

Exceptional Assistance Measure for Integration into Childcare

REFERENCE FRAMEWORK

2024-2025

Coordination and drafting

Direction de l'encadrement du réseau
Sous-ministériat des politiques et programmes

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Introduction

Educational childcare services (ECSs) are required to foster the social integration of each child under their responsibility. The role of the ECS is to foster the overall development of the child throughout the day in a collective context and by providing guidance in the games initiated by the child. However, some children need additional assistance for integration due to the major obstacles they experience compared to other children their age.

To meet this need, the Ministère de la Famille (the Ministère) has introduced the Exceptional Assistance Measure for Integration into Childcare (the EAM) for subsidized educational childcare providers.¹

The EAM funds all or some of the hours of additional assistance needed by children with disabilities compared to other children their age. It is offered as a supplement to the services provided by the health and social services network, and the services that the educational childcare provider can fund through the Allowance for Integration into Childcare (the Integration Allowance) included in its operating subsidy.

Objectives

The EAM aims to:

- make ECSs accessible to parents of children with needs requiring additional assistance;
- recognize the needs for assistance of these children to ensure their integration into an ECS;
- support educational childcare providers who assist these children by funding part of the additional expenses.

The assistance provided must:

- ensure the health and safety of the child and everyone else in their environment;
- ensure the group's daily activities run smoothly;
- provide assistance in addressing basic needs and medical treatment;

¹ Subsidized educational childcare providers include childcare centres (CPEs), subsidized day care centres, and home childcare providers (HCPs) that have been certified by a family childcare coordinating office.

- foster the child’s overall development and social participation in the everyday activities of the ECS.² The type of assistance varies according to the time of day and the child’s individual characteristics, pace, and needs.

The group’s regular educator or home childcare provider has the most responsibility in implementing adaptive measures in the child’s integration plan. The carer can be involved in planning the activities for the day and making decisions on how tasks are divided. The EAM does not cover expenses related to the provision of rehabilitation services, nor does it help children develop a particular skill.

Target clientele

Children eligible for the subsidy have a deficiency causing a significant and persistent disability, and a significant need for additional assistance during integration due to the major obstacles they experience. These children are at risk of not being integrated into an ECS if they do not have additional assistance, because they must make greater efforts to adapt and need more one-on-one support, services, and resources.

The obstacles faced by the children may result in the following:

- needs for assistance to perform daily living activities (eating, changing location, getting dressed, etc.) and to participate with the rest of the group in all the life experiences offered by the educational program;
- needs for supervision and assistance due to
 - their disabilities;³
 - developmental delays;
 - severe behavioural disorders.

Any child who needs additional assistance may benefit from the EAM. The number of hours of assistance provided is equal to the additional individual support needed by the child in performing daily living activities at the ECS, in comparison to other children their age.

² Social participation consists of acquiring lifestyle habits and performing social roles during the various daily activities of the ECS. Its purpose is to ensure the child is treated fairly compared to other children their age.

³ A disability is an impairment of a person’s intrinsic ability to perform a physical or mental activity. It refers to the level of impairment of an ability. The main categories of abilities are associated with intellectual activities, language, behaviour, sense and perception, motor activities, breathing, digestion, excretion, reproduction, protection, and resistance.

Eligibility

Prerequisites

This subsidy offers last-resort financial assistance. The educational childcare provider must first ensure that:

- the individualized, adapted interventions and the means listed in the integration plan have been implemented;⁴
- a collaboration process with partners has been initiated to meet the child's needs, or an intervention plan has been developed based on the child's needs;
- an intersectoral Individualized Service Plan (ISP) is in preparation or has been produced, demonstrating all the means available to the facility (resources, programs, measures, and collaboration) are being used to meet the child's needs and to provide support for the child's integration into childcare services, when the child situation needed it.⁵

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for the EAM, the applicant must:

- be an educational childcare provider as set out in the *Educational Childcare Act* (CQLR, c. S-4.1.1), and have subsidized childcare spaces. For an HCP, the application must be submitted by the home childcare coordinating office by which it was recognized;
- ensure the parent qualifies for the reduced contribution;
- be receiving the Integration Allowance for the days of occupancy of the child for whom the EAM subsidy has been requested;
- ensure the child's parents agree to participate in the necessary steps;
- meet all the above-mentioned prerequisites;

⁴ The integration plan identifies the specific actions it has taken to facilitate the child's social participation in the activities at the ECS. It identifies the child's integration needs based on the activities in which the child participates, the layout of the premises, and the availability of equipment.

⁵ An ISP is a process that results in the implementation of all individualized services and the deployment of the resources required to meet the child's needs and facilitate their social integration. Developing the ISP involves determining how to meet the child's needs: the services to be offered, the resources required, and the responsibilities of each organization or institution involved. To develop the ISP, the child must be receiving the coordinated services that they need. ISP follow-ups require periodic assessments, resulting in adjustments if necessary.

- fill out a subsidy application or a renewal application for EAM using the electronic service system;
- provide the required information on the child's assistance needs and include all the necessary documents for assessment of the file.⁶

Subsidy

Amount

The subsidy is based on a total hourly rate of \$26.01, for a maximum of eight hours of assistance per day of occupancy.⁷

For a childcare centre or subsidized day care centre, the subsidy is based on a maximum of 260 days of occupancy per child, and for a home childcare provider it is based on a maximum of 235 days of occupancy. The subsidy is equal to the number of hours per day of occupancy recommended and accepted by the Ministère, multiplied by the hourly rate established by the Ministère and the number of days of occupancy per child in the childcare, up to the maximum allowed.

Payment

The EAM subsidy is granted annually, for the reference period from September 1 to August 31. For a home childcare provider, the subsidy is paid by the coordinating office every two weeks, in accordance with instruction No. 9 concerning the allocation and payment of subsidies to home childcare providers.

Use

The EAM subsidy covers all or part of the salary paid for the additional hours required of the person responsible for providing assistance. This person is selected at the educational childcare provider's discretion. The educational childcare provider must ensure that the chosen person has the necessary skills and must guarantee the quality of the services provided. Moreover, the provider ensures that the person providing assistance holds a valid attestation establishing that no impediment exists; to this end, in accordance with the provisions of the *Educational Childcare Act*.

⁶ This information includes the needs, steps completed, resources committed, and means required to ensure the child's social participation in the childcare provider's activities, compared to other children their age.

⁷ The total hourly rate includes the employer's contributions to the mandatory plans, as well as paid days of absence and staff training days.

The educational childcare provider must ensure that the number of hours of assistance offered daily to the child for whom the subsidy is paid is equal to the number of hours established by the regional advisory committee (committee) and used to calculate the subsidy.

Making unilateral changes to the service agreement is not permitted, nor is reducing the number of days of occupancy in order to provide more hours of assistance per day (e.g., if three hours of assistance are allocated per day, the educational childcare provider cannot reduce the child's occupancy to three days per week and provide support for five hours per day).

However, when a new service agreement is signed for additional days of occupancy (e.g., the parent's needs increase and the number of days of service offered increase from three to five days per week), the educational childcare provider may ask for the subsidy to be adjusted accordingly.

As required, once the educational childcare provider has received a positive response, it must implement support and assistance in accordance with the recommendations made by the committee and accepted by the Ministère. If the educational childcare provider did not have the resources needed to provide support before the application was accepted, it may make an agreement with the parent to increase the hours of assistance for the remaining period of the year.

Admissible and inadmissible expenses

The subsidy must be used exclusively to provide assistance services on a daily basis to the child for the allocated number of hours (e.g., an allocation of three hours represents three hours of individualized assistance per day). The only expenses eligible are those related to remunerating the person providing assistance.

The following expenses are inadmissible:

- administrative expenses of any kind (e.g., management expenses, service organization expenses, coordination expenses, application preparation expenses);
- remuneration of advisory services for educators or HCPs (professional or not);
- expenses related to acquiring materials or equipment.

Amounts not used by the educational childcare provider

Sometimes, amounts set aside to provide assistance to a child are not used, for example:

- when the child leaves the childcare service earlier than anticipated;
- when, despite the reasonable efforts of the service provider, the hours of assistance have not been fully provided.

The educational childcare provider must keep any such unused amounts and use them to care for and integrate other children receiving the Integration Allowance. An HCP must return the unused balance to the coordinating office to be made available to another HCP, to care and integrate another recipient of the Integration Allowance, as needed.

Annual reporting

The educational childcare provider must keep in the parent file a record of the hours of assistance actually provided to the child during the year (September 1 to August 31), along with proof that a copy of this record has been delivered to the parent. The record must be produced using the [document](#) provided for this purpose within 30 days following August 31 or the child's departure, whichever comes first. It must be signed by the educational childcare provider, who must also keep proof that it has been delivered to the person with parental authority. For verification purposes, the date considered is the date on which the balance sheet is signed by the educational childcare provider.

The educational childcare provider must also account in detail any unused amounts of the subsidy, so the Ministère can audit its use, as applicable.

The Ministère reserves the right to recover amounts not used in accordance with this reference framework.

Documents to be kept in the child's parent file

For each child for whom an EAM subsidy is paid, the following documents must be kept in the parent file:

- a copy of the application form, duly completed and signed;
- the Reason(s) for Submitting a Renewal Request with Change Form, as applicable;
- a copy of the letter of acceptance or refusal and proof of delivery to the parent (parent's signature on the letter in the file);
- a record of the number of hours of assistance actually provided to the child during the year and proof of delivery to the person with parental authority;
- the documents required for the Integration Allowance, namely:

- the professional's report or the attestation from Retraite Québec;
- the childcare integration report and any updates;
- a list of the steps taken and results obtained for each version of the integration plan.

Calls for applications

To submit an application, a childcare provider must confirm the child's assistance needs through the electronic service system.

Applications for a renewal request without change

Applications for a renewal request without change must be made during the:

- first round from early June to October 15, 2024;
- second round from November 1, 2024, to January 15, 2025;
- third round from February 1 to May 15, 2025.

The subsidy is calculated from September 1, 2024, and is paid to the childcare service during the summer or early fall. The subsidy may be adjusted according to the child's actual number of days of occupancy for the reference year.

The documents to be submitted with an application for a renewal request without change are as follows:

- section 1 of the form, signed by the childcare provider, the parent and, for a coordinating office, the home childcare provider;
- the integration plan, signed by the parent and the childcare provider, dated less than one year previously.

Applications for a renewal request with change

Applications for a renewal request with change include those for additional hours of assistance compared to the number of hours granted over the previous year. Applications can only be submitted during the first round, i.e., June 1 to October 15, 2024. An amount equal to the number of hours granted over the previous year is paid during the summer or early fall. Each application is assessed by the Ministère at the end of the application period and then, if accepted, the increase is calculated from September 1, 2024, and is paid to the childcare service.

The documents to be submitted with a Renewal Request with Change Form are as follows:

- the duly completed and updated form;
- a copy of the form signed by the childcare provider, the parent, and a professional recognized by the Ministère and, for a coordinating office, the home childcare provider;
- the document to summarize any significant new obstacles to integration, compared with those identified in the previous year's application, which justify the need for additional assistance;
- the integration plan, signed by the parent and the childcare provider, dated less than one year.

Any Renewal Request with Change Form submitted during the second round (November 1, 2024, to January 15, 2025) or third round (February 1 to May 15, 2025) will be processed as a Renewal Request without Change, and will therefore be renewed without additional hours of assistance.

New applications

New applications are those made for children not already receiving an EAM subsidy. They must be submitted during the:

- first round from August 15 to October 15, 2024;
- second round from November 1, 2024, to January 15, 2025;
- third round from February 1 to May 15, 2025;
- fourth round from June 1 to August 15, 2025, only for a child whose integration expressly requires assistance and who began receiving care on or after May 15, 2025.

Each application is assessed by the Ministère at the end of each round. If accepted, the subsidy is calculated from September 1, 2024 (first round), or from the date of electronic transmission of the completed application (second, third, and fourth rounds), and paid to the childcare provider.

The documents to be provided with a new application are as follows:

- the form, duly completed;
- a copy of the form signed by the childcare provider, the parent, and a professional recognized by the Ministère and, for a coordinating office, the home childcare provider;
- the integration plan, signed by the parent and the childcare provider, dated less than one year previously.

Change of childcare provider

When a child for whom the subsidy is paid changes to another educational childcare provider, the new provider must apply for the EAM and include the documents required for assessment of the application.

Through the electronic service system, the new provider **must use the Renewal Request with Change Form**, whether or not they want to add to the number of hours previously granted. Applications must be submitted for a:

- Renewal Request with Change (whether or not adding to the number of hours previously granted)
 - first round from June 1 to October 15, 2024.
- Renewal Request without Change (no addition to the number of hours previously granted)
 - second round from November 1, 2024, to January 15, 2025;
 - third round from February 1 to May 15, 2025;
 - fourth round from June 1 to August 15, 2025.

The subsidy is calculated from September 1, 2024, or the start date of attendance (whichever is later), and paid to the childcare provider. The subsidy may be adjusted according to the child's actual number of days of occupancy for the reference year.

Second application in the same year

The service provider **may not submit** a second request during the same reference year to change the number of hours of assistance that has already been granted.

Request follow-up

The educational childcare provider must follow up on **Current Applications** through the electronic service system to ensure that all files are active, and must also delete any **Draft Applications** that will not be delivered in the reference year.

Please note that **Draft Applications** are not sent to the Ministère and are not tracked by the electronic service system. The **Draft Applications** section will be phased out of the electronic service system on May 31, 2025.

The **Current Applications** section contains requests related to the EAM sent to the Ministère or awaiting correction by the provider.

The **Valid Applications** section contains EAM applications submitted to the Ministère or awaiting correction by the childcare provider.

Once the committee has assessed the request, it makes recommendations on the number of hours of assistance per day. When the Ministère authorizes the recommended number of hours and days of occupancy in the reference period, a notification is sent to the childcare provider's email address.

In the **Valid Applications** section, the  icon appears next to applications for which the Ministère has issued a communication.

In the **Communications** section, the  icon displays the content of the communication sent by the Ministère.

Consideration of Applications

Regional coordination

EAM implementation is coordinated regionally by the Ministère's Direction de l'opération des programmes, which must:

- set up the committees and coordinate their work;
- process applications, checking that they are filled and submitted to the committee;
- check applications for a renewal request without change;
- send to educational childcare providers, through the electronic service system, the letter of acceptance or denial, within a reasonable time, and make payments where applicable;
- ensure follow up on the EAM.

It is up to each committee to determine its regional collaborative process and how it will operate, although it must comply with the major benchmarks set out in the reference framework and use the tools at its disposal.

Verification of applications for renewal

Applications for a renewal without change are not assessed by committees. For applications for a renewal with more hours than the previous year, the committee may grant all or some of the requested additional hours, based on its analysis of the child's needs.

Consideration of applications by the committee

Setting up a committee representing the region’s partners is key to the successful implementation of this measure. The committee must be composed of different organizations whose representatives have the clinical expertise needed to assess applications, distinguish the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, and make recommendations adapted to each situation.

For example, depending on the dynamic of regional collaboration, the committee may be composed of representatives from the following organizations:⁸

Regional representatives	Organizations represented or expertise sought
Two representatives	Educational childcare providers (CPEs, coordinating offices, and day care centres)
One representative	Rehabilitation or intellectual disability expertise in the public network
One representative	Rehabilitation or physical disability expertise in the public network
One representative	Child psychiatry expertise in the public network
One representative	Integrated health and social services centre (CISSS) or integrated university health and social services centre (CIUSSS)
One representative	A parent of a child with a disability or a representative of a regional association representing the interests of children with disabilities
One representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educator in the health field • Professional from the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux • Special needs educator • Professionals with clinical experience in childcare integration

When assessing applications and make funding recommendations, the committee must take the following aspects into account according to the prescribed terms and conditions:

- the extent of the child’s needs, as demonstrated by the educational childcare establishment;
- the effort made by each partner;
- the risk of compromising daily operations;
- the risk of an interruption in service for the child.

Applications are first analyzed by each member of the committee, according to the established criteria. The committee members then agree on the number of hours of assistance to be recommended for the child, based on the information provided on the form. New applications or applications for a renewal request with change may be refused or accepted in whole or in part, based on the committee’s analysis.

⁸ Other partners may join the committee, depending on the nature of the applications received and the needs of the children concerned. For example, if a child has been taken in charge by the Director of Youth Protection, a youth centre may be consulted to ensure the child’s situation and needs are properly assessed.

The committee must also examine applications for a renewal request with change, for children who have already received an EAM subsidy, to ensure any new obstacles and changes during the year are sufficient to justify the additional need for support.

If you have questions about the EAM, please contact the information officers at the Customer Relations Centre by calling 1-855-336-8568. For more information, please refer to the [Ministère's website](#).

Important dates for 2024-2025

Requests	Date	Processing requests	Subsidy calculation
Renewal request without change	June 1 to October 15, 2024	Ongoing	From September 1, 2024
	November 1, 2024, to January 15, 2025		
	February 1 to May 15, 2025		
Renewal Request with Change	June 1 to October 15, 2024	End of application period * Requests received thereafter will be processed as a renewal request without change	From September 1, 2024
New applications	August 15 to October 15, 2024	End of application period	From the date of electronic transmission of the completed application form
	November 1, 2024, to January 15, 2025	End of application period	
	February 1 to May 15, 2025	End of application period	
	June 1 to August 15, 2025 * Only for a child who began receiving care on or after May 15, 2025	End of application period	
Change of ECS	June 1 to October 15, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Without changes to hours: ongoing ▪ With changes to hours: at the end of the reception period 	From September 1, 2024, or from the date on which occupancy begins, whichever comes latest
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ November 1, 2024, to January 15, 2025 ▪ February 1 to May 15, 2025 ▪ June 1 to August 15, 2025 	Ongoing * These requests will be processed as a renewal request without change	

Electronic Service System

1. Employee access rights for the electronic service system of the EAM are managed in clicSÉQR by the person in charge of the provider's electronic services. Please refer to section 1 of the [Exceptional Assistance Measure for Integration into Childcare Services](#).
2. The educational childcare provider must ensure a detailed follow up on current applications, the compliance of attachments, the removal of unwanted applications, and the submission of applications that have been duly completed and signed.
3. Applications with a "Draft" status will be removed from the electronic service system by the Ministère on May 31, 2025.
4. For an HCP, the application must be completed online by the coordinating office, in collaboration with the childcare provider and the parent. The coordinating office must submit the application along with the necessary documentation.
5. The educational childcare provider must wait for the decision for any request submitted in 2023-2024 before submitting a renewal application for 2024-2025.
6. The educational childcare provider must calculate the anticipated number of days of occupancy for the child during the reference period or according to the date on which the duly completed application has been submitted, by subtracting vacation days and other anticipated days of absence.

