

Organizational License Pilot Program

Webinar Q&A

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Q: Expanding to a minimum of three sites in 12 months without funding to go with it is challenging when you have to meet staffing/ratio guidelines. How is this being navigated, as this seems to be the biggest barrier?

A: This pilot is designed to remove some administrative tasks from the site directors/program supervisors, to help provide more time to deal with on-site work. However, we do not have specific funding to help with expansion. There are some resources from the Department of Commerce (<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/building-infrastructure/capital-facilities/early-learning-program/>) and the Washington Early Learning Loan (WELL) fund (<https://wcra.net/loan-programs/washington-early-learning-loan-fund-well/>)

Q: We have sites that are ready to go, but staffing is a concern. I am curious about how others in this meeting see themselves being able to open several sites without additional funding. What ways have you thought of to get additional funding?

A: That is a question we hear often. We are not able to provide those resources for individual businesses at this time. By participating in the pilot, programs will be able to network and process these barriers together.

Q: I am curious what the benefits are for providers/sites participate in the pilot.

A: As providers are ready to open more sites, it will be more streamlined and efficient. There is also the benefit of having one licensor which helps improve communication and having all organizational related information completed and on file, allowing them to focus on the site specific information. As a pilot participant, providers are also able to give feedback on the implementation process.

Q: Will there be a separate licensor than the one we already have?

A: It is likely your licensor for the pilot will be different than the one you have now. If all locations enter the pilot program then you will be assigned a pilot staff member. If only part of your centers enter the program, then you could have two separate licensors (one for the site(s) not in the pilot and one for the sites in the pilot).

Q: Will there be more guidelines about staffing at each site, or will that be up to the licensor?

A: We still require that sites follow current Washington Administrative Code (WAC) guidelines for staffing. An additional piece to the program is that each site will have to assign a primary contact for the organization, who will be responsible for certain organizational related tasks and organization related communication with the licensor.

Q: Do you see the minimum and maximum numbers of sites changing?

A: At this time, we need programs to have more than 2 sites to adequately assess the process efficiencies and no more than 7 sites to allow equitable access for those wanting to participate and provide a larger variety of programs. The sample size in this pilot program has already generated over 30 organizations with over 100 sites, so we have already achieved the number of participants for cohort number one. With the interest we have received since November, we already have half of what we were looking for. If we do not reach the full pilot size of 216 licenses then we may consider recruiting again or may adjust the minimum or maximum number of sites.

Q: One program is considering opening Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) slots, would that be considered in this pilot?

A: It would not meet the definition of a new site, but we are interested in having ECEAP representation in the pilot.

Q: When does the pilot start?

A: The first cohort is launching July 1, 2022 with half of the pilot participants, and the remaining half will be launched by October 1, 2022. Existing programs will move directly into the pilot. New programs are not required to be licensed right away but will be expected to be ready for licensure within 12 months of when they enter the pilot.

Q: I would like to be already be licensed by July 1, 2022, or at least be in the final steps of that process. Will that impact the process?

A: We can consider it. Sites can enter the pilot when they are on an initial license. There is nothing in our design that would prohibit that, but we would love to complete the process with you from start to finish.