

ELMS Tips – revised January 2024

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For Assistance with ELMS, email elms@dcyf.wa.gov.

- This is the only way to get in the queue for assistance.
- Send a description of your problem, what screen it happened on, and the steps you took just before it happened.
- Include child ID's (not names), class or site names, or other examples.
- In some cases, it may be helpful to send a screen shot.

Adult:Child Ratio and Assigning Teaching Staff

The adult-to-child ratio is a minimum of 1:10 for ECEAP classes.

The adult-to-child ratio is a minimum of 1:4 for Early ECEAP classes serving infants.

The adult-to-child ratio is a minimum of 1:5 for Early ECEAP classes not serving infants.

The adult-to-child ratio is determined by the teaching positions allocated to a class rather than individual teachers. If teaching staff are in class simultaneously, they must have separate positions in ELMS. If multiple teachers "tag team" over the course of a day, they share a position in ELMS. The "Is Primary Lead Teacher" checkbox must be checked for one staff person in each class. Carefully read the Class>Staff position instructions in ELMS for details.

Application Errors

DCYF ECEAP staff can correct errors in locked applications for enrolled children. Send requests to elms@dcyf.wa.gov. You can change applications before they are locked. If an application is changed after the parent and staff have signed it, it is very important to print the revised version for signatures. The signed application is your protection that you did everything possible to prove the child is legally eligible for ECEAP. This maintains a clear paper trail in case there is a fraud allegation.

Browser Choices

Select Chrome, Firefox, Safari, or Edge as your browser for ELMS.

Bulk Updates

In the Bulk Updates section of the Child tab, you can:

- Change names of family support specialists.
- Enter children's actual first days of class. This triggers the 90-day countdown for screenings.
 - Format dates in Bulk Updates as MM/DD/YYYY. If there is an error in the date, you may lose your data when you click Save.
- Enter health screening information for a whole class at once. This includes vision screening and height/weight screening.
 - Bulk Updates will retain the last data entered, in italics just above the data entry fields, for your reference. This occurs if you entered the data through Child & Family Updates or Bulk Updates.
- Enter informal family support notes for a whole class at once.

Family Support staff with no other role in ELMS cannot access Bulk Updates. ELMS may show "No children found" when these staff attempt to access Bulk Updates.

Child Name Correction

If there is a typo in ELMS or you learn of a change or correction to a child's legal name, you can always correct a child's name in ELMS:

- For children who are not yet enrolled, change their name on Prescreen Step 1 or Application Step 1.
- For enrolled children, change it on the Household page of Child/Family Updates.

You sometimes have to Save and leave the page, and then the name change will apply everywhere in the child's ELMS record.

Child Search, returning to

There is a link to return to the Child Search page at the top of the Prescreen, Application, and Child/Family Updates screens. This returns you to the same search results you were on when you opened this child's documents.

Child Status Search

When you perform a child search using status, remember that the results will show children with all selected statuses. You can search for children who are on a waiting list and either complete prescreen, incomplete application, or complete application. In all other cases, only one status can be searched for at a time. Otherwise, the search will return no results.

Changing Waiting List Preferences

If a child is on more than one waiting list, you can rank them first, second, or third choice. You can later change the preferences in one of these locations:

- On the Child Search page, open the child's "On Waiting List" status and select new preferences.
- On the site Waiting List, click on the preference link.

Cloning application for siblings

You can clone parts of the child application for age-eligible siblings who are applying and will begin attending ECEAP during the same school year. While completing the first child's application, enter the sibling's name as part of the household in Step 3. Finish the first application, and click on the sibling's name on Step 8 to start the second application.

You cannot clone between years. If you clone an application for a sibling in one year and that sibling is not enrolled that year, ELMS deletes the cloned application at the end of the school year on July 1. It is not available in the new school year. You must start a new prescreen for the sibling to enroll them in the following year.

Duplicate Child Records

We are working to eliminate duplicate child records in ELMS. You receive an alert whenever you start a prescreen with a similar name and/or birthdate to a child already in ELMS. If ELMS asks you to check with your ELMS Administrator or elms@dcyf.wa.gov, it is important to do this. We are working to reduce the number of false alarm duplicate warnings.

DCYF ELMS support staff can delete a duplicate record for a child. Send the child ID for the record that needs deleting to elms@dcyf.wa.gov.

ELMS Help/Definitions

Do you know that ELMS has definitions and instructions embedded throughout? You can hover and click anywhere you see a dotted underline in ELMS. Then, you'll see a popup with more information. For example:

- On the first page of any child's Application in ELMS, you can see the definition of foster care, Family Assessment Response (FAR), or a child-only TANF cash grant.
- On the Health Info page of the Application, you can learn details about medical or dental homes, well-child (EPSDT exam), or the meanings of each immunization status.

Email Child Notes from ELMS

When entering a critical Parent-Teacher conference, child development note, or family support contact in ELMS, you can check the box "Send teacher & family support staff an email that a critical/urgent note was entered." ELMS will email the child's assigned teacher and family support staff, alerting them to enter ELMS to read the note.

Enrolling children who are already in ELMS

When you start a prescreen for a child in ELMS, you may learn that the child is already in ELMS. Follow the guidance in the message on your screen when this happens. Take the time to request the older version, and do not continue with a second prescreen for a child already in ELMS. DCYF staff delete the latest duplicate record entered for a child and retain the older version.

DCYF staff has been asked if you can just start a new child record during a time crunch. Please do not do this. ELMS is built to have one prescreen and application per child, regardless of year or location. If your ELMS Administrator is not readily available to help, please email elms@dcyf.wa.gov, and we will help. Thanks for keeping ELMS accurate!

Enrollment – Class Full

If you attempt to enroll a child and the class already has 20 children, you will see "Class Full." You must exit children from this class before you can enroll more.

Enrollment - Out-of-Ratio

If you attempt to enroll a child without enough teaching staff to maintain the adult-to-child ratio, you will see "Out of Ratio." Click on that link and follow directions to add staff or check "Position is filled" before enrolling the child (or ask your supervisor to do so). Alternatively, you must exit a departing child before enrolling the new child.

Enrollment - Transferring Children Before Classes Begin

Only children enrolled in a class with an actual start date can be transferred. If the child has not yet started class, use "Exit" instead of "Transfer" by selecting "No" when ELMS asks you if the child showed up to class in person. This will lead to exiting the child as "never attended." Then, during the exit process, you can add them back to the waiting list. From the waiting list, you can re-enroll them in the new class.

Exit Children at End of School Year

As each of your classes end for the school year, exit each child from their class in ELMS. All classes must end, and children must exit by June 30. Exiting all children is required before submitting your monthly report for the final month of classes. Once the next school year is opened in ELMS in the spring, you can re-enroll continuing children in the next year as soon as the classes are set up for the year.

- You can complete bulk exits from the following locations:
 - Child Search – select the child names you want to exit, then click the "Exit" button at the top of the search results.
 - Exit Child link – on the child tab, select the Exit Child menu item. Select the child names you want to exit and click the "Select Checked Children" button.
 - Locations & Classes> Class>Class Roster page – Click the "Bulk Exit" button at the top of the class roster. This button will only be visible after classes end.
 - Monthly Report class pages – for the month when the class ended, click the "Bulk Exit" button on Step 2. This button will only be visible for the month classes end.

Family Support Notes

Family support notes are entered in ELMS in the Child and Family Updates section. To get there:

1. Find the child using the Child Search tab.
2. To the right of the child's name, select Child and Family Updates. Choose the Family tab.
3. Click the button "Add Family Support Notes."
4. If you are recording a formal family support visit of 30 or more minutes, check the box and complete the page. Formal visits are visits that meet the requirements of ECEAP Performance Standard F-1, whether or not they were scheduled in advance.
5. The total number of Family support visits will appear on the Monthly Reports once the children's classes begin.
6. Enter each family support contact separately. Please do not lump several dates together.
7. It is OK if you had visits before classes began; they will show in the accumulated count all year if they occurred July 1 or later.

After classes have started, you can also enter family support notes from the Monthly Report class page for the previous month. Click the blue number in the Family Support Visits column to begin.

Foster or Kinship Care and Guardian Changes in the Child Application

If the child's foster or guardianship status changed between the time of the prescreen and the application. In that case, you can change the answers to foster care, kinship care, or adopted after foster/kinship care on Step 1 of the application. Then you must go to Step 3 and:

- Change Household Situation.
- Change Family Size.
- Change Work/Training.

Follow-Up Alerts

On the Child Search page, there is a red exclamation mark icon next to the names of some children. These children either need follow-up on a health issue or are approaching the date they will need a follow-up or have mobility mentoring data entry to be completed.

- You can click on this icon and see the subject of the Follow-Up Alert.
- You can also see this information on the Child and Family Updates pages for Medical Status, Dental Status, or Health Screening if you click on **YES** next to "Follow-Up?"

Health Screenings – entering multiple screenings

Each school year, ELMS allows you to enter a maximum of three well-child exams, three dental screenings, and three height/weight measurements for each child. If a child has more than three in a single school year, you should overwrite the most recent one in ELMS with information about the screening that just occurred.

Income Eligibility

Child eligibility is determined only once at the time a child is first enrolled in ELMS. If they are over-income at that time, they retain this designation throughout their time in ECEAP.

- If family income increases, we do not change it in ELMS. If family income decreases, we do not change it in ELMS.
- Exception: A child on an IEP does not use an ESE slot, and there is no ESE icon on the ELMS Waiting List. If a child from an ESE family obtains an IEP after enrollment, they are removed from the ESE category.
- Exception: A child who is currently experiencing homelessness does not use an ESE slot, and there is no ESE icon on the ELMS Waiting List. If a child from an ESE family becomes homeless after enrollment, they are removed from the ESE category.
- If you determine eligibility information was entered in ELMS incorrectly at the time the child was enrolled, email elms@dcyf.wa.gov to request the correction. If the change occurred in the family after the child was enrolled in ELMS, we do not change ELMS.

Monthly Report – How to Use

ECEAP Contractors complete a Monthly Report within ELMS each month before being paid. Depending on your role and employer, you may be required to complete a section of this. See this [brief presentation](#) for details.

Monthly Report - View Parent-Teacher Conference and Family Support Visit Minutes

The Class page of the Monthly Report shows the cumulative Parent-Teacher Conferences and Family Support visits minutes for each child from the beginning of the school year through the end of the report month. Minutes added for months after the report month will show up on later reports. For example, if you enter minutes for April and the monthly report is for March, those minutes won't show up until the April monthly report.

When you open children's family support notes or parent-teacher conferences from the Monthly Report class page, you only see notes through the report month (the previous month). To see more recent notes, go to Child Search and open Child/Family Updates.

To review the total minutes per child for the year, go to the Reports tab. Select the report: Family Support and Parent-Teacher Conference Minutes.

Copying from Other Sources into Notes Sections

Copying text from ChildPlus or other places and then pasting into the notes section of ELMS does not work. It imports HTML code and formatting information that can break that child's ELMS pages. A note from a source that uses complex formatting can be copied into a .txt file first and then copied from the .txt file into ELMS to avoid issues. It will also avoid issues if you type notes into ELMS.

Overlapping Enrollment Dates

A child cannot have overlapping enrollment in ELMS. If a child moves from one class to another, the start date in the second class must be after their last day attended in their original class.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

To enter Parent-Teacher conference time:

1. Find the child using the Child Search tab.
2. To the right of the child's name, select Child and Family Updates.
3. Choose the Child Development tab.
4. Click the button "Add Parent/Teacher Conference."
5. For a formal parent-teacher conference, check the box, and three more required fields appear. Formal conferences are conferences that meet the ECEAP Performance Standards.
6. In the "Length in Minutes" field, enter a number only. Non-numeric characters prevent the page from saving.
7. Record a summary and any follow-up notes and save.

After classes have started, you can also enter parent-teacher conferences from the Monthly Report class page for the previous month. Click the blue number in the Parent-Teacher Conference Minutes column to begin. Parent-teacher conference minutes automatically appear on the class Monthly Reports once children's classes begin, and they will accumulate each month from July through June.

Priority Points – Prescreen

The priority points generated by a child prescreen do not count most prioritization factors. Please complete the application for an accurate accounting of a child's priority.

Priority Points – Viewing for one child

You may view a detailed list of a child's priority points on their completed Child Application, Step 8.

Reports That Only Display Currently Enrolled Children

If you'd like to view Class Roster, Enrollment by Child, Health Status by Child, or Health Monitoring reports between April 1 and June 30, make sure ELMS is in the desired school year before you go to the Reports tab. Additionally, ensure all children have actual start dates before retrieving useful data from these reports in the Fall.

Roles without ELMS access

You can enter the names of staff with the following roles in ELMS, but they will not have access to ELMS:

- Coach
- Dietitian
- ECEAP Staff – Other - **This role cannot be combined with any other ELMS role.**
- Health Professional
- Mental Health Professional
- Cultural Specialist
- Language Specialist
- Other Classroom Staff

If a person in one of these roles needs access to ELMS, please assign them an ELMS role with the needed access. For example, a Health Professional may need the ELMS role of Health Direct Service Staff if they need to view or enter health data for children or view health reports.

If a person with the ECEAP Staff – Other role needs to be assigned a different role, then the ECEAP Staff – Other role must be removed first.

Site Address Changes

The site address is locked in ELMS. If the children, teachers, and supplies move to a new address, you will create a new site in ELMS. To start a new ECEAP site, see **Adding a Site** on page 26 of the [ELMS Administrator's Manual](#).

If a site address was entered incorrectly into ELMS and has not moved, email elms@dcyf.wa.gov to request the correction.

Site Contact Person – How to change in ELMS

It is important to have the correct on-site contact person listed in ELMS. This person should work at the site daily since DCYF shares this info with state Emergency Management to use in case of emergency. To set the contact person, go to Locations & Classes > Sites > Staff and check the box by their name.

STARS ID Numbers

Staff with an ELMS role of Lead Teacher, Assistant Teacher, or Family Support Staff should have a STARS ID displayed on their ELMS Edit Staff page. This allows ELMS to retrieve staff qualification and background check information from MERIT. If the STARS ID is not displayed in ELMS, try these options:

- If they do not yet have a STARS ID, apply for one in MERIT.
- If they have ELMS access and a STARS ID, contact elms@dcyf.wa.gov. The problem is that the person has multiple MERIT accounts that need to be merged.
- If they do not have ELMS access but have a STARS ID, search for them on the ELMS Staff page, click Edit, then click the "Associate MERIT STARS ID" button.

Starting the New Year in ELMS

The next school year typically becomes available in ELMS in April. Between then and July 10, it is possible to work on both the current year and the next year in ELMS. For more information, see [Starting the New Year in ELMS](#).

Subcontractor Funds Per Slot

On the Subcontractor Funding and Slots page of ELMS, the Contractor enters the Funds Per Slot. This must match the amount per slot in the actual subcontract. The ESE Limits section of this page is optional.

Subcontractor ESE Limit

If you are an ECEAP contractor with subcontractors, you can now set an ESE limit for each subcontractor in ELMS on the subcontractor funding and slots page. ELMS will limit the number of ESE children the subcontractor can enroll to the amount entered in the limit. This is optional. Leave it blank if you do not want ELMS to enforce a limit.

Swapping Teacher Roles

You can swap a pair of teachers from the same class so that the person who was entered as the Lead Teacher becomes the Assistant Teacher and vice versa.

1. Open the class Staff, Slots & Ratio page.
2. Click the "Swap Staff" link next to one of the people you would like to swap.
3. Then, check the name of the person you want to swap them within the popup.
4. Save

Teachers – Adding Teaching Staff to Classes

Carefully read the instructions on the ELMS Class>Staff, Slots & Ratio page about how to add teachers. It is critical to set up the "positions" correctly. If you have problems, please contact elms@dcyf.wa.gov.

- The number of adults in the adult:child ratio is the number of teaching positions filled by staff for all ECEAP hours.
- Each staff person who is present for all class hours must have their own position. Two teachers can be in one position if they are a tag team; for example, one is there in the morning and one in the afternoon.
- First, add all the positions you need, then add the teachers' names.
- Make sure each position has a checkmark for "filled for all ECEAP hours" if true. This is necessary to count the adult correctly:child ratio.
- Make sure you've checked "Is primary lead teacher?" for one lead teacher per class. This teacher is automatically loaded into GOLD.
- If a teacher leaves a class that has started, you must add the new teacher before removing the teacher who left. This is because ELMS needs to maintain the adult:child ratio.
- Each staff person can only have one role in a class. They can't be a lead teacher and an assistant teacher at the same time.
- If you add a new Lead Teacher in the Staff tab, ELMS will prompt you to specify if they are the primary lead teacher. If you select "yes," this will uncheck the box for any existing Lead Teacher.

Transfer Between Contractors

To request a transfer of a child's ELMS record to you from another ECEAP contractor:

- Have the parent or guardian sign the [parent consent form](#) granting permission to move the child's ELMS records from their prior ECEAP contractor to you.
 - Keep this form with your records. Do not send it to DCYF.
 - In the rare cases when the parent does not want all of their record transferred and wants to keep some of the notes you made in Child/Family Updates private, email elms@dcyf.wa.gov with the details.
- Ask your ELMS Administrator to "[Request Records Transfer](#)" from the ELMS Child tab.
 - Complete the popup form with the child's legal name, nickname, if any, parent name who signed consent, staff name who obtained signature, date of signature, and the site waiting list you want the child to be on.
- DCYF staff may contact the child's former location before the transfer of records.
- Once we have received exit information from the previous contractor, we will notify you that the child record is ready for you.

View Your ELMS Roles

To quickly see the user roles and locations you can access in ELMS, click on your email address in the upper right corner of the screen.

Waiting Lists

DCYF collects waiting list statistics through ELMS and reports these to researchers, legislators, and other policymakers. These statistics count all children placed on the Waiting List within ELMS and measures ECEAP waiting lists consistently statewide. Please take the time to assign children with a completed prescreen to a site Waiting List in ELMS.

Work/Training Hours Updates for Working Day Each Year

The work and training information necessary to qualify a child for Working Day services must be updated between school years. When you click Enroll for the child for the new year, you will see a "Review Working Day Eligibility" button. You must click the button, review, update, and save before enrolling the child into Working Day ECEAP.