



**VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN
COMPLIANCE POLICY**

INTRODUCTION

The intent of this policy and procedure developed by the Early Learning Coalition of Pinellas County, Inc. (Coalition) is to provide interpretive guidelines for applicable services and standards as outlined in [60BB-8](#) and the VPK Provider Agreement (AWI-VPK 20). This Coalition policy and procedure is inclusive of all VPK providers.

This policy and procedure provides clear definitions and guidelines for VPK providers to follow. All providers must meet the requirements before becoming approved as a VPK provider. Enforcement described in this policy is designed for existing VPK programs that are not in compliance.

Failure to adhere to the terms of the Agreement/Contract or any violations described herein may result in the discontinuance of funding and parent notification of non-compliance.. Also, parents will be reminded that they are permitted one transfer within the VPK program session should they opt to choose a different facility which provides VPK.

The Early Learning Coalition of Pinellas County, Inc. reserves the right make exceptions to this policy.

Providers may appeal action taken in accordance with this policy in accordance with the [School Readiness/VPK Grievance and Dispute Resolution Policy \(ELCPC-2008-08\)](#).

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Section I
DEFINITIONS

Agreement: a binding document between two entities addressing the payment for services and the details of those services.

Coordinated Child Care of Pinellas, Inc. (CCC): Agency contracted by the Early Learning Coalition of Pinellas County to administer VPK Child Eligibility determination and VPK Provider Reimbursement in addition to other designated School Readiness and VPK services.

Corrective Action: Documented or demonstrated correction of noncompliance found during a desk audit or onsite monitoring visit.

Desk Audit: Offsite monitoring of a VPK program to ensure compliance with policies, documentation and records. Documents that may be requested include: current lesson plans and classroom schedule, VPK Enrollment/Attendance Certification form, Teacher attendance forms used to track child attendance, Child Attendance and Parental Choice Certificates (Monthly forms), Child Eligibility and Enrollment Certificates and provider attendance policy and enrollment policy that are given to parents. Findings of a desk audit could initiate an onsite monitoring visit.

Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum: A curriculum that is based on research and addresses all developmental areas by child's age.

Good Moral Character: Attestation signed by childcare staff, owners and directors affirming they have not been found guilty of or plead no contest to, regardless of adjudication, to any charges listed under the provision of the Florida Statutes or under any similar statute of another jurisdiction. They must

also acknowledge existence of any criminal records relating to the offenses regardless of whether or not those records have been sealed or expunged.

Level 2 Background Screening: Security background investigations which include, but are not limited to fingerprinting for all purposes as required by F.S. Chapter 435.04, statewide criminal and juvenile records checks through the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and federal criminal records checks through the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and may include local criminal records checks through local law enforcement agencies.

Onsite Monitoring: Visit by monitor to evaluate compliance with the VPK Provider Agreement, contract management and programmatic requirements by the Coalition or its designee. During the monitoring, the following topics are reviewed: Staff to child ratios, curriculum, lesson plans, assignment of approved VPK instructor and/or substitute instructor if applicable, and documents regarding VPK children to include the Child Eligibility and Enrollment Certificate, VPK Enrollment/Attendance Certification form, VPK attendance accuracy and provider attendance policy and enrollment policy that are given to parents..

Staff Child Ratio: Ratio of approved staff to children in a VPK class. The maximum ratio includes all children in a class regardless of funding source or age.

VPK Secondary Instructor: Assistant teacher in a VPK classroom required for classes with 11 or more children enrolled.

VPK Substitute Instructor: An individual assigned to serve as a substitute in the absence of the lead VPK Instructor.

Section II
STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Staff qualifications must meet requirements outlined in Ch. 1002, F.S. and be approved by the Coalition or its designee before a VPK program may begin or a change is implemented in the classroom or program.

VPK DIRECTOR CREDENTIAL

All VPK providers are required to have a director on staff with documentation of:

1. Current Director Credential approved by Florida Department of Children and Families
2. VPK Director Endorsement

VPK INSTRUCTOR

All VPK instructors are required to have documentation of:

1. Level 2 Background Screening
2. Attestation of Good Moral Character
3. Florida VPK Education Standards Training (2008) within 90 days of hire.
4. Permission to be employed under section [435.06, F.S.](#)
5. Education Credential described in [Ch. 1002., F.S.](#)

VPK INSTRUCTOR SUBSTITUTE

All VPK substitute instructors are required to have documentation of:

1. Level 2 Background Screening
2. Attestation of Good Moral Character
3. Education Credential described in [60BB-8.410](#)

Substitute instructors may be assigned to a VPK class for no more than 30% of a VPK Program. Providers are required to track the assignment of all VPK Substitute Instructors and maintain records for three years.

VPK SECONDARY INSTRUCTOR

All VPK secondary instructors are required to have documentation of:

1. Level 2 Background Screening
2. Attestation of Good Moral Character
3. Permission to be employed under section [435.06, F.S.](#)

VPK STAFF CHANGES

All changes in VPK staff including director, instructor or secondary instructor must be approved **prior to implementation in classroom or program**. Providers must submit required documentation at least 5 business days before the proposed effective date to allow time for processing.

Section III **MONITORING– STAFF QUALIFICATIONS**

Initial Approval

A VPK provider must demonstrate compliance in all areas before a VPK program is approved to begin. Providers must demonstrate compliance in areas of Staff Qualifications and Program Requirements to be approved as a VPK provider. All documentation must be kept in the VPK Provider Certification Files and undergo a two person quality assurance review by the Coalition or its designee.

Maintenance of Compliance

VPK providers are responsible for maintaining compliance with all Staff Qualifications and Program Requirements. As a *courtesy*, the Coalition will notify providers of impending expiration of a director credential, staff credential, Attestation of Good Moral Character or background clearance 90, 60 and 30 days in advance. Updated documentation will undergo a two person quality assurance review by the Coalition or its designee.

Onsite Monitoring

Onsite monitoring will be unannounced and include review of:

- Assignment of approved VPK Instructor and Secondary Instructor
- VPK Substitute Instructor approval and tracking information.

Desk Audit Monitoring

Providers will be notified 5 business days in advance of desk audit monitoring and must submit:

- VPK Substitute Instructor approval and tracking information.

Section IV

ENFORCEMENT – STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

A VPK provider must meet all staff requirements before a program is approved. Failure to maintain compliance with staff qualification requirements could result in nonpayment for days affected by the non-compliance. Unresolved non-compliance could result in the termination of the VPK Provider Agreement (AWI VPK-20).

Section V

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

LICENSING OR ACCREDITATION

VPK providers must be in good standing and operating under a current license from Pinellas County License Board, legally licensed exempt or accredited by an association or agency recognized by the [Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program](#).

STAFF CHILD RATIOS

The VPK instructor must be present during all instructional hours.

School Year

1 VPK Instructor: 10 students (VPK & non-VPK students.)

1 VPK Instructor AND 1 secondary instructor: 11 - 18 students (VPK & non-VPK students.)

Summer

1 VPK Instructor: 12 students (VPK & non-VPK students.)

CURRICULUM

Programs must use lesson plans and a curriculum to deliver VPK which:

1. Is developmentally appropriate
2. Is designed to prepare children for early literacy
3. Enhances the age-appropriate progress of children in attaining each of the performance standards adopted by the Florida Department of Education
4. Prepare children to be ready for kindergarten

*Instructional Hours include planned activities or experiences that implement curricula while an instructor is present and engaged in the activities or experiences. ***Children who are sleeping or napping are not considered to be participating in instructional hours.***

Section VI
MONITORING – PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Onsite Monitoring

Onsite monitoring will be unannounced and include review of:

- Staff Child Ratios
- Curriculum and Lesson Plans

Desk Audit Monitoring

Providers will be notified 5 business days in advance of desk audit monitoring and must submit:

- Lesson Plans for current week and one prior week to be identified by monitor.

Section VII

ENFORCEMENT – PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Failure to meet program requirements will result in a corrective action plan which allows 10 business days for the provider to demonstrate compliance. Non-compliances related to licensing, accreditation, instructional hours or staff ratios may also result in nonpayment for days affected by the non-compliance. Repeated non-compliance could result in the termination of the VPK Provider Agreement (AWI VPK-20) and closure of a VPK program.

Section VIII

CHILD DOCUMENTS

VPK Child records must include:

1. Child Eligibility and Enrollment Certificate
2. Child Attendance and Parent Choice Certificate Forms

Section IX

MONITORING- CHILD DOCUMENTS

Onsite Monitoring

Onsite monitoring will be unannounced and include review of:

Child File Documents (minimum of 20% children enrolled)

- Child Eligibility and Enrollment Certificate
- Child Attendance and Parent Choice Certificate Forms
- Comparison of teacher attendance, parent sign-in and VPK Enrollment/Attendance Certification Forms

Desk Audit Monitoring

Providers will be notified 5 business days in advance of desk audit monitoring and must submit:

Child File Documents for a minimum of 20% children enrolled. Individual children to be identified by monitor at the time of request.

- Child Eligibility and Enrollment Certificate
- Child Attendance and Parent Choice Certificate Forms
- Comparison of teacher attendance, parent sign-in and VPK Enrollment/Attendance Certification Forms

Section X

ENFORCEMENT – CHILD FILE DOCUMENTS

Failure to meet child file document requirements will result in a corrective action plan which allows 10 business days for the provider to demonstrate compliance. Non-compliances may also result in nonpayment for each day affected by the non-compliance. Repeated non-compliance could result in the termination of the VPK Provider Agreement (AWI VPK-20).