Get Kids Ready
Participation Process Overview

2026-27 School Year

Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

Get Kids Ready

Introduction

Get Kids Ready will run every year with child care providers offering school readiness programming between July 1 and June 30. The Get Kids Ready program is free to families. Child care providers cannot charge families for Get Kids Ready instruction. Participating providers will receive state funding for those hours. Child care providers can charge families for additional time that children are in care beyond the Get Kids Ready instruction hours.

There are three main steps that child care providers must complete to participate in and receive funding for Get Kid Ready:

1. **Intent to Participate –** Signifies interest in participating in the Get Kids Ready program along with understanding of the Get Kids Ready program requirements.

2. **Program Eligibility Verification Application –** After submitting an Intent to Participate, child care providers must then submit materials to verify they meet the Get Kids Ready program eligibility requirements.

3. **Payment Applications –** Child care providers found eligible to participate in Get Kids Ready by DCF must submit four (4) Payment Applications throughout the year for each service period they wish to receive payment for.

Please visit the Get Kids Ready webpage for child care providers for full program details, FAQs, and other resources.

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2026-27 School Year Important Dates

Program Enrollment Timeline	Open	Close
Step 1: Intent to Participate	January 6, 2026	February 1, 2026
DCF to post list of child care providers who submitted an Intent to Participate to website	By February 15, 2026	
Step 2: Program Eligibility Verification Application	April 6, 2026	May 15, 2026
Notification of eligibility status (rolling basis)	By June 2, 2026	
DCF to post finalized list of child care providers who are eligible to participate to website	June 2, 2026	
Step 3: Payment Application Periods	See chart below	

Payment Application Periods Timeline			
Service Period	**Application Period**	**Count Period**	**Payment Date**
July-September 2026	9/1-9/20/2026	8/17-9/11/2026	9/30/2026
October-November 2026	11/2-11/18/2026	10/12-11/16/2026	11/30/2026
December 2026-February 2027	2/2-2/17/2027	1/11-2/5/2027	2/26/2027
March-June 2027	5/3-5/19/2027	4/12-5/7/2027	5/28/2027

Step 1: Get Kids Ready Intent to Participate

Overview
Timeline: Jan 6-Feb 1, 2026

The Intent to Participate must be submitted by **licensed/ certified child care providers** who wish to participate in the 2026-27 school year through the Child Care Provider Portal **no later than February 1, 2026**.

During the Intent to Participate, child care providers will:

- Enter **contact information**
- Indicate the **maximum number of slots** they plan on making available for Get Kids Ready. This will be the maximum number of slots they can receive payment for the school year.
- Attest that they **understand and agree to meet all Get Kids Ready eligibility and application requirements**, including:
  - Child care programs must be in compliance with all legal, financial, and regulatory requirements imposed by law or administrative rule, including overpayment compliance
  - Child care programs must implement a curriculum that meets the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS) for children participating in Get Kids Ready.
  - Children being served in Get Kids Ready for the 2026-2027 school year must be 4 years old on or before September 1, 2026.
  - Lead teachers providing instruction for Get Kids Ready must have an associate degree or bachelor's degree, in any field of study.
  - Child care programs must provide at least 437 hours of instruction in elementary school readiness to children participating in Get Kids Ready between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027.
  - Child care programs may not have a contract with a school district to provide 4-year-old kindergarten for the 2026-2027 school year.

Checklist
What You Need to Submit Your Intent

Before Submitting your Intent to Participate between January 6 and February 1, 2026, ensure you are prepared to meet or provide the below criteria:

- [ ] Program must be Licensed/Certified
- [ ] Contact information which will be publicly posted to DCF website
  - [ ] Contact Name
  - [ ] Contact Email
  - [ ] Contact Phone Number
- [ ] Maximum number of slots you will make available for the upcoming school year. **Note: This is the maximum number of slots child care providers can receive payment for and cannot be increased once the Intent to Participate is submitted.**
- [ ] Attest that you understand and agree to meet all Get Kids Ready eligibility and application requirements
(see full list on the left)

Step 2: Get Kids Ready Program Eligibility Verification Application

Program Eligibility Verification Application April 6-May 15, 2026

Child care providers who submitted an Intent to Participate in the Child Care Provider Portal (CCPP) must also complete a Get Kids Ready Program Eligibility Verification Application through CCPP which will be available April 6, 2026. Program Eligibility Verification Applications are due by May 15, 2026.

When completing the Program Eligibility Verification Application providers will:

- Re-attest that they **understand and meet all Get Kids Ready eligibility and application requirements, including that they do not have a contract with school district to provide 4K**
- **Verify and/or upload required evidence of meeting eligibility requirements**, including:
    - A **schedule showing at least 437 hours of Get Kids Ready instruction** between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027
    - An **indication of how their curriculum meets Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS)**
    - That Get Kids Ready lead teachers have an associate or bachelor's degree, if you already have a Get Kids Ready lead teacher identified
        - **Note:** This can be left blank at the time of the Program Eligibility Verification Application. Child care providers will need to confirm all lead teachers have an associate or bachelor's degree during Payment Applications.
- **Confirm or reduce** (but not increase from the number submitted in the Intent to Participate) the **maximum number of Get Kids Ready slots** they intend to make available.

DCF will notify providers when their eligibility is verified on a rolling basis, but no later than June 2, 2026. The earliest date approved providers may begin offering Get Kids Ready services is July 1, 2026.

Checklist: What You Need to Submit Your Program Eligibility Verification Application

Before Submitting your Program Eligibility Verification Application between April 6 and May 15, 2026, ensure you are prepared to do the following:

- ☐ Upload a schedule showing at least 437 hours of instruction (Use Sample/Template Schedule as an optional resource)

- ☐ Indicate how your program's curriculum meets WMELS (see full list of options on the DCF website)

- ☐ Confirm or reduce (but not increase from the number submitted in the Intent to Participate) the maximum number of Get Kids Ready slots they intend to make available

- ☐ *Optional:* Select your Get Kids Ready lead teacher(s)

    Note: We encourage you to verify that your Get Kids Ready lead teachers' degrees show in their Wisconsin Registry profiles under Education. Child care providers will need to confirm all Get Kids Ready lead teachers have an associate or bachelor's degree during Payment Applications.

- ☐ Re-attest that you understand and agree to meet all Get Kids Ready eligibility and application requirements, including that you do not have a contract with a school district to provide 4K for the 2026-27 school year (see full list on page 4)

Step 3: Payment Applications

Payment Applications (See Dates Below)

Service Periods

There are four service periods throughout the school year, in which payments will be made for. Service periods are:

- July-September
- October-November
- December- February
- March-June

Payment Applications

Child care providers will be required to submit a Payment Application in the Child Care Provider Portal for each of four (4) service periods for which they want to receive payment. Each Payment Application will ask providers to:

- **Confirm or update information** from the Program Eligibility Verification Application
- Verify that Get Kids Ready lead teachers have an associate or bachelor's degree
- List **all children enrolled** in Get Kids Ready during the applicable payment Count Period
- Child care providers may also be asked to **respond to brief questions about Get Kids Ready implementation** to help DCF understand how the program is being delivered and identify areas for improvement

Payment Application Dates:

- September 1-20, 2026
- November 2-18, 2026
- February 2-17, 2027
- May 3-19, 2027

Count Periods

There will be four (4) Count Periods per year where child care providers will need to report on child enrollment in Get Kids Ready:

- August 17-September 11, 2026
- October 12-November 16, 2026
- January 11-February 4, 2027
- April 12-May 7, 2027

Checklist: What You Need to Submit Each of Your Payment Applications

Before submitting each of your Payment Applications, ensure you are prepared to meet or provide the below criteria:

- ☐ Confirm/update information from the Program Eligibility Verification Applications (see full list on page 5)

- ☐ Verify your Get Kids Ready lead teacher(s), ensuring their degree is updated in the Education section of their Registry profile or that you can upload proof of degree in the Child Care Provider portal at the time of the Payment Application

- ☐ Keep a list of all children enrolled in Get Kids Ready (and who attended Get Kids Ready at least one day during the corresponding Count Period)

- ☐ Respond to brief survey questions (no preparation required)

Service Period
July–September 2026

Child care providers who submit the **Payment Application (September 1-20, 2026)** and are approved, will receive per-child payments for all eligible children who are enrolled in Get Kids Ready and attended Get Kids Ready at least one day during the **Count Period (August 17-September 11, 2026).** These payments will **cover the months of July, August, and September** and the payment will be made on **September 30, 2026**.

Child care providers who do not wish to submit a Payment Application for this Service Period will not receive payment for any of these months. They will still be able to submit a Payment Application for future Service Periods.

Note: Per-child funding amounts for each Service Period will fluctuate based on the total amount of eligible children enrolled in Get Kids Ready statewide.

Count Period

Payment Application

Payment Date

July 2026

			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	

August 2026

						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					

September 2026

		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			

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Service Period
October-November 2026

Child care providers who submit the **Payment Application (November 2-18, 2026)** and are approved, will receive per-child payments for all eligible children who are enrolled in Get Kids Ready and attended Get Kid Ready at least one day during the **Count Period (October 12 – November 16, 2026).** These payments will **cover the months of October and November** and the payment will be made on **November 30, 2026**.

Child care providers who do not wish to submit a Payment Application for this Service Period will not receive payment for any of these months. They will still be able to submit a Payment Application for future Service Periods.

Note: Per-child funding amounts for each Service Period will fluctuate based on the total amount of eligible children enrolled in Get Kids Ready statewide.

October 2026						
				1	2	3
4	5	5	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

November 2026						
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					

Count Period

Payment Application

Payment Date

Service Period
December 2026 - February 2027

Child care providers who submit the **Payment Application (February 2-17, 2027)** and are approved, will receive per-child payments for all eligible children who are enrolled in Get Kids Ready and attended Get Kids Ready at least one day during the **Count Period (January 11 – February 5, 2027).** These payments will **cover the months of December, January, and February** and the payment will be made on **February 26, 2027**.

Child care providers who do not wish to submit a Payment Application for this Service Period will not receive payment for any of these months. They will still be able to submit a Payment Application for future Service Periods.

Note: Per-child funding amounts for each Service Period will fluctuate based on the total amount of eligible children enrolled in Get Kids Ready statewide.

Count Period

Payment Application

Payment Date

December 2026

		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		

January 2027

					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						

February 2027

	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						

Service Period
March-June 2027

Child care providers who submit the **Payment Application (May 3-19, 2027)** and are approved, will receive per-child payments for all eligible children who are enrolled in Get Kids Ready and attended Get Kids Ready at least one day during the **Count Period (April 12 – May 7, 2027).** These payments will **cover the months of March, April, May, and June** and the payment will be made on **May 28, 2027**.

Child care providers who do not wish to submit a Payment Application for this Service Period will not receive payment for any of these months. They will still be able to submit a Payment Application for future Service Periods.

Note: Per-child funding amounts for each Service Period will fluctuate based on the total amount of eligible children enrolled in Get Kids Ready statewide.

Count Period

Payment Application

Payment Date