

# FAQ

## FIRST NATIONS EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR WAGE ENHANCEMENT FUNDING (2019-20 & 2020-21)

*“To support the development of high quality, culturally appropriate, sustainable programs, services and supports for children and families through ongoing community engagement, collaborations, partnerships and coordinated approaches to planning, implementation and governance.”*

(BC First Nations ELCC Framework – Draft Mission Statement)

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### Overview

BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS), through the Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework, is pleased to make available again the First Nations ECE Wage Enhancement (FNWE) funding for 2019/2020 and 2020-2021.

The FNWE funding stream was developed to enhance wages for certified Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) working in First Nations communities in licensed and un-licensed Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) programs.

Research shows that certified ECEs are a critical part of delivering quality ELCC programs and this funding can make it easier for First Nations to attract and retain qualified educators.

FNWE funding supports certified ECEs to bring them closer to the wage benchmarks determined by our research of ECE wages in First Nations ELCC programs across BC. It also includes an incentive amount to recognize the commitment of ECEs in

undertaking certification, as well as an additional allowance for benefits. FNWE funding is distributed to Nations twice annually.

### Who is eligible to receive FNWE funding?

Indigenous and non-Indigenous, certified ECEs and ECE Assistants (ECEAs) who:

- Can demonstrate that they hold a current certificate\* through the BC ECE Registry; and
- Worked in a First Nations licensed or un-licensed IELCC program during the funding period.

*\* Please note, individuals in the process of applying for or renewing their ECE/A certification will need to provide proof of application and may only be eligible for the incentive portion of this funding opportunity.*



BC Aboriginal  
Child Care Society

## Can we apply to enhance wages for Elders and Knowledge Keepers?

Funding to support wages for Elders and Knowledge keepers can be applied for under the Service Grant Funding Stream which is now open for application.

## How are the FNWE funding amounts determined?

BCACCS acknowledges the importance of strengthening wages for ECEs across the sector. As a starting place, FNWE funding is focused on increasing the income of those ECEs whose wages are the lowest in the sector and fall below the benchmark (based on the sector's median wage) for their certification level.

The following wage grid\* was used as the hourly benchmark for each qualification:

ECE Assistant Certificate:	\$17
ECE Certificate:	\$21
Infant/Toddler Certificate:	\$23
Special Needs Certificate:	\$23
Managers:	\$26

*\*Please note amounts for this year's wage grid have increased for ECE, I/T, Special Needs and Managers.*

Where educators' wages are below the benchmark, the FNWE funding calculation is designed to "top-up" all wages, to a maximum of \$5,000 per educator annually. In addition, eligible educators will receive a \$1,000 incentive amount annually to recognize their commitment to professionalism and effort in undertaking certification.

Nations will also receive an allowance for each eligible educator's mandatory employment related costs (MERCs), calculated at 20% of the combined benchmark and incentive amount.

## Is the FNWE funding considered taxable income?

Yes, educators reporting taxable income\* to the Canada Revenue Agency are required to report FNWE funding as part of their taxable income.

*\*This is taxable in the calendar year it is received by the employee/individual.*

## Does the FNWE funding need to be distributed to educators by a specific date?

Upon receiving the FNWE funding, the employer (in most cases a First Nation) is required to pay out the wage enhancement to approved educators within 30 days of receiving FNWE funding. Nations will receive an email notifying them of approval and next steps.

## What are Nations expected to report for FNWE funding?

Nations are required to submit semi-annual reports including financial reports detailing the disbursement of funds. BCACCS will follow up with Nations to collect financial reporting and discuss how communities can share the impacts of the funding for children, families, and the community.

## How to apply for the First Nations ECE Wage Enhancement funding

The process for application is slightly different from 2018/2019 and now has two steps.

1. In order to begin the application process, please work with the leadership of your Nation/community to complete a registration form at: [https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID\\_6108?SA=AM](https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_6108?SA=AM)
2. Once your registration is processed you will be emailed and invited to fill out applications for funding opportunities including the FNWE funding.

The intake dates for FNWE each year will be:

- **September 15 – October 15**  
(for the period covering April 1 – September 30)
- **March 15 – April 15**  
(for the period covering October 1 – March 31)

If you have missed the intake date, please contact BCACCS for support. All previous FNWE applicants should have already received an invitation to apply. If you have not received an invitation yet please check with your band office. If you have any questions, please reach out to the IELCC Framework Implementation team at [ielccprojectassistant@acc-society.bc.ca](mailto:ielccprojectassistant@acc-society.bc.ca) or 604-913-9128.