Guidance Document - Steps to apply for OPP (formerly ECE)

IF you already have completed this process and qualified with us in previous years, you are all set - do not complete again.

Here is a step-by-step guide to applying for the Ohio Preschool Program funding. We ask all families with children exiting Early Intervention and those on IEPs to apply as we rely on the funding to support our high quality preschool program. We encourage all families who may qualify due to financial challenges to apply as well.

Families with children who are categorically eligible for OPP are not required to provide proof of income. This means that you DO NOT have to complete the income portion of the application unless you choose to do so for other benefits, etc.

This includes children who:

- **Children with an Individualized Education Program (IEP)**
- **Children who are experiencing homelessness**
- **Children who are exiting Early Intervention at age three with an exit IFSP**
- **Children who are in kinship or foster care**

Documentation that is required to be submitted to verify categorical eligibility:

- Proof of the IEP or IFSP (we can help with this)
- Homeless Attestation form for families experiencing homelessness
- Family case plan or court order indicating foster or kinship placement
- Proof of kinship permanency incentive eligibility or payments

You will have two options. You can fill this out online or you can fill a paper copy. We are here to assist you either way.

First Step:

- Gather your documents
    - A birth certificate is required
    - If you are applying due to financial hardship, have paystubs ready
        - Plan on 4 of the most recent paystubs

- Complete the release of information and email that to mcarter@esclakeeriewest.org

Next Steps:

- Complete the application online: https://ssp.benefits.ohio.gov/apspssp/ssp.portal/login/loginSecure
- You may have to set up an Ohio ID. Complete that step.

- Identify us as the childcare provider
  - If your child is going to **Union** - You will SELECT ESC of Lake Erie West Early Childhood Program at Union
  - If your child is going to **Hiawatha** - You will SELECT ESC of Lake Erie West Early Childhood Program at Westwood (this will change to Hiawatha by August 20th)
  - If your child is going to **Monclova** - You will SELECT ESC of Lake Erie West Early Childhood Program at Monclova

- Notify us that you've completed the steps so we can track it on our end.
  - Email mcarter@esclakeeriewest.org

Do you need help with this process?

Contact Terri Mabrey at Terri Mabrey, Social Worker
419-725-2064
tmabrey@esclakeeriewest.org

Here is our ESC website for more information:
https://www.esclakeeriewest.org/EarlyChildhoodProgramTuitionAssistance.aspx