



<b>Policy:</b> <b>ELCPC-60.2.1</b>	<b>Title:</b> Special Needs Reimbursement Rate	
<b>Coalition Plan:</b>	<b>Board Approved: 6/9/19</b>  <b>OEL Approved</b>	<b>Effective Date: 6/9/19</b>

**References:** 1002.82, F.S.; CCDF Plan; 6M-4.500, F.A.C; OEL-SR 20 – Statewide SR Provider Contract; Coalition Payment Rate Schedule

**Purpose:**

To provide guidance and establish protocols for the Special Needs Reimbursement Rate for child care providers

**Background:**

A special needs child is defined as a child who has been determined eligible as a child with a disability in accordance with Chapter 6A-6, F.A.C., and is participating in a program for children with disabilities provided by the school district or a child who has an individualized education plan (IEP) or family support plan (FSP).

A School Readiness provider may be paid at a higher rate if caring for any school readiness child with special needs requiring additional care. To receive a special needs rate, a child care provider must submit a list of the special needs services it is providing for each special needs child, in addition to the routine school readiness services. A special needs rate may be negotiated up to twenty (20 percent above the maximum approved base reimbursement rate established for infant care by the coalition. However, any amount that exceeds the providers private pay rate for infant care shall be classified as a quality expenditure.

To receive a special needs rate, in addition to the base rate, it must be requested by the provider and approved by the Coalition. A special needs rate may be reimbursed for a school readiness child that has a documented physical, mental, emotional, or behavioral condition that requires a higher level of care in the child care setting. The special need child's condition must be validated by a licensed health, mental health, education or social service professional other than the child's parent or person employed by the child care provider.

**Policy:**

1. A child care provider may be reimbursed by the Coalition at a higher rate if caring for any school readiness child that requires additional care beyond services required by

ADA.

2. Qualifying diagnosis for "maximum care level" include but are not limited to:
  - a. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
  - b. Bipolar Disorder
  - c. Severe Emotional Disturbance
  - d. Deaf or Blind
  - e. Traumatic Brain Injury
  - f. Cerebral Palsy
3. If a School Readiness provider is caring for a School Readiness child younger than 13 years old with an identified special need and requests a special needs rate they must:
  - a. Provide the Coalition with a current copy of the child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Family Service Plan (FSP)
  - b. Complete the *School Readiness Special Needs Rate Request Form and Matrix*.
4. Documents to be reviewed by Coalition staff to determine approval and finalize reimbursement rate per score determined on the *School Readiness Special Needs Rate Request Form and Matrix* which will be as follows:
  - a. If the listed accommodations match the child's special needs, Coalition staff will score the Matrix to calculate the child's new rate and notify the provider.
  - b. Based on the Matrix, you may receive a 20% rate increase based on the care level/age of the child (*i.e.- If a 4 year old in your care is determined eligible for a 20% rate increase, you will receive 20% above your standard 4 year old rate for that child*).
5. The child's newly established rate will take effect upon Coalition approval date.
6. If an IEP/IFSP is updated or expires within the approved duration for the Special Needs Rate, it is the responsibility of the School Readiness provider to submit the updated IEP/IFSP to the Coalition.
7. As long as the child remains in care and the IEP/IFSP is current, all rates will be approved through July 1 of the current fiscal year.
8. School Readiness providers will be required to reapply annually, by June 15, to continue to receive the Special Needs Rate for the following fiscal year

**Exhibits:**

*School Readiness Special Needs Rate Request Form and Matrix*