

## Parent's Choice of Sites and Type of Child Care

Coordinated Child Care of Pinellas, Inc. (CCC) administers state and federally funded "parent choice" School Readiness Child Care Scholarship programs. The legal child care choices under the School Readiness Child Care Scholarship program in Pinellas County include:

- Licensed and Legal Exempt School Readiness Approved & Quality Counts Child Care:** Child care providers under this category are licensed/legal exempt child care facilities and choose to participate in the Quality Counts Program. These providers must meet additional quality standards above that of the Pinellas County Child Care Licensing Program standards, maintain participation in the Quality Counts Program and maintain compliance with their School Readiness Agreement.
- Licensed and Legal Exempt School Readiness Approved Child Care:** Child Care providers under this category are licensed/legal exempt child care facilities (Family Child Care Homes, Child Care Centers, Faith Based or School Age Programs), and are a School Readiness Approved Provider and have a duly signed School Readiness Agreement. These providers must meet the Pinellas County Child Care Licensing Program standards and maintain compliance with their School Readiness Agreement.
- Voluntary Prekindergarten Program (VPK):** VPK is a free program for all children who turned 4 years old on or before September 1st each year. VPK classrooms are established throughout Pinellas County and offered by private community providers and Pinellas County Schools. There are 2 VPK programs offered within the year; a school year program that is a maximum of 540 hours and a summer program that is for 300 hours. Each 4 year old may attend only one of these programs (school year or summer). Ask a CCC Family Services staff member for detailed information about VPK.
- Head Start/Early Head Start:** is an alternative care choice that may be available to you if your child is birth to mandatory school age. If you are interested in this program contact your local Head Start office at 547-5900.
- CCC Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R)** unit can provide you with assistance in locating any type of School Readiness Child Care Approved Child Care Provider (as applicable) that meets yours and your child(ren)'s needs and are convenient to where you live, work or attend school. CCR&R staff will also provide you with information regarding Quality Count, Gold Seal and VPK provider sites. Call CCR&R at **547-5750** or visit our website at [www.childcarepinellas.org](http://www.childcarepinellas.org) to request a list of child care providers.
- Non-Licensed Unregulated Care (Informal) (Relative or In-Home Non-Relative):** Child Care caregivers under this category are **not licensed and not regulated** under licensing standards and must maintain compliance with their School Readiness Agreement. Informal provider is defined as a responsible relative (non-parent) including siblings, age 18 or older. The relative may care for the child(ren) in the relative's home or the child(ren)'s home; a person (**non-relative**), age 18 or older, who cares for the child(ren) in the **child(ren)'s own home**. The maximum reimbursement for this is one-half the established state and local approved rate for family child care homes. Non-Licensed Unregulated Care (Informal) requirements are as follows:
  - Caregivers in this program are **required** to attend /complete the six (6.0) Hour Family Child Care Rules & Regulations Class and pass the Family Child Care Rules & Regulations Competency Exam.
  - Caregivers successfully complete CPR & First Aid Training.
  - Pass the Abuse Background Check completed for all household members who are 13 years or older.
  - A home site visit completed at the home where child(ren) will be cared for to determine if the environment is healthy and safe.
  - Caregivers complete and submit the Curriculum and Character Education Compliance Forms.
  - Caregivers sign and submit the School Readiness Agreement and complete the CCC Finance Packet.

**NOTE:** Payment **will not start** until all above requirements have been satisfactorily met and the caregiver has a duly signed School Readiness Child Care Agreement to receive funding.

**I acknowledge that I have fully reviewed this document and fully understand its contents and my child care choices.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE of Parent/Guardian Completing Form

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Civil rights provide that:** No person in the United States shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, national origin, ethnic background, sex, religious affiliation, or disability; (45 CFR §98.20(b)(1))

## Parent/Guardian School Readiness Program Rights and Responsibilities

- 1. School Readiness Approved:** Your child care scholarship voucher(s) is/are **only valid at CCC School Readiness Approved Providers**. CCC will not be responsible for charges you acquire from a provider who has not completed CCC School Readiness Approved Process. For a list of School Readiness Approved providers in your area please contact our CCR&R unit.
- 2. Scholarship Authorization:** Your child care scholarship **CAN NOT START** until you and your provider(s) **ACTIVATE** your scholarship(s). Please discuss this process with CCC Eligibility Staff who can confirm that placement has occurred and authorized prior to payment being made. **Each scholarship authorization is only valid for no more than 15 calendar days. Please note the "Expiration Date"**. Your child(ren) must start care prior to the "Expiration Date" indicated on the form. It will be CCC's assumption that child care is not needed, if the child is not enrolled by that date.
- 3. Right to Change Providers (Transfers):** If you need to **CHANGE PROVIDERS**, you **must** call CCC to get a new authorization before you transfer your child (ren). You will not be allowed to change providers unless parent fees are current. This applies **even if your child is going back to a provider. If you move your child prior to obtaining authorization from CCC you will be responsible for self paying the full cost of care. If you are not comfortable with the quality of child care being provided**, you should immediately notify CCC and remove your child, especially if there are questions about the children's **safety** in the child care site.
- 4. Responsibility to Pay Parent Fees:** Parents/guardians are responsible to pay their child care provider the established daily parent fees assigned from the approved sliding fee schedule. If the provider charges more than CCC's child care reimbursement rate, **you will have to negotiate or pay** the extra money in addition to your parent fee. It is important that you inquire about any additional provider fees before selecting your child care provider. While many providers will negotiate this additional cost they are not required to do so but they must give you a written disclosure regarding the rates and fees for you to sign and keep a copy.  
  
**Note: You must keep current in your payment of parent fees to your provider(s).** This fee may change due to changes in your income and/or family size. The fee is due whether or not the child(ren) is/are in care, and on CCC approved holidays. When your child is in a full-time program, you must pay the full-time parent fee. When your child(ren) is/are in a part-time program, you must pay the part-time parent fee. You may be responsible for payment, **IN ADVANCE**, of a portion of the cost of your child care. **Unpaid fees may be cause for termination from this and any other child care scholarship program.**
- 5. Responsibility to Maintain Attendance:** Your child(ren) **must go** to care. Reimbursement for absences shall be authorized for **no more than** a total of three (3) absences per calendar month per child, except in the event of extraordinary circumstances (ask your provider about their attendance policy). Either way your scholarship will be terminated if you do not use this scholarship or if you exceed the Funder regulations. If you remove your child from a child care location for more than 10 days in any month without notifying CCC your child care scholarship will be terminated. This includes but is not limited to removal of the child from a care location for the summer months or during school breaks without making prior arrangements with CCC. If your child is sick, you **must call your provider** so that they will be aware of the situation.
- 6. VISITATION RIGHTS:** Regardless of who funds your child care CCC strongly encourages you to visit your child while he/she is in care. **You may visit anytime unannounced** and let the provider know that you want to see where your child will PLAY, EAT AND SLEEP. Discuss each of these activities with the provider as well as discipline and toilet learning policies. It is also recommended that you inquire about how this provider will help pre-school age children be ready to learn when they start school.
- 7. SCREENINGS AND ASSESSMENTS:** As a requirement of the State and as part of your acceptance of receipt of a school readiness child care scholarship, your child(ren) will receive a developmental screening/assessment completed by your child care provider. Another benefit, that is part of your scholarship, is that a vision and hearing screening may also be administered to your child(ren) by qualified professionals periodically throughout the year at your child care provider's site.

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SIGNATURE of Parent/Guardian Completing Form

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Date

### Information Regarding Provider Responsibilities

**PROVIDER EXPECTATIONS:** All child care providers (for all Funders) are required to report any unusual marks, bruises, etc... on any child. If your Funder is the Early Learning Coalition of Pinellas County (ELCP) and you are under the "At-Risk" category (Protective Investigations, Protective Service or Foster Care): Your child care provider is required to call your Case Manager on the first day of care, if your child is absent for two or more consecutive days, and when you remove the child from care.

**HEALTH AND IMMUNIZATION RECORDS:** **Within 30 days** of starting child care, all children **must have current health and immunization records** on file at their child care site. For the most current immunization schedule visit the following website <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/schedules/default.htm>.

**DEVELOPMENTAL APPROPRIATE PRACTICES AND HEALTH & SAFETY:** All child care providers accepting ELCP school readiness child care scholarship children must have a developmentally appropriate curriculum and commitment to character education program approved by the ELCP and comply with State and local health and safety requirements.

**MONITORING AND ATTENDANCE:** Federal, State and local funding agencies have the right to monitor/review each and every provider site and participant's record (funded by them) without prior notice. The provider is responsible for submitting the Enrollment/Attendance Verification Form to CCC's Reimbursement Department **by the 3<sup>rd</sup> (before close of business 5:00p.m.) of the following month**. The provider must verify, in the upper left hand box, that their full name, address, phone number, social security number and the children in their care are complete and correct. **The provider is required to complete the enrollment/attendance verification using the "Key" located at the bottom left corner. Payments will be sent to the provider by the 20<sup>th</sup> of that month**, providing all paperwork is complete. Please call (727) 547-5740 if you have any questions.