

Early Childhood Council
Waiver Extension Application

EC Council Name: Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Council	Date: 11-12-2020
Primary Contact (Name and Position): Stacy Petty, Director	Phone: 719-486-7273
Mailing Address: PO Box 338, Glenwood Springs, CO 81602	Email: rmecc@mtnvalley.org
Waiver Number: 19-01	Waiver End Date: December 1, 2020

1. Please provide a short description of the waiver that was granted and the timeline:

This waiver allowed us to partner with high quality programs in our area to sponsor no more than 2 Provisional ECT candidates in their program. These candidates were allowed up to 1 year to reach full ECT qualifications while working in the classroom as an ECT with specific oversight from their supervisor and coaching supports.

2. Why are you requesting an extension of this waiver?

8 participants participated in the past 18 months and 7 of those completed their ECT requirements successfully. COVID has certainly compounded the teacher shortage in our regional and across the state, so anything we can do to support the development of additional qualified staff is a win for our region. Programs are reporting teacher shortages across the board. One school district program today stated "they are always hiring lead teachers". They have had to close several rooms due to a lack of qualified staff. Anything we can do to provide another option to train qualified applicants would be helpful to programs. While the 7 who completed the program have certainly helped those programs, others are still dealing with the teacher shortage on a daily basis.

3. Please explain the impact this waiver has had on children, families and/ or your community:

7 additional ECTs have meant additional open classrooms or at least the ability to fill open positions before they have had to close a classroom. It has given programs the time needed in order to grow their own staff into these positions and provide care for the children in these classrooms. We have partnered with licensing and our regional coaches to provide support and coaching to participating programs.

4. While the waiver was in place, what action did you take to meet the waived rule or regulation's intended purpose? Will you still be able to continue this action?

The RMECC Director was in regular contact with the programs to get updates about P-ECTs and progress towards ECT qualifications. The Council frequently worked with the programs on requirements laid out in the waiver and potential future candidates. The Council also worked closely with licensing and coaches to ensure we were all aware of any program challenges that came to the surface so we could help support the program.

5. Please summarize the findings from your evaluation of this waiver - include specific information on the number of participants, impact on the early childhood field in your community, lessons learned that you'd like to share with the ECLC and the state departments, etc.

We had 8 participants enroll and 7 successfully complete. The 7 are still working in centers to our knowledge. 7 additional ECTs has meant additional open classrooms. It has given programs the time needed in order to grow their own staff into these positions and provide care for the children in these classrooms. We have partnered with licensing and our regional coaches to provide support and coaching to participating programs.

The lessons learned have been more around logistics than anything else. Programs report the waiver has been very helpful in getting new ECTs qualified. We do plan to add to our tracking plan a few things to address some holes we discovered on the logistics side of things. For instance, in our waiver we highlight that we wouldn't support more than 2 P-ECTs at any given time in a program. We discovered that there could be professionals in a program on a state waiver that wouldn't be counted towards the 2 maximum as stated. To address this, we have added a step to the application process where we reach out to the state or our local licensing specialists to make sure there aren't other professionals on waivers that we need to be aware of. Another way we are vetting applicants is to evaluate how long it will take for the applicant to earn their full ECT qualifications. With 2 applicants, we found out they were within months of getting their full ECT qualifications. We advised the program to not take on the extra requirements through the waiver but instead support the teacher to meet the requirements on their own given the short timeframe. So overall, we want to bolster parts of our process to ensure coordination and alignment, adequate support for the programs and to support continuing collaboration with key partners.

6. Please explain how continuing this waiver is the only available method to implement the early childhood project. Are there any changes you want to make to the existing waiver?

With limitations due to COVID, this is the one definitive way to help support potential ECTs in our region in a short timeframe. During this time we plan to build additional capacity around CDA's which is quite limited in our region. We currently have one coach who is actively supporting applicants in Garfield county to prepare for their CDA. Another person in Eagle County can do the verification visit. We would like to expand that capacity to be able to support applicants across the region. We do not want to make any changes to the actual waiver, just the logistics detailed in #5.

7. How long are you requesting an extension of the waiver?

We would like to request an additional 18 months for this waiver. We expect to have more programs who need continued support in securing qualified teachers especially during the COVID pandemic. Thank you for your consideration.

SIGNED:



Date: 11-12-2020

ECC Coordinator Name

ECC Coordinator Signature

ECC Membership Chair Name

ECC Membership Chair Signature

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Submit completed form to ECLC staff. For more information: <http://www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org/early-childhood-councils>

Early Childhood Council Waiver Request
Colorado Department of Human Services Written Statement

Early Childhood Council Name: RMECC	Waiver #: 19-01
CDHS Contact (Name and Position): Teresa Ribble; Licensing Supervisor	Phone: (303) 866-4191
Email: teresa.ribble@state.co.us	Date: 11/23/2020

- **Confirm Rule and Citation:** Is the rule on the Application eligible for Waiver Review? (*ie. the rule is listed in CCR 2509 and not noted in state statute*)

YES: ☒ NO: ☐

- **Is the correct citation used on the Waiver Application?**

YES: ☒ NO: ☐

If citation is incorrect, please cite the correct one here:

- **Implications of Waiver Approval on the health and safety of children** (*Does approval of this waiver request have anticipated implications on the health & safety of children?*):

CDHS believes this waiver may have some implications on the health and safety of children. When adults work in early childhood settings with little or no early childhood education and/or experience, this may pose a potential risk to the children's social emotional and academic development. Staff who work in this field need to have the necessary early childhood development knowledge and skills to ensure the children in their care have the crucial means to create long term outcomes for future academic and social emotional success.

- The Department has reviewed this Waiver Request for Health & Safety concerns and has the following comments:

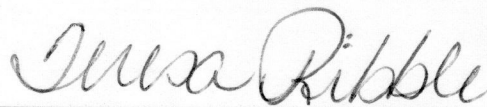
The Department requests the following recommended requirements to continue with the extension of the waiver request.

1. The P-ECT applicant will submit an application to the Department with verifiable documentation of current qualifications to obtain a P-ECT letter prior to working with children along with the required facility agreement with RMECC. The letter will expire one year after the date of the application approval. The Department reserves the right to revoke any P-ECT letter if substantial evidence has been found the Director is responsible for one or more of the following at any participating child care facility, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Committing fraud;
 - b. Responsible for egregious or repetitive grounds for negative licensing actions;
 - c. Providing false information;
 - d. Providing false transcripts for self or staff, or,
 - e. Providing false letters of experience for self or staff.
2. The license must be in good standing with the Department, hold a Colorado Shines Level 3-5 rating, and no adverse action within the last 12 months.
3. Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Council shares all collected data associated to this project with the Department every 6 months or when requested.
4. The participating facilities will communicate any reports, requests, forms, and general waiver information to our general ECT evaluations email address: cdhs_oec_ectq@state.co.us.

SIGNED:

Teresa Ribble

State Agency Representative Name



State Agency Representative Signature



Early Childhood Council Waiver Request

Recommendation from ECLC Waiver Review Subcommittee

Early Childhood Council Name: Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Council	Waiver #: 20-01 Extension
CDHS Staff: Teresa Ribble	Date: 12/3/2020
Recommendation to ECLC: Approve the waiver request	

1. Summarize Waiver discussion:

The waiver #20-01 was requested to extend waiver #19-01, which created a Provisional-Early Childhood Teacher (P-ECT) program in the Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Council area (Lake, Pitkin, Eagle and Garfield counties). This waiver was initially requested in order to address the workforce crisis and allow educators to reach the full ECT qualification more quickly. The Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Council (RMECC) is requesting to extend their current waiver, which allows Child Care Centers and Preschools which meet specific conditions to be allowed to hire people into an Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) position who have certain education or experiences but have not yet met all of the ECT qualifications and allows them a period of up to 12 months to complete all ECT requirements. During this time, the center would provide additional supports, such as enhanced coaching, reflective supervision and classroom observations.

The Waiver Review Subcommittee met on December 3 at 12:30pm. Stacy Petty from Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Council and Teresa Ribble from Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) were present. Stacy shared that overall the waiver was very successful and created an alternative pathway for 8 participants; 7 are still in their positions. While there was some initial communication challenges - for example, some programs who were wanting to access this waiver were also utilizing other workforce-related waivers, which put them at risk of having more than 2 staff using a workforce waiver at one time (which was the limit put in place by this waiver) - Stacy worked closely with the licensing staff to address the concerns and develop clearer communication lines. Teresa shared that the Council has been very communicative and shared data as requested throughout the waiver. The Department is supportive of continuing the waiver, provided the guidance offered last time is continued (programs must be in good standing with no adverse licensing action in the last 12 months; the Council continues to share data with the Department; etc.)

The group discussed the critical role of navigation in the process; while a few additional candidates expressed interest, Stacy and the Council worked with them to identify if this waiver was the best alternative, or if there were other pathways that were more appropriate to become ECT qualified.



2. Recommendation from ECLC Waiver Review Subcommittee:

ECLC Waiver Review Subcommittee recommends approval of the waiver request for 18 months, continuing the guidance and recommendations from the previous waiver from the Department.

RMECC shall provide a status update of the Provisional-Early Childhood Teacher Program after 6 months and 12 months. After the 18 months approval period, the RMECC should provide an additional update on the waiver and the ECLC can determine whether it should be extended.

TO BE COMPLETED AT NEXT FULL ECLC MEETING

Date of ECLC Meeting: December 17, 2020
ECLC Waiver Decision and Conditions: