



## Documents Required for School Readiness Eligibility Determination Collier, Glades, Hendry and Lee Counties

**TO QUALIFY FOR BENEFITS:** You must be actively employed, attending job training or educational programs a minimum of 20 hours a week. New clients cannot be enrolled if you are not working or going to school.

**HAVE YOUR CHILD CARE PROVIDER CHOSEN PRIOR TO YOUR APPOINTMENT.** If you need assistance in choosing a child care provider, please call an ELC Resource & Referral Specialist at (239) 213-1137 for Collier County and (239) 935-6100 for Glades, Hendry and Lee counties.

***You must provide ALL of the following documents in order for your eligibility to be fully determined. Please keep in mind that based on what is determined during the eligibility interview, additional documentation may be requested.***

- A VALID (NON-EXPIRED) PHOTO ID for all adults in the family unit.** Examples include a Driver's License, Florida Identification card, passport, immigration card, student ID, and/or state or government issued identification card is acceptable. Membership cards from stores or other facilities are not accepted for identification.
- PROOF OF BIRTH: Documents used to establish the age of the child(ren) include:**
  - An official or certified copy of the child's birth record filed according to law with the appropriate public officer.
  - An original or certified copy of the child's certificate of baptism or other religious record of the child's birth, accompanied by an affidavit, which the child's parent swore to or affirmed, stating that the certificate is true and correct.
  - An insurance policy on the child's life that has been in force for at least two years.
  - A passport or certificate of the child's arrival in the United States.
  - An immunization record that a public health officer or licensed practicing physician signed.
  - Florida SHOTS documentation.
  - A valid military dependent identification card.
  - Official court documents.
  - Hospital records.
  - If a child's parent is unable to submit any of the supporting documentation listed above, a coalition shall document the child's age based on an affidavit that the child's parent swore to or affirmed. A certificate of age, signed by a public health officer or by a licensed practicing physician, must accompany the affidavit and must state that the physician has examined the child and believes that the age shown on the affidavit is true and correct.
  - Note: OEL expects that safety is a priority for clients whom DCF or its contracted community-based provider referred. A coalition should not deny SR services for lack of age verification documentation; however, a coalition should obtain documentation within 30 days of initial eligibility determination. Coalition staff should document due diligence and contact the referring agency for proof of age if unable to obtain such proof from the parent.
- PROOF OF RESIDENCY:**
  - Case file documentation must support that the applicant lives at the address the applicant provided as his or her residence during the interview process.
  - The following documents support residency:
    - Government-issued document (Florida driver's license, Florida identification card, property tax assessment for current calendar year showing a homestead exemption).
    - Military order showing that the child's parent is a service member in the United States Armed Forces assigned to duty in Florida.
    - Signed and dated rent receipt or lease agreement for current calendar year.
    - Utility bill received within the last six weeks.
    - Pay stub received within the last six weeks.
    - Property tax bill for current calendar year.
    - If a homeless child does not have access to any of the supporting documents listed above, a coalition may accept documentation from a homeless shelter, domestic violence shelter or authorized emergency management location.
    - Child Care Application and Authorization (Referral).



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- A coalition may accept an affidavit the child's parent swore to or affirmed accompanied by a letter a landlord or property owner wrote within 30 days of the affidavit that confirms that the child resides at the address shown in the affidavit.

**SCHOOL VERIFICATION:** If you are currently enrolled in school you must provide a letter on official school letterhead, signed by the registrar's office with the school seal, detailing classroom hours and the dates the semester begins and ends. All information will be verified by the eligibility staff.

**INCOME VERIFICATION:**

Earned income documentation-

- Applicants who are **not self-employed**- Appropriate documentation sufficient to determine hours of employment and rate of pay based on one of the following-
  - Six weekly, three biweekly or two monthly pay stubs that are current and consecutive.
  - A statement the employer signed.
  - A signed contract for employment.
- Applicants who are **self employed** – Appropriate documentation sufficient to determine hours worked and income, such as business account ledgers, written documentation from customers, contractors or federal tax returns.

Unearned income documentation- One of the following is required:

- An award letter or verification statement
- A written statement from the absent parent. If the amount varies, then the parent must provide a minimum of six weekly, three bi-weekly or two monthly income amounts, or each income source that varies. (Child support)

Family Unit Income – The combined gross income, from all sources, of all members of the family unit who are 18 years or older.

- Family unit means parent(s) living together, their minor children and any other children for whom the parents are legally responsible. A family unit may also include any additional related adults who reside with the family and whom the family supports financially. If counted as part of the family unit, the coalition should include each person's countable income (earned or unearned).
- If a parent is living with an aunt, uncle, grandparent or non-relative who the parent does not support, the coalition should not count that person as a member of the family size unit.
- If the parent lives in the same dwelling unit with a roommate, friend or relative who is not the biological or legal parent of the child, then these household members are optional and a coalition does not have to count their income as part of the total family income.

If the employer pays:

- Bi-weekly - bring your 3 most recent and consecutive pay stubs.
- Weekly - bring your 6 most recent and consecutive pay stubs.
- Semi-monthly (if you are paid on the same dates every month) - bring your 4 most recent and consecutive pay stubs.
- Monthly - bring your 2 most recent and consecutive pay stubs.
- If you recently started a job and do not have 6 weeks of pay stubs, please provide a letter from the employer on letterhead stating the date of hire, the number of hours of work per week, the rate of pay, and the frequency of pay (weekly, bi-weekly, etc).

**PAY STUBS MUST SHOW:**

- Employee's name, employer's names, rate of pay and hours worked each week.
- If the pays stubs do not show the above information, we need documentation from the employer stating the hours of work and rate of pay per week, in addition to the paystubs.

**SELF EMPLOYMENT** – Self employed individuals must verify earned income at application and redetermination. In addition, these individuals must make all business records available to the eligibility advisor. Examples of business records include documentation on:

- Income tax records necessary to determine gross income and deductible expenses.
- Purchases.
- Sales.



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- Salaries.
  - Capital improvements.
  - Utility, transportation and other operating costs.
  - Work calendars for tips and recording pay as received.
  - IRS Tax Schedule C (or corporate documents if incorporated) by averaging it over the number of months of employment.
  - If the parent filed no taxes or his/her business is new, the parent must provide his/her ledger books with receipts showing business expenses and time parent spent "on the job" (ex. Calendars). The advisor cannot allow for deductions without receipts for expenses.
  - Identifiable costs of labor (salaries, employer's share of Social Security, insurance).
  - Stock, raw materials, seed and fertilizer, and feed for livestock.
  - Rent and cost of building maintenance.
  - Business telephone costs.
  - Costs of operating a motor vehicle when one is required in connection with the operation of the business.
  - Interest paid to purchase income-producing property.
  - Insurance premiums and taxes the parent paid on income producing property.
  - Costs of meals and equipment for children for whom child care is provided in the home.
  - Travel and lodging away from home.
- PROOF OF ALL HOUSEHOLD INCOME:** This includes earned and unearned income from all household members.
- **PROOF OF ALIMONY:** a copy of the court order, copy of cancelled checks.
  - **CHILD SUPPORT** for ANY and ALL children in the home (regardless of whether they receive child care benefits)
- You must provide the child support case number along with -
- A copy of the court order OR
  - An online printout documenting the last 6 weeks of payments from the Child Support Enforcement website or other website OR
  - A printout of the payment history from the Clerk of Court.
  - Out of state documentation of child support as applicable.
- VOLUNTARY CHILD SUPPORT:**
- Verification from child support enforcement or clerk of the court website showing gross amount the household receives on behalf of the child and the period over which the absent parent pays it. (Use six weeks or two months).
  - Written statement from the absent parent indicating what the absent parent paid over the last six weeks including the dates the absent parent made the payments. The parent can submit copies of checks and/or cancelled checks to accompany written statements or in lieu of written documents. The parent can use a court order if the court recently issued it. However, if the court order has been established for a period of time and the custodial parent indicates that the court order does not reflect current payments, the advisor should request proof of the last six weeks (two months if paid monthly) of payment and average the income. The statement must also include the absent parent's address and current phone number.
  - If for any reason, the first two sources are not available, an attestation from the parent – under the penalty of perjury, which is first degree misdemeanor, punishable by a definite term of imprisonment, not exceeding one year and/or a fine not exceeding \$1,000.
- CHILD SUPPORT PAID OUT** – If child support is paid out by a household member, this may be deducted from the total household income. Proof of deduction from paystubs, court orders, etc. must be provided.
- ALIMONY** is money paid to the custodial parent/guardian by a former spouse or partner.
- Court order showing amount ordered and a written statement from the payee that it is being received as stipulated. Copies of payments for six weeks can also be submitted.
- DISABILITY AND SSI/SSA/SSDI:**
- Award letter from the Social Security Administration. The SSA updates this letter each January.



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- Written letter from the Social Security Administration showing current year of monthly gross payments before deductions if any. If documenting a disability, the eligibility specialist should determine from whose claim the SSA draws the benefit in order to ensure the claimant is disabled.
  
- WORKER'S COMPENSATION/UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION**
  - Recent award letter showing gross amounts of benefits an individual received.
  - Written statement on letterhead from the employer paying Worker's Compensation, signed by authorized personnel, stating when you stopped working.
  - Note: Receipt of this income announces loss of purpose of care.
  - A parent can receive 60 days to seek employment after becoming unemployed.
  - A parent who has a temporary disability may have 60 days to reestablish purpose of care.
  
- CASUAL LABOR INCOME DOCUMENTATION**
  - Some individuals whom the coalition considers self-employed may only do lawn work or side jobs.
  - Acceptable forms of documentation to establish income for such jobs could be written statements from each employer and a work calendar that shows dates the individual worked, for whom and amount of income received.
  - The eligibility advisor can use these calendars as verification but only when no other verification exists. Case notes should clearly explain why other types of earnings documentation are unavailable.
  
- CLIENTS RECEIVING REFERRALS FROM SOUTHWEST FLORIDA WORKS:** Must provide all above documentation as applicable and proof of TANF if receiving. Appointments should be arranged as soon as possible, but at least within ten days of the receipt of the referral.
  
- CLIENTS RECEIVING REFERRALS FROM DCF, FAMILY PRESERVATION, LUTHERAN SERVICES and LEAD AGENCIES (Domestic Violence and Homeless clients residing in a shelter).** Referrals must be completed by the case workers and presented immediately. Appointments should be arranged as soon as possible, but at least within ten days of the receipt of the referral. All above documentation is requested as well as custody documents as applicable.
  
- TRANSFERRING YOUR CHILD TO A NEW CHILD CARE PROVIDER:** Provide a receipt from your current child care program indicating that your parent fees are paid in full. Please provide us with the correct name of the new child care program in which you wish to enroll.

Client's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Next Appointment is scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_