

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS



A Program of Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children

To be eligible for a WAGE\$ supplement, applicants must:

- Earn \$23 per hour or less
- Provide direct and consistent care for children ages birth to 5 in the following roles: Assistant Teacher, Lead Teacher, Floater, or Family Child Care Provider, without holding dual roles.
- Provide proof of education based on the WAGE\$ RI scale in the form of an official transcript or CDA credential.
- Register with the Rhode Island Early Childhood Education Workforce Registry
- Work at a DHS-licensed, BrightStars & CCAP participating child care program
- Work at least six (6) months in the same child care program before receiving a wage supplement.
- Provide proof of income, such as a current paystub, or for Family Child Care Providers, a Schedule C or full tax documents if requested.
- The award recipient must meet a level of education appearing on the WAGE\$ supplement scale:

Level 1*	National CDA credential OR 3 college credits in early childhood education	\$1500	*Temporary Level of Education: Participants must advance to a higher level as noted on the scale in order to remain eligible. Deadlines are shared with individual participants as applicable.
Level 2*	12 or more college credits in early childhood education	\$2500	
Level 3*	36 college credits, including 12 or more credits in early childhood education OR Associate's degree with 3-11 credits in early childhood education	\$3000	
Level 4*	Associate's degree with 12 or more college credits in early childhood education OR Bachelor's degree with 3-11 credits in early childhood education	\$4000	
Level 5	Associate's degree with 24 credits in early childhood education OR Bachelor's degree with 12-23 credits in early childhood education	\$5000	
Level 6	Bachelor's degree with 24 or more credits in early childhood education	\$6000	



Rhode Island Association for the
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Child Care WAGE\$® Rhode Island
is a licensed program of Early Years.



FACT SHEET



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What is WAGE\$?

WAGE\$ provides a education-based salary supplements to center-based educators and family child care providers working with children in an early childhood setting. The program is designed to increase retention, education and compensation. The program is funded with Preschool Development Grant (PDG) planning dollars made available by the state of Rhode Island. This funding is available for a limited time and based on the parameters of the federal grant.

Who is eligible to receive a salary supplement?

A child care professional earning \$23 per hour or less, who is at least 18 years old and working a minimum of 10 hours per week in a licensed early childhood setting, may be eligible to participate in the WAGE\$ program. Eligible professionals must work directly with children ages birth to 5 in roles such as Assistant Teacher, Lead Teacher, Floater, or Family Child Care Provider, without holding dual roles. Participants must meet the educational requirements outlined on the WAGE\$ RI scale, providing proof in the form of an official transcript or CDA credential. Additionally, participants must register with the Early Childhood Education Workforce Registry, work at a DHS-licensed, BrightStars, and CCAP-participating child care program, and have been employed at the same program for at least 6 months. Proof of income, such as a current paystub or, for Family Child Care Providers, a Schedule C or full tax documents, will be required.

*Ineligible Positions: Education Coordinators, Assistant Directors, Directors, dual-role employees, and other administrative staff are not eligible to receive the wage supplement. *

How much will I receive?

The awards vary based the education earned by the participant and the eligible hours worked. The salary supplement scale shows annual award amounts for full-time eligibility. Awards are issued in two six-month installments per year, each after the participant completes an assigned six-month commitment period in the same child care program. The amount received will reflect the average hours worked during the six-month period; supplements for part-time employees are prorated. This funding is available for a limited time and based on the parameters of the federal grant.

What do I have to do to participate in WAGE\$?

Interested child care professionals must complete an online application and provide verification of the following: (1) current employment in a licensed child care program, (2) current wages, (3) education completed, as verified by an official transcript or CDA credential, and (4) proof of participation in the Workforce Registry. If submitting an international transcript, we can accept a copy of an official evaluation.



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How are supplements received?

Payments are issued following commitment period completion to eligible participants who have met the requirements. Commitment periods run from mid-month to mid-month and are established for each individual participant using application date, start date and education documentation. The installment is based on half of the annual award amount and reflects the average hours worked during the six-month period. All payments are contingent upon funding availability. Program staff must verify that participants have worked in their child care programs during the preceding six months before payments can be issued. Once approved for an award, participants who remain in the same child care program do not need to reapply in order to receive future installments.

How can I increase the level of the supplement I receive?

WAGE\$ participants may, and in some cases must, increase their supplement amounts by advancing their education. Participants awarded at a “Temporary Level” must raise their education level to remain eligible for the program. TEACH Early Childhood® Rhode Island offers scholarships to child care professionals seeking to earn course credits toward specific early childhood credentials or degrees. For more information, contact TEACH Early Childhood® Rhode Island at 401-739-6100 or teach@riaeyc.org. Participants are encouraged to submit an updated transcript to WAGE\$ RI after completing any formal coursework so staff can assess eligibility for the highest possible award.

Do I have to pay taxes on the supplement I receive?

The salary supplement is income. Participants will receive an IRS-1099 form at the end of the year if they received \$600 or more from The Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children (RIAETC) during the calendar year. Recipients are responsible for reporting and paying any personal income taxes due. Participants will be taxed on wage supplements confirmed within their assessment year. This is not necessarily the date a check is received by the participant. The assessment year is the tax year currently being assessed by the IRS.

Will I receive a supplement if I move to another child care program?

Payments are issued to participants after each six-month period in the same child care program. If a participant moves to another licensed child care program within the six months, then the commitment period must be reset based on eligible reapplication and the employment date at the new site. This policy is designed to encourage more stability for the children in care.

If I work in a child care center, what is the center’s responsibility?

A child care center must agree to provide verification of an applicant’s employment status and wages and agree not to use participation in the program to offset normal wage increases. The center is not responsible for providing the salary supplement.

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