County of Wellington
Policy and Procedure Manual

Responsibility:	Directly Operated Programmes	**Policy Number:**	10 a)
Area:	Child Care Centres	**Effective Date:**	August 2022 (Replacing Waitlist Policy 2022)
Subject:	Waitlist and Enrolment Policy and Procedure, Directly Operated Programmes	**Revised:**	November 2026
Authority:	Children's Early Years Division		

Policy Statement

The Children's Early Years Division (CEYD) enrolls children in the Directly Operated Programmes (DOPs) through the enrolment process outlined in this policy. When the maximum licensed capacity of a programme has been reached and spaces are no longer available, children's names will remain on the waitlist which can be referenced as spaces become available. This confidential waitlist is comprised of information provided by families who require care and outlines their child care needs and requests. There will be a transparent process of offering a space and enrolling children into the programme that is driven by an established order of priority as outlined in this policy.

Guiding Principles

Spaces in the programme will be filled in a timely fashion based on the order of priority outlined in this policy. As a publicly funded operator, it is imperative to fill child care spaces to ensure fiscal responsibility and maximize operational service within the community. Our priority is to utilize full time spaces either with one full time family, or a combination of two part time families. Should there not be another part time request at the time that a part time family is next on the waitlist, the family will remain at the top of waitlist and the spot will be filled by the next family or families that can fill the spot on a full time basis.

Families will not be charged a fee or deposit to be placed on the waitlist.

Only children that have been born are placed on the waitlist. Expected birth dates (or "due dates") are not permitted. Families that are expecting a child may place their child on the waitlist after the child is born.

Children will be placed onto the waitlist applicable to the current age of the child and as they age, will be automatically transferred to the waitlist applicable to the next age group until such a time that they have aged out of eligibility for placement. For example, if a child is placed on the waitlist as an infant they will be considered for Infant spaces until they are 18 months of age, at which point they will “age up” to be considered for open Toddler spaces.

Only children who require a minimum of two days of child care can be added to the waitlist.

Exceptions to the enrolment process may be made to meet extenuating circumstances as deemed by the Manager of Directly Operated Programmes and/or the Director of Children’s Early Years.

Types of Child Care Offered in the DOPs

Full time, Full day	Scheduled child care for 5 days a week, for greater than 5 hours each day or 5 consecutive hours
Part time, Full day	Scheduled child care for less than 5 days a week for greater than 5 hours each day
Part time, ½ day with lunch	Scheduled child care for 5 or less days a week for less than 5 hours a day which includes participation in lunch
Part time, ½ day without lunch	Scheduled child care for 5 or less days a week for less than 5 hours a day that does not include participation in lunch

Procedure for Enrolment

The Wellington-Guelph Child Care Application and Waitlist website is where families can find and apply for licensed child care and authorized recreation programmes in the Wellington/Guelph service area. The online Wellington-Guelph Child Care Application and Waitlist uses the OneHSN Childcare Connect Platform.

To apply for child care, families will need to sign up and create a free OneHSN account. Families will be taken through a step-by-step wizard to help them set up their profile, apply for child care and prioritize applications. The applications will use the information from your profile, so it is important to ensure this information is kept up to date. The ‘Help’ tab at the top of the page also contains a short video that will provide guidance on how to use the platform and apply for child care.

Families can find and apply to the County's Directly Operated Child Care Programmes by using the search function on the map. Search for the following centre names:

- Palmerston Child Care and Learning Centre
- Mount Forest Child Care and Learning Centre
- Wellington Place Child Care and Learning Centre
- Willowdale Child Care and Learning Centre

OneHSN will automatically send an email to applicants after they submit an application, confirming the application was successful and listing the programmes that they have applied to.

An Automated Welcome Letter will automatically be sent to the family from the County of Wellington to acknowledge that their application has been added to the programme's waitlist, and to provide programme/centre specific information and next steps.

Families can find a summary of all applications submitted for their child under 'Summary of My Child Care Applications'. Days of care required, preferred start dates and priority levels can be updated from this page.

Note: Families who currently have a child enrolled in a Directly Operated Programme have top priority for any upcoming available spaces. If the family already has another child currently enrolled in the specific programme being applied to, please ensure the box is checked for 'Sibling Enrolled in the Program' on the application under 'Summary of My Child Care Applications'.

While on the waitlist

Families are responsible for maintaining their account to ensure that information is accurate and reflective of child care needs. Failure to provide correct information or failure to upkeep information may result in removal from the waitlist. If care is no longer required for your child, please remove any child care applications under 'Summary of My Child Care Applications' or consider deactivating the account.

The CEYD cannot provide families with a timeframe identifying how long a child might be on the waitlist as predicting the movement of children through child care is not an exact science. The CEYD cannot provide families with their exact placement on the waitlist as this can change when children age up and join a waitlist of another age group. The CEYD can give an approximate estimate of the number of families waiting ahead of them by using general numbers in a response such as "There are approximately 25 children ahead of you".

Removal from waitlist

Children will automatically be removed from the waitlist when they are 60 months of age.

Families can manually remove a child care application in the platform by navigating to 'Summary of My Child Care Applications'. Select the specific application and click 'Remove Applications'.

Alternatively, families may notify the Children's Early Years (CEY) Clerk at DOCWaitlist@wellington.ca if they would like to be removed from the waitlist. When this happens, the family will be sent an email confirming that they have been removed from the waitlist.

As part of the application process, families are required to prioritize up to five of their existing child care applications. The priority given to each provider will ensure that when a child is placed, the child will remain on the waitlist of providers with a higher priority rank. The applications for providers with a lower priority rank will be removed. Any applications that were not prioritized will also be removed. For example, if a family's child was enrolled in the programme that was ranked as priority number three, the child will remain on the waitlist for the programmes prioritized as number one and two.

In an effort to keep the waitlist current, families will receive notifications from the OneHSN Childcare Connect platform every **60 days** asking families to log into their account to confirm that child care is still needed. If there has been no activity on the account **after 120 days**, the child care application(s) will become inactive. Please keep an eye out for these notifications to ensure application(s) are kept active in the system. Remember to check the junk folder, and mark do-not-reply@onehsn.com as a 'safe sender'.

Order of Priority for Enrolment into the Programme

Families will be offered a child care space based on the following order of priority:

1. Families who currently have a child enrolled in a Directly Operated Programme (specific to the site that the child is currently enrolled in) and Permanent staff that are actively working in a Directly Operated Child Care Centre.

2. 10% of spaces in the Directly Operated Programme will be designated for children living in Guelph and Wellington County who:
    - Are eligible for Fee Subsidy, or
    - Are deemed high-risk by a community service provider, including but not limited to: Family & Children's Services (F&CS), Women in Crisis, KidsAbility, Community Mental Health Association (CMHA)

    Once the 10% capacity is reached, or if a Fee Subsidy or high-risk family cannot take a space, priority continues in order.

3. Families who reside in the County of Wellington have priority for the Directly Operated Programmes located in the County of Wellington and families who reside in City of Guelph have priority for the Directly Operated Programme located in the City of Guelph.

4. Families who reside in the County of Wellington have next priority for the Directly Operated Programme located in the City of Guelph and families who reside in the City of Guelph have next priority for Directly Operated Programmes located in the County of Wellington.

5. One family requiring full time full day care OR two part time families that can fill one full time space

6. Families who reside outside the City of Guelph and/or County of Wellington

Once the order of priority is established, the chronological order by date in which children were added to the waitlist will determine which family is offered a child care space.

The Manager of Directly Operated Programmes and/or Director of Children's Early Years reserve the right to override this priority list at their discretion due to extenuating circumstances

Enrolment into the Child Care Programme

The following steps will be taken when an available space is open to enroll a new child into child care:

1. The Centre Supervisor will contact the family by email when a child care space becomes available. If no response is received, the Supervisor will make up to two follow-up phone calls over the next two business days. If the family does not respond after three contact attempts within three business days, the space will be offered to the next eligible family on the waitlist.

Family accepts child care space	The space must be accepted within 72 hours of it being offered. The start date must begin within 2 weeks of the date the space was offered.
Family declines child care space but wants to remain on waitlist	A family can choose to decline an available child care space up to two times. If a family declines an offered space on the third time, they will be given the option to move their application to the end of the waitlist or remove themselves from the waitlist completely.
Family gives no response to offered space	If there is no response from the family within 72 hours (3 business days), the centre Supervisor will proceed to offer the spot to the next eligible family on the waitlist. The family will maintain their current spot on the waitlist.

2. Prior to the child's anticipated start date in the programme, the Supervisor will place the child in OneHSN with the applicable start date and send the family required registration documents through their OneHSN account. The registration package must be completed prior to the child's start date. A tour of the child care centre is given upon request.
3. Families will be required to provide a deposit equal to the first two weeks of care and all completed registration paperwork prior to the anticipated start date at the centre. This payment will be applied to the last two weeks of child care fees when enrolment in the child care centre ends.

Once Enrolled in a Directly Operated Programme

Families will be provided with an invoice for child care fees biweekly. Payment can be made by either setting up automatic pre-authorized payment from a banking institution or made online through their OneHSN account. If choosing the pre-authorized payment option, families will be provided with a schedule of set withdrawal dates. If paying directly online, payment is due within five business days of receiving an invoice.

Should families want to request a change in their child care needs, such as hours of care required, the centre Supervisor must receive at least one month notice to ensure it can be accommodated as it may impact staff schedules and shifts. Families must receive approval from the Supervisor before making any changes to their schedule.

Families must provide a month's notice (equal to 20 business days) to withdraw their child(ren) from the programme.

The Directly Operated Programme may terminate child care with two weeks' notice (equal to 10 business day).

Resources

Wellington-Guelph Child Care Application and Waitlist

Children's Early Years Division Serving Wellington County and City of Guelph

Child Care Fee Subsidy Serving Wellington County and City of Guelph

Ministry of Education – Find and pay for child care