

RCW 43.216.755 Child care providers—Community-based training pathway. (1) By July 1, 2021, the department shall implement a noncredit-bearing, community-based training pathway for licensed child care providers to meet professional education requirements associated with child care licensure. The community-based training pathway must be offered as an alternative to existing credit-bearing pathways available to providers.

(2) The department shall consult with the following stakeholders in the development and implementation of the community-based training pathway: The statewide child care resource and referral network, a community-based training organization that provides training to licensed family day care providers, a statewide organization that represents the interests of family day care providers, a statewide organization that represents the interests of licensed child day care centers, an organization that represents the interests of refugee and immigrant communities, a bilingual child care provider whose first language is not English, an organization that advocates for early learning, an organization representing private and independent schools, and the state board for community and technical colleges.

(3) The community-based training pathway must:

(a) Align with adopted core competencies for early learning professionals;

(b) Be made available to providers in multiple languages;

(c) Include culturally relevant practices; and

(d) Be made available at low cost to providers and at prices comparable to the cost of similar community-based trainings, not to exceed two hundred and fifty dollars per person; and

(e) Be accessible to providers in rural and urban settings.

(4) The department shall allow licensed child care providers until at least August 1, 2026, to:

(a) Comply with child care licensing rules that require a provider to hold an early childhood education initial certificate or an early childhood education short certificate; or

(b) Complete community-based trainings.

(5) For the purposes of this section, "demonstrated competence" means an individual has shown that he or she has the skills to complete the required work independently. [2020 c 342 § 2.]

Findings—Intent—2020 c 342: "The legislature finds that a nurturing and loving relationship between an early learning provider and a child the provider cares for is an essential component of early learning and has a strong influence on that child's healthy development. Further, the legislature finds that successfully operating a child care center or licensed family home is becoming more financially challenging as the state's regulatory framework for child care and early learning has grown more comprehensive. The legislature recognizes the value of demonstrated competence that comes with a provider's experience in delivering quality child care. Therefore, in response to our state's urgent child care crisis, the legislature intends to provide relief to early learning providers by building the early learning workforce to meet the needs of working families across our state. The legislature further intends for providers to have a range of options to meet education requirements, including a noncredit-bearing[,] community-based training pathway." [2020 c 342 § 1.]