



School Readiness (SR) Waiting List | FAQ

Q: Why is there a waiting list for School Readiness?

A: Funding for School Readiness services is limited.

Q: How does the Waiting List work?

A: 1. After submitting the online application, it can take up to 20 business days to be processed. Once the application has been approved, child(ren) will be placed on the School Readiness Waiting List and the parent will receive an email as approval confirmation.

2. As funding becomes available, families will be notified by email. Funding is distributed by priorities and following a first-come, first-serve basis.

3. After the funding notification is sent, parent(s) will have 30 days to establish eligibility (see section 3 below) and enroll their eligible child(ren) into a School Readiness program.

4. If parent(s) fails to establish eligibility within the 30 days period, child(ren) will be removed from the waiting list.

5. Waiting List times can vary as funding for School Readiness is limited. To remain on the waiting list, parent(s) must update application every 6 months. A notification email will 30 days prior to the waiting list revalidation due date to remind parent(s) to update their application.

6. If parent(s) fail to update application by leaving it in "Active Pending Update" or "Rejected" status for more than 30 days, the system will automatically remove child(ren) from the waiting list and the parent will need to reapply.

Q: I am on the School Readiness Waiting List. What documents should I be getting ready to establish eligibility once I am offered funding?

A: [Click here to view](#) a full list of required documents.

Q: Will I still be eligible for the program if I am currently unemployed?

A: Yes, the applicant must meet one of multiple purposes for care to be approved for School Readiness, Employment is only one of them. Here is a list of purposes for care:

- Employment
- Educational Activity
- Exempt from Work Requirements due to Disability
- Exempt from Work Requirements due to Age
- Special needs child(ren) 3 years old through admission to kindergarten with a current IEP (Individualized Educational Plan) from a local school district.
- At-risk child(ren) 9 through 13 years old.



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Q: Will I still be eligible to remain on the School Readiness Waiting List if I lose my purpose for care?

A: No, the applicant must have a purpose for care (listed above) to remain on the waiting list.

Q: I'm currently pregnant, can I add my unborn child to the waiting list?

A: No, the child must be born to be placed on the waiting list. The child's date of birth is used to determine the priority.

Q: Is there a cost to parents with School Readiness?

A: Yes. Depending on the household income, the family will assigned a copay based on a percentage of their gross annual income. Parents are expected to make their co-payment directly to the childcare provider. Additionally, childcare providers may have registration and differential fees required to attend their center or family childcare home. These fees are collected at the discretion of each individual provider. The ELCHC does not cover these additional fees.

Q: How do I report changes for School Readiness Waiting List?

A: Contact the Early Learning Coalition to speak with a Family Services Specialist to report a change for the Waiting List. Address and phone numbers can be changed from the coalition side. Purpose for care, documentation, and household size can only be updated from the family side.

Q: I'm moving to another county; can I transfer my waiting list application?

A: No, waiting list applications do not transfer. Applications in Hillsborough must be inactivated, and parent needs to reapply in the new county. Contact the Early Learning Coalition to speak with a Family Services Specialist to request a county transfer.

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Q: I have an approved waiting list application, once I'm made eligible can you pay the provider retroactive for the time my child was in attendance and I was waiting in the waiting list?

A: No, payment will only occur after eligibility has been determined. The time parent waits on the waiting list is not refundable.



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Q: I'm currently receiving School Readiness funding, but I just had a baby and want to get services for him/her. What do I need to do?

A: Newborn children must be placed on the waiting list.

Q: I'm on the waiting list and need childcare immediately. What other options do I have?

A: Your child who is currently on the School Readiness Waitlist (and turning 5 years old by September 1st of the upcoming school year) may be eligible for immediate entry into early education through our Free Voluntary prekindergarten (VPK) program. VPK is a state program designed to prepare every child in Florida for kindergarten and build the foundation for their educational success. To learn more and to apply, see the link below: [Free VPK for 4 Year Olds - The Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County](#)

Hillsborough County Head Start for children 3-5 years old and Early Head Start for children up to 3 years old is available for low-income families, including children with special needs. There is no cost to the parent. To learn more and to apply, see the link below: [Apply for Head Start/Early Head Start | Hillsborough County, FL](#)

