



Instructions and Tips for Creating Compliant Policies and Procedures: Waiting List Policy and Procedures (O. Reg. 137/15, ss. 75.1(2))

Mandatory Information

Every licensee that establishes or maintains a waiting list is required to develop written policies and procedures with regards to waiting lists. The following information **must be included** in your child care centre's or home child care agency's waiting list policies and procedures to demonstrate compliance with requirements under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* and O. Reg. 137/15:

- How the licensee determines the order in which children on the waiting list are offered admission
- That the waiting list will be made available in a manner that maintains the privacy and confidentiality of the children listed on it, but that allows the position of a child on the list to be determined by the affected persons or families

Other Considerations

The following are some tips and other considerations for developing your waiting list policies and procedures. These are not mandatory, but they will support the development of more comprehensive and high-quality policies and procedures:

General

- Provide definitions for ambiguous terms used throughout your document.
- Include a space to put the date that the policy was last developed and/or updated.
- Break down your procedures into a step-by-step process that is easy to understand and follow and that includes clear roles and responsibilities.
- Be clear about the intent of your policy and what you are trying to achieve through its implementation.

Consultation and Resources

- Consult resources about all the best practices that could support your program in setting out a high-quality waiting list policy (e.g. the Child Care Centre Licensing Manual or the Home Child Care Agency Licensing Manual, as applicable, etc.).
- Where applicable, consult with the local service system manager (CMSM/DSSAB) to determine whether a centralized waiting list is maintained and whether you are therefore required to develop a waiting list policy.

Processes and Expectations to Include

- Reflect other regulatory requirements in your policy and procedures (e.g. the requirement to not charge a fee to place a child on a waiting list, record retention requirements, a copy of the waiting list policy being included in the parent handbook, etc.)
- Explain why children may be placed on a waiting list as opposed to being offered immediate admission.
- Be clear about whose responsibility it is to create and maintain the waiting list.
- Provide steps for handling a request to place a child on a waiting list.
- Provide steps for placing a child on the waiting list.

- Outline who parents should contact to inquire about their child's placement on a waiting list and how to make such inquiries.
- Describe how to respond to parents who inquire about their child's placement on the waiting list, including providing the estimated likelihood of a child being offered a space in the program.
- Explain how confidentiality and privacy of children and families on a waiting list will be maintained, including what information will be shared and what information will not be shared.

When developing your process for how the licensee determines the order in which children on the waiting list are offered admission:

- Determine and set out how the order in which children on the waiting list will be offered admission.
- Be clear about how children may be given priority with regard to being offered an available space at the child care centre.
- Clarify whether fees will be charged once admission is offered to a child and accepted by a parent (i.e. a guaranteed spot at the child care centre or a home child care premises), what the fee amount will be and whether it is refundable.
- Set out timelines within which parents must confirm their child's admission once a space becomes available.
- Provide situations in which a family may be removed from a waiting list (e.g. if the timeline to confirm a child's admission once a space becomes available is missed).