



# WSP-ECE Handbook Insert for: ECE Wage Grid Guidelines

*Revised April 2024*

Education and Early Childhood Development

## Introduction

The Canada - New Brunswick Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement continues to build on the success of the designation of New Brunswick Early Learning Centres and New Brunswick Early Learning Homes. New Brunswick's vision is to ensure access to a high-quality, affordable, and inclusive early learning and child-care system that families can rely on and where every child receives the necessary services to reach their full potential. Ensuring parents have access to affordable, quality, and inclusive early learning and child-care services supports a parent's ability to participate in the workforce, while also providing children with meaningful learning experiences from a young age.

The key elements of quality childcare services include a stable workforce that is knowledgeable, experienced, and caring. Wages that are clearly articulated and predictable play an important role in the recruitment and retention of qualified Early Childhood Educators (ECE). Effective November 01, 2022, to further support the recruitment and retention of qualified Early Childhood Educators, the Government of New Brunswick will implement an ECE Wage Grid for educators working in designated NB Early Learning Centres and NB Early Learning Homes with children 0-5 years and for school-age educators working in licenced early learning and childcare facilities in New Brunswick.

### Acknowledgement

We wish to acknowledge the contribution of the early learning and childcare operators who have been integral in the development of these ECE Wage Grid Guidelines:

The Francophone and Anglophone sector Working Groups,  
and the Operator Engagement Table members.

Thank you for your thoughtful participation and commitment to building a stronger and more stable ECE workforce for New Brunswick children and families.

### Canada-New Brunswick Canada-Wide Early Learning and Childcare Agreement



## ECE Wage Grid

The ECE Wage Grid sets out the required minimum hourly wage rate operators must pay eligible educators, effective **April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024**.

	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Level 1	<b>22.79</b>	<b>24.04</b>	<b>25.35</b>
Entry Level	<b>16.47</b>	<b>17.48</b>	<b>18.54</b>

## ECE Wage Grid with funding amounts

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3		
	Designated 0-5	School Age	Designated 0-5	School Age	Designated 0-5	School Age	
Level 1	\$10.04	\$7.49	\$11.29	\$8.74	\$12.60	\$10.05	<b>Wage Support Funding</b> (Includes \$2.55 Minimum Wage Offset)
	\$12.75	\$15.30	\$12.75	\$15.30	\$12.75	\$15.30	<b>Operator Minimum Contribution</b>
	<b>\$22.79</b>	<b>\$22.79</b>	<b>\$24.04</b>	<b>\$24.04</b>	<b>\$25.35</b>	<b>\$25.35</b>	<b>Minimum Hourly Wage Rate</b>
Entry Level	\$3.72	\$1.17	\$4.73	\$2.18	\$5.79	\$3.24	<b>Wage Support Funding</b> (Includes \$2.55 Minimum Wage Offset)
	\$12.75	\$15.30	\$12.75	\$15.30	\$12.75	\$15.30	<b>Operator Minimum Contribution</b>
	<b>\$16.47</b>	<b>\$16.47</b>	<b>\$17.48</b>	<b>\$17.48</b>	<b>\$18.54</b>	<b>\$18.54</b>	<b>Minimum Hourly Wage Rate</b>

**Note:**

- On April 1, 2024, EECD introduced a minimum wage offset of \$2.55/hr, as part of the WSP-ECE funding, for educators working with children 0-5 years in a Designated Facility.

- Educators working exclusively in non-designated facilities with children 0 - 5 years will continue to receive a wage top up of \$7.25 per hour for Level 1 and a wage top up of \$3.15 per hour for Entry Level.

## Typical ECE Annual Salary

The annual ECE salary is based on an average of **36 hours** per week:

	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Level 1	\$ 42 663	\$ 45 003	\$ 47 455
Entry Level	\$ 30 832	\$ 32 723	\$ 34 707

Salary amounts do not include the additional 14% administration fees.

Mandatory Employee Related Costs includes:

- *Employment Insurance (E.I.)*
- *Canada Pension Plan (C.P.P.)*
- *4% or 6% for Vacation Pay*
- *WorkSafeNB*

## Eligibility

### Who is eligible for the ECE Wage Grid?

- Educators and Administrators, working directly with children, in designated New Brunswick Early Learning Centres
- Operators of designated New Brunswick Early Learning Homes
- School Age Educators working in licensed Early Learning and Childcare facilities
- Untrained Relief Staff working in designated New Brunswick Early Learning Centres (see restrictions below)

## ECE Wage Grid – Levels and Steps

The ECE Wage Grid is based on recognized training and relevant experience at each funding Level. It includes two (2) Funding Levels: Entry Level and Level 1, and three (3) Steps.

**As the employer, operators are responsible for determining the eligibility and assessment of the Step an educator is eligible for.**

**Note:** All educators will be assessed in the same manner across all facility types for Levels and Steps.

### Level Criteria

Funding Levels are determined based on the following qualifications and training:

#### Level 1:

- Certificate or Diploma in Early Childhood Education
- Related degree in Education or Early Childhood Development
- Unrelated degree

#### Entry Level:

- Introduction to Early Childhood Education (90 hours)
- School Age Educators (untrained)
- Relief Staff (untrained)

Mandatory training requirements for Level 1 and Entry Level educators working in Designated Facilities with children 0-5 years:

- New Brunswick Curriculum Framework for Early Learning and Childcare, OR
- Curriculum éducatif des Services de garde francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick

#### **Note:**

- School Age educators are exempt from curriculum training.
- Levels will continue to be assessed and assigned by EECD as per the WSP-ECE guidelines.

## Step Assignment Criteria

Step Assignment apply to the following categories:

- new educators
- relief staff
- conditionally approved educators
- educators upgrading from conditional approval

The assignment of a Step will be determined by the operator using the following criteria:

- An educator must provide the operator with documentation demonstrating relevant years of experience since completion of the recognized training for the funding Level they qualify for (see Relevant Work Experience below).
- The operator will assess the documentation and determine the Step the educator is eligible for based on their relevant experience.
- When assessing relevant work experience, one year of relevant work experience is a minimum of 750 hours working directly with children 0-12 years.
- Operators and educators must complete and sign the *ECE Wage Grid Attestation* form, confirming that the educator has met all of the requirements.
- Operators will upload the completed *ECE Wage Grid Attestation* form to the Operator Portal as part of the WSP-ECE application process.
- Documentation demonstrating the relevant experience must be maintained in the educator's staff file and is not required to be sent to EECD unless requested.
- WSP-ECE applications must be submitted a minimum of five (5) business days prior to the start of the next WSP-ECE reporting period.
- **WSP-ECE funding will begin upon approval by EECD.**
- **Operators will be solely responsible for WSP-ECE wage top up provided to educators prior to approval of educators in the Portal. Retroactive adjustments will not be provided.**

## Step Increase Criteria

For an educator to be eligible for a Step increase, the following conditions must be met:

- A 12-month calendar year with a minimum of 750 hours of relevant work experience
- If applicable, 10 hours of training related to the curriculum used at the Designated Facility as per Licensing Regulation – ECS Act 11.1(3)(4).

To request a Step increase for an educator, the operator must complete the following:

- The *ECE Wage Grid Attestation* form must be completed and signed by the operator and educator, confirming that the educator has met all requirements.

- Operators must upload the completed *ECE Wage Grid Attestation* form to the Operator Portal.
- Documentation demonstrating relevant experience and completion of 10 hours of training related to the curriculum must be maintained in the educator's staff file and is not required to be sent to EECD unless requested.

Step Increase Guidelines:

- An educator will remain at their currently approved Step until requirements are met for moving to the next Step on the ECE Wage Grid.
- Only one (1) Step Increase will be approved within a 12-month period after a step assignment has been approved.
- Step increases must be submitted a minimum of five (5) business days prior to the start of the next WSP-ECE reporting period.
- **Funding at the new Step will begin upon approval by EECD.**
- **Retroactive adjustments will not be provided.**

Note:

- Operators and educators will receive an e-mail notification 30 days prior to the anniversary date to advise that an educator may be eligible for a Step Increase.
- It is the operator's responsibility to ensure that, if applicable, all Step increases are submitted for approval prior to the anniversary date.
- Step increases cannot be submitted more than 30 days prior to the anniversary date.

**When an educator completes the training required to advance from Entry Level to Level 1, they will commence at Level 1, Step 1.**

## Relevant Work Experience

For the purpose of the ECE Wage Grid, relevant experience is defined as experience working directly with children 0 – 12 years.

Examples of relevant work experience could include:

- Early Childhood Educators
- Teachers
- Inclusion Support Workers
- Educational Assistants
- Human Services
- Other occupations with specific knowledge of child development.

Examples of how relevant work experience could be assessed, include:

- Resumes
- Reference Checks

- Letter of Reference
- Professional Portfolios
- Other

## Conditional Applications

All educators conditionally approved in the WSP-ECE program, will remain at Step 1 of their approved Level, regardless of their years of experience, until they have completed the following mandatory training requirements for Level 1 and Entry Level:

- 90-hour Introduction to Early Childhood Education **OR**
- 30-hour Curriculum (New Brunswick Curriculum Framework for Early Learning and Childcare, OR Curriculum éducatif des Services de garde francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick).

When mandatory training requirements have been met, the operator will reassess the Step the educator qualifies for based on their relevant years of experience at that funding Level, as per the Step Assignment criteria above.

## Untrained Relief Staff

Untrained Relief Staff are short term or on-call employees, who temporarily replace an educator, and work 88 hours or less per month.

- Untrained Relief Staff will **remain at Entry Level, Step 1** on the ECE Wage Grid **unless** they choose to complete the 90-hour Introduction to Early Childhood Education.
- All Untrained Relief Staff approved in WSP-ECE prior to November 01, 2022, will remain at Entry Level, Step 3 on the ECE Wage Grid.

When mandatory training requirements have been met, the operator will reassess the Step the educator qualifies for based on their relevant years of experience at that funding level, as per the Step Assignment criteria above.

## Maternity and Paternity Leave

Maternity and/or paternity leave are not considered a break in service. Upon return-to-work, educators may be eligible for a Step Increase if it has been 12 months or more since the last Step Increase. The following will apply:

- The minimum of 750 hours of relevant work experience **is not applicable** for an educator returning from a Maternity and/or Paternity Leave.



- If applicable, the 10 hours of training related to the curriculum used at the Designated Facility as per *Licensing Regulation – ECS Act 11.1(3)(4)* requirement **must be met** prior to a Step Increase being assigned. Training may be completed during maternity and/or paternity leave or upon return.
- Operators are required to indicate on the *ECE Wage Grid Attestation* that the educator has returned from Maternity and/or Paternity Leave.
- Only one Step Increase will be approved within a 12-month period.

## Exceptions - Special Privilege Clause

For the purposes of the ECE Wage Grid, the following exceptions will apply:

- All educators and administrators approved in WSP-ECE prior to November 01, 2022, will remain at Step 3, of their current funding Level on the ECE Wage Grid.
- Educators currently approved in WSP-ECE, who work in a Designated Facility with children 0-5 years and or a licenced early learning and childcare facility providing school-age services on November 01, 2022, **AND** who are registered in a Post-Secondary ECE certificate or diploma program prior to September 01, 2022, will be eligible upon completion for Level 1, Step 3 on the ECE Wage Grid under the following conditions:
  - Documentation demonstrating registration in a recognized ECE certificate or diploma program must be provided to the operator by December 1, 2022
  - Operators must upload documentation demonstrating enrolment in the Operator Portal by December 01, 2022
  - Documentation demonstrating enrolment must be maintained in the educator's staff file
  - 1-year ECE program (or the 1<sup>st</sup> year of a 2-year ECE program) must be completed by November 1, 2023

## Other

The ECE Wage Grid will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Operators must update their Staff Handbooks.

## Contact Information

For further information, please contact the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development:

- By phone at: 1-833-221-9339 (toll-free)
- By e-mail at: [WSPECE-PSSPEG@gnb.ca](mailto:WSPECE-PSSPEG@gnb.ca)