



Eligibility Policy

In order to be eligible to receive an incentive of up to \$3,000 based on funding availability through the DC Leading Educators toward Advanced Degrees (DC LEAD) program administered by Southeast Children’s Fund (SCF), a child care educator must meet the following requirements:

1. Be employed and remain employed in a child development facility licensed by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) for one year:

- a. Employment will be confirmed through a staff record in the Division of Early Learning Licensing Tool (DELLT) at the time of application, after six months (when the initial payment will be made) and at the end of one year;
- b. Must be employed on the date the child care educator completes the DC LEAD incentive [application form](#); and
- c. Remain employed with the current employer for one year from the date the incentive agreement is signed.

Note: Staff in facilities not licensed by OSSE are not eligible.

2. Be employed in an eligible position:

- a. “Staff Type” must be one of the following:
 - i. Center Director
 - ii. Teacher
 - iii. Assistant Teacher
 - iv. Expanded Home Caregiver
 - v. Home Caregiver
 - vi. Associate Home Caregiver

3. Be enrolled in a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or an associate/bachelor’s degree program to meet the OSSE minimum education requirements or already meet the OSSE minimum education requirements for their current position based on the “Staff Type” above.

- a. Current position will be confirmed through staff records in DELLT.
- b. See Table 1 for minimum education requirements timelines.

Table 1: Minimum Education requirements

Position	Minimum Education Credential Required	Effective Date
Center Director	Bachelor’s degree (BA) in early childhood education	December

	(including early childhood development, elementary education or early	2022
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Position	Minimum Education Credential Required	Effective Date
	special education) or a bachelor’s degree in any subject area with at least 15 semester credit hours in early childhood education.	
Teacher	Associate degree (AA) in early childhood education (or early childhood development, child and family studies or a closely related field) or an associate degree (or higher) in any subject area with at least 24 semester credit hours in early childhood.	December 2023
Assistant Teacher	Child Development Associate (CDA) or an associate degree (or higher) in any subject area.	December 2023
Expanded Home Caregiver	Associate degree in early childhood education (or early childhood development, child and family studies or a closely related field) or an associate degree (or higher) in any subject area with at least 24 semester credit hours in early childhood.	December 2023
Home Caregiver and Associate Home Caregiver	CDA	December 2023

4. Complete the DC LEAD incentive payment agreement

- a. In order to receive the incentive, eligible child care educators must sign an incentive payment agreement with the DC LEAD program and their employer. To be paid, the child care educator will be required to provide the required information below to DC LEAD:
 - i. Completed DC LEAD [application form](#)
 - ii. Signed DC LEAD contract



Note: If you are a DC LEAD scholar, this will be included in your DC LEAD scholarship agreement

iii. Payment Information

(Note: There are both banked and unbanked payment options)

1. **Direct Deposit:** If you choose to be paid via direct deposit, the following information is required to complete the incentive payment:
 - a. Bank name
 - b. Routing number
 - c. Account number
2. **Check (via mail):** If you choose to be paid via check, the following information is required:
 - a. Home address

Note: A paper check will be mailed to this address

iv. W-9 form

5. Upon DC LEAD application approval, recipients must **sign** an agreement that includes the following:

- a. **Agreement to remain employed** in their current child development facility in a child development facility licensed by OSSE for one year.

6. Incentive payment will only be issued after all required information is provided and the DC LEAD incentive application is approved.

A first incentive payment will be made after six months and a second payment may be made at the end of the one-year agreement, contingent on continued employment and availability of funding.

Incentive Payment Amount

The incentive payment amount for child care educators who meet the minimum education requirements or are in a CDA or degree program to meet the minimum education requirements for the position they are currently in is up to \$3,000 across a one-year period. The incentive payment will be distributed as up to two payments of \$1,500.

For questions about the DC LEAD eligibility policy, please reach out SCF at DCLEAD@sechildrensfund.org