

# Early Learning Coalition of Flagler & Volusia

## **2010 PROVIDER POLICIES & PROCEDURES HANDBOOK**

### **VOLUNTARY PRE-KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION PROGRAM**



**January 2010**

Please keep this handy reference guide throughout the year

Disclaimer: Please be aware that the information, procedures and policies in this manual are subject to change. Notification of changes will be posted on the ELCFV website ([www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org)) and noticed monthly in the VPK Reimbursement mailing, green sheet, VPK Notes. The handbook will be updated annually.

# Voluntary Prekindergarten Provider Policy and Procedure Manual

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# **Voluntary Prekindergarten Provider Policy and Procedure Manual**

Dear VPK Provider,

Welcome to the Early Learning Coalition of Flagler and Volusia (ELCFV) Voluntary Pre-kindergarten (VPK) education program. We are delighted to have you as a provider and hope that your experience will be very rewarding.

The VPK program is a constitutional amendment passed by Florida's voters in November, 2002 requiring voluntary prekindergarten for all four-year-old children by the fall of 2005. As a result, VPK was designed to provide a strong early learning foundation for all four-year-old children in the state of Florida. ELCFV contracts with local providers to offer direct VPK services to children and their families. The VPK program is voluntary and free to children and families that are eligible for services. The goal of the program is to ensure children enter kindergarten fully ready to learn and succeed.

As a VPK provider, it is ELCFV's expectation that you will provide an environment rich with child-initiated active learning experiences for children. The curriculum of your choice must be developmentally appropriate and can be modified for individual four-year-olds that have skills at either end of a developmental continuum. As a VPK provider your curriculum should address the seven domains of development as directed by the Florida Department of Education Performance Standards for Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten: Physical Health, Approaches to Learning, Social and Emotional Development, Language and Communication, Emergent Literacy, Cognitive Development and General Knowledge and Motor Development.

The VPK Provider Policies and Procedures Handbook is provided to assist you with questions you may have involving VPK. However, please note, the VPK program is relatively new and evolving, subsequently this Handbook will be updated on a frequent basis to include new requirements regarding VPK programs. You can periodically check this Handbook for changes and/or new information regarding VPK rules and regulations by going to [www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org).

Please remember, the VPK program is regulated by legislative requirements and policies and procedures established by the State of Florida. It is important that you familiarize yourself with the guidelines that govern the VPK program in order to be in compliance. These references are located in Florida Statutes – Title 48 – Chapter 1002 – Part V, Florida Statutes – Title 29 – Chapter 402 – Section 402.26.

Once again, the Early Learning Coalition of Flagler and Volusia welcome you as a VPK provider and look forward to working with you. The coalition is here to assist you in any way possible and truly serves as your advocate in providing VPK services.

Respectfully,  
Glynne Pascal  
Quality Assurance Manager

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## **VPK Statewide Program Administration**

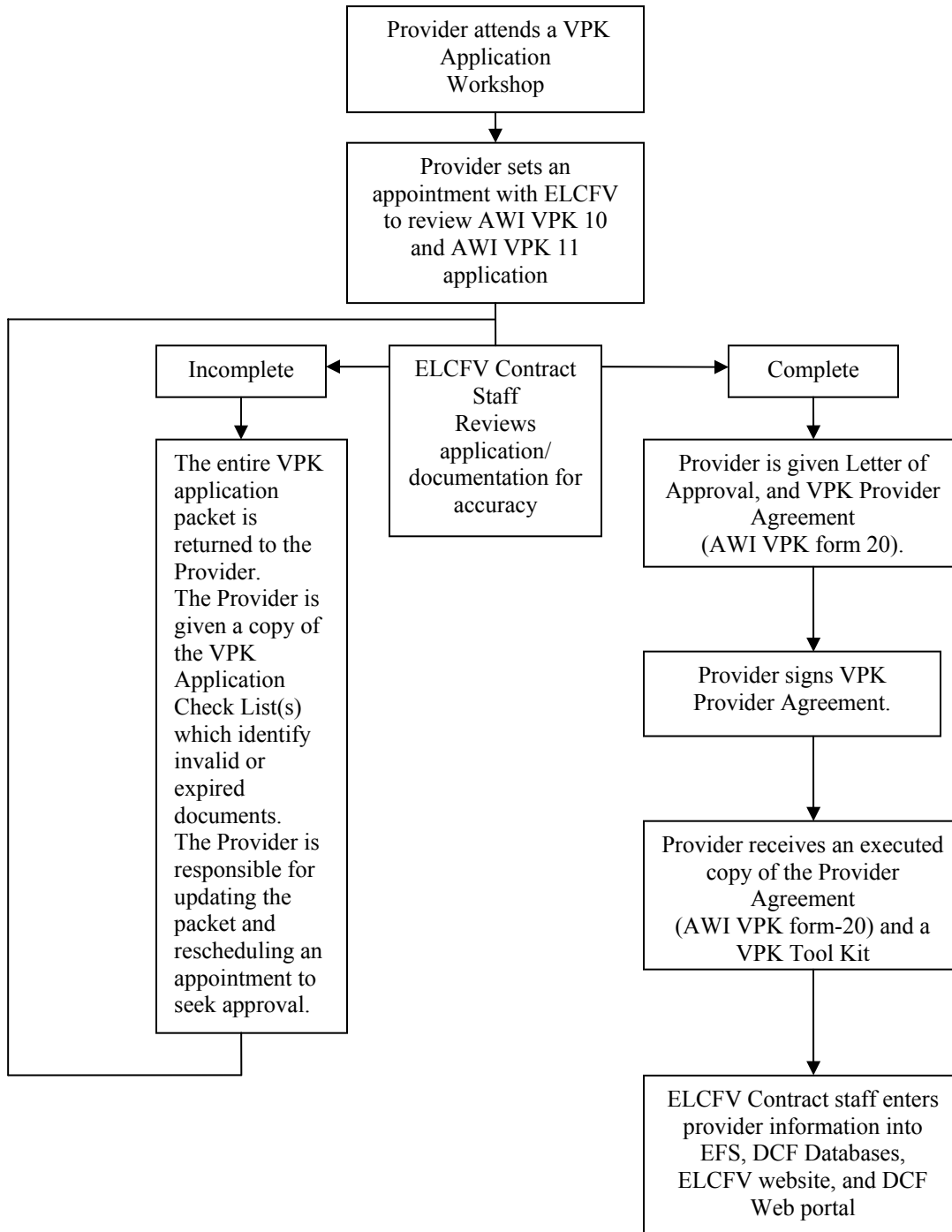
The Department of Education/Office of Early Learning (DOE/OEL) works in collaboration with the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to implement the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education program. The VPK program begins at the State level and is administered by local coalitions. In turn, the Early Learning Coalition of Flagler and Volusia contracts with local providers to provide direct VPK services to children.

<p><b><u>Department of Children and Families</u></b> Responsible for childcare licensing and credentialing of staff</p>	<p><b><u>Agency for Workforce Innovation Office of Early Learning</u></b> Responsible for operational requirements and day-to-day management of VPK Programs</p>	<p><b><u>Department of Education Office of Early Learning</u></b> Responsible for creation of performance standards, curriculum and accountability</p>
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### **VPK Programs**

VPK programs are offered through approved private and faith-based child care centers, family homes, and the School Districts of Flagler and Volusia Counties. VPK is free and available to all Florida four-year-olds. A child must be four on or before September 1st of the school year in which they will attend VPK. The program must provide developmentally appropriate instruction and activities to prepare children to be school ready.

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## VPK Site Requirements at a Glance

Legislation sets forth specific requirements that providers must comply with when designing their VPK program. However, VPK providers do have flexibility in how they design their program as long as they meet the required number of instructional hours, staffing requirements, and class sizes. Parents are free to choose the program that best meets their child's individual needs.

### Program Types:

- **Summer:** This program operates no sooner than May 1<sup>st</sup>, must end before the start date of District School Kindergarten and must deliver 300 VPK instructional hours.
- **School Year:** This program operates within the time frame of no sooner than 14 days before Labor Day and must end by June 30<sup>th</sup>. It requires the delivery of 540 VPK instructional hours.

Both Private and District Public Schools may apply for either or both program types; however District Public Schools are mandated to provide the Summer Program.

### Provider Type:

In order to participate in the VPK program, providers must be one of the following:

- Licensed child care facility
- Licensed family home child care
- Nonpublic school or faith based provider that is exempt from licensure
- Public school district (for the school year program type, must have met the class size amendment).

***Note: Registered family child care homes, unlicensed family child care homes and informal child care providers are not eligible to participate in the VPK program.***

To be eligible to deliver the VPK program, a private prekindergarten provider must meet each of the following requirements:

- DCF License or License Exempt status
- License Exempt status must be supported by an Accreditation Certificate that has been issued by an Accrediting Agency that has been approved by AWI.
- Liability insurance showing ELCFV, 230 North Beach Street, Daytona Beach, FL 32114 as "Certificate Holder".
- Director holding a valid Director Credential and VPK Director Endorsement as required.

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- Full cleared Level II Background Screening on all VPK assigned staff and Director.
- Instructors holding proof of a minimum of a Florida Child Care Professional Certificate (FCCPC) and approved Emergent Literacy training.
- Instructors holding an associate or higher degree must produce a Staff Credential Verification (form 5206) from DCF.
- Gold Seal Accreditation if applicable (consists of DCF congratulatory letter and Gold Seal certificate and Accrediting agency certificate).

### **VPK Application Process**

All Private Provider programs must attend one VPK Application Workshop each year before applying to operate a Summer VPK Program and/or a School Year VPK Program. The workshop provides orientation on new policies and current forms and procedures. Workshop schedules for the primary application period of January through May are posted on the ELCFV website, in the Kite Tales Newsletter, and on the VPK News insert (green sheet) that accompanies VPK reimbursements.

Providers must complete AWI VPK 10 and AWI VPK 11 forms, attach all required supporting documentation, sign and date the forms prior to submitting to ELCFV. If you plan on being a VPK provider, you must make an appointment with the ELCFV Provider Contracts Coordinator to submit your application packet for review.

**All application appointments are held at the Early Learning Coalition of  
Flagler and Volusia Counties office**

**230 North Beach Street  
Daytona Beach, FL 32114**

- **Incomplete application packets will not be accepted.**
- **ELCFV will not accept mailed or faxed VPK application packets.**

**Remember, you must receive written notification of approval from ELCFV before you begin VPK classes.**

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**You will not be reimbursed for days prior to receiving VPK approval**

### **AWI-VPK 10 form:**

The AWI-VPK 10 form is about the child care provider's facility. The form requires basic contact, licensing, and accreditation information. When submitting your AWI-VPK 10 form, please provide the following documents:

- A copy of your DCF License
- A copy of Religious Exempt status if applicable
- Certificate of Insurance (COI) identifying ELCFV as the "certificate holder" with the address of 230 North Beach Street, Daytona Beach, FL
- A copy of your facility's Attendance Policy for your VPK Program
- A copy of your VPK Endorsed Director Credential
- Cleared Level II Background Screening on the Director (Local, Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and Attestation of Good Moral Character). **Note: Level II means fingerprints are done every 5 years. Re-screens will not be accepted. Also be aware, the Attestation of Good Moral Character is valid for one (1) year from the date of the signature.**

### **AWI-VPK 11 form:**

The AWI-VPK 11 form is about the proposed VPK classroom. A separate AWI-VPK 11 form must be submitted for each VPK class approval being requested. Classes are identified as A, B, C, etc. This form requires the name and supporting documentation for the Lead Instructor (Teacher) and the Secondary Instructor (Assistant) assigned to the VPK class.

Page 2 of this application form allows for information on the start date, end date, VPK operating days and times, and non-instructional days (days that VPK services will not be delivered, therefore are not included in the 540 hour instructional time).

The following supporting documentation must be submitted with each AWI-VPK 11 form. If staff is being assigned to several classes that operate at different times, please only submit one set of supporting staff documentation.

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- Proof of the Lead Instructor's credential  
**School Year VPK Program:** the minimum requirement is a Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC) formerly named the CDA or CDAE. This documentation should be presented as a Staff Credential Verification, form 5206 and a DCF Training Transcript.

**Summer VPK Program:** the minimum requirement is any one of the following credentials.

1. Valid Florida Educator Certificate
2. Bachelors or higher degree in Early Childhood Education, Prekindergarten or Primary Education, Preschool Education, or Family and Consumer Science.
3. Bachelor or higher degree in Elementary Education if the instructor has been certified to teach children any age from birth through sixth grade regardless of whether the certificate is current and if the instructor is not ineligible to teach in a public school because his or her educator certificate is suspended or revoked.

For information on the educational credentials adopted by the State Board of Education visit <http://www.firn.edu/doe/earlylearning/pdf/vpkeqcrd.pdf>

- Proof of Emergent Literacy Training. This documentation should be presented in the form of a DCF Training Transcript.  
**Note:** The preferred training is the Department of Education Emergent Literacy for VPK. However, the DCF Birth to Three Literacy training will be accepted if it was taken before November 2005.
- A cleared Level II Background Screening for the Teacher and the Assistant. Cleared Level II Background Screening includes (Local, Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and Attestation of Good Moral Character).
- **Note: Level II means fingerprints are done every 5 years. Re-screens will not be accepted. Also be aware, the Attestation of Good Moral Character is valid for one (1) year from the date of the signature.**

## Class Size and Staff to Child Ratios

### School Year VPK Program:

- Minimum class size is 4 VPK eligible children. A Provider or school does not violate the minimum class size if fewer than four VPK eligible students attend on a particular day.

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- Maximum class size is 18 children (including any non-VPK eligible children) A VPK class may not exceed – either in enrollment or a particular day's attendance – the maximum class size.
- Staff to child ratio for a class of 4 to 10 children is one (1) Lead Instructor
- Staff to child ration for a class of 11 to 18 is one (1) Lead Instructor and one (1) Secondary Instructor

### **Summer VPK Program:**

- Minimum class size is 4 VPK eligible children. A provider or school does not violate the minimum class size if fewer than four VPK eligible students attend on a particular day.
- Maximum class size is 12 (including any non-VPK eligible children). A VPK class may not exceed – either in enrollment or a particular day's attendance – the maximum class size.
- Staff to child ration for a class of 4 to 12 children is one (1) Lead Instructor

### **Blended Classes:**

- A private provider or public school may organize a VPK class as a blended class, instructing students enrolled in the VPK program together with children who are not enrolled in the VPK program.
- A blended class may include children of any age; however, these multi-age arrangements must not interfere with the provider's or school's obligation to deliver 540 instructional hours for the School-Year VPK program or 300 instructional hours for the Summer VPK program.

### **Multi-class groups:**

- A provider or school may teach two or more VPK classes as one group in a single classroom. However, this grouping arrangement does not authorize a provider or school to exceed any staff-to-child ratio, square footage per child requirement or other state and local requirement.
- Each VPK class with a multi-class group may not exceed 18 students for the School-Year VPK program or 12 students for the Summer VPK program.
- Each VPK School Year class must be staffed with the required VPK Instructor and if over 11 children, an Assistant.
- VPK Instructors and Assistants must be assigned to a class and be responsible for the children enrolled in that class.

**Ratio and Credential requirements must be maintained even if assigned staff is absent.**

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**Substitute Instructors and Assistants:** When the assigned and approved VPK staff is absent from a VPK class, the Provider is required to notify ELCFV immediately and to temporarily assign a substitute staff who has the required credential and background screening.

The procedures require a private provider that assigns a substitute Lead Teacher, who does not have the required teaching credential, to notify the ELCFV. If, after 10 consecutive instructional days, a private provider does not assign a substitute who has the required credentials, the procedure requires the provider to give the ELCFV a written description of efforts to find an instructor who has the credentials. The form to use to notify the ELCFV of the temporary use of a substitute staff is called "Coalition Notification of Changes to Your VPK Program" and can be downloaded from the ELCFV website, [www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org), under Commonly Used Forms.

The substitute instructor procedure, if not followed, may allow the ELCFV to take enforcement action on the provider if, after 20 consecutive instructional days, the provider does not assign a substitute instructor who has the required credentials. Enforcement action is termination of funding for the time frame during which a credentialed staff is not in place. The non-funded days must be made up by extending the end date of the VPK Program.

**All substitute staff must comply with the cleared Level II Background screening requirement.**

### **Permanent Changes in VPK Classroom Staffing and Structure**

The ELCFV must be made aware, immediately, of permanent changes to VPK staffing as well as the temporary use of substitute staff as mentioned above.

This would occur during the replacement of previously approved Lead Teachers and/or Assistants, or the transferring of staff between previously approved VPK classrooms. This is very important. If an on-site monitoring occurred and the staffing was different than what is shown in your approved VPK file, funding is pulled for each day of the non-compliance. The VPK calendar will need to be extended as well to administer the full 540 instructional hours.

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Changes in classroom capacity, curriculum, and requests to dissolve a class also must be communicated to the ELCFV. All of these changes are made on the "Coalition Notification of Changes to Your VPK Program" form which is found on the ELCFV website, [www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org), under Commonly Used Forms.

### **Director Credential**

Director Credential: To meet DCF licensing standards, all child care facility directors must have a Director Credential. To operate a VPK program this requirement extends to family home child care and license exempt settings as well.

The DCF website, [www.dcf.state.fl.us/childcare/forms.shtml](http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/childcare/forms.shtml) will guide you to the Verification and Application Form for the Florida Child Care Director Credential and provide instructions on submitting the documentation to obtain the Director Credential.

**Director Credentials issued after December 31, 2006 must carry the VPK Director Endorsement in order to qualify to operate a VPK Program.**

**It is the "Best Practice" of ELCFV that Director Credentials issued prior to December 31, 2006 are required to carry the VPK Director Endorsement upon applying for the Director Credential five-year renewal in order to qualify to operate a VPK Program.**

Accessing the DCF website shown above will guide you to the VPK Director Endorsement Application Form and instructions on submitting the documentation to obtain the VPK Director Endorsement.

### **Change or Loss of the Director**

If a VPK Provider experiences a change in Director, the following steps must be taken to remain in compliance with the Statewide Provider Agreement (AWI-VPK Form-20 which is signed upon approval to operate VPK). The change may be the result of a director leaving or of the facility terminating employment. In either case, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) must be notified within 5 days. DCF will issue a new or provisional license depending upon the status of the new director's credentials or the efforts being made to employ a new director.

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ELCFV must be notified immediately if there is any change in director. Be aware that the Provider cannot simply reassign another person who has the credentials required to satisfy the VPK paperwork. The Director is the director as shown on the DCF License and must be approved by DCF.

To notify the ELCFV of a change in director, access the VPK Provider Change of Director form found on the ELCFV website, [www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org), under "Commonly Used Forms".

Change of director places the VPK Provider in a Provisionally Approved status for the length which may be granted for up to six months, as per DCF procedures. If, however, DCF criteria are met, but VPK legislative mandates are not achieved, the Provider will be placed in a Provisionally Approved Status for up to three month, giving the Director time to bring the Director Credential/VPK Endorsement into compliance.

## Background Screening

### **Background Screening:**

All VPK instructors and instructor assistants must complete background screenings and be cleared through DCF before they begin working in a VPK classroom. The background screening for VPK differs from the current child care licensing policy, in as much as there is no exception for private schools or religious exempt facilities if they are going to participate as a VPK provider.

**Please note that the Volunteer and Employee Criminal History System (VECHS) is not an adequate background check for VPK purposes.**

Level II background screenings consists of:

- A Signed and dated Attestation of Good Moral Character
- Local (County) background screening results
- FDLE (State) screening results
- FBI (National) clearance letter from DCF background screening

Level II background screenings should be completed every five (5) years and not be confused with the five (5) year re-screen that DCF accepts. The five (5) year re-screen will not give the results you will need for FBI clearance to participate in a VPK program. For information on background screening requirements visit: <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/childcare/docs/CriminalHistoryCheck.pdf>

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## Live Scan

### Live Scan:

To expedite the background screening process for VPK providers, ELCFV in collaboration with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) offers VPK providers the opportunity to utilize the Live Scan process for Level II background screening. To take advantage of this program the provider must meet the following requirements:

- The live scan is **ONLY** for **VPK program** staff
- The Center/Family Home Child Care (FHCC) programs must have VPK teachers or directors in their VPK program who need to be Level II background screened
- The VPK provider must have a Center/FHCC email address in order to be processed through live scan

### Live Scan Process: Setting up a Live Scan Account

- The Provider Director will call the Provider Services-Service Area; Contracts staff-VPK to express an interest in the Live Scan Process.
- The Contracts staff inputs information from the director into the Civil Workflow Control System (CWCS) form and e-mails it to the DCF office in Jacksonville.
- Within 5 to 10 business days, the Provider Director will be notified that an account has been set up for this Provider facility. This notification is sent to the provider via e-mail.

### Live Scan Process: Arranging to send staff for the screening

- The Provider Director will download the VPK Provider Request form from the ELCFV website, [www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org), under Commonly Used forms. The staff person will complete the form and the director will sign the supervisor line.
- Staff needing to be Live Scan will be going to the DCF office at 210 North Palmetto Avenue, Daytona Beach for the scan to be done. DCF accepts Live Scan clients on a walk-in basis.
- Before the Live Scan process can continue, the ELCFV office must receive payment of \$27.25 per person being Live Scanned. The Live Scan applicant should stop at the ELCFV office at 230 North Beach Street, Daytona Beach to make the payment and receive a receipt.
- Payment methods include business check, personal check, money order or exact change for cash payments.
- Checks or money orders should be made payable to "ELCFV".

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- The Live Scan applicant will proceed to the DCF office at 210 North Palmetto Avenue, Daytona Beach with both the receipt and the completed VPK Provider Request form.

### **Live Scan Process: Obtaining results**

- Once Live Scan is complete, the Provider Director should receive an e-mail within a short period of time containing the FDLE results portion of the Scan.
- FBI results will arrive on DCF Letterhead via the US Mail within 2 to 3 weeks.
- **Be advised:** If results of the screen show a "Record" for the individual screened, the process may take slightly longer.

## **VPK Calendar**

### **Program Calendars:**

Florida law mandates a school year program which will deliver 540 instructional hours or a summer program which will deliver 300 instructional hours. Parents may choose one of the two options.

During the application process, potential VPK providers will be asked to submit their program calendar which will indicate the start and end dates, operational days and hours of VPK operation per day.

**School Year Program:** The school year program option consists of **540 hours** of VPK instruction. The early learning coalition may not pay a VPK provider for a VPK class unless the class schedule complies with the following:

- Except as provided in paragraph (b) of 60BB-8.451, a school-year program may not begin instruction more than 14 days before Labor Day.
- A school-year program must complete instruction by June 30.

The following chart shows various program design options or as a provider you can elect to customize your own program design:

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VPK Program Design	Minimum Number of Days	Total Number of Instructional Hours
One (3) Instructional Hour Session in the Morning	180	540
One (3) Instructional Hour Session in the Afternoon	180	540
One (4) Instructional Hour in the Morning	135	540
One (4) Instructional Hour in the Afternoon	135	540
One (6) Instructional Hour Session 5 days a week	90	540
One (6) Instructional Session 3 days a week	90	540

### Summer Program:

A private provider can also choose to offer a summer VPK program, however public schools are required to offer a summer program if any eligible families are interested in enrolling their children. The summer VPK program consists of **300 hours** of instruction. A summer VPK program cannot start before May 1 and must end before the start date of public school in the fall. **Note:** *Each school district is required by law to deliver the summer VPK program for every eligible child whose parents want to participate.*

### Instructional Hours:

Instructional hours are the times instructors are actively working with children to promote the VPK performance standards and a developmentally appropriate curriculum.

Snack and lunch times are considered instructional time as long as VPK staff is sitting with and interacting with the children.

Naptime cannot be counted as instructional time during the VPK program.

Under VPK guidelines you are being paid for actual instructional hours. As used in the VPK program, the term "instructional hours" means:

- (1)Planned activities or experiences that implement curricula. Sixty consecutive or non-consecutive minutes of instructional time in planned activities or experiences that implements a private provider's or public

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school's curricula for the VPK program. In accordance with Section 1002.67(2) (b), F.S.

The link for Policy Number OEL-IM-0041-06 instructional hours for the VPK program is:  
<http://www.floridajobs.org/earlylearning/documents/OEL%20IM%200041%2006.pdf>

## **Non-Instructional Days:**

Non-instructional days are days that the provider chooses to be closed (holidays, teacher planning days, etc.), as well as days that the provider chooses not to provide VPK services but may be open and operating. In this example, the provider may charge private pay parents the cost for that care, but they must let the parent(s) know ahead of time what the VPK non-instructional days will be in case the parent would like to make other arrangements. If a provider serves children who receive a child care subsidy, the provider would be paid the full day regular rate for children on non-instructional days.

## **Field Trips:**

VPK programs are allowed to take field trips. However, the field trip must be documented as a curriculum activity and must be part of the lesson plan. You can not use a recreational activity as a learning activity.

## **Curriculum Requirements**

### **Curriculum:**

Each VPK provider's curriculum must be developmentally appropriate, designed to prepare a student for early literacy, enhance the age-appropriate progress of students in attaining the state-adopted performance standards, and prepare students to be ready to learn based on the statewide kindergarten screening (Section 1002.67(2) (b), Florida Statutes). VPK providers may select or design the curriculum for their classrooms, unless on probation for continued failure to meet kindergarten readiness rates.

Four-year-old children are very curious and inquisitive by nature. Subsequently, the curriculum used in a VPK classroom should include active learning experiences that are child-initiated, as well as those planned and initiated by the teacher. The curriculum should be developmentally appropriate, meaning that it is appropriate for four-year-olds and can be modified for individual four-year-olds that have skills at either end of a developmental continuum (individually appropriate). Also, the teacher should take into account a child's personal

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knowledge, often related to culture (culturally appropriate), and then use this information to build on a child's strength and skills when planning the curriculum.

**Note: It is developmentally inappropriate to use a kindergarten curriculum with prekindergarten students.**

For more information about the curricula in VPK classrooms, the VPK Education Standards, Emergent Literacy Training, and other services offered by DOE/OEL, please visit their website at [www.myfloridaeducation.com/earlylearning](http://www.myfloridaeducation.com/earlylearning) or call (850) 245-0445.

### **Literacy and Florida VPK Standards Training**

#### **Literacy Training:**

The Department of Education (DOE) Emergent Literacy for VPK is recommended for all Lead Instructors in the VPK classroom as of November, 2005. This is a 5-hour on-line course. Approved five-hour Emergent Literacy Courses completed before November, 2005 are accepted. The 5 hour DOE on-line Emergent Literacy course is necessary for all Directors as they meet the VPK Director Endorsement Credential requirement.

- The course is offered on-line at [www.myflorida.com/childcare](http://www.myflorida.com/childcare), select training requirements and then on-line training courses. You can also receive the training information from ELCFV on a DVD with an accompanying manual.
- The DOE Emergent Literacy training provides .5 CEU's, which is helpful in the process of renewing CDA credentials.
- Having all VPK staff trained in DOE Emergent Literacy makes for a more qualified and diverse staff if you encounter the need to rearrange staffing patterns in your program.
- This course can be taken by anyone, even if they are not a VPK provider.

#### **Florida Performance Standards for VPK Training:**

The Department of Education has created Performance Standards for VPK just as it has created them for grades kindergarten through twelve. The standards cover eight domains of development:

- Physical Health
- Approaches to Learning
- Social and Emotional Development
- Language and Communication
- Emergent Literacy
- Mathematical and Scientific Thinking

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- Social Studies and The Arts
- Motor Development

The goals set forth in the standards are intended to be reached by the *end* of the child's VPK year. It is the purpose of the VPK program to develop the whole child and to have the child ready to learn upon entering kindergarten. The key word here is "whole" child not just their academic abilities.

It is the *recommendation* of Best Practices of the ELCFV that **Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Standards** training should be completed by all VPK staff. It is the responsibility of the provider to acquire this training for VPK staff.

Scheduled VPK trainings including **Florida VPK Education Standards** trainings are advertised on-line at [www.myflorida.com/childcare](http://www.myflorida.com/childcare). Select "Click to Register", then "Instructor Led". You will be asked to enter your name and social security or ID number. After verifying your demographic information, you will choose the date range, county where training will be held and type of training. Choose "VPK Training Providers". Scroll down to Step 2; you will see currently scheduled training. Scroll down to step 3 to register. Staff working with any age group may register for VPK training. VPK training currently being offered includes:

- **Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Standards:** ELCFV Best Practices recommend that VPK teachers complete this FREE three (3) hour module. It provides an overview of the Standards and examples of developmentally appropriate instructional techniques for four year old children. **.3 CEU's are earned for completing this training.**
- **Integrating the VPK Standards:** This is an optional FREE two (2) hour training that focuses on the Emergent Literacy domain of the Performance Standards for VPK. This module provides participants the opportunity to create a developmentally appropriate activity, related to a benchmark in phonological awareness, to implement in the classroom. **.2 CEU's are earned for completing this training.** VPK Standards training is a prerequisite. Participants may choose to complete a practicum to earn an additional .3 CEU's.
- **Emergent Literacy in the VPK Classroom:** This is an optional FREE ten (10) hour training that provides a practical classroom implementation of emergent reading, emergent writing, oral language and communication and environment. It includes hands-on activities to assist in understanding the concepts. **1 full CEU is earned for completing this training.** VPK Standards training is a prerequisite.

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## VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate

### Readiness Rate:

The VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate measures how well a VPK provider prepares four-year-olds to be ready to learn for kindergarten based on the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS).

The FLKRS is administered to children within the first 30 days of kindergarten. As required by law, the FLKRS is aligned with the *Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Standards*. The FLKRS includes a subset of the Early Childhood Observation System (ECHOS) and an observational instrument used to monitor the skills, knowledge, and behaviors a student demonstrates or needs to develop. It also includes a subset of the Broad Screen, a measure of early literacy skills including letter naming and phonemic awareness.

The maximum VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate possible is **300**. Readiness rates are calculated for all VPK providers that served at least four (4) children who were in attendance for at least 70-percent of either the School-Year or Summer VPK program (have substantially completed the program) participated in the FLKRS kindergarten screening.

### VPK Provider Readiness Rate Website:

Rates for providers who served children during the 2005-06 or 2006-07 and 2007-08 program years are published at:

[www.vpk.fldoe.org](http://www.vpk.fldoe.org)

For additional information, please refer to the ELCFV website at [www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org) click on VPK for Providers and scroll to VPK Provider Readiness Rate for a power point presentation of the 2006-07 VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate Provider Verification training and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).

Readiness rates will be re-calculated each year as a method of measuring the performance of providers in preparing Florida's four-year-olds to be ready to learn for kindergarten.

The State Board of Education sets the minimum readiness rate. **A Low Performing Provider (LPP)** is a VPK provider whose readiness rate is at or below the bottom 15-percent of all providers' readiness rates.

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Providers who fall below the minimum readiness rate will be notified by mail and required to:

- acknowledge their status
- create an improvement plan
- include in their plan a list of actions already taken or proposed to be taken, and a timeline to implement the proposed actions
- complete periodic progress reports

## Useful Links:

- For information about the VPK education standards, kindergarten screening, curricula, professional development, and accountability, please contact the **Florida Department of Education, Office of Early Learning** at:

[www.fldoe.org/earlylearning](http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning)

1-866-447-1159

- For information about the improvement process and all other day-to-day operations of the VPK Education Program, please contact the Agency for Workforce Innovation, Office of Early Learning at:

[www.earlylearningflorida.org](http://www.earlylearningflorida.org)

1-866-357-3239

- For information about provider licensing and credentials, please contact the Department of Children and Families at:

[www.dcf.state.fl.us/childcare](http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/childcare)

## VPK Program Monitoring

### VPK Program Monitoring:

ELCFV will monitor VPK providers for compliance with the terms and conditions documented on the AWI-VPK Form 20 (Statewide Provider Agreement), AWI-VPK Form 10 and AWI-VPK Form 11, including details as outlined in Florida Statue 1002.55 (2) and 1002.61 (2) as appropriate, dependent upon whether the provider is offering a school year or summer program.

# **Voluntary Prekindergarten Provider Policy and Procedure Manual**

## **VPK Monitoring will be Unannounced:**

The monitoring procedure will consist of a combination of review of documentation and site visits.

The AWI-VPK 10 will be monitored to verify the provider has identified the curriculum they will be using for each of the eight (8) domains of the VPK Performance Standards and cross checked with the on-site monitoring visit.

Reimbursement staff will monitor attendance/billing information monthly for any indications of non-compliance with the providers' approved calendar. Any irregularities identified will result in an on-site visit from ELCFV staff within 10 working days, to ensure the provider can still meet the 540-hour or the 300-hour VPK instructional requirements.

During the monitoring visit, the following will be verified:

- The sign in/out sheets contain the parent's name
- The monthly attendance verification forms are complete with the parent signature
- The Parental Choice forms are on-site and signed currently at the end of every month.
- The Director that is identified on-site is the Director shown in the VPK contract file
- The staff in the VPK classroom are the staff shown in the VPK contract file
- The number of children in the VPK classes does not exceed the class size shown in the VPK contract file
- The operating hours of the VPK class(s) are posted and match the hours shown in the VPK contract file
- The curriculum being used matches the one(s) identified in the VPK contract file

## **VPK Certificate of Eligibility (COE)**

### **VPK Child Enrollment Policy:**

It is the policy of Early Learning Coalition of Flagler and Volusia Counties to have a "single point of entry" to provide an integrated information system that allows a parent to enroll his or her child in the VPK program at various locations throughout Flagler and Volusia Counties.

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## VPK Child Enrollment Procedure:

During the face to face appointment, the parent provides the following information: Proof of child's age (birth certificate, immunization records, etc), proof of Florida residency (Florida driver's license, electric bill, etc), and the child's social security number (optional):

The Parent is given directions on how to access the ELCFV website for provider profiles. This website provides the parent a choice of VPK school year/summer approved private and faith-based child care centers, family homes, and the school districts of Flagler and Volusia Counties programs. If a parent is unable to access the internet, they are given a list of approved VPK providers and provided with information necessary to make an informed decision as to which VPK provider will best suit their needs. Parents are advised that providers cannot place contingencies upon VPK enrollment requirements, and that there should not be any fees charged to parents during the VPK program hours. The prospective VPK parent is also advised that the VPK provider should make available to the parent copies of their programs following information:

- Written procedures allowing parental access at any time to the program
- The provider's attendance policy
- The provider's discipline policy

ELCFV staff fills out the Certificate of Eligibility (COE) (AWI-VPK 02) which is on NCR and retains the white copy to be placed in the child's file. The Parent receives both the pink and yellow copies of the COE and is instructed to give both copies to the provider upon enrolling their child in a VPK program.

## Provider Enrollment of VPK Eligible Child

During the VPK provider enrollment process the following will occur:

- Providers may not enroll children into a VPK program until they have been approved by ELCFV to operate a VPK program and have signed a Statewide Provider Agreement. A provider may make a copy of the child's COE and hold on a waiting list until such time as the provider has completed the necessary step to operate VPK.
- Families wishing to enroll in your VPK program must present the yellow and pink completed original Certificate of Eligibility (COE). "Complete" means that block I and II of the COE have been completed and the COE has been signed by both the parent and ELCFV Eligibility staff. The provider and parent/guardian should jointly complete Section III of the COE. The provider retains the yellow copy of the carbonless document and the parent receives the pink copy.
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- The yellow copy of the COE must be retained by the provider in the child's enrollment file for 5 years, this rule applies even if the child transfers or withdraws from your program. Parents leaving your VPK program and intending to enroll in another VPK program must be directed to ELCFV to obtain a new certificate

Section IV of the COE is completed by ELCFV staff in the event a child transfers to another VPK program. ELCFV will estimate the remaining hours a child needs to complete a 540 hour session or a 300 hour session.

However, in lieu of the provider completing the printed directions shown in Block IV of the COE, the following procedure has been established for tracking your reimbursable VPK enrollment.

- The form "Voluntary Pre Kindergarten Classroom Enrollees" is included in your VPK Application Workshop packet or can be downloaded from the ELCFV website under "Commonly Used Forms".
- As you are creating your classroom rosters, using the Classroom Enrollee form, for a new VPK program session, record each child's information from your copy of the COE. The "Date Enrolled" column should show the first day of your program for children that are pre-enrolled, or the date "physically attended" for children who enroll after your program has started.
- Once a Classroom Enrollee form is received from the VPK provider, the COE number will be matched with the assigned COE number in the ELCFV data system (EFS) and the child will be enrolled the provider's VPK program.

# Voluntary Prekindergarten Provider Policy and Procedure Manual

STATE OF FLORIDA  
VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN  
EDUCATION PROGRAM

## Child Eligibility and Enrollment Certificate

<b>I. CERTIFICATE OF CHILD ELIGIBILITY</b> <i>(Issued by the Early Learning Coalition of Flagler/Volusia)</i>			
Print in black or blue ink			
1. VPK program year:	2. Certificate number:  Replaces Certificate Number:	3. Certificate issue date:	4. Enrollment: <input type="checkbox"/> New enrollment <input type="checkbox"/> Re-enrollment
5. Parent or guardian name:	6. Work telephone:	7. Home telephone:	8. Other telephone:
9. Home address:			
10. City:		11. State:	12. Zip + 4 Code:
13. Child's full name:		14. Child's date of birth:	15. S.S. # (optional):
16. Preferred Program type: <input type="checkbox"/> School-year program (540 hours) <input type="checkbox"/> Summer program (300 hours)			

## II. PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (CERTIFIED BY PARENT/GUARDIAN)

I CERTIFY THAT I HAVE RECEIVED A COPY OF THE VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN PARENT HANDBOOK AND HAVE REVIEWED AND UNDERSTAND THE PARENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES CONTAINED IN THIS DOCUMENT.

PARENT SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ORIENTATION STAFF: \_\_\_\_\_

### PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

Your child's social security number is requested under s. 119.071 (5)(a)2, F.S., for use in the records and data systems of the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI), Department of Education (DOE), school districts, and early learning coalitions. If you submit your child's social security number, it will be used for routine identification of your child and for correlation of your child's results on the statewide kindergarten screening to the provider or school that serves your child in the VPK program for purposes of assigning the provider or school a kindergarten readiness rate under s. 1002.69, F.S. Submission of your child's social security number on this form is voluntary and not a condition of enrollment in the VPK program.

## III. ADMISSION BY PROVIDER OR SCHOOL *(Jointly Prepared by Provider or School AND Parent or Guardian)*

17. Name of provider or school:	18. Daytime telephone:	19. Fax:
20. Address of VPK site:	21. VPK class: (e.g., A, B, C)	22. Date child will begin attendance:
<b>The provider or school certifies that it admits the child (item 13) for enrollment in the VPK program and agrees to deliver the program for the child.</b>		<b>I certify that I choose the provider or school (item 17) to deliver the VPK program for my child and direct that program funds be paid to the provider or school for my child.</b>
23. Provider or school signature:	24. Date:	25. Parent or guardian signature:
		26. Date:

<p><b>ENROLLMENT SUBMISSION AND CONFIRMATION</b> <i>(Submitted by Provider or School) TO PROVIDER OR SCHOOL:</i> Your certificate number authorizes the Early Learning Coalition to make payments for the VPK program. Upon enrollment of the child, enter the certificate number on the VPK Prekindergarten Classroom Enrollees Form. Fax this form to Early Learning Coalition of Flagler &amp; Volusia at (386) 323-2426.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Transfer Estimate Remaining Hours: _____ Previous Provider: _____ Telephone Number: _____</p>	<p><b>TO CONTACT THE COALITION FOR PAYMENT:</b> Early Learning Coalition of Flagler and Volusia 230 North Beach Street Daytona Beach, Florida 32114 (386) 323-2400 <a href="http://www.elcfv.org">www.elcfv.org</a></p>
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**NOTICE TO PRIVATE PROVIDER OR PUBLIC SCHOOL:** A Private provider or public school must keep each original signed form for at least 5 years. A private provider must permit the Early Learning Coalition, and a public school must permit the School District, to inspect the original signed forms during normal business hours. If required by the Early Learning Coalition, a signed copy of this certificate must be forwarded to the Coalition or a qualified contractor acting on behalf of the Coalition.

# Voluntary Prekindergarten Provider Policy and Procedure Manual

## VPK Enrollment/Change Notification

It is important to establish the children enrolled in your VPK program as soon as possible, especially if you are opting to select an Advance Payment for the start of your VPK session.

Your Advanced Payment is based on names of children enrolled 6 weeks prior to the start of your program. It is recommended that you send in the Enrollees Form each time you add a child. Remember, you must be an approved VPK Provider before you begin enrolling children into a VPK Program.

- As children are accepted into your program and added to your VPK roster, please add them to the “Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Classroom Enrollees” form and fax the updated information to 386-323-2432 attention: ELCFV Reimbursement Coordinator, by the end of each business day, until each classroom roster is filled. This form will be part of your VPK Application Workshop packet. If additional pages are needed they may be downloaded from the ELCFV website [www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org) under VPK then under Commonly Used Forms.
- If a child leaves your VPK program, show the name and requested information on the “Voluntary Pre Kindergarten Classroom Disenrollment” form. This form will be part of your VPK Application Workshop packet. It can also be downloaded from the ELCV website [www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org) under VPK then Commonly Used Forms. Fax the amended information and any required documentation, to 386-323-2432 attention: ELCFV Reimbursement Coordinator.
- If you have been approved to operate more than one VPK classroom and you and the parent agree to move a child into a different classroom, it is important to complete the “Voluntary Pre kindergarten Classroom Transfers” form. This form will be part of your VPK Application Workshop packet and can also be downloaded from the ELCFV website [www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org). This form includes the procedure to follow in the event that children are transferred from one classroom to another within your VPK Program. Fax this information to 385-323-2432 attention: Reimbursement Coordinator by the end of the business day.
- Once your VPK program session is up and running, any changes to classroom rosters must be noted on the aforementioned forms and forwarded to ELCFV.

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- Remember, accurate rosters are your link to accurate funding.

## VPK Reimbursement

### **VPK Provider Reimbursement:**

Before payment is disbursed to the provider, the VPK attendance sheet that a provider submits at the end of the month will be reviewed by a Reimbursement Specialist. The VPK 80:20 Attendance Rule guidelines will be applied to the absences that are recorded on the submitted attendance sheet.

### **VPK 80:20 Attendance Rule:**

Below are the highlights of the procedures that VPK providers will follow under the new Uniform Attendance Policy:

1. Providers will still be responsible for submitting the monthly attendance sheets and, for completing and retaining, the Parental Choice Form that is signed by the parent at the end of each month.
2. Providers will be paid for absences that do not exceed 20% of the programs instructional hours per month. Absences that exceed 20% per month will not be paid, unless it is determined at the end of the 540 instructional hour program that the overall absences did not exceed 20%.
3. Providers will no longer need to submit absence documentation with the VPK attendance sheet in order to be paid for absences up to 20% of the programs instructional hours per month. Absences over 20% of the instructional hours per month will not be paid under any circumstances.

**Example:** If a given month of a VPK program operating a 3-hour a day program has 20 days of operation that would equal 60 hours of VPK for that month. 20% of 60 hours is 12 hours or 4 days that would be paid as absence. A child's absence over 4 days that month would not be paid. If a child was absent 6 days, 2 days would not be paid.

20% of a 540 instructional hour program is 108 hours. For a 3-hour per day program that would be 36 days over the entire VPK program time frame. So in the above scenario, if by the end of the program the child only had 30 absences total, you would receive an adjustment that would pay for the above 2 days.

Any questions, please call Julie Koslik on (386) 323-2400 ext. 148 or via e-mail: [jkoslik@elcfv.org](mailto:jkoslik@elcfv.org).

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An instructional day is payable on which the **child attends** the VPK program, either in whole or in part.

Payable absences cannot be claimed for instructional days before the child's first day of attendance or after the child's last day of attendance.

Note: Each provider is responsible for creating their own attendance policy. The providers' attendance policy should not follow the states policy which is intended to address the provider and the state's policy on how absences can be reimbursed. Each of your VPK families must be given a copy of your attendance policy and a copy is also required for your VPK provider file with ELCFV. Your goal as a VPK provider is to provide a program that will allow a child to be ready to learn upon entering Kindergarten. Therefore your objective is to have the children in attendance and involved in the learning activities you have planned.

### **Emergency Closure:**

- Closures caused by circumstances beyond the provider's control are payable if the provider submits to ELCFV, written documentation, which explains the nature of the closure, and that it is temporary.
- Documentation is not required if government offices or public schools in the provider's county are closed because a state of emergency is declared to exist.
- For a temporary closure to be payable it cannot exceed 10 instructional days per closure. If circumstances cause more than one temporary closure, the combined total for payment cannot exceed 10 instructional days.
- The combined total of one or more temporary closures that exceeds 10 instructional days must be made up by the provider by revising the class schedule. Keep in mind that the revised schedule cannot extend beyond the last day by which the VPK program is required to complete instruction.
- 
- Temporary closures caused by circumstances within a providers control are not payable and must be made up by revising the class schedule as previously stated.
- A temporary closure is not payable if a provider does not reopen and resume instruction after the closure.

# Voluntary Prekindergarten Provider Policy and Procedure Manual

Need help understanding the mandate? Just give the VPK office a call and we will be glad to help (386) 323-2400 Ext. 148.

## VPK Payment Options

**Reimbursement Payment:** means that you will be paid after the end of the month based on actual enrollment and attendance records for that month.

### **Advance Payment:**

- The VPK provider must notify the ELCFV regarding whether or not it has chosen to receive advance payments at the time it signs its Statewide Provider Agreement for the upcoming program year. (If a provider has already signed paperwork and not notified the coalition, the provider should do so as soon as possible.) Under the Advance Payment rule, providers cannot opt-in or opt-out of receiving advance payments after classes begin.
- The ELCFV shall make advance payments to VPK providers no later than the last day of the month prior to the month for which the provider is receiving an advance payment. As a specific example, a coalition must make April advance payments no later than March 31.
- Providers that choose to accept monthly advance payments shall receive an advance payment for each month of the VPK class (es).
- Each advance payment shall be equal to the sum of the number of instructional hours each student enrolled in the class is scheduled to attend in the month multiplied by 95% of the VPK hourly rate. The VPK hourly rate shall be equal to the county's allocation per child divided by the total number of hours in the VPK program type (school-year or summer) being offered.
- Reconciliation of the advance payment against student attendance will occur monthly. The 80-20 formula described above will be used to determine the
- total payment amount the provider has earned based on attendance. Because of the time required to process attendance rosters, the reconciliation for the first advance payment may alter the payment for the third month of the class in the same way that prepayments are currently processed. In other words a provider which received an advance payment for April will submit its roster in May. The coalition will process the roster in May and compare the amount the provider earned to the amount of the provider's advance payment. If the

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provider was overpaid or underpaid for April, the coalition will adjust the amount of the provider's advance payment for June.

- After each class has ended, the 80-20 formula will be applied for the entire class period. This calculation may reveal that additional funds are due to the provider or may reveal that the provider received an overpayment.

As part of your VPK Application Workshop packet you will receive a W-9 form. This form can also be downloaded from the ELCFV website [www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org) under VPK then Commonly Used Forms.

When the coalition receives this completed form from you, the payment structure for your program will be established and you will be recognized as an eligible VPK provider.

Notes:

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## Maintaining Accurate Program Information

During the operation of your VPK Program, there may be occasions when you experience change(s). If changes occur it is extremely important that you notify the Provider Contracts Coordinator by submitting the proper forms to ELCFV. The following is a summary of possible changes that might occur within your program and how ELCFV should be notified:

- **Change in Program name:** In this situation, the owner, director and location are remaining unchanged. The Provider has notified the ELCFV Resource and Referral Department and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and has received a new license under the new name.

For the transition of your VPK contract with the ELCFV, please access the form titled "VPK Provider Name Change" found on the ELCFV website, [www.eclfv.org](http://www.eclfv.org), under VPK then the Commonly Used Forms link. Follow the instructions on the form for submission to the ELCFV Provider Contracts Coordinator.

- **Change of Ownership: ELCFV MUST be notified immediately when there is a change in ownership.** When there is a change in ownership the new owner does not automatically inherit the former owners VPK program. The new owner must apply to become a VPK provider and can not start to offer services until they have been approved by ELCFV. Children enrolled in the previous owner's VPK program can request a transfer to the new owner's program once the VPK program has been approved. The new provider will not be reimbursed for services rendered until they are formally recognized by ELCFV as a VPK provider.

The ELCFV Resource and Referral Department and Department of Children and Families must be notified when a provider is in the process of changing ownership. DCF must inspect the facility for compliance and issue a new license. When a child care facility providing VPK services changes owners, a complete VPK application packet must be submitted by the new owner. This involves AWI VPK 10 and 11 forms and all supporting documents. A new calendar must be created whereby the new owner will deliver a full 540 instructional hours. In this situation, one provider contract will end and a new provider contract will begin. It may happen that there is a lapse of time between contracts. Please be aware, during that lapse no funding is released for enrolled VPK children. Providers changing ownership must make their enrolled families aware of the change in ownership, that funding may lapse and private pay arrangements may need to be made. Additionally, the

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children's Certificate of Eligibility (COE) expires at the end of the provider's contract. A re-enrollment COE must be obtained by the parent from ELCFV in order to enroll with a different Provider already operating or to enroll at the same facility with the new owner.

For a transition of your VPK contract with ELCFV, please access the form titled "VPK Provider Change of Ownership" found on the ELCFV website, [www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org), under VPK then Commonly Used Forms. Follow the instructions on the form for submission to the ELCFV Provider Contracts Coordinator.

- **Change in Program Location:** In this case, the Provider name, owner and director are remaining the same. The change is in the physical location (address) of the facility. This change must first be confirmed through the Department of Children and Families Licensing with the issuance of a new license. The ELCFV Resource and Referral Department must be notified as well as the Reimbursement Department.

There is an additional consideration involved in address change process. The VPK children enrolled in your program will need to be moved as well. To do this the parents will need to do one of the following:

1. Obtain a new COE from their nearest ELCFV office to transfer to the new location
- OR**
2. Complete a "Parent Consent to Transfer Child (ren) in the Event of their Provider Relocation" form.

**Do not move VPK funded children** to the new location until the change has been approved through the ELCFV Provider Contracts Coordinator. To do so causes a non-refundable lapse in funding effective from the date the children were moved, and creating the need to extend the Provider's VPK calendar in order to fulfill the 540 instructional hour requirement.

For the transition of your VPK contract with ELCFV, please access the form titled "VPK Provider Change of Address" found on the ELCFV website, [www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org), under VPK then under Commonly Used Forms link. Follow the instructions on the form for submission to the ELCFV Provider Contracts Coordinator.

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- **Change in Director:** The Provider owner, location and name are remaining unchanged. The change involves the replacement of one director with another. This change must first be confirmed through Department of Children and Families Licensing with the issuance of either a new or provisional license.

For the transition of your VPK contract with ELCF, please access the form titled "VPK Provider Change of Director" found on the ELCFV website, [www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org), under VPK then Commonly Used Forms link.

- **Changes to Your Classroom Capacity, Curriculum, or to dissolve a classroom:**
  1. To increase or decrease the capacity of a classroom, use the form entitled "Coalition Notification of Changes to Provider's VPK Program" found on the ELCFV website, [www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org), under VPK then under the Commonly Used Forms link.

When increasing the capacity of a classroom, remember that an assistant must also be added. There are blocks on this form to do both changes for the classroom indicated. Of course decreasing the classroom capacity will allow you to also show the removal of the assistant.

2. Changes in curriculum information should be submitted to ELCFV. The new curriculum information is important if it differs from what was initially recorded on the AWI-VPK Form 11 at the time of application approval. There is a block on the "Coalition Notification of Changes to Provider's VPK Program" form to show this information.
3. The dissolving of a classroom may occur when a Provider received approval to operate multiple classrooms. During the course of the VPK Program, the provider may realize that enrollment does not justify the number of classrooms approved. A Provider can transfer children to another class and dissolve the now empty class. Use form "Coalition Notification of Changes to Provider's VPK Program" to indicate that change in the block provided. Please see the section on Transferring Children to classrooms within your VPK Program for instruction on moving the children.

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- **Temporary Change in Staffing:** This would be referred to as substitute staff. The VPK provider is required, when the approved instructor(s) assigned to a VPK class are absent or have terminated employment, to temporarily assign a substitute teacher who has the required credentials. The procedures require a private provider that assigns a substitute to notify the coalition. If, after 10 consecutive instructional days, a private provider does not assign a substitute instructor who has the required credentials, the procedures require the provider to give the coalition a written description of efforts to find an instructor who has the credentials.

The substitute instructor procedures if not followed may allow the coalition to take enforcement action on a provider if, after 20 consecutive instructional days, the provider does not assign a substitute instructor or instructor who has the required credentials. Note: A substitute instructor, whether the instructor has the required credentials, must comply with the level II background screening requirements in Section 1002.55(3)(d), 1002.61(5), or 1002.63(6), F.S.

Use the "Coalition Notification of Change to Provider's VPK Program" form to make ELCFV aware of the use of a substitute. This form is found on the ELCFV website, [www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org), under VPK then on the Commonly Used Forms link.

- **Permanent Change in Staffing:** In the event of any changes in VPK classroom staffing, the Coalition must be notified immediately. The second and third blocks on form "Coalition Notification of Changes to Provider's VPK Program" are where you will put this information. **Remember**, you must also include the necessary documentation of credential, level II background screening and emergent literacy for the lead teacher position and necessary documentation for the teacher assistant. **You may not receive reimbursement until new staff has been approved in writing by the ELCFV.**
- **Changes in VPK Calendars and daily schedules and non-instructional days cannot be made once they have been initially approved.**

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## Pre-Printed Attendance Roster

### Pre-Printed Attendance Rosters:

The current months pre-printed attendance roster will be mailed to you, the Provider, by the 30<sup>th</sup> of the previous month. When completing the attendance roster please adhere to the following:

- Mark an "X" for present and an "E" for absent. "T" is used to indicate a child had terminated enrollment in your VPK program.
- The original signed absence documentation should be retained in the child's enrollment file. A copy of the signed absence documentation should accompany the completed attendance roster that you fax to ELCFV on the last day of the month after the attendance has been recorded.
- If you have a child in your VPK program that did not pre-print on the current month attendance roster, write their name in and record the days of their attendance. Also, notify the ELCFV office and make sure they received the Classroom Enrollee form that you faxed when the child enrolled.
- If a child pre-prints on the current month attendance roster, and is no longer attending your program, draw a line through the name, and note the last day of attendance. Also, notify the ELCFV office and make sure they received the Classroom Disenrollment form that you faxed when the child left your program.
- The provider should return the pre-printed Attendance Roster (all pages signed by the Director) and a copy of all required signed absence documentations to the ELCFV Reimbursement Coordinator.
- Attendance forms and absence documentation can be faxed to the ELCFV office at (386) 323-2432, attention Reimbursement Coordinator or personally delivered by 4:00 p.m. on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the following month. Remember, all faxed documents must be of legible copy quality, and must be followed up by the original attendance forms and absence documentation via mail or personal delivery to the ELCFV office at 230 North Beach Street, Daytona Beach, FL 32114, by the 5<sup>th</sup> working day of the month.

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- A copy of the completed pre-printed attendance roster should be retained at the Provider facility for 5 years with absence documentation copies for your records.

If a child has terminated enrollment in the VPK program, place the letter T after the X when completing the attendance roster. The last X marks the last day a child attended the for VPK services. If the letters X, E, or T are not in the space, ELCFV will mark the undocumented column as a non-payable day.

### **Most Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Regarding Reimbursement**

- **What if the Provider does not fax or personally deliver the attendance roster and the mailed copy does not arrive by the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the month?** Any attendance roster received after the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the following month but before the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the following month (**grace period**) will be processed in the following month. (NO EXCEPTIONS)
- **What if the Provider does not fax or personally deliver the attendance roster and the mailed copy does not arrive by the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month?** Attendance rosters not received by the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the following month will be considered **NON-REIMBURSABLE**. (NO EXCEPTIONS)
- **How does ELCFV use your attendance rosters to calculate your reimbursement?** ELCFV receives your completed attendance roster by fax and the original is by mail or hand delivered by the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the following month. ELCFV matches up your attendance roster information with the Enhanced Field System (EFS), which maintains the placement status of enrolled VPK children. Then ELCFV will match your hand written enrollees, and withdrawals on the attendance roster with the records that have been created by the roster updates that you have faxed in during the month. (Enrollees form, Disenrollment form, etc.). ELCFV will attempt to contact the Provider regarding any information that does not match. Finally, ELCFV will calculate the amount owed to the Provider.

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- **Who is responsible for reconciling the Provider's reimbursement payments?** It is the Provider's responsibility to review the reimbursement summary, provided by the ELCFV Finance Staff, each month. An instruction for reviewing your reimbursement summary follows. If the Provider fails to report underpayments or names of children which have been omitted from the reimbursement summary, within 15 calendar days of the receipt of the reimbursement summary, the underpayment shall be considered non-reimbursable. Underpayments should be reported to ELCFV Finance Staff at (386) 323-323-2400 Ext. 148. Additionally, the provider is required to report any overpayment to the ELCFV Finance Staff at (386) 323-323-2400 Ext. 148.
  
- **What will be different about the last 2 (two) VPK program month's Pre-Payment amounts?** If you have chosen to receive the advance payment option, please note that your final 2 (two) VPK program months will be pre-paid at 50%. This rule will avoid any overpayments that may develop toward the end of your program year. The ELCFV will reconcile your attendance rosters at the end of each of these months and reimburse your actual attendance. This will avoid the potential hardship of a Provider having to pay back possible overpayments.

### **Notes:**

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## Payment Reconciliation/Reimbursement Summary

### How to reconcile your payment against your reimbursement summary:

- With the reimbursement check or direct deposit acknowledgement the provider will receive a copy of their submitted attendance sheet, which has been marked to show the payable days for each child on the roster.
  - The provider will also receive a form called the Final Provider Reimbursement Report generated through input into the EFS.
  - The total number of days attended on the Attendance Sheet should match the Total Days on the Final Provider Reimbursement Report. The provider can then review the forms line by line to determine if there are discrepancies.
  - Calculate the number of children multiplied by the number of hours multiplied by the reimbursement rate. The rate is \$4.57 per hour for Volusia County and \$4.55 per hour for Flagler County (The rates stated are current as of June 2009)
  - If you selected the "Advanced Payment" option, you have already been paid for the number of children you had at the end of last month, multiplied by the total number of instructional hours available for the month, multiplied by the reimbursement rate.
  - Using your calculation from the actual month's attendance roster as the true reflection of the month's activity, you will very likely see a difference in the amount advance paid and the actual amount that is reimbursable.
1. This actual amount could be larger than what was advance paid, maybe you added children during the month, or it could be less than you were prepaid. This could result from children withdrawing during the month, or not being documented correctly for absences, making days non-reimbursable. So, part of your check amount is going to be that positive or negative adjusted amount from the previous month.

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The balance of your check is going to be the "Advanced Payment" for the current month. That pre-payment is determined by the number of children you have enrolled at the end of the previous month, multiplied by the total number of instructional hours available for the month, multiplied by the reimbursement rate.

- Remember, adjustments are the result of the actual way the month "plays out" and are the result of your attendance sheet forms. Those adjustments are made to your pre-payment for the month after the month ends.
- If you have chosen the "Reimbursement" option, you receive no advance payment for the month. Your true reimbursement amount is calculated right off your attendance sheets. You receive your payment after the month is over. A Provider will operate for the first month without receiving payment, but you can see where this option provides a more immediately accurate reimbursement. Providers have a choice, at the time of application approval, as to the option that best meets their needs.
- Remember to always review your payment information when you receive it, and report any discrepancies to the ELCFV as soon as possible. Underpayments will be considered non-reimbursable if they are not reported within 15 days of your receipt of the reimbursement summary. Overpayments must also be reported within the 15 day timeframe as well.

Notes:

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## Student Attendance/Parental Choice Certificate

### Student Attendance and Parental Choice Certificate (Short Form):

- Each VPK Provider must require the parent of each VPK child in your VPK program to verify their child's attendance by completing "Student Attendance and Parental Choice Certificate" form on a monthly basis.
- You will receive the form with the VPK child's information pre-printed with your first attendance roster or within a few days after a child enrolls in your VPK classroom. If you do not receive this form notify the ELCFV office as soon as possible on (386) 323-2400 Ext 148 or the form can be downloaded from the ELCFV website, [www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org), under VPK then the Commonly Used Forms link.

This form allows the parent to verify the attendance that was recorded for their child's attendance in your VPK program. It also further certifies that the parent continues to choose you as their child's VPK Provider, and directs that you be funded for the program you provided.

- The parent of your VPK child should complete this form at the end of each month. Each month is recorded on a separate line. Remember, this form must be kept at your facility for monitoring purposes and retained at your site for at least 5 years, per our contract with the Agency for Workforce Innovation. So, obtain all your parent signatures on site. **Do not** send these forms home to obtain the parent signature.

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## ELCFV Grievance Policy/Procedure

**Provider Grievance Policy:** Any grievance made to ELCFV by a Provider must be made in accordance with the following procedure:

- a) The grievance must be set forth clearly and comprehensively in writing and delivered to the office of the ELCFV within ten (10) days of the date of incidence. If there is a legal basis of any kind to the grievance that should be referenced in the writing with as much specificity as reasonably possible, including, by example, but not limitation, reference to policy, procedure, statute, regulation, case law or executive order. If there are third parties who are pertinent to the grievance, contact information for the third parties and any known representative, including but not limited to legal counsel, acting on their behalf should be provided.
- b) Within ten (10) days of the second meeting of the ELCFV Board following receipt by the ELCFV of the grievance the Provider will be informed, in writing, of the decision of the ELCFV.
- c) The decision of the ELCFV is final unless, in the complete discretion of the ELCFV, it is determined that good cause exists for reconsideration. If a Provider believes good cause may exist for reconsideration of a decision by the ELCFV and wishes for the ELCFV to reconsider a decision then the Provider should set forth the basis for reconsideration in writing and deliver the writing to the office of the ELCFV. The ELCFV will respond to any request for reconsideration in the same manner as with any grievance made originally as set forth above. There is not appeals process for grievances made with the ELCFV.
- d) Prior to instituting any litigation with the ELCFV the Provider must first receive a final decision on the grievance, as set forth in paragraphs 1-3 above. In addition, after receiving the final decision, the Provider must request that the ELCFV participate in a mediation conference with the Provider. The request must be in writing and delivered to the office of the ELCFV. It is within the complete discretion of the ELCFV to accept or deny the request. Acceptance may be conditioned upon participation in the mediation conference by third parties who are pertinent to the grievance. Within ten (10) days of receipt of the request the
- e) ELCFV will inform the provider in writing whether the request is accepted or denied.
- f) If the request is accepted the mediator will be mutually agreed and the entire cost of mediation will be borne by the Provider unless otherwise mutually agreed. If the request is denied the decision of the ELCFV is final. Mediation must be held within sixty (60) days of the date of written acceptance by the ELCFV unless otherwise mutually agreed. Mediation is to be held in the county of the business office of the Provider making the grievance.
- g) Grievances about Providers are to be dealt with by the Providers and will not be considered by the ELCFV. It is recommended that the Provider have a grievance procedure in place which is likely to result in resolution of any grievance which may or may not include mediation.

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**VPK Contact Log**

**Suzanne Ray, VPK Eligibility Specialist 386-323-2400 Ext. 115.**  
Please contact me regarding child enrollments, transfers, termination, Certificates of Eligibility, re-enrollments, and estimated remaining hours.

**Julie Koslik, Reimbursement Coordinator 386-323-2400 Ext. 148.**  
Please contact me regarding reimbursement, Enrollee/Disenrollment forms, attendance sheets and payment discrepancies.

**Alecia Coitrone, Provider Contracts Coordinator 386-323-2400 Ext. 186.**  
Please contact me if you need assistance with your VPK approval process, changes or questions regarding your VPK program.

**Debi Psychogohios, Professional Development and Education Manager 386-323-2400 138.** Please contact me for VPK trainings and receiving CEU's.

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## VPK Resources

ELCFV: [www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org)

2008 Florida Statutes:

[http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&Search\\_String=&URL=Ch1002/PART05.HTM](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=Ch1002/PART05.HTM)

AWI: [http://www.floridajobs.org/earlylearning/oel\\_program\\_guid.html](http://www.floridajobs.org/earlylearning/oel_program_guid.html)

DCF: <http://www.211live.org/index.cfm://www.dcf.state.fl.us/childcare/>

211 Get Connected: <http://www.211live.org/index.cfm>

Volusia County Health Department: <http://www.volusiahealth.com/VitalStats.asp>

Flagler County Health Department: <http://health.flaglercounty.org/vital.php>

Dates of Birth Range for VPK Eligibility:

<http://www.floridajobs.org/earlylearning/documents/VPK%20Eligibility%20Calendar.pdf>

Florida Center for Reading Research: [www.floridajobs.org/VPK/index.html](http://www.floridajobs.org/VPK/index.html)

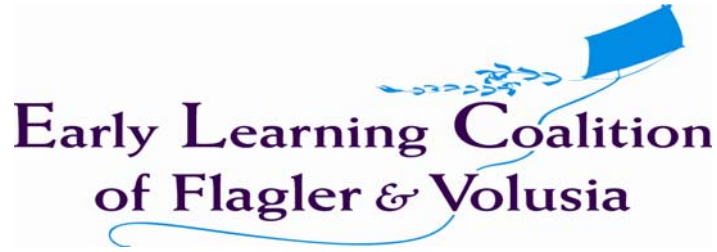
Volusia County School Board (calendar information):

<http://blackboard.volusia.k12.fl.us/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>

Flagler County School Board (calendar information):

<http://www.flaglerschools.com/content/parents-students>

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## *2010 Provider Policies and Procedures Handbook*

This VPK Provider handbook has been designed to assist the VPK Provider in navigating through their VPK program from the beginning of the process through the reimbursement information. Please take the time to read over this handbook and keep it in a convenient location as you should be referring to the handbook throughout your VPK program year.

Please sign below verifying that you have received and read the VPK Provider Handbook. Please be prepared to return this form when applying for your VPK program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Position

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\*Please submit this completed form at the VPK Application Review when applying for your VPK Program.