



## **2022-2023 School Readiness and Local Funding Reimbursement Tip Sheet for Providers**

This tip sheet is intended to assist providers with knowing vital information that will allow them to be reimbursed in a timely and efficient manner and to help them make every effort to maximize their site's monthly provider reimbursements. These are the rules, requirements and processes that our Coalition's Reimbursement Department follows to help ensure the accurate and efficient processing of the monthly provider reimbursements within the functionality of the Division of Early Learning (DEL) Provider Portal. Please know that this is not all of the information providers need to know to be fully knowledgeable and meet all requirements for all programs and all departments within the Coalition. There is a link to the most current DEL Provider Portal User Guide on the dashboard of the DEL Provider Portal. There are additional resources such as this tip sheet for providers that is available on our website at [www.elcpinellas.org](http://www.elcpinellas.org). **Please be sure to read this tip sheet in its entirety or refer to it when you have a question as all of the information a provider needs can be found in this tip sheet, in the User Guide on their site's portal dashboard or on the Coalition's website. Tip # 12 is a very important reminder for providers so please be sure to read it.**

**FYI - The DEL Portal System Requirements: Chrome or Internet Explorer Version 10 or higher**

### **1. Sign in Sign Out Sheets – Must meet Rule 6M Requirements**

- a. Providers are required to submit sign in sign out sheets for the ELC children at the same time that they submit the electronic attendance each month. Sign in sign out sheets must be received by the due date stated in the attendance on the Provider Portal attendance screen. If not, the attendance will **not** be processed and reimbursement will not be made on the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. Deadline must be met to ensure that the Reimbursement Team can meet the billing deadline so all providers who complied with submission deadline for sign in sign out sheets and electronic attendance are reimbursed on time per the contractual deadline of the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month.
- b. Sign in sign out sheets should be uploaded to the Monthly Sign in out Sheet folder on the OEL Provider Portal. Please use the child's ELC enrollment name for the child's sign in sign out sheet and not the child's nickname. We only know the child by the first and last name used at the time of enrollment to the provider's site. The ELC Pinellas requirement is that providers **alphabetize sign in sign out sheets by the child's last name before uploading. Also that when uploading, that the file name is in this format; month then year of the sign in sign out sheets then child's last name and then first name or initial. Sample: September 2022 Smith, Alex.** This will help the Reimbursement Specialists in comparing this information with the submitted attendance for validating, internal desk monitoring, and processing accurate reimbursements.
- c. The provider's site name must be on every sign in sign out sheet, preferably at the top, and should include the month and the year. The days of the month must match the right date i.e. Thursday, September 22, 2022. Please account for every day of the month and write closed or N/A on days that your site does not provide care for the child such as Saturday and Sunday. There must be a sign in and out time with a.m. and p.m. designation for every child for every day that the child is present with the client's signature. Please use the appropriate sign in sign out sheet for children who attend before and after school. There are samples on the ELC's website at [www.elcpinellas.net](http://www.elcpinellas.net).
- d. It is best practice to mark the day with the word "ABSENT" when a child is absent to prevent client from signing in and out on the absence line later, when the child returns to care.



- e. If your site is closed, this should be marked on the date of closure on your sign in sign out sheet so your Reimbursement Specialist will know this when comparing sign in sign out sheets to the submitted attendance. If your site is closed for a holiday, please write holiday where the client would normally sign in and sign out. This will keep clients from signing in on the days that your site is closed.
- f. There must be a place for the provider to sign and date the sign in sign out sheet at the bottom. This signature is the provider's attestation that the sign in sign out sheet is true and accurate. There should never be a discrepancy between the sign in sign out sheet and the submitted attendance. There are samples of the proper sign in sign out sheet forms available on our website at [www.elcpinellas.net](http://www.elcpinellas.net).
- g. Per 6M rules, one sign in sign out sheet, per month, per child is required.
- h. We prefer that sign in sign out sheets be uploaded but if not then they can be faxed to 727-400-4472. No matter if provider is uploading or faxing the sign in sign out sheets, they need to be in **alphabetical order by child's last name. This will assist the Reimbursement Specialists to process attendance more efficiently as the attendance roster is in alphabetical order in the attendance screen of the Provider Portal.** Providers are responsible to get a confirmation if they must fax their sign in sign out sheets to the Coalition. This is the only proof that providers will have that their site's sign in sign out sheets were received. Providers would need to show proof that the fax was received if there were an issue with the timely processing of their site's attendance per the attendance submission and reimbursement processing deadlines. Providers who are outside of Pinellas County (Out of County Providers) but contract with Pinellas County **must fax** their alphabetized sign in sign out sheets, as their document library is not visible to Pinellas ELC. Providers who choose to drop off sign out sheets need to put them in alphabetical order as well and need to know that there is a possibility that they can get lost. Please remember that the Reimbursement Specialists do not notify providers if sign out sheets are not received. Providers can follow along in the attendance screen to see when attendance is processed as the green SUB switches to APP. This usually occurs no later than the 13<sup>th</sup> of the month; however, the reimbursement finalization date changes from month to month depending on what day of the week the payment period opens and if there are holidays or unusual circumstances.
- i. FYI - Currently, the file size limit for uploading documents is 2MB per upload and the system works better if file name is in lower case letters including the .pdf extension. The file should be in pdf format.

## 2. **Attendance**

- a. Attendance must be submitted each month by the due date noted in the attendance screen. Attendance can be submitted as early as the last day of the month after you have recorded all of the children's attendance for that day. There is no need to wait until the system's due date to submit attendance for the month. Submitting sooner is better rather than later.
- b. Attendance submitted after the system due date will **not** be processed in the current payment period.
- c. Sign in sign out sheets are required in order for attendance to be processed. Sign in sign out sheets should be submitted to the Coalition on the same day as the attendance to avoid any possible delay in processing your site's attendance.
- d. Please be sure to cancel/end/term enrollments for children no longer attending by going to the **Enrollments Tab/Manage SR Enrollments/View-Edit Enrollments** process **BEFORE** submitting attendance electronically to the Coalition. Use the end enrollment button to terminate children who have attended your site for one day or more and use the cancel button to remove enrollments for children who never attended for even one day. Providers should not wait until attendance is due to key terminations. Providers should enter enrollment terminations at the time they occur. There is no



need to wait until it is time to submit attendance. If you are unable to terminate a child, **please contact Family Services at 727-400-4411**. Please remember that Reimbursement staff does not key enrollment terminations. The term must be keyed in a timely manner in order for the child to be removed from future months' attendance rosters. This will also avoid overpayments and adjustments due to overpayments. Terminations cannot be keyed backwards to a prior month if that month's attendance has been submitted and or processed.

- e. The provider controls when the "H"s appear are on the attendance. It is the provider's responsibility to make sure that the "H"s are on the right date. It is best to set the holidays up correctly during contract submission so that your site does not have to make changes throughout the contract year. Providers are able to choose all 12 of their site's reimbursable holidays at the time they submit their contract. Providers should decide on their site's holidays at the beginning of the contract year. All closure dates should be recorded in the closure calendar screen and providers who offer VPK should make sure that their site's closure dates also coincide with their VPK instructional calendar. Additional closure dates are non-reimbursable and will be marked with an asterisk on the attendance. The provider should mark unplanned closures with an N on the attendance roster as they are non-reimbursable. **Per ELC policy, changes cannot be made, after the fact, to the twelve (12) approved reimbursable holidays that are in the provider's certified contract.** The provider can only make changes to **future** holidays. This is done by submitting the change through their provider profile. Any future holiday date changes require an amendment (20A) as this change to Exhibit 6 is an amendment to the provider's original contract. Holidays should not be changed on short notice, as clients need to be notified of any holiday changes in advance so that they can make other arrangements for their child's care. Please report to your Reimbursement Specialist, as soon as possible and **prior** to submitting the monthly attendance, any issues with missing "H"s on your attendance roster. This will avoid a delay in the processing of your attendance. It is highly recommended that you review your paid holidays in your certified 22-23 contract by viewing the Exhibit 6: Holiday Schedule. If any of these dates are wrong, if all 12 of the paid holidays that you wanted to observe for your site were not captured originally, or if a Saturday or Sunday was chosen by mistake then you will need to submit the corrections through your provider profile and have a 20A completed. Please note that the 20A process takes up to 72 hours to complete so be sure to give plenty of notice ahead of the observed holiday date that you want to be reimbursed for your site. Remember corrections can only be processed prior to the reimbursable holiday date. No exceptions!
- f. If your site is closed unexpectedly for any reason and the site is not available to provide care to the children, this day then becomes an "N" and should be marked as a non-reimbursable day. This is done by clicking on the "X" and choosing Enrolled/Non-reimbursable as the reason. Please include a note so that the Reimbursement Specialist is notified of the reason that your site was closed for that day. Providers are self-employed subcontractors and provider closures other than the 12 approved holidays are non-reimbursable and should be marked with an "N." This will avoid any overpayment for unapproved closure days. \*\*\*\*\*Temporary Closures that may be reimbursable require a very specific process that includes the timely notification to the Coalition with an Unusual Incident Form and the submission through the Provider Portal of the temporary closure dates. Please refer to the requirements for notification in the statewide contract, the Provider Portal User Guide, the "For Providers" section of our website for the form and other information pertaining to temporary closures if your site is affected by an event that would constitute the need for a temporary closure. These are approved on a case by case basis per the contract. \*\*\*\*\*



- g. It is best to record attendance throughout the month rather than at the end of the month. This will help providers save time at the end of each month. The recorded attendance and the sign in sign out sheet should match **exactly** for each child on the attendance roster. Be sure that every child is accounted for on the attendance roster and that attendance is not recorded solely based on the site's sign in sign out sheets or teacher roll as children that were intended to be termed or who need to be termed will likely be missed and unintentionally reimbursed. There should never be a discrepancy between the two! **The system will not allow providers to record attendance into the future. As an example, if recording attendance today then the rest of the month would be blank making today the last day you could record attendance for until tomorrow.**

### 3. **Absences**

- a. The "X"s populate automatically on the attendance. This means the child was present. Click on an "X" to record an absence and choose the reason for the absence.
  - b. The system marks absences as "A"s in the provider's view but when the attendance is viewed by the Reimbursement Staff, the first 3 "A"s are "E"s for excused absences and the rest remain "A"s.
  - c. If you have a Request for Justification of Extended Absence (RJOA) form (be sure to only use the RJOA Form that was effective August 1, 2022) and the supporting documentation, if it is required for the code being recorded as the reason for the absence, **it must be attached to the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) "A" or absence.** Please make a comment when doing this that states all of the dates that the form and the documentation covers. Reimbursement staff will see these notes when they are processing the attendance. This helps the Reimbursement Specialists process attendance efficiently.
  - d. If you do not have the form and the documentation, if it is required, please **do not** record "A"s. These will then become non-reimbursable days and providers should code them as such by clicking on the "X" and choosing Enrolled/Non-Reimbursable as the reason for the absence. This will record an "N" and staff will quickly know that no form or documentation has been attached for absences beyond three (3). This will also help staff save time by not having to change the "A"s to "N"s. Please help us avoid the possibility of overpayments by marking these correctly. **If the docs are not attached to the 4<sup>th</sup> "A" then the excessive absences will not be considered for reimbursement.**
  - e. Please know that the Reimbursement Specialists **will not look for the Request for Justification of Excessive Absence Form or the documentation in any other location other than those docs that are attached to the 4<sup>th</sup> "A" on the electronic attendance.**
  - f. Please do not upload the absence form and documentation for the current month absences, as they will not be reimbursed. The RJOA form must be attached to the 4th absence to be reimbursed with the attendance roster.
4. If the provider receives the Request for Justification of Extended Absences form (RJOA) and the documentation **after, and only if after** the attendance has already been submitted, then those absences will be reimbursed by adjustment with a future service period. In this case, **only**, providers should upload the RJOA form and the documentation to the Monthly Adjustment Request folder. Please label the file with the month/year it pertains to and with the child's name. Example: August 2022 - Smith, J. – Late RJOA Form. Providers should also email their site's Reimbursement Specialist to advise them that a late RJOA Form and the backup documentation, if required, was uploaded/submitted to the Monthly Adjustment Request folder. The Portal currently does not notify the ELC staff when a document has been



uploaded. These requests will be reimbursed as soon as possible with a future payment period. Keep in mind that this falls into the 60-day adjustment request rule.

5. If a child is no longer attending and the provider was not able to end the enrollment through the enrollment tab using the User Guide or the Tip Sheet, please contact Family Services at 727-400-4411. If there are days that the site should not receive any reimbursement, please record "N"s for all of the days of the month that your site does not want to be reimbursed so that your site will not be overpaid. Reimbursement staff does not know this information, so we have to rely on the providers to record this correctly when submitting the attendance. Please make a note as to why you are recording "N"s for a child for the month. The note should say child was terminated on specific date or whatever the situation may be. Reimbursement Specialists do not key terminations noted at the time attendance is submitted. It is the provider's responsibility to make sure the termination is keyed in a timely manner. There is no way for a provider to record a "T" through the attendance screen. A "T" will only be placed when the enrollment is terminated through the Enrollment Tab. Please be sure that all enrollments for the child are terminated at the same time. There may be more than one enrollment row due to care level changes due to child's birthday or due to a change in client's eligibility such as a fee change, redetermination, a funding rollover, etc. You can easily review all rows if you filter out that child by name in the filter box.
6. When uploading documents, there is no need to call to see if the Reimbursement Team has received them. **If the provider can see them in the site's document library folder then the Reimbursement Specialist can also see them.** Providers should always confirm for themselves, though, that they can see the uploaded documents. Please be sure that documents are uploaded to the correct folder, as staff does not receive any notification that documents were uploaded. We only look in the folder in which we expect to see the documents uploaded. For example, sign in sign out sheets are uploaded monthly to the folder labeled Monthly Sign in out Sheets. They will not be considered as received if we cannot find them in the correct folder. Please always alphabetize sign in sign out sheets before uploading them.
7. If, when you are recording the attendance, there is an issue that needs addressed such as an incorrect schedule (FT vs. PT, FTV or PTV), an incorrect care level (Infant through School Age), an incorrect copayment or a child is missing from the attendance **even after the client signed the Payment Certificate**, then please call 727-400-4411 and address the issue with the Family Services' staff. It is important that these issues are corrected on the attendance roster **before** it is submitted for reimbursement. Providers should look at the attendance frequently to identify any issues and have them corrected prior to recording and submitting the attendance. Reimbursement staff cannot correct enrollment/eligibility issues so please do not call your assigned Reimbursement Specialist. It is highly recommended that you submit your attendance for all of the children that you are able to on time so that the majority of your site's reimbursement will not be delayed. If Family Services' staff enroll a child late or the client signs the Payment Certificate late then that child will appear in your site's attendance for the enrolled month at the top of the attendance list and it can be submitted separately at any given time. Attendance that is submitted in between due dates will be processed with the next service period in the next month's payment period. Sorry, no exceptions. Example: August 2022 attendance submitted on September 15, 2022 is processed with September 2022's service period in the October 2022 payment period.



8. Once each month's reimbursement has been completely processed and the payment period is officially closed, the Provider Reimbursement Detail Reports are available by funding type by clicking on the Attendance Tab and choosing Reimbursement Details option. Providers can run these detail reports by Service Period Month (the month that the care was provided) or by Payment Period Month (the month that the attendance was processed and reimbursed). Also, if your site serves children funded through local funding or VPK funding then you will need to run that report separately from the SR report by clicking on the down arrow and choosing the report for that funding. EFT receipts are uploaded for SR and Local funding on or before the 20<sup>th</sup> of every month to the Monthly Reimbursement Report folder in your Provider Portal document library. EFT receipts are uploaded for VPK on or before the last business day of the month to the Monthly Reimbursement Report folder in your Provider Portal document library. Please look at the EFTs as there is a definition as to what each dollar amount received is for such as SR, SR Plus or PTPP funding or a prior period due to an adjustment or late attendance or for VPK, the definition might be for the provider advance payment or the reversal of the advance payment for the prior month when the actual/true attendance is processed.
9. Issues or questions about client eligibility and child enrollments should be directed to the Family Services Department and not the Reimbursement Department. Providers can call the Family Services' staff at 727-400-4411. If you have to leave a message, please be sure to give as much detailed information as you can so that staff can be prepared to answer your question thoroughly when they respond back to you.
10. You should call or email your assigned Reimbursement Specialist first before contacting the Reimbursement Supervisor. The Reimbursement Specialists manage their own caseloads; therefore, they have the most current information about your site's attendance, your site's sign in sign out sheets, your site's RJOA Forms, your site's monthly reimbursements and adjustments. They can help a provider in their caseload better than anyone else in the Reimbursement Department. Telephone calls to the Supervisor are gladly welcomed; however, calls should only be made to the Supervisor when the assigned Reimbursement Specialist is unavailable for more than one business day, is unable to answer the provider's question or when the provider's reimbursement related issue cannot be resolved through the site's assigned Reimbursement Specialist and therefore, needs to be escalated to the Supervisor level.
11. Please be sure to check your email regularly and read carefully all communications from the Coalition. Email is not only our primary way of communicating with providers but also the Division of Early Learning's way of communicating with providers. Be sure to click on the links which are sometimes highlighted to read any linked resources or attachments. This will help your site stay informed and help your site understand what is being requested or what is required. It is the provider's responsibility to know what has been communicated to them via email. Email communication is referred to in the statewide contract and providers must have a valid email that they have access to and can receive emails from the Coalition at. We also post information on our website at [www.elcpinellas.net](http://www.elcpinellas.net). Our website is a very good place to find general information for all providers or updates so we suggest looking there for answers to your questions. Our website is [www.elcpinellas.net](http://www.elcpinellas.net) and then to see what resources are available or to find a form, click on "For Providers" in the menu bar at the top of the screen. Also, under "About Us" and then "Media" are copies of all of the communications that the Coalition has sent out to the providers.

