



Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG B-5) Initiative Overview

In 2019, Virginia received a federal PDG B-5 award to strengthen its early childhood care and education (ECCE) system. As part of PDG B-5, Virginia piloted a unique effort in 11 selected Cohort 1 communities which served to unify birth-to-five providers, increase access and strengthen quality. In 2020 the initiative was funded for an additional three years and is now broadening its reach of participation to an additional 8 communities that make up Cohort 2. This effort is supported by a partnership between the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF), and the University of Virginia (UVA).

Cohort 1 Communities: Alexandria, Charlottesville/Albemarle/Louisa, Chesterfield/Colonial Heights, Fairfax County, Harrisonburg/Rockingham, Southwest VA, Spotsylvania/Stafford/Fredericksburg, and Roanoke

Cohort 2 Communities: Central Virginia, Danville-Pittsylvania, Greater Augusta, Hampton Roads, Henrico, Martinsville-Henry, Southeast, and Western Tidewater

Teacher Recognition Program Overview

The **Teacher Recognition Program** is a central activity of the larger PDG B-5 statewide initiative and involves the provision of a financial incentive up to \$1500. The program is open to lead and assistant teachers working in child care and family day home sites within PDG B-5 communities. Participating teachers must meet all eligibility requirements (*see eligibility section below*) to qualify and maintain eligibility. Of note, the recognition program has undergone **two significant changes from the 2019-2020 program year**; 1) public school teachers are no longer eligible to participate and 2) assistant teachers in family day home settings are now eligible to participate.

Purpose

Strengthening the early childhood system starts at the classroom level. **Teachers should be supported to improve and be recognized as one of the most important elements to a high-quality experience for young learners.** We recognize that many early childhood teachers - especially in family day homes and child care settings - are women of color who provide an essential service yet often are paid less than teachers in school-based settings. We also know that teacher turnover is much higher in these settings which can negatively impact adult-child relationships and interactions. As Virginia strives to increase access to ECCE experiences for communities historically impacted by racial and economic inequities and support the continuous improvement of publicly-funded ECCE sites, the teacher recognition program is a strategy being employed to **support, retain, and reward talented yet undercompensated early educators in non-school settings.**

Structure

The **Teacher Recognition Program** is designed to support both **lead and assistant teachers** in child care and family day homes who have direct contact with young children ages birth – 5 (*children not yet enrolled in kindergarten*) in ECCE settings. A financial incentive of *up to* \$1500 will be provided to eligible teachers (see eligibility requirements below). **There is no expectation that teachers use this incentive for work related expenses.** This incentive is solely intended as recognition of their ongoing efforts to improve Virginia's ECCE system. Teachers will receive up to \$1500, distributed in either up to **3-payments of \$500 or up to 6-payments of \$250**, and will be notified of their payment status no later than December 2020.

Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in the **Teacher Recognition Program** teachers must:

- Work at least **30 hours per week directly with children** (ages birth – 5) in **ECCE settings**.
- Work at **publicly-funded child care sites and family day homes** participating in PDG B-5 communities.
 - Teachers employed by public school divisions in the Commonwealth **are not** eligible.
 - Teachers working in programs, including Head Start, whose site is *co-located* in a public school building **may be** eligible if they are **not** employed by the public school system.

Teachers must register for the PDG B-5 Initiative by October 9, 2020 to be eligible for participation in the Teacher Recognition Program. This deadline was extended from the original 9/25/2020 PDG registration deadline previously announced. Note: Due to the varying state of site operations related to COVID-19, extensions to the registration deadline may become necessary. Should this occur, sites will be notified of updates through their regional PDG B-5 community leads.



(Eligibility Continued)

- **Register** for participation in the broader **PDG B-5 Initiative** no later than **Friday October 9, 2020**.
 - In August/September, teachers will receive an invitation to register through the state’s **LinkB5 System** for the 2020-2021 PDG B-5 program year. **Teachers are encouraged to register as quickly as possible.**
- **Opt-in** to receive a financial incentive by responding to a request from VECF to confirm consent and submit a W9 form (see “consent to participate” section below)

To maintain eligibility and receive incentive payments, teachers must **be continuously employed at least 30 hours per week, continue working directly with children ages birth – 5 and remain employed at the site where they initially registered for participation in PDG B-5.** Teachers that DO NOT maintain these requirements will not be asked to return prior payments but will also NOT receive future payments.

Consent to Participate in the Teacher Recognition Program

Registering to participate in the PDG B-5 Initiative **DOES NOT** guarantee participation in the Teacher Recognition Program. **Teachers must first meet the stated eligibility requirements and then actively “opt in” to receive the financial incentive.** All registered and eligible teachers will receive an email from VECF at PDGB5@vecf.org requesting consent to participate in the recognition program and completion of an IRS W-9 form. Program payments **will not** be disbursed without receipt of a valid W-9 form. **If teachers participated in the Teacher Recognition Program in 2019 and provided VECF a W-9 form at that time, they will be required to submit an updated form for the current program year.** All sensitive information included on the W-9 form will be held securely and only used for the purpose of disbursing payments and completing required year-end tax forms as necessary.

Periodic Employment Verification and Payment Schedule

To maintain eligibility and receive incentive payments, teachers will be periodically verified as **continuously employed at least 30 hours per week, working directly with children ages birth – 5 and remaining employed at the site where they initially registered for participation in PDG B-5.** Individual site leaders will be requested to confirm this information *prior* to the disbursement of funds. Below is the anticipated schedule of employment verification and resulting payment by teacher payment status (three payments vs. six payments).

| Employment Period Required | Employment Verification Requested from Sites | 3-Payment Status | 6-Payment Status |
|--------------------------------------|--|------------------|------------------------------|
| November 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020 | January 2021 | January 2021 | January 2021 & February 2021 |
| January 1, 2021 – February 28, 2021 | March 2021 | March 2021 | March 2021 & April 2021 |
| March 1, 2021 – April 30, 2021 | May 2021 | May 2021 | May 2021 & June 2021 |

Tax Impact and Other Implications

If participants receive more than \$600 per calendar year, VECF will issue recipients an IRS Form 1099-MISC reporting the total amount of funding received under the Teacher Recognition Program. VECF and its PDG B-5 program partners cannot provide legal, tax or accounting advice; any information provided is intended to be general in nature; and **recipients under the program are strongly encouraged to consult their own professional tax, accounting, and legal advisors on tax matters.**

Contact Information

If there are questions regarding the **Teacher Recognition Program**, please contact PDGB5@vecf.org.

Teachers must register for the PDG B-5 Initiative by October 9, 2020 to be eligible for participation in the Teacher Recognition Program. This deadline was extended from the original 9/25/2020 PDG registration deadline previously announced. Note: Due to the varying state of site operations related to COVID-19, extensions to the registration deadline may become necessary. Should this occur, sites will be notified of updates through their regional PDG B-5 community leads.



Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG B-5) 2020-2021 Teacher Recognition Program FAQ

*This FAQ is intended as a supplement to the Teacher Recognition Program Overview which contains additional details about the program that may not be included here.
See also that document for reference.*

| PROGRAM GUIDELINES, STRUCTURE & ELIGIBILITY | |
|---|---|
| HOW do I register for the Teacher Recognition Program (Teacher Recognition Program)? | There is no separate registration required for the Teacher Recognition Program, however, ALL teachers <i>interested</i> in receiving an incentive through this program MUST register to participate in the PDG B-5 Initiative through the LinkB5 platform no later than 10/9/2020 . Teachers registering in the PDG B-5 initiative by this date will be contacted via email by the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF) at PDGB5@vecf.org with further information about the Teacher Recognition Program. To be considered, teachers MUST register in LinkB5 by 10/9/2020. <i>This deadline was extended from the original 9/25/2020 PDG registration deadline previously announced.</i> |
| WHAT are the basic eligibility requirements to be considered for participation in the Teacher Recognition Program? | Registered lead or assistant teachers, working at least 30 hours per week directly with children ages birth - 5 (prior to Kindergarten entry) in publicly-funded child care centers and family day homes participating in PDG B-5 during the 2020-2021 program year (<i>July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021</i>). |
| WHY am I NOT eligible to participate in the Teacher Recognition Program if I am a teacher employed by a public school division? | For the 2020-2021 PDG B-5 program year, teachers employed by public school divisions <u>are not</u> eligible for the Teacher Recognition Program. This determination was made due to the limited availability of funds and a commitment to more fully supporting child care teachers who are far less financially compensated and more likely to experience high rates of turnover which can negatively impact teacher-child interactions. |
| I registered for participation in PDG B-5 through LinkB5, does this mean that I will <u>definitely</u> be a part of the Teacher Recognition Program? | Registering to participate in the PDG B-5 Initiative DOES NOT guarantee participation in the Teacher Recognition Program. Teachers must first meet the stated eligibility requirements and then actively “opt in” to receive the financial incentive by responding to a follow-up email from VECF (PDGB5@vecf.org) and submitting a valid IRS W9 form . See also sections below on “ Tax Related Matters ”. |
| HOW do I opt-in to receive the financial incentive? | All registered and eligible teachers will receive an email from the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF) at PDGB5@vecf.org requesting consent to participate in the recognition program and completion of an IRS W-9 Form . All sensitive information included on the W-9 Form will be held securely and only used for the purpose of disbursing payments and completing required tax forms as necessary. See “ Tax Related Matters ” section below for additional information regarding W-9 Forms. |



**Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG B-5)
2020-2021 Teacher Recognition Program FAQ**

MAINTAINING ELIGIBILITY

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>After registering for participation in the PDG B-5 initiative, I <i>voluntarily</i> moved from the site where I first registered to another site participating in PDG B-5. Will I still be eligible to receive the \$1500 incentive?</p> | <p>Retaining and rewarding talented teachers and providing consistency for young children is key to improving early learning experiences in childcare settings. As such, movement of teachers among different sites disqualifies them from eligibility for the incentive, whether the new site is or is not participating in PDG B-5. You will receive incentive payments for each employment period* in which your employment was verified <i>BEFORE</i> you moved to a different site. Beyond that, you will <i>NOT</i> be eligible for additional payments.</p> |
| <p>During a part of the program year I was away from my site on maternity leave, family medical leave, sick leave, or other site-approved leave. Will I still be eligible to receive the (up to) \$1500 incentive?</p> | <p>Yes, you will still be eligible to receive the incentive, partially or in full, if you continue to be employed by your site through each employment period.</p> |
| <p>When I registered for PDG B-5 I was working directly with children birth-5 at least 30 hours per week. My center told me they need to reduce my hours. Will I still be eligible to receive the (up to) \$1500 incentive?</p> | <p>Yes, you will still be eligible to receive the incentive, partially or in full, if you continue to be employed by your site and working with children birth-5 through each employment period.</p> |
| <p>When I registered for PDG B-5 I was working directly with children birth-5 at least 30 hours per week. I <i>voluntarily</i> asked my site to reduce my hours. Will I still be eligible to receive the (up to) \$1500 incentive?</p> | <p>You will receive incentive payments for each employment period* in which your employment was verified <i>BEFORE</i> you voluntarily reduced your working hours. Beyond that, you will <i>NOT</i> be eligible for additional payments.</p> |
| <p>When I registered for PDG B-5 I was working directly with children birth-5. Now I am no longer working with the same age group. Will I still be eligible to receive the (up to) \$1500 incentive?</p> | <p>You will receive incentive payments for each employment period* in which your employment was verified <i>BEFORE</i> you stopped working directly with children birth-5. Beyond that, you will <i>NOT</i> be eligible for additional payments. The Teacher Recognition Program is designed to support teachers working directly with this age group.</p> |
| <p>My site had been open but then was required to or chose to close <i>temporarily</i> as a result of COVID-19. Will I still be eligible to receive the incentive?</p> | <p>Yes, you will still be eligible to receive the (up to) \$1500 incentive if your site considers you to be employed through each employment period. For example, in the case of a work furlough you may be asked not to work and not receive pay but still be considered employed by your site.</p> |
| <p>My site is operating in a full or partially virtual status. Will I still be eligible to receive the (up to) \$1500 incentive if I am working any part of my 30 hours per week remotely?</p> | <p>Teachers working directly with children in both <i>physical</i> and <i>virtual</i> spaces are eligible to receive the incentive so long as other eligibility requirements are met during each employment period*: working directly with children birth-5, in a PDG B-5 participating site, registered for PDG B-5 by 10/9/2020. <i>This deadline was extended from the original 9/25/2020 PDG registration deadline previously announced.</i></p> |
| <p>Have additional questions regarding eligibility?</p> | <p>Please email us at PDGB5@vecf.org for direct assistance.</p> |



**Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG B-5)
2020-2021 Teacher Recognition Program FAQ**

PROGRAM PAYMENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| WHAT can I do with the money I receive as part of the Teacher Recognition Program? | There is <u>no expectation</u> that teachers use this incentive for work related expenses. Teachers can determine for themselves how to use the funds received through the Teacher Recognition Program. There are no rules, guidelines, or limits on what teachers can choose to do with each incentive payment. |
| WHEN will I receive the payments from VECF? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are notified that you will receive up to 6 payments totaling \$1500, it is anticipated that you will receive \$250 each month between January 2021 – June 2021 if your employment is verified in each employment period. • If you are notified that you will receive up to 3 payments totaling \$1500, it is anticipated that you will receive \$500 payments in January 2021, March 2021 and May 2021 as long as your employment is verified in each employment period. |
| WHY are some teachers receiving \$1500 in three payments and other teachers receiving \$1500 in six payments? | Virginia is trying to learn the best way to design the Teacher Recognition Program in order to most effectively support participating teachers. As such, teachers will be placed in either a three-payment group or six-payment group. There is no option to be switched from your assigned pay group. You will be notified of your payment group assignment in the late Fall. |
| Why does my continued employment need to be verified by my Site Administrator <i>before</i> I will be sent incentive payments? | Program eligibility guidelines require that teachers will be periodically verified as continuously employed at least 30 hours per week, working directly with children ages birth – 5 and remain employed at the site where they initially registered for participation in PDG B-5. |
| HOW will I receive incentive payments? | Paper checks will be mailed to the address listed on participant W-9 forms. <u>Direct deposit is not an option for payment.</u> To ensure payments are mailed to the correct address, please contact us at PDGB5@vecf.org if the address provided on your W-9 changes at any point. |
| What will the check look like when it is delivered by mail? | All checks are processed by a vendor in California. Checks will be mailed in an envelope like the picture below and arrive within 10-15 days of being approved for processing by VECF. |
| Do I have to cash the check immediately after receiving it? | Teachers are encouraged to cash or deposit checks as early as is convenient. The expiration date will be listed on the check and is typically 90 days from issuance. If checks are NOT cashed or deposited prior to expiration, they will NOT be automatically reissued. |
| What do I do if I have a problem cashing or depositing a payment? | Please email us at PDGB5@vecf.org for direct assistance. |



**Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG B-5)
2020-2021 Teacher Recognition Program FAQ**

Below is the anticipated schedule of employment verification, resulting payments by teacher payment status and sample payment envelope.

| Employment Period Required* | Employment Verification Requested from Sites | 3-Payment Status | 6-Payment Status |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| November 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020 | January 2021 | January 2021 | January 2021 & February 2021 |
| January 1, 2021 – February 28, 2021 | March 2021 | March 2021 | March 2021 & April 2021 |
| March 1, 2021 – April 30, 2021 | May 2021 | May 2021 | May 2021 & June 2021 |





**Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG B-5)
2020-2021 Teacher Recognition Program FAQ**

| TAX RELATED MATTERS | |
|---|--|
| <p>I was contacted by VECF and asked to complete an IRS W-9 Form. Why am I required to submit an IRS W-9 Form to participate in the Teacher Recognition Program?</p> | <p>It is the expectation that <i>most</i> teachers in the Teacher Recognition Program will receive most or all of the \$1500 incentive. By law, any participants receiving over \$600 in calendar year 2021 <i>must</i> receive an IRS 1099 Form from VECF in January 2022. Information obtained from participant W9 Forms will enable VECF to comply with the IRS reporting requirements. Payments WILL NOT be issued to participants until a completed and signed W-9 form is received.</p> |
| <p>I participated in the Teacher Recognition Program in the 2019-2020 program year and provided VECF a W-9 at that time. Why am I being asked to submit one again?</p> | <p>Law requires Teacher Recognition Program participants to submit a W-9 form for <i>each</i> program year of participation to ensure that records are maintained and up to date for future payment and tax reporting purposes.</p> |
| <p>What should I do if I have questions about the impact of receiving this incentive on my tax status?</p> | <p>VECF and its PDG B-5 program partners <u>cannot</u> provide legal, tax or accounting advice; any information provided is intended to be general in nature. Recipients are strongly encouraged to consult their own professional tax, accounting, and/or legal advisors on tax matters.</p> |
| <p>Have additional questions regarding these matters?</p> | <p>Please email us at PDGB5@vecf.org for direct assistance with any matters except for tax, accounting, or legal advice.</p> |