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MEMORANDUM

To: Early Childhood Programs and Staff

From: Office of Child and Family Services

Subject: **Early Childhood Educator Salary Supplement System Rules**

Date: March 12, 2024

The Early Childhood Educator Workforce Salary Supplement System is funded and administered by Maine's Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services. The purpose of the Early Childhood Educator Workforce Salary Supplement System is to develop and implement a system to provide salary supplements to child care providers and early childhood educators who provide direct services to children in licensed child care facilities and licensed family child care programs, incentivize continuing education of the early childhood workforce, and raise the overall quality of care for young children.

22 M.R.S. § 3737-A provides the Department rulemaking authority to establish a tiered payment system. The tiered system must provide, at a minimum, three tiers based on the education and experience levels of child care providers and early childhood educators. The second tier must provide a salary supplement that is at least 50% greater than the first tier, and the third tier must provide a salary supplement that is at least 50% greater than the second tier.

22 M.R.S. § 3737-A also directed the Department to implement a tiered system for salary supplements beginning July 1, 2023. Due to administrative delays, emergency rules for the tiered system went into effect on December 1, 2023.

To comply with the legislative intent, retroactive payments were made to eligible staff registered in MRTQ in the highest tier for the months July through October 2023. Eligible staff received a payment equivalent to \$100 per month for the months they were registered in the highest tier. Payments to providers included the administrative costs for applicable staff payments.

The Early Childhood Educator Workforce Salary Supplement System final rules are effective March 11, 2024. To access the rules, please visit:

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/provider-resources/early-childhood-educator-workforce-salary-supplement-program>

For questions and inquiries about the Early Childhood Educator Workforce Salary Supplement System rules, contact the Department at ECEWageProgram.DHHS@maine.gov or (207) 624-7996.