

## **ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION**

## **FUNDED KINDERGARTEN IN LONG DAYCARE**

**QUALITY AREA 6** |



#### **PURPOSE**

In this policy document, Creative Minds Early Years Pty Ltd is referred to as Creative Minds Early Years.

This policy provides a clear set of guidelines and procedures for:

- enrolling a child at Creative Minds Early Years
- the orientation of new families and children into Creative Minds Early Years
- ensuring compliance with Victorian and national legislation, including disability discrimination, anti-discrimination, human rights laws, No Jab No Play and Department of Education [DE]
   Kindergarten Funding Guide.
- ensuring access to participation, especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged children
- ensuring early entry applicants (this includes children younger than three years and children younger than four years old on 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten) are given equitable access to enrolment.
- adhering to the DE's priority of access requirements for both three and four-year-old children



## **POLICY STATEMENT**

## **VALUES**

Creative Minds Early Years is committed to:

- engaging collaboratively and respectfully with parents/guardians during enrolment and orientation to learn about their expertise, culture, values and beliefs and priorities for their child's learning and wellbeing
- families feeling respected, safe and supported during the enrolment process
- ensuring families who may experience barriers to accessing kindergarten are proactively engaged
- being flexible and catering for unique family circumstances and needs
- being transparent in the process and allocation of places through consistent communication and information sharing
- ensuring the registration, allocation and enrolment process is simple to understand, follow and implement
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided for enrolment
- promoting fair and equitable access to kindergarten programs, including those who face barriers to participation
- enrolling Early Start Kindergarten (*refer to Definitions*) eligible children into full 15 hours of kindergarten program

#### SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students,



volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Creative Minds Early Years, including during offsite excursions and activities.

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and sho	ould not	be delete	ed		
Ensuring not to exceed the maximum number of children whom the service is licensed to provide care for	R				
Developing strategies on how to communicate with parents/guardians with varying literacy skills, or where English is not a first language	V	<b>V</b>	<b>V</b>		
Providing a free kindergarten program to children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend, that is delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher, and offering at least:  15 hours per week for 40 weeks of the year, or 600 hours per year Rotational model – Monday – Friday 2 x 7.5 hour sessions per child (within long daycare booking) Sessional and integrated models offered	R				
Providing a free kindergarten program to children who turn three years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend, that is delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher and offering a least:  15 hours per week for 40 weeks of the year, or 600 hours per year Rotational model – Monday – Friday 2 x 7.5 hour sessions per child (within long daycare booking) Sessional and integrated models offered	R				
Communicating to families the days and times the service will operate, planned closures (including public holidays and child-free days), details of any planned alternative sessions, and unplanned teacher absences or emergency situations	R				
Following the Priority of Access criteria to funded programs at Creative Minds Early Years, as described in Department of Education's [DE] <i>The Kindergarten Funding Guide (refer to Attachment 1)</i>	R	<b>V</b>	V		



Communicating and providing advice to families regarding the best time to commence kindergarten for children born between January and April – Funded kindergarten ONLY applies to one year of 3 year old kindergarten and one year of year before school kindergarten	٧	<b>V</b>	<b>√</b>		
<ul> <li>Supporting inclusion and access through specific funding stream (for eligible families):         <ul> <li>Child Care Subsidy available to families to reduce the cost of fees.</li> <li>Early Start Kindergarten (refer to Definitions)</li> <li>Early Start Kindergarten extension grants (refer to Definitions)</li> <li>Access to Early Learning (refer to Definitions)</li> <li>Second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten (refer to Definitions)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	R	٨	٧		
Supporting families whose children may be eligible for early entry to kindergarten or late entry to kindergarten and school exemption (refer to Attachment 2)	<b>√</b>	V	√		
Providing communication to families explaining how they can only access <b>one</b> funded 3 year old kindergarten and <b>one</b> funded year before school kindergarten program per child, per year.	R	<b>V</b>			
Considering any barriers to access that may exist, developing procedures that ensure all eligible families are aware of, and are able to access a kindergarten program	R	<b>V</b>	V		
Complying with the Inclusion and Equity Policy	R	R		V	$\sqrt{}$
Ensuring the collection of accurate, consistent and timely kindergarten data, to monitor and proactively manage capacity, utilisation of services and to meet School Readiness Funding requirements	R	R			
Ensuring families have access to:					
<ul> <li>Parent handbook</li> <li>Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy and/or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety</li> <li>Fees Policy</li> <li>Privacy Statement</li> <li>Code of Conduct Policy</li> </ul>	R	٧	٨		
Appointing a person to be responsible for the enrolment process and the day-to-day implementation of this policy (refer to Attachment 2)	R				
Responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process as required	V	<b>V</b>	<b>√</b>		
Where applicable, considering access and inclusion for vulnerable children in the allocation of places at the service (refer to Attachment 1 and 2)	R	<b>V</b>			



Where applicable, providing families with consistent and transparent communication on waitlist management processes (refer to Attachment 2)	R	√			
Complying with the service's <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i> in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information	R	R	R	√	V
Creative Minds Early Years will provide rotational mixed age kindergarten programs based on our community's needs. Families will be surveyed to identify needs.	V	<b>V</b>			
Creative Minds Early Years will <b>not</b> be providing self-funded kindergarten places.	√				
Providing opportunities for interested families to attend the service during operational hours to observe the program and become familiar with the service prior to their child commencing in the program except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the approved provider, nominated supervisor, early childhood teachers or educators under the <i>National Law: Section 167</i> .	R	٧	٧		
Providing parents/guardians with information about the requirements of the law for enrolment, including obtaining the AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) and accessing immunisation services	R	V	<b>V</b>		
Ensuring parents/guardians are only offered a <b>tentative</b> place until the AIR Immunisation History Statement ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) has been assessed as being acceptable or the child has been assessed as eligible for the grace period	R	V	<b>V</b>		
Assessing the child's immunisation documentation as defined by the Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit (refer to Sources) for early childhood education and care services prior to enrolment to determine if the child's vaccination status complies with requirements or whether the child is eligible for the 16-week grace period (refer to Definitions)	R	<b>V</b>	٧		
Ensuring that only children whose AIR Immunisation History Statements (refer to Definitions) have been assessed as being acceptable or who are eligible for the grace period (refer to Definitions) have confirmed places in the program	R	V	<b>V</b>		
Advising parents/guardians who do not have an AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) and who are not eligible for the grace period that their children are not able to attend the service and referring them to immunisation services (refer to Attachment 3)	R	V	V		
Taking reasonable steps to obtain an up to date AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) from a parent/guardian of a child enrolled under a grace period within 16 weeks from when the child begins attending (Note: the child	R	V	<b>V</b>		



can continue to attend the service if acceptable immunisation documentation is not obtained).					
Completing the enrolment record prior to their child's commencement at the service and providing AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) of their child's immunisation status.  Note: Child enrolment does not roll over into following year.  Each year requires enrolment process to start again with up-to-date AIR immunisation statement required.				V	
Where a child is eligible for the 16 weeks grace period, ensuring that the child's immunisations are updated in line with the schedule and providing an up to date AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) to the service				1	
Taking reasonable steps to obtain an up to date AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) from all parents/guardians after enrolment, timing reminders to comply with the maximum seven-month interval (Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 107, Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 Section 143E)	R	V	V		
Ensuring all authorised nominees (refer to Definitions) have been completed on the enrolment record (refer to Definitions) (Regulations 160 and 161)	R	V		V	
Ensuring that the enrolment record (refer to Definitions) both digital and/or hard copy complies with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162 and that it effectively meets the management requirements of the service	R	V	V		
Ensuring that enrolment record (refer to Definitions) is kept up to date if family circumstances change, and that services are made aware if they become eligible for additional funding as a result of changed circumstances (e.g. if a child acquires a Health Care Card the child becomes available for Kindergarten Fee Subsidy; if the child or family becomes known to Child Protection, the child becomes eligible for Early Start Kindergarten and Early Start Kindergarten Extension grant).	R	V	V	V	V
Ensuring that enrolment records <i>(refer to Definitions)</i> are stored in a safe and secure place, and kept for three years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the service <i>(Regulation 183 (1a) (2d))</i>	R	V	V		
Discussing the individual child's needs with parents/guardians and developing an orientation program to assist them to settle into the service. The service should take into consideration barriers parents/guardians may have in disclosing sensitive information including communication and information barriers and the development of trusting relationships.	R	V	V		
Reviewing the orientation processes for new families and children to ensure the objectives of this policy are met	R	1	<b>V</b>	<b>V</b>	



Ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time whilst the child is being educated and cared for ( <i>Regulation 157</i> ), except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the approved provider, nominated supervisor, early childhood teachers or educators under the <i>National Law:</i> Section 167	R	R	٧	٧	٧
Taking reasonable steps to contact non-attending families prior to the cancellation of their enrolment (refer to Attachment 4)	<b>V</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>V</b>		
Reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> and the <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i> )	<b>V</b>	V	V		
<ul> <li>stay with their child as long as required during the settling in period</li> <li>make contact with educators at the service, when required</li> <li>Except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the approved provider, nominated supervisor, early childhood teachers or educators under the National Law: Section 167 – Alternative arrangements will be implemented to maintain communication</li> </ul>	٨	٨	٨	٧	
Assisting parents/guardians to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child	V	√	√	V	
Sharing information with parents/guardians concerning their child's progress with regard to settling in to the service	<b>V</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>V</b>	V	
Discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required such as Pre School Field Officer, Early Intervention Programs, and Maternal Health Services	V	<b>V</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>V</b>	
<ul> <li>Developing strategies to assist new families to:         <ul> <li>feel welcomed into the service</li> <li>become familiar with service policies and procedures</li> </ul> </li> <li>share information about their family beliefs, values and culture and feel culturally safe</li> <li>share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities and needs</li> <li>sharing goals/hopes for their child's journey</li> <li>value the voice of the child, ensuring they have opportunity to articulate their individual interests and needs</li> <li>discuss the values and expectations they hold in relation to their child's learning</li> <li>providing comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating</li> <li>Reading and complying with this Enrolment and Orientation</li> </ul>	√	√ R	√	<b>\</b>	√
Updating information by notifying the service of any changes as				V	
they occur, for example returning to work or ceasing work; if the					



child or family becomes known to Child Protection/Family Services/Orange Door					
Notifying Creative Minds Early Years in writing if they wish to cancel their enrolment two weeks prior to last enrolled day.				√	
Kindergarten Information Management (KIM) (refer to Definitions) collates data received from the Parent Occupation and Education details (see definitions) for funding purposes for School Readiness Funding (see definitions)					
A child's Transition Learning and Development Statement summarises their abilities as they start school and identifies their approaches to learning. It is passed on to the child's future school. The Transition Learning and Development Statement (often referred to as the TLDS):					
<ul> <li>summarises a child's learning and development</li> <li>identifies their approaches to learning and their interests</li> <li>indicates how the child can be supported to continue learning.</li> <li>TLDS is written during term 4 in conjunction with families for children in the year before school</li> </ul>	R	٧	<b>V</b>	٧	



### **PROCEDURES**

## **GENERAL ORIENTATION PROCEDURES**

The time required for orientation and settling in will vary for each child and their family, therefore it is important to be flexible and individualise orientation for each family.

- Offer families the opportunity to visit the service at different times during the day/session, this allows the child and their family to become familiar with the various routines of the service
- Provide reassurance to the family that they must stay with their child during the orientation visit
- Provide reassurance to the family that they may stay with their child for as long as they choose once the child is officially enrolled and commences to build confidence in their new environment
- Provide the family with suggestions for developing and maintaining a routine for saying goodbye to their child
- Reassure the family:
  - they can leave their child initially for a shorter day, gradually increasing the length of time
  - they may call and speak to their child's early childhood teacher or educator(s) at an agreed time
  - the early childhood teacher/educators will keep them informed on how their child is settling in
  - they will be informed about any changes or circumstances which may affect them or their child.
- Further considerations may include but are not limited to:



- send an email/or communication through Kidsoft iParent Portal during the day to
  update the family on their child including a photo of the child (if the child has settled
  in) (refer to the information and Communication Technology Policy). Note: For children
  in out-of-home care, the educator may need to seek permission from Child Protection
  before taking and distributing photos of the child
- o asking the family how they have settled in and if they have any questions or concerns.
- Refer to Attachment 2 for the general kindergarten registration and enrolment procedures
- Refer to Attachment 4 for cancellation of enrolment and non-attendance procedures.

#### **BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION**



#### **BACKGROUND**

The Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 require approved services to have a policy and procedures in place in relation to enrolment and orientation (Regulation 168(2) (k)).

It is intended by 2022 that all eligible Victorian children (refer to Definitions) will have access to two years of kindergarten before commencing school. Where demand is higher than availability, approved providers must adhere to their eligibility and DE's Priority of Access criteria (refer to Definitions and Attachment 1) in order to allocate the available places. The criteria used to determine the allocation of places takes account of the requirements set out in DE's Kindergarten Funding Guide (refer to Sources), the service's philosophy, values and beliefs, and the provisions of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010. The Victorian Government requires funded organisations to ensure that their policies and procedures promote equal opportunity for all children.

Immunisations are an effective means of reducing the risk of vaccine preventable diseases. Early childhood education and care services which are regulated under the *Education and Care Services* National Law Act 2010 and Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 have legislative responsibilities under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* to only offer a confirmed place in their programs to children with an Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions).

#### LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 160, 161, 162, 168, 170, 171, 177, 181, 183
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)
- Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 (Vic)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)



#### The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au
- Commonwealth Legislation Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au



## **DEFINITIONS**

Access to Early Learning (AEL): a program for a child who is at least three years old on April 30th in the year of enrolment, providing intensive support to eligible families with multiple and complex needs, assisting them to access universal kindergarten programs.

**Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement:** The AIR is a national register administered by Medicare that records all vaccinations given in Australia, including to children. In the case of medical contraindication, an authorised medical practitioner completes and signs a Medical Exemption Form and supplies it to the AIR (previous forms of documentation, for example a letter from a GP or local council, are no longer acceptable).

**Authorised nominee:** (In relation to this policy) is a person who has been given written authority by the parents/guardians of a child to collect that child from the education and care service. These details will be on the child's enrolment form.

Children/families experiencing vulnerability and/or disadvantage (in relation to this policy): children are vulnerable if the capacity of parents and family to effectively care, protect and provide for their long-term development and wellbeing is limited. Some factors which may contribute to a child experiencing vulnerability include: a child with a disability; living in a family with a low income, or one which is experiencing problems with housing, domestic violence, substance abuse, or mental health; known to child protection; in statutory out-of-home care; Aboriginal and/or Torre Strait Islander, having a culturally and linguistically diverse background; having a young or sole parent, or a parent with a disability (adapted from the Kindergarten Funding Guide)

**Children with additional needs:** Children whose development or physical condition requires specialist support or children who may need additional support due to language, refugee or asylum seeker experience, complex trauma, cultural or economic circumstances (refer to Inclusion and Equity Policy) (refer to Children/families experiencing vulnerability and/or disadvantage Definition).

**Deferral:** When a child does not attend in the year when they are eligible for a funded kindergarten place or is officially withdrawn from a service prior to the annual confirmation in April DET considers that this child has not accessed a year of funded kindergarten and is therefore eligible for a DET funded kindergarten place in the following year.

**Early Start Kindergarten (ESK):** Early Start Kindergarten provides eligible children with 15 hours of free or low-cost kindergarten each week led by a qualified Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registered teacher. ESK is available to children who are at least three years old by 30 April in the year they are enrolled to attend the program and are:

- from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, or
- known to child protection.



These children can also access free or low-cost year-before-school kindergarten through the ESK Extension Grant regardless of whether they have accessed ESK in the previous year.

**Early Start Kindergarten extension grants:** provides eligible children with 15 hours of free or low-cost kindergarten each week led by a qualified VIT registered teacher. The ESK extension grants are available to children attending kindergarten in the year-before-school and are:

- o not eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy
- o from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, or
- known to child protection.
- A child is not required to access ESK in the previous year to access the ESK extension grant.

Eligible child: as defined by the Victorian DET Kindergarten Funding Guide:

- a child who is at least four years old on 30 April in the year of attendance; enrolled for at least
   15 hours per week or 600 hours per year in a Four-Year-Old Kindergarten; and not enrolled at a funded kindergarten program at another service
- a child who is at least three years old on 30 April in the year of attendance and is enrolled in a funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten for a minimum of 5 hours per week
- any child that is enrolled in an early childhood and education and care service must have an AIR Immunisation History Statement that indicates that the child is fully vaccinated for their age or who qualifies for the 16-weeks grace period

**Enrolment record:** the collection of documents which contains information on each child as required under the National Regulations (*Regulations 160, 161, 162*) including but not limited to parent details; emergency contacts; authorised nominee; transportation authorisations, details of any court orders; and health information including immunisation status. Enrolment records are stored securely in the service due to their confidential nature.

**Kindergarten registration form:** The process of families providing initial information about their child to confirm their intention to enrol in kindergarten, administered by the CRES Provider (*refer to Definition*) or by the kindergarten service. This includes collection of basic contact information, kindergarten preferences and any other details that may inform prioritised allocation in kindergarten

**Grace period:** allows specific categories of children of families experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage to enrol and attend the service without an AIR Immunisation History Statement *(refer to Definitions)* or when the statement is assessed as not being up-to-date. Services complete the grace period eligibility form with families during enrolment, and keep a copy with the child's enrolment record. The 16-week grace period starts on the first day of the child's attendance at the service. During the grace period, the service is required to take reasonable steps to obtain the AIR Immunisation History Statement *(refer to Definitions)* and to encourage families to access immunisation services.

**Kindergarten Information Management (KIM):** is an online system for kindergarten funding applications, data collection, and reporting.

Local Government Area (LGA): a geographic area governed by a local council or shire

**Parent Occupation and Education Details**: Service providers must collect completed education and occupation information from the parents/guardians of all children enrolled in a funded kindergarten program as part of the annual confirmation process.

It is essential that you collect this information and confirm your enrolments on time as this information is used to inform the calculation of School Readiness Funding (SRF) at your kindergarten service. The amount of SRF your service receives will be based on the needs of its children, as determined by their parent/guardian education and occupation information.



**Priority of access:** in instances where more eligible children apply for a place at a service than there are places available, the service must allocate spaces using the criteria outlined in the DET Kindergarten Funding Guide (refer to Attachment 1 and Sources).

**Registration:** The process of families and carers giving initial information about their child to confirm their intention to enrol in kindergarten, administered by the service provider/EYM/CRES Provider. This includes collection of basic contact information, kindergarten preferences and any other details that may inform prioritised allocation in kindergarten.

**School Readiness Funding:** funding provided by DET for programs and supports that builds the capacity of kindergarten services, educators and families to support children's learning and development outcomes.

**Second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten:** second year eligibility may be considered when a child shows delays in key outcomes of learning and development. An assessment is carried out for each child by an early childhood teacher in Term 4 (the year before the child is to attend school) when a second year is being considered.

**Transition Learning and Development Statement (TLDS):** A child's Transition Learning and Development Statement summarises their abilities as they start school and identifies their approaches to learning. It is passed on to the child's future school. The Transition Learning and Development Statement (often referred to as the TLDS):

- summarises a child's learning and development
- identifies their approaches to learning and their interests
- indicates how the child can be supported to continue learning.



### **SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES**

## **SOURCES**

- Australian Childhood Immunisation Register: <u>www.servicesaustralia.gov.au</u>
- Australian Government Department of Health, National Immunisation Program Schedule: www.health.gov.au
- Department of Health and Human Services, Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care service: <a href="https://www2.health.vic.gov.au">www2.health.vic.gov.au</a>
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: <a href="https://www.acecqa.gov.au">www.acecqa.gov.au</a>
- Guide to the National Quality Standard: <u>www.acecqa.gov.au</u>
- Priority of Access Guidelines for child care service: <u>www.dese.gov.au</u>
- The Kindergarten Funding Guide (Victorian Department of Education and Training): www.education.vic.gov.au

## **Related Policies**

- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations
- Compliments and Complaints
- Dealing with Infectious Disease
- Fees
- Inclusion and Equity
- Privacy and Confidentiality



#### **EVALUATION**



In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (Regulation 172).

#### **ATTACHMENTS**



- Attachment 1: Attachment 1 Eligibility and priority of access criteria for 3 and 4-year-old funded kindergarten program
- Attachment 2: General kindergarten registration and enrolment procedures
- Attachment 3: Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation
- Attachment 4: Cancellation of enrolment and non-attendance
- Attachment 5: Student Family Occupation Index

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#### **AUTHORISATION**

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Creative Minds Early Years on 18 May 2023.

**REVIEW DATE: 18/5/2024** 



#### ATTACHMENT 1. ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITY OF ACCESS CRITERIA

#### FOR A FUNDED KINDERGARTEN THREE OR FOUR-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

The approved provider must notify all families of the priority of access (PoA) policy that applies when they enrol their child.

In instances where more eligible children apply for a place at a kindergarten service than there are places available, services must:

- prioritise children based on the Department of Education (DE) criteria listed below
- work with other local kindergarten services and the regional DE office to ensure all eligible children have access to a kindergarten place.

This criteria must be used by the approved provider when prioritising enrolments. Guidance is available from the Department's regional offices if required.

Service providers should build flexibility into their enrolment processes that consider the circumstances of families from priority groups.

If participating in a central registration and enrolment scheme, the CRES provider will allocate places in accordance with DE's PoA criteria, and other local criteria if applicable

Services must first apply the DE's PoA criteria, and following this may apply locally developed criteria, as per examples below.

All information relating to PoA criteria should be respectfully collected from families upon enrolment, recorded in the child's confidential enrolment record and entered into the Kindergarten Information Management (KIM) system, where applicable.

First Priority	Process that could be used to verify need(s)
Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out- of-Home Care	<ul> <li>This information can be obtained from the child's carer/family as part of the enrolment process and/or received from a referral source which may include:         <ul> <li>Child Protection</li> <li>Child and family services (family services referral and support team, Child FIRST/integrated family services/Services Connect case worker)</li> <li>Maternal and Child Health nurse, or</li> <li>Out-of-Home Care provider</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children	<ul> <li>As part of the enrolment process, service providers must respectfully ask families 'is your child Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?'</li> </ul>
Asylum seeker and refugee children	<ul> <li>As part of the enrolment process, service providers should respectfully ask whether the family/child holds a visa or ImmiCard identifying the child and/or parents as a refugee or asylum seeker</li> </ul>
Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy	<ul> <li>A child or parent holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card, or</li> <li>Multiple birth children (triplets, quadruplets).</li> <li>Asylum seeker and/or refugee children</li> </ul>



## Children with additional needs, defined as children who:

- require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the kindergarten program
- require a combination of services which are individually planned
- have an identified specific disability or developmental delay

#### The child:

- is assessed as having delays in two or more areas and is declared eligible for a second funded year of 4-year-old kindergarten, or
- holds a Child Disability Health Care Card, or
- has previously been approved for Kindergarten Inclusion Support Package, or referred by:
  - o the National Disability Insurance Scheme
  - Early Childhood Intervention Service
  - o Preschool Field Officer, or
  - o Maternal and Child Health nurse

## Second priority (in order shown)

- 1. children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten; or
- 2. children turning six years of age at kindergarten who have been granted an exemption from school-entry age requirements by the regional office of DET/approved second year funded kindergarten children
- 3. children who turn three years of age\* by 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten
- 4. children who have a sibling that has previously attended Creative Minds Early Years
- 5. family lives, works or studies in the Colac Otway Shire by date of application

### Third priority

1. All other families

**Note:** DET's PoA guidelines are to ensure that kindergarten programs are available to those children who stand to benefit the most from attending early education. In mixed age groups, PoA guideline will equally prioritise three and four-year-old children that are considered high priority. Where programs for three- and four-year old children are provided separately, the PoA criteria will be applied separately for each age cohort.

## \* Early Start Kindergarten and Three-Year-Old Kindergarten

During the roll-out of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten, Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) (*refer to Definitions*) will continue to provide 15 hours a week of funded kindergarten for all eligible children up until 2029, when three-year-old children across the state will have access to 15 hours

It is important to continue to enrol eligible children in ESK, even if funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten is available at the service.

This guarantees that children experiencing vulnerability will continue to be enrolled in the full 15 hours of kindergarten in all service settings, including long day care. It also ensures that service providers can continue to receive all funding entitlements.

Service providers are expected to continue to provide the full 15 hours funded through Early Start Kindergarten, even in instances where three-year-old groups are being offered fewer than 15 hours.

ESK is available to children who turn three years of age by 30 April in the year of enrolment and who:

- are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- are known to Child Protection/Family Services/Orange Door
- have a refugee or asylum seeker background\*

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\*Children/families without a current refugee visa or ImmiCard who have a recent refugee experience may be eligible by exception for Early Start Kindergarten, for more information contact your local Department of Education and Training office.

Refer to the Department of Education and Training website for up-to-date information: www.education.vic.gov.au



## ATTACHMENT 2. GENERAL KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION AND ENROLMENT PROCEDURES

## KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION PROCESS

Stage	Family Role	Kindergarten Role
1. Proactive engagement and awareness	Searches for information about ECEC.  Receives information from a service provider, MCH staff or support service they have contact with.	Communicates information about ECEC to families  Tours of service Open days Website Facebook page
2. Registration	Completes a registration form via our website.	Supports families to complete registration forms if they find it difficult. Support provided where required.
3. Allocation	Receives an update on the progress of their registration.	Send tentative offer by end of term 2 in year prior to attendance
4. Acceptance and communication	Accepts their offer of place or rejects the offer.  Offers confirmed once all required documents are received (including up to date AIR immunisation statement) by due date. (see information regarding immunisation below)  Late responses will be placed back on a waiting list and tentative offers sent with the next round.	Supports families to understand what a tentative offer means and what they need to do next and documents required.  Late acceptances will be placed on a waiting list with next round of offers
5. Confirmation and Orientation	Engages in orientation process.	Enrolment confirmed via email end of term 3. Orientation process begins term 4



## **Kindergarten registration dates**

If families miss the registration close deadline, they can still register although they will be placed into a pool for second-round (or even later rounds) of allocation and are less likely to get their top preference. After second round offers have been confirmed, Creative Minds Early Years will continue to allocate children to kindergarten places where they are available. More places may become available as children move kindergartens or withdraw, or when kindergartens add capacity.

Date	Activity
Ongoing/Always open	Registrations open
End term 2 year prior to enrolment	First round offers
End 2 <sup>nd</sup> week term 3	Acceptance of first round offers due
Week 4 of term 3	Second round offers
End week 6 term 3	Acceptance of second round offers due
Where required	Subsequent offers on an individual basis

#### Age

Your child will be eligible for kindergarten only if they meet the following age criteria:

- To be eligible for Three-Year-Old Kindergarten, your child must turn 3 by April 30 in year of attendance
- To be eligible for Four-Year-Old Kindergarten, your child must turn 4 by April 30 in year of attendance

## Registration

The quickest way to complete a registration form is online at https://creativemindscolac.com.au

A separate registration form must be completed for each child.

Families can register directly at Creative Minds Early Years and we can assist with completing the registration.

To fill out the registration form, families will need to provide information about themselves and their child. At this stage they do not need to attach any supporting documentation.

The registration form asks families for:

- Basic information about the child including name, date of birth and address.
- Contact details for the parent or carer.
- Whether the child is identified as fulfilling any of the following criteria:
  - Is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
  - Is from a multiple birth (triplet or greater)
  - o Is known to Child Protection
  - o Is in Out-Of-Home Care
  - Holds, or has a family member who holds, a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card, Department of Veteran's Affairs Gold Card or White Card, or a Refugee or Asylum Seeker Visa.

## **Enrolment**

Once a kindergarten place has been accepted, the enrolment process can begin.

To enrol a child, families will need to provide copies of:

- Proof of identity: child's birth certificate, birth notice or passport
- Concession cards and immigration visas (where applicable).
- Documents from Family Support Services or a Maternal and Child Health nurse confirming high support needs and/or disability or letter from a doctor for complex medical needs (where applicable).



- Immunisation History Statement (unless experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage, at which point they can take
  advantage of a 16-week 'grace period'. More information is available at <a href="https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-children/no-jab-no-play/immunisation-enrolment-toolkit">https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-children/no-jab-no-play/immunisation-enrolment-toolkit</a>
- Documents detailing any medical conditions or requirements the child has.

Kindergartens may also require additional documentation. The kindergarten should ensure that information regarding any additional documentation is easily accessible for families, carers and support services.

**Note:** Places will not be allocated to children until any outstanding fees owed to the service by the family is paid, or a payment plan is agreed to between the family and the service (refer to Fees Policy).

#### **Enrolment Records**

Enrolment records (*refer to Definitions*) form part of the enrolment procedure and are completed by families after they have been allocated a place, and before commencing attendance. An example enrolment form can be found on the DET website: <a href="https://www.education.vic.gov.au">www.education.vic.gov.au</a>

#### **Cancellations**

Families to notify Creative Minds Early Years in writing of their intention to leave the service 14 days prior to last day of enrolment. If the service is not informed, fees will continue to be generated for that place.

## **Second Year Registration**

- Children currently enrolled at Creative Minds Early Years who have been determined eligible for a second year of kindergarten, the ECT will advise the enrolment officer to add them to the waiting list for the following year.
- New Families to Creative Minds Early Years of children who have been determined as eligible for a second year must complete and submit a kindergarten registration form for a second year. Parent needs to provide the declaration of second year funded kindergarten submitted/approved from previous kindergarten upon enrolment.
- A Declaration of Eligibility Form for a second year of kindergarten must be completed and submitted to the relevant funding authority.

## Children Younger than the Eligible Preschool Age

- If a child is aged less than four by April 30 in the year they are to attend Kindergarten, the family must request early school entry approval in writing for their child to attend school in the following year. Requests should be made to the officer in charge, usually a director of the relevant government education authority region, or the non-government school that the child will be attending.
- Should the child not attend school the following year, the child will not be eligible for another year of funded preschool, as identified in the relevant funding criteria.

#### Children Older than the Eligible Preschool Age

- Some children may turn six years of age during their preschool year. This is usually relevant in the case of children who have been identified as requiring a second year of preschool.
- Children who will turn six during the preschool year must apply for an exemption from school from the relevant Regional Director of the education department.
- Families must complete an 'Exemption from School due to attendance in kindergarten program' form before the child starts kindergarten and submit it to relevant regional office of the education department authority. The form is available on the website or by contacting the Regional Office.
- The kindergarten service must sight the approved exemption letter from relevant education authority and note that it has been sighted on the child's enrolment record. Data on the number of children attending Kindergarten who are six years plus, and confirmation that the exemption was sighted for each child, must be provided as part of funding data collection process.



#### Withdrawal

Some children who have commenced Kindergarten may benefit from withdrawing from the program, in order to access Kindergarten in the following year.

- A withdrawal can occur without any impact on government funding for that child's place the following year, only if it is implemented **before** the first funding data collection that occurs in, or around April each year.
- If a withdrawal occurs later in the year, the government funding will not be available in the next year.
- When a withdrawal occurs, a fee adjustment will be made of either correct invoicing or fee reimbursement.

#### **Immunisations**

According to the No Jab, No Play law in Victoria, your child **must** be fully vaccinated to start kindergarten. An Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register is not required for this registration form, **but** you should ensure that your child's immunisations are up to date and you have a copy of this statement before commencing the enrolment and orientation process. The AIR immunisation statement **MUST** be up to date prior to starting kindergarten.

If up to date AIR statement is **NOT** received 4 weeks prior to commencing kindergarten then enrolment will be void and position offered to next child on waiting list. Communication between Creative Minds Kindergarten and Early Learning Service and parents is extremely important so we remain informed of status.

A grace period applies for families who may find it difficult to provide an up-to-date statement by October.

Further information on immunisation requirements for enrolment in early childhood services is available through the DET website at http://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/child-care-kindergarten/Pages/enrol-in-kindergarten.aspx .

### **Priority of access**

Creative Minds Early Years follows the Department of Education and Training's Priority of Access criteria (*refer to Attachment* 1), that prioritises allocation of kindergarten places for children who:

- Are at risk of abuse or neglect
- Are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- Are, or have parents or carers who are, asylum seekers or refugees
- Are eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (hold a valid concession card or are a triplet or quadruplet)
- Have additional developmental needs.

Children that fit one or more of those criteria will be allocated to a place in kindergarten as a high priority. This form will collect all the information required to determine if a child is eligible for Priority of Access.

If you believe you or your child are in exceptional circumstances which require prioritisation and are not covered by any of the above criteria, please contact Creative Minds Early Years to discuss.

#### **Fees**

Upon enrolment in Creative Minds Early Years's funded kindergarten, parents/guardians will be required to pay holding fee of 1 week full fees based on your booking. This amount is refunded at the end of the booking enrolment. Refer to Fees Schedule in Fee Policy – Funded Kindergarten in long daycare.

## Before you start, make sure you have copies of:

- Proof of identity: your child's birth certificate, birth notice, or passport
- Concession cards and immigration visas (where applicable).
- Documents from Family Support Services or a Maternal and Child Health nurse confirming high support needs and/or disability or letter from a doctor for complex medical needs (where applicable)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> year funded kindergarten declaration (where applicable)



## ATTACHMENT 3. LETTER FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS WITHOUT ACCEPTABLE IMMUNISATION DOCUMENTATION

**Creative Minds Early Years** 

[Address]

[Insert date]

Dear [insert name]

Re: Enrolment at Creative Minds Early Years for [insert year]

I am contacting you regarding your tentative place for [insert child's name] at [Service Name] in the [insert 3 year old or 4 year old program] in [insert year].

Under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* early childhood education and care services cannot enrol a child unless the parent/guardian has provided AIR Immunisation History Statement.

AIR Immunisation History Statement includes evidence of immunisations and is used to assess whether you child is fully vaccinated for their age.

As we have not received acceptable immunisation documentation for [insert name of child] by the due date, and your child is not eligible for the 16 week grace period, we are unable to confirm a place at our service for [insert year] and your child's name has been removed from our list.

Immunisation programs are effective in reducing the risk of vaccine preventable diseases. Immunisation from an early age helps protect your child against serious childhood infections. Further information about immunisations for your child is available from:

- your doctor
- [insert details of local government immunisation service]
- National Immunisation Information Line Tel. 1800 671 811
- Australian Immunisation Register: <u>www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register</u>
- Better Health Channel website: www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/no-jab-no-play

Should you wish to re-apply for a place for [insert child's name], we are happy to accept a new enrolment application accompanied by an AIR Immunisation History Statement. The new application would be considered in line with Creative Minds Early Years's Enrolment and Orientation policy.

Yours sincerely

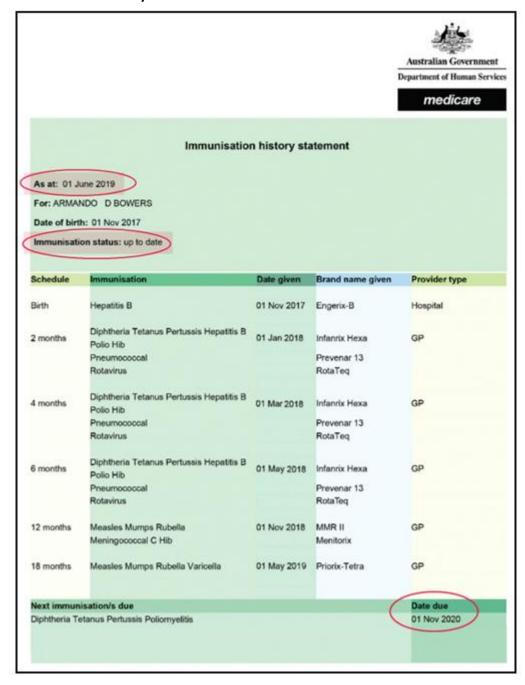
[Insert name]

[Insert title]

**Creative Minds Early Years** 



## Example of an immunisation history statement





#### ATTACHMENT 4. CANCELLATION OF ENROLMENT AND NON-ATTENDANCE

#### FOR FUNDED KINDERGARTEN

#### **Cancellation of Enrolment**

Families **MUST** notify Creative Minds Early Years and/or an Enrolment Officer in writing of their intention to cancel their child's enrolment **14 days prior** to last intended enrolled day. Fees will continue to be generated for that place until the Creative Minds Early Years is notified.

**Note:** This process does not apply to vulnerable children (*refer to Definitions*). Children and families that are experiencing vulnerability are to be supported according to their individual needs. Where children/families are linked to Child Protection and not attending; early childhood teacher or educator will need to inform their Case Officer.

### Non-attendance

- Term One
  - Families that have accepted a placement and have not completed an enrolment form and not attended the service within the first 3 weeks of Term One will be contacted and informed their placement has been cancelled.
- Families Traveling Overseas
  Families are required to notify Creative Minds Early Years prior to extended periods of travel, and ensure fees are paid in full prior to leaving.

To prevent large fee amounts are not accrued during the child's absence, enrolments are preferred to be cancelled for extended periods of absence/travel. As if a child doesn't attend the last enrolled day, funding is void and full fees applicable back to last attended day.

Places can be resumed when returned providing there is a position available.

- Non-contactable Families
  - After two weeks of a child not attending the service, early childhood teacher, educator or enrolment officer
    to call and follow up with email the family. If there is no response, log this attempt and place in the child's
    file on Kidsoft. Inform Noninitiated Supervisor of update.
  - After second week of the child not attending and the family has made no attempts to contact the service, early childhood teacher, educator or enrolment officer to contact the family via phone/text and/or email. If there is no response, log this attempt and place in the child's file in Kidsoft. Noninitiated Supervisor of update.
  - After third week of non-attendance and no response, inform nominated supervisor/Approved Provider and cross check families contact details.
- Nominated supervisor or approved provider to email family, ensuring a response date is documented in the email.
- If the family have made no attempt to communicate with the service before the response date, post a final attempt letter, ensuring a response date is documented in the letter.
- If the family has not responded to the final attempt letter before the response date, their placement will be cancelled.



## **ATTACHMENT 5. STUDENT FAMILY OCCUPATION INDEX**

EDUCATION STATE	\
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## PARENTAL EDUCATION AND OCCUPATION DETAILS

Plea	se complete this form in English	1		
СН	IILD'S NAME:			
KII	NDERGARTEN NAME:			
	ease tick this box if there is only ild	one parent/guardian for the	Parent/guardian A (primary carer)	Parent/guardian B  (must be completed, except where there is only one parent/guardian for the child)
	ucation uivalent overseas education and qu	ualifications are recognised for the	purposes of this data	a collection.
1.	What is the highest year of primary or secondary school	Year 9 equivalent or below		
	the parent/guardian has completed? (tick one)	Year 10 or equivalent		
	For persons who have never attended school, mark 'Year 9 equivalent or below'.	Year 11 or equivalent		
		Year 12 or equivalent		
2.	2. What is the level of the highest qualification the parent/guardian has completed? (tick one)	No non-school qualification		
		Certificate I to IV (including trade certificate)		
		Advanced diploma / Diploma		
L		Bachelor degree or above		
Oc	cupation			
3.	What is the occupation group of Parental Occupation Index on page		□ A	□ <b>A</b>
			□В	□В
	If the parent/guardian is <b>not curre</b> job in the last 12 months, or has re please use their last occupation		□ C	□ C
	produce doe area and occupation		□ D	□ <b>D</b>
	If the parent/guardian has <b>not</b> bee months, tick 'N' OR	n in paid work for the last 12	□N	□N
	If the parent/guardian has <b>not</b> bee <b>months</b> because the person cares tick <b>'H'</b>		н	□н
Na	me parent/guardian (print)		Date	
Sic	mature parent/quardian			

YICTORIA Education and Training

Version 2 (Jan 2020)





## PARENTAL OCCUPATION INDEX

MANAGERS		
Chief Executives, General Managers and	Chief Executives and Managing Directors, Corporate General Manager, Defence Force	A
Legislators	Senior Officer, Local Government Legislator, Member of Parliament	
Farmers and Farm Managers	Aquaculture Farmers, Crop Farmers, Livestock Farmers, Mixed Crop, Livestock Farmers	A
Specialist Managers	Advertising, Public Relations and Sales Managers, Business Administration Managers, Construction Managers, Education, Health and Welfare Services Managers	A
Hospitality, Retail and Service Managers	Accommodation and Hospitality Managers, Retail Managers	В
PROFESSIONALS generally with a bachelors de	egree or above	
Arts and Media Professionals	Music Professionals, Photographers, Journalists and Other Writers	A
Business, Human Resource and Marketing Professionals	Accountants, Auditors and Company Secretaries, Financial Brokers and Dealers, and Investment Advisers, Human Resource and Training Professionals, Information and Organisation Professionals, Sales, Marketing and Public Relations Professionals	A
Design, Engineering and Science Professionals	Architects, Designers, Planners and Surveyors, Engineering Professionals	A
Education Professionals	Early Childhood Teachers, School Teachers, Tertiary Education Teachers	Α
Health Professionals	Health Diagnostic and Promotion Professionals, Health Therapy Professionals, Medical Practitioners, Midwifery and Nursing Professionals	A
ICT Professionals	Business and Systems Analysts, and Programmers, Database and Systems Administrators, and ICT Security Specialists	A
Legal, Social and Welfare Professionals	Barristers, Judicial and Other Legal Professionals, Solicitors, Counsellors, Psychologists, Social Workers, Ministers of Religion	A
TECHNICIANS AND TRADES WORKERS		
Engineering, ICT and Science Technicians	Agricultural, Medical and Science Technicians, Building and Engineering Technicians, ICT and Telecommunications Technicians	В
Automotive and Engineering Trades Workers	Automotive Electricians and Mechanics, Mechanical Engineering Trades Workers, Panel beaters, and Vehicle Body Builders, Trimmers and Painters	С
Construction Trades Workers	Bricklayers, and Carpenters and Joiners, Floor Finishers and Painting Trades Workers	С
Electrotechnology and Telecommunications Trades Workers	Electricians, Electronics and Telecommunications Trades Workers	С
Food Trades Workers	Chefs	В
	Bakers and Pastry cooks, Butchers and Smallgoods Makers, Cooks	C
Skilled Animal and Horticultural Workers	Animal Attendants and Trainers, and Shearers, Horticultural Trades Workers	С
Other Technicians and Trades Workers	Hairdressers, Textile, Clothing and Footwear Trades Workers	С
COMMUNITY AND PERSONAL SERVICE WORK	ERS	
Health and Welfare Support Workers	Ambulance Officers and Paramedics, Dental Hygienists, Technicians and Therapists, Health Workers, Massage Therapists	В
Carers and Aides	Child Carers, Education Aides, Personal Carers and Assistants	D
Hospitality Workers	Bar Attendants and Baristas, Cafe Workers, Gaming Workers	D
Protective Service Workers	Police	В
	Defence Force Members - Other Ranks, Fire and Emergency Workers	С
Personal Service Workers	Beauty Therapists, Driving Instructors, Travel Attendants	D
Sports	Sports Coaches, Instructors and Officials, Sportspersons	C
	Fitness Instructors, Outdoor Adventure Guides	D
CLERICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE WORKERS		
Office Managers and Program Administrators	Contract, Program and Project Administrators, Office and Practice Managers	В
Personal Assistants and Secretaries	Personal Assistants, Secretaries, Legal Secretaries	С
General Clerical Workers	General Clerks, Keyboard Operators	D
Inquiry Clerks and Receptionists	Call or Contact Centre Information Clerks, Receptionists	D
Numerical Clerks	Bookkeepers, Accounting, Financial and Insurance Clerks, Bank Workers	D
Clerical and Office Support Workers	Couriers and Postal Deliverers, Filing and Registry Clerks, Survey Interviewers	D
		В
	Conveyancers and Legal Executives	
Other Clerical and Administrative Workers	Conveyancers and Legal Executives  Court and Legal Clerks, Insurance Investigators, Loss Adjusters and Risk Surveyors	С
	- ,	_
Other Clerical and Administrative Workers	Court and Legal Clerks, Insurance Investigators, Loss Adjusters and Risk Surveyors Purchasing and Supply Logistics Clerks, Debt Collectors, Human Resource Clerks, Inspectors and Regulatory Officers	_
	Court and Legal Clerks, Insurance Investigators, Loss Adjusters and Risk Surveyors Purchasing and Supply Logistics Clerks, Debt Collectors, Human Resource Clerks, Inspectors and Regulatory Officers	D
Other Clerical and Administrative Workers SALES WORKERS & MACHINERY OPERATORS	Court and Legal Clerks, Insurance Investigators, Loss Adjusters and Risk Surveyors Purchasing and Supply Logistics Clerks, Debt Collectors, Human Resource Clerks, Inspectors and Regulatory Officers  5, DRIVERS AND LABOURERS	D



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