



Experience-Based Competency

Providers and Staff Working in Licensed Child Care and Early Learning Programs Can Meet Their Role Qualification with Experience.

To choose this option, providers log into their MERIT account and update their Dashboard.

Once Experience is selected in MERIT, the dashboard status bar for job role education will turn green and the requirement will be met.

This experience option is not available to meet staff qualifications for:

- Early Childhood Assistant Program (ECEAP)
- Early Achievers professional development points



How to Select this Option in MERIT

Determine if this pathway is the best option for you. By selecting this option, you acknowledge the following:

- This will meet your licensing requirement.
- This will not go toward your Early Achievers points for education.
- This does not meet ECEAP staff qualifications.
- This option does not build in future education opportunities.
- You have completed all training requirements over the past seven years.



Update Your MERIT Dashboard

1. Login to MERIT at merit.dcyf.wa.gov.
2. Click on the "Job Role Education" status bar on your MERIT Dashboard.
3. Click the "Click Here" button. A popup box will appear.
4. Use the drop-down menu to select "I want to use my experience and training."
 - *Note: This option will only appear if you are in a qualifying role and will have the required work experience by Aug. 1, 2026.*
5. Click "Save."
6. Your Job Role Education status bar will now be green and display your requirement as met.





Eligibility

1. Active employment in an eligible job role recorded in MERIT (<https://apps.dcyf.wa.gov/MERIT/Home/Welcome?ReturnUrl=%2Fmerit%2F>):
 - Family Home Licensee
 - Family Home Lead Teacher
 - Family Home Assistant Teacher
 - Center Lead Teacher
 - Center Assistant Teacher
2. Seven years of cumulative experience working in a licensed facility by Aug. 1, 2026.
3. Completed and maintained compliance (through all seven years) for the following training requirements (WAC 0105: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=110-300-0105>, 0106: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=110-300-0106>, and 0107: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=110-300-0107>):
 - All renewable Health and Safety trainings:
 - Bloodborne Pathogens
 - CPR
 - First Aid
 - Food Handlers
 - Safe Sleep
 - Child Care Basics or DCYF approved equivalent – see publication *Completing Child Care Basics* (EPS_0035) available online at www.dcyf.wa.gov/publications-library/EPS_0035



FAQs

Why do I not see this as an option to select on my MERIT dashboard?

This option will only be available on your dashboard if you are working in a qualifying role and will have the required work experience by Aug. 1, 2026.

Please ensure the following:

- *You have active employment in an eligible job role recorded in your MERIT Employment Information.*
- *Your Employment Information in your MERIT Professional Record is accurate and includes all relevant employment history.*

How do I update my employment information in MERIT?

Contact the MERIT support team by emailing merit@dcyf.wa.gov or calling 1-866-482-4325, option 5.