
 - [DCYF equivalent](#)
 - If the best candidate for the position is not fully qualified, the contractor must ensure the newly hired staff person is on a [Professional Development Plan \(PDP\)](#) to fully meet the qualifications of their role within five years from the date of hire