

Frequently Asked Questions

Early Learning and Child Care Preschool Designated Space Allocation Grid & Call for Proposals

Q1. What is the Early Learning and Child Care Preschool Designated Space Allocation Grid?

A. The Early Learning and Child Care Preschool Designated Space Allocation Grid provides the information on the number, the location and the types of designated spaces to be allocated in New Brunswick and identifies priority areas in the province where early learning and child care space needs are greatest.

The Early Learning and Child Care Preschool Designated Space Allocation Grid is a key component of the call for proposals process, established to guide applicants submitting proposals. Serving as a guide for applicants in their submissions, the Early Learning and Child Care Preschool Designated Space Allocation Grid was put in place to ensure families from across the province have equitable access to childcare to support their labour force participation and a fair distribution of government funds.

Q2. Why was the Early Learning and Child Care Preschool Designated Space Allocation Grid created?

A. New Brunswick will create 3,400 designated child care spaces in 2021-2026, for preschool aged children (0-5 years) under the Canada-New Brunswick Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. The Early Learning and Child Care Preschool Designated Space Allocation Grid was created to ensure families from across the province have equitable access to early learning and child care to support their labour force participation and the fair distribution of government funds.

Q3. How was the Early Learning and Child Care Preschool Designated Space Allocation Grid determined?

A. The Early Learning and Child Care Preschool Designated Space Allocation Grid was based on the needs of NB's families. An analysis was conducted to understand the realities, gaps and challenges families are facing to access affordable, quality and inclusive early learning and child care services. This included extensive research of the population, immigration, and economic growth of New Brunswick, as well as significant engagement with parents and key partners and stakeholders.

Q4. The population of New Brunswick is on the rise. How do we ensure the Early Learning and Child Care Preschool Designated Space Allocation Grid responds to the real needs of families, both short term and long term?

A. The Early Learning and Child Care Preschool Designated Space Allocation Grid will be reviewed at least once a year and updated with current information about New Brunswick's population, immigration and economic trends.

Q5. What is the Call for Proposals process and why was it created?

A. The call for proposals is a new designation process that prioritizes communities with the greatest needs for early learning and child care services, among others. Those interested will complete *Step 1 – Application for a Designated Facility or Increase in Designated Spaces* to obtain a designated early learning and child care licence or to expand spaces in an existing designated facility.

The Department will issue a call for proposal at a minimum of once a year as per [Policy 901: Space Allocation for Designated Early Learning and Child Care Facilities](#).

All complete applications received by the deadline specified in the call for proposals will be reviewed by an evaluation committee comprised of representatives from within the respective school district of the proposed facility and government departments. The evaluation of proposals will be conducted using a one-stage process, based on a technical evaluation. Applicants who meet the evaluation criteria and receive the highest score(s) will be eligible to receive designation status.

Q6. How is the call for proposals process different from the previous designation approval process?

A. The call for proposals is the first step in obtaining a new designation or increasing the designated preschool spaces within a facility. for a new licence or to increase designated preschool spaces. Once a proposition is successful the Department will provide resources to support applicants in preparing for their request for a licence.

Q7. When will applicants be advised of the status of their application for designated spaces?

A. Applicants will be advised of their application status within 45 days of the closing date of the call for proposals.

Q8. Do operators who have applied for a licence for designation or for an increase of designated spaces after May 10, 2022, need to submit an application through the Call for Proposals?

A. Yes. All operators need to apply through the call for proposal to be considered for designation.

Q9. Why are there more spaces for infants (children under 2 years old) than other ages (2-5 years old) in the Early Learning and Child Care Preschool Designated Space Allocation Grid?

A. Families have consistently told us finding infant care has been an obstacle when it comes to returning to the workforce, especially for women. That's why almost 50 per cent of new space creation in 2023 is targeted for infants.

The results of the in-depth socio-demographic analysis conducted in New Brunswick communities and extensive consultations with families and other stakeholders, identified infants' spaces as the biggest gap, particularly for those ages 0-15 months.

Q10. Is it possible for an operator to apply for a new licence that is not designated for infant and preschool age children?

A. Yes. A current or new operator can apply for an Early Learning and Child Care licence that is not designated.

Q11. Can I add non-designated spaces to an existing designated licence?

A. No. A designated licence cannot have non-designated spaces on the same licence. A new licence would be required to increase spaces.

Q12. Can an existing designated licence increase spaces for infants or children ages 2-5 years old outside of the call for proposals?

A. *Infant (Under 2 years old):* As per updates to Policy 901, existing Early Learning and Child Care Homes and not-for-profit facilities that are currently designated can create new infant spaces outside the call for proposal process until August 2023. Any proposed changes must be submitted to, and approved by, the Quality Assurance Mentor. In September 2023, all increase requests will need to follow the Call for Proposals process.

Preschool (2-5 years old): Existing designated licences cannot increase preschool spaces (for children ages 2-5) outside of the Call for Proposals.

Q13. Can operators of existing designated facilities increase their designated preschool spaces if their community is not identified in the Early Learning and Child Care Preschool Designated Space Allocation Grid?

A. No. Only the spaces identified in the Early Learning and Child Care Preschool Designated Space Allocation Grid of January 2023 will be considered in the Call for proposals.

Q14. Will an operator be able to make a proposal for multiple communities?

A. Yes, applicants are eligible to apply for multiple communities identified on the Early Learning and Child Care Preschool Designated Space Allocation Grid. Applicants seeking approval for multiple licences must submit a proposal for each designated licence.

Q15. What is Policy 901: Space Allocation for Designated Early Learning and Child Care Facilities?

A. Policy 901 establishes the criteria for the allocation of spaces within designated Early Learning and Child Care facilities by the Department. It also establishes the application process and the evaluation criteria for applying for a new designated licence or the increase of spaces in existing designated facilities. To access Policy 901 online, click [here](#).

Q16. Where can I find more information?

A. More information can be found on the [GNB website](#) or by contacting the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development at 1-833-221-9339 or by email at EECDPortal-PortailEDPE@gnb.ca.