

Mixed Delivery New Policies: FY25



01. Parental Activity Requirements

02. Per-Child Copayments

03. Attendance

04. Waitlists



Note: These and all other Mixed Delivery requirements for FY25 are detailed in the Mixed Delivery Program Guidelines - FY25

Parental Activity Requirements

- Mixed Delivery has moved from a pilot testing the effectiveness of a program aligned with other school-day, school-year programs for preschoolers (VPI) in private settings to a full-day, year-round program with features both targeted at school readiness for 3- and 4-year-olds and child care and education services for infants, toddlers and two-year-olds.
- As Mixed Delivery has evolved, the state is looking toward promoting alignment with other similar programs like the Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP), while also retaining the unique and successful features of Mixed Delivery (contract model, reimbursement at 100% of Cost of Quality, etc.).

Rationale for Parental Activity Requirements

- The current Mixed Delivery model has an emphasis on full-day, year-round services—making it important that the families enrolled generally want and need this care schedule.
- Most families who need and/or prefer full-day, year-round services are likely already working, looking for work, or participating in an education or training program.
- Having the requirements will help ensure that Mixed Delivery is serving the families most in need of full-day, year-round services.

Parental Activity Requirements

- In addition to meeting one of the eligibility criteria described in the Child Eligibility Criteria section of the Mixed Delivery Program Guidelines - FY25, all parents* in the family must be engaging in one of the following activities:
 - **Employment**, including self-employment and remote work
 - **Education or training program**, including high school, basic adult education, GED courses, instruction in English as a second language, associate degree or certificate programs, technical or vocational programs, registered apprenticeships, or coursework at post-secondary institutions of higher education
 - **Job search**
- Limited exceptions to activity requirements may be made if one or both parents* in the family are unable to provide care themselves due to illness, disability, or another reason.

*The words parental and parent(s) are used to refer to parent(s) and/or legal guardians.

Parental Activity Requirements

- There are no minimum hour expectations associated with these activity requirements. Acceptable documentation to verify participation in a qualifying activity may include:
 - **Employment:** Pay stubs, Work schedule, Letter from employer, Self-certification
 - **Education:** Letter from educational institution, Transcript showing active enrollment in courses, Class schedule, Self-certification
 - **Job search:** Self-certification
- In lieu of providing documentation, families may provide a signed statement that they are engaging in one of the previous activities.
- Exceptions for Good Cause
 - If all available parents in the household are not participating in a qualifying activity but there is good cause for parent(s) needing access to ECCE services for their children, the family may provide a signed statement that they have an exception for good cause. Good cause may include, but is not limited to, a disability, illness, or other limiting factors.

Per-Child Copayments

Rationale for Per-Child Copayments

- Full-day, year-round programs for children birth to five generally require families to contribute to the cost of services.
- Establishing a copayment scale for Mixed Delivery families promotes alignment and equity across state-administered ECCE programs.
- Accordingly, the FY25-26 biennial budget requires that there be a copayment scale in Mixed Delivery based on the scale used in CCSP.
- The recommended scale is intended to remain affordable and equitable for Mixed Delivery families.


Per-Child Copayments

- Copayments will be flat monthly rates per child participating in Mixed Delivery, with families at or below 100% FPL having no copayment.
- Copayments will not exceed 7% of countable income for any family.
- Copayments may be decreased at any time if a family reports a reduction in income. Copayments may not increase at any point during a family's eligibility period.

Per-Child Copayment Rates

Income Range (% Federal Poverty Level)	Per-child Monthly Family Copayment
0% - 100%	\$0
101% - 200%	\$55
201% - 300%	\$100
301% and above	\$150

Collecting Copayments

- Copayments are paid directly to the provider by the family and are deducted from the monthly per-child payment (at cost of quality) to the provider. 
- VECF and VDOE are working on a way to manage reimbursements that maximizes equity for families, ensures full payment to ECCE sites, and minimizes burden on ECCE sites, Ready Regions, and VECF.

Attendance

- Regular attendance is critical for children to receive the benefits of participation in ECCE.
- In FY25, the collection of attendance data is primarily for informational purposes. It will help us understand attendance patterns and refine the policy.
- The policy is intended to take supportive approach to help families access care, as opposed to a punitive approach.
- Having an attendance policy helps define active enrollment to ensure that slots are being occupied by families that need and use them regularly.
- Understanding attendance can help us understand child outcomes based on the amount of services that children receive.
 - I.e., children who do not attend regularly may not demonstrate the same growth as those who do.

■ Days

- In the Attendance section of the Mixed Delivery Program Guidelines - FY25, we use workdays (days when children could attend) rather than calendar days (e.g., 15 consecutive absence days may equal 3 weeks).

■ Absence day

- A day when child generally expected to be present, but is not (drop-off and pick-up times are not considered).

■ Explained absence

- A day when the site is made aware that the child will not be in attendance due to illness, travel, or other personal reasons.

■ Unexplained absence

- A day when the child is not in attendance and the site was not notified.

■ Consecutive absences

- More than one absence day in a row, note that these may not be consecutive on the calendar (e.g., Friday absent, weekend off, Monday holiday, Tuesday absent = 2 consecutive absences).

- Sites are NOT expected to take action for **explained** absences, however:
- After **15** consecutive or non-consecutive explained absences within a month or if the family anticipates and makes the site aware of an absence of more than 15 consecutive days, the site must notify their Mixed Delivery coordinator by email and/or phone.
- The Ready Region must then email VECF.
- The Ready Region and VECF will then determine if any action is necessary.

- Sites are NOT expected to take action for **non-consecutive unexplained** absences, however:
- After **15** unexplained non-consecutive absences within a month, the site must reach out to their Mixed Delivery coordinator by email and/or phone.
- The Ready Region must then email VECF.
- The Ready Region and VECF will then determine if any action is necessary.

- Frequent **unexplained** absences may be a sign that:
 - The family needs additional support to fully participate in ECCE services
 - Their childcare needs or preferences have changed
- Mixed Delivery ECCE site leaders **must** ensure that families are aware of the attendance guidance associated with Mixed Delivery
 - Language will be provided that can be used to inform families by incorporating this information into ECCE sites' existing attendance policies and/or enrollment paperwork
- Frequent consecutive unexplained absences
 - Only type requiring multi-step action, should be uncommon

- After **5 consecutive unexplained** absence days, the ECCE site **must**:
 - Contact family
 - To check in and offer support
 - Notify Mixed Delivery coordinator
 - About recurring absences and outreach
- After **10 consecutive unexplained** absence days, the site **must**:
 - Contact family
 - To offer support, verify the continuing need for care, and remind the family of expectations
 - Remind family that after 15 consecutive unexplained absence days with, child no longer in MD
 - Notify Mixed Delivery coordinator
 - About recurring absences and outreach

- After **15 consecutive unexplained** absence days, the site **must**:
 - Contact family (by close of business on workday 15)
 - To notify them child no longer has a Mixed Delivery slot (funding)
 - *Note:*
 - *Child may remain enrolled at site, without Mixed Delivery funding, if family and site agree*
 - *If ECCE site chooses to disenroll child from site, they **must** provide at least a 5 workday (1 week) grace period, so family can find alternative care if needed*
 - Notify Mixed Delivery coordinator
 - Child no longer enrolled in Mixed Delivery due to noncompliance with the MD attendance policy
 - Child needs to be withdrawn in the Mixed Delivery Data Portal
 - *NOTE:*
 - *Only Mixed Delivery coordinators and VECF can make withdrawal in Mixed Delivery Data Portal for this reason*
 - Work with Mixed Delivery coordinator to fill slot with eligible child within 30 days of 10-day communication

Unexplained Absences

CONSECUTIVE (CONT.)

CALENDAR

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Day 5 Contact

Day 10 Contact

Day 15 Contact
No longer in MD

Last day of minimum
grace period

- Mixed Delivery ECCE sites **must** comply with attendance-related VDOE OCCHS licensing requirements *and* additional Mixed Delivery reporting requirements related to frequent absences, to:
 - Allow ECCE sites/Ready Regions to identify families in need of additional support and resources to fully participate in ECCE services
 - Ensure all slots are actively filled
 - Provide information about attendance patterns to inform program design, policies, improvements
- By the 15th of the month, enter data on frequent absences into Mixed Delivery Data Portal.
- *NOTE: payment to Mixed Delivery sites will not be impacted unless a slot is not filled within the 30-day enrollment window.*

Waitlists

Rationale for Waitlists

- Through the biennial budget and legislation, the VA General Assembly clearly communicated that it wishes to better understand unmet family demand for ECCE services across the Commonwealth.
 - Budget language requires that Mixed Delivery, VPI, and the CCSP to have an approach to maintaining waitlists for services.
 - Beginning in FY25, VDOE will be required to report annually on the amount of funding that would be necessary to 1) sustain current enrollment; 2) support enrollment based on a growth rate; and 3) fully meet family demand by eliminating waitlists.
- Waitlists demonstrate to legislators and the public that the existing investment in Mixed Delivery is a good investment that meets the needs and preferences of many families, and that there are more families who could benefit from services that cannot access them due to funding limitations.
- Waitlists help determine the extent of unmet demand for Mixed Delivery, providing evidence to support advocacy efforts and requests for additional funding.
- Waitlists help ECCE sites fill empty slots efficiently, which means that they can maintain the slots, receive stable funding, and maximize the number of children actively receiving services throughout the year.
- *Note: As a contract model Mixed Delivery does not pay on attendance.*

Mixed Delivery Specific Waitlist

SCREENING PROCESS

- ECCE sites or Ready Regions (if waitlist held centrally) **must** have a process for maintaining a Mixed Delivery specific waitlist.
- VECF will provide information required, resources, and Mixed Delivery Data Portal guidance.
- Screen:
 - Families of children attending the ECCE site who are interested, but not yet enrolled, in Mixed Delivery.
 - Families who are newly enrolling at the ECCE site, for example as part of completing enrollment packets.
 - Families whose children are not yet enrolled or offered a slot at the ECCE site and are put on the site's regular waitlist.

Mixed Delivery Specific Waitlist

TRACKING AND REPORTING

- Waitlist screening can be completed by parent or ECCE site staff.
 - No parent documentation is required.
- Data will be entered into Mixed Delivery Data Portal.
- Monthly verification:
 - By the 15th of each month, Mixed Delivery ECCE sites must verify that current Mixed Delivery waitlist information is accurate and complete.
- Sites must retain the Mixed Delivery screening information for families on their Mixed Delivery specific waitlist.