

# 2025-26 VICTORIAN EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER INCENTIVES PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The Victorian Early Childhood Teacher Incentives Program is available for qualified early childhood teachers taking up roles in services delivering a funded kindergarten program.

This document provides information about the 2025-26 program.

## VICTORIAN EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER INCENTIVES

There are two types of incentives available **from July 2025 to June 2026**:

- **Individual Incentives of \$9,000 (before tax)** for eligible early childhood teachers working outside the Victorian early childhood education sector to take up a teaching role at any service delivering, or planning to deliver a funded kindergarten program.
- **Location Incentives of between \$9,000 to \$50,000 (before tax)** for eligible early childhood teachers who take up a teaching role at selected services delivering a funded kindergarten program, critical to the delivery of the Best Start, Best Life reforms.

Applicants who meet the eligibility criteria for both types of incentives can receive both payments.

Additionally, anyone receiving an incentive and moving more than 100 kilometres from their current residence to take up the role, can receive a **relocation supplement**.

### Eligibility

An overview of eligibility requirements for the different types of incentives and relocation supplements is provided below.

You can also test your eligibility using the Eligibility Checker at **Appendix 1**.

### Eligibility requirements for incentives

**To apply for an incentive, applicants must meet the following general requirements:**

- Apply for the incentive within 60 days of accepting a role.
- Be registered, or provide evidence of eligibility to register, as an early childhood teacher with the Victorian Institute of Teaching.
- Provide confirmation from their employer that they will teach funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten, Four-Year-Old Kindergarten, Pre-Prep or a mixed-age funded kindergarten group.
- Not have previously received an Early Childhood Teacher Incentive, Targeted Educator Incentive or school's Teacher Financial Incentive.
- Be contracted for a minimum of 12 months in a teaching role at the service.
- Be eligible, or provide evidence of a visa application in progress, to work in Australia for the full duration of their employment contract.

*Applicants must provide evidence of a visa application outcome within seven days of receiving the outcome to retain their incentive and avoid having to make repayments.*

*Refer Appendix 1 for more details.*

To apply for	Applicants must also	And meet at least one of these requirements	
<b>Individual Incentives - \$9,000</b>	accept a role at a service delivering, or planning to deliver, a funded kindergarten program	must be returning to teach in the Victorian early childhood education sector after a break of 12 or more months	must currently reside or be employed outside of Victoria <b>OR</b>
<i>(Refer <a href="#">Appendix 1</a> for exceptions to this requirement)</i>			
To apply for	Applicants must also	And meet at least one of these requirements	
<b>Tier 1 Location Incentives - \$9,000</b>	accept a role at a service pre-approved for a Tier 1 Location Incentive	<b>N/A</b>	
<b>Tier 2 Location Incentives - \$21,000</b>	accept a role at a service pre-approved for a Tier 2 Location Incentive	must not currently be employed as a teacher in the Victorian early childhood education sector	<b>only if the applicant is accepting a role at a regional or rural service and does not meet the other two conditions:</b>
<b>Tier 3 Location Incentives - \$50,000</b>	accept a role at a service pre-approved for a Tier 3 Location Incentive <b>AND</b> accept a role that is for a minimum of 20 hours of employment per week	<b>OR</b> must be a graduate early childhood teacher	<b>OR</b> the role must be more than 60km from their current place of residence

### ***Eligibility requirements for relocation supplements***

To receive a relocation supplement, an applicant must:

- Meet the above eligibility requirements for incentives **and**
- Have evidence to show they relocated 100km or more for the role (e.g. have copies of utility bills showing their name, residential addresses, and dates).

Applicants can access a larger relocation supplement if they have evidence to show they are relocating with one or more dependants. A dependant is considered to be a child under the age of 18, or an adult who the applicant has the legal power to make decisions on behalf of.

Evidence to show relocation with a dependant can include:

- For child dependants – copies of birth certificates and school enrolment documentation.

- For adult dependants – copies of legal documents demonstrating the applicant's legal power and a statutory declaration to confirm the dependant is relocating with them.

If an applicant meets these eligibility requirements, they could receive **one** of the following relocation supplements (the monetary values shown are **before tax**):

If they are relocating a distance of	Individually	With one or more dependant/s
100-200km	\$1,000	\$2,000
200-500km	\$2,000	\$3,000
More than 500km	\$4,000	\$6,000
From overseas	\$6,000	\$8,000

## Application process

This incentives program is administered by BUSY At Work on behalf of the Department of Education (the department). Applications for incentives can be made [online](#).

As part of the application process, you will need to provide BUSY At Work with evidence to support your application. This includes, but is not limited to:

- An Employer Declaration form completed by your employer confirming the service and role you are employed in
- Evidence showing you meet the eligibility requirements outlined above and at Appendix 1
- If applicable, evidence supporting a relocation supplement (as outlined above).

BUSY At Work will assess applications within 10 business days of submission. If further evidence or information is required to support an application, the assessment timeframe may be extended.

If you are eligible, you will be asked to sign an Incentive Recipient Agreement to receive the incentive. This is a legal document that contains your rights and obligations as an incentive recipient, **so please read it carefully before signing**.

You can contact BUSY At Work (at [EC.Financial.Support@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:EC.Financial.Support@education.vic.gov.au) or 1300 161 396) for information about the application process and required evidence.

The department reserves the right to consider ineligible applications on a case-by-case basis.

## Prioritisation of applications

Incentives are limited, and applications will be prioritised based on the circumstances of the service and applicant. Priority will be given to:

- Teachers taking on roles with higher working hours and for longer periods of employment
- Permanent roles over fixed-term roles
- Teachers joining services that do not employ existing incentive recipients.

## Payment schedule/timings

Incentives are paid in milestone payments. Incentive recipients will be required to submit evidence to show they are still employed in the same role at the same service, to receive each payment. Failure to provide evidence may result in the obligation to repay some or all milestone payments.

The timing of milestone payments can be found at [Appendix 2](#), and detailed information about milestone conditions (including evidence) is provided in the Incentive Recipient Agreement.

## **Further information**

Early childhood teacher roles at Victorian early childhood services are listed on the [Early Childhood Jobs](#) website. You can filter jobs on the Early Childhood Jobs website to find roles with Location Incentives.

For more information about the Victorian Early Childhood Teacher Incentives Program please visit [Financial support to study and work in early childhood | Victorian Government \(www.vic.gov.au\)](#), email [EC.Financial.Support@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:EC.Financial.Support@education.vic.gov.au) or call 1300 161 396.

## **Further considerations for the Early Childhood Teacher Incentives program**

### ***Tax implications***

The receipt of incentive payments (and a relocation supplement if applicable) may have taxation implications and implications in respect of other government benefit schemes (such as Centrelink).

Applicants are advised to seek their own independent taxation advice and liaise with relevant organisations to find out about these implications before applying for an Early Childhood Teacher Incentive.

### ***Compassionate grounds***

Where exceptional circumstances prevent the recipient from completing their employment, the department may waive some or all repayment obligations.

Compassionate or compelling circumstances will be assessed by the department on a case-by-case basis, and evidentiary documentation may be required to waive the repayment obligation.

### ***Update of guidelines***

These guidelines, including program eligibility criteria, may change. Updated guidelines will be published on the [department's website](#).

## APPENDIX 1: ELIGIBILITY CHECKER

Eligibility requirements	Options and instructions
<b>Section A - Requirements you must meet to apply for any incentive under this program</b>	
<p>1 Did you accept your new teaching role within the last 60 days?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes (<i>proceed to next question</i>)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No (<i>see note at end of Appendix 1</i>)</p>
<p>2 Is the contract for your new teaching role for a minimum of 12 months?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes (<i>proceed to next question</i>)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No (<i>see note at end of Appendix 1</i>)</p>
<p>3 Can your new employer confirm that you will be teaching a funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten program, Four-Year-Old Kindergarten program, Pre-Prep, or funded mixed-age Kindergarten program?</p> <p><i>If you will not be working in a Three-Year-Old, Four-Year-Old, Pre-Prep or mixed-age funded kindergarten program, you are not eligible for an incentive.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes (<i>proceed to question 4</i>)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No (<i>see note at end of Appendix 1</i>)</p>
<p>4 Are you registered, or eligible to register, as an early childhood teacher with the <a href="#">Victorian Institute of Teaching</a>?</p> <p><i>Check your eligibility to register on the <a href="#">Victorian Institute of Teaching</a> website.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes (<i>proceed to next question</i>)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No (<i>see note at end of Appendix 1</i>)</p>
<p>5 If you are not an Australian citizen/permanent resident, are you eligible to work in Australia for the duration of your employment contract?</p> <p><i>This includes if you have evidence of a visa application in progress that demonstrates that you will be eligible to work for the duration of your teaching contract (e.g. you provide copies of emails, payment receipts and documents to show you are transitioning from a student visa to a work visa). You must provide evidence of a visa application outcome within seven days of receiving the outcome.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes (<i>proceed to next question</i>)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No (<i>see note at end of Appendix 1</i>)</p>

- 6 Have you previously been awarded an incentive under the Early Childhood Teacher Incentives Program, Targeted Educator Incentive Program, or school's Teacher Financial Incentive Program? ☐ Yes (*see note at end of Appendix 1*)  
☐ No (*proceed to Section B*)

### Section B – Additional requirements you must meet to apply for a Location Incentive

- 7 Is your new service pre-approved to offer a Tier 1 (\$9,000) Location Incentive?  
*Your employer will be able to tell you this. You can also share your employer's service name and ID with BUSY At Work to check.* ☐ Yes (*you may be eligible for a Tier 1 Location Incentive, proceed to Section C*)  
☐ No (*proceed to next question*)
- 
- 8 Is your new service pre-approved to offer a Tier 2 (\$21,000) or 3 (\$50,000) Location Incentive?  
*Your employer will be able to tell you this. You can also share your employer's service name and ID with BUSY At Work to check.* ☐ Yes (*proceed to next question*)  
☐ No (*proceed to Section C*)
- 
- 9 Are you a graduate early childhood teacher? ☐ Yes (*you may be eligible for a Tier 2 Location Incentive, proceed to Section C. If applying for a Tier 3 Location Incentive, proceed to question 12*)  
☐ No (*proceed to next question*)
- 
- 10 Are you currently working as an early childhood teacher in a funded kindergarten program in Victoria? ☐ Yes (*proceed to next question*)  
☐ No (*you may be eligible for a Tier 2 Location Incentive, proceed to Section C. If applying for a Tier 3 Location Incentive, proceed to question 12*)
- 
- 11 If your new service is in a rural or regional LGA, is it more than 60km away from where you currently live?  
*Use the [Victoria's Regions and Regional Cities](#) site to check whether your service is in a rural or regional LGA.* ☐ Yes (*you may be eligible for a Tier 2 Location Incentive, proceed to Section C. If applying for a Tier 3 Location Incentive, proceed to question 12*)  
☐ No (*proceed to Section C*)

- 12 If your service is pre-approved to offer a Tier 3 Location Incentive **and** you meet one of the requirements at questions 9, 10 or 11, is your new contract for at least 20 hours of employment per week?
- ☐ Yes (*you may be eligible for a Tier 3 Location Incentive, proceed to Section C*)
- ☐ No (*proceed to Section C*)

### Section C – Additional requirements you must meet to apply for an Individual Incentive (complete even if you completed Section B)

- 13 Are you an early childhood teacher who is currently living or employed outside of Victoria?
- ☐ Yes (*you may be eligible for an Individual Incentive*)
- ☐ No (*proceed to next question*)
- 
- 14 Are you an early childhood teacher who is returning to the Victorian early childhood education sector after a break of 12 or more months?
- ☐ Yes (*you may be eligible for an individual incentive*)
- ☐ No (*proceed to next question*)
- 
- 15 If you were employed in the Victorian early childhood education sector over the last 12 months, were/are you:
- working in Family Day Care
  - working as a casual relief teacher
  - working as an educator at a service that is different to the one you will be working at as a teacher
  - a graduate early childhood teacher who is not currently working in a funded kindergarten program in Victoria and:
    - o completed a qualification to be a dual-registered early childhood and primary teacher
    - and/or**
    - o completed your qualification to become an early childhood teacher 12 or more months ago
- ☐ Yes (*you may be eligible for an Individual Incentive*)
- ☐ No (*see note at end of Appendix 1*)

**NOTE:** If you were prompted to see the end of Appendix 1, you may not be eligible for a Location and/or Individual Incentive.

Please note that this Eligibility Checker is a guide only. BUSY At Work confirms your eligibility after you apply.

Contact BUSY At Work ([EC.Financial.Support@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:EC.Financial.Support@education.vic.gov.au) or 1300 161 396) to confirm your eligibility.

## APPENDIX 2: INCENTIVE MILESTONE PAYMENTS

The table below lists the milestone payment amount that will be paid after the incentive recipient submits the evidence required to meet each milestone condition.

The evidence required is detailed in the Incentive Recipient Agreement; and is received, and verified, by BUSY At Work.

### Victorian Early Childhood Teacher Incentives

Category	Total value	Milestone 1 (on signing the Incentive Recipient Agreement)	Milestone 2 (end of first 6 months)	Milestones 3, 4 and 5 (end of first, second and third years)
<b>Individual Incentive</b>				
Returning to teach in a funded kindergarten program in Victoria after a break of 12 or more months <b>or</b> moving to Victoria from another state or overseas	\$9,000	\$4,000	\$2,000	\$1,000
<b>Location Incentives</b>				
Tier 1 Location Incentive	\$9,000	\$4,000	\$2,000	\$1,000
Tier 2 Location Incentive	\$21,000	\$6,000	\$3,000	\$4,000
Tier 3 Location Incentive	\$50,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
<b>Relocation Supplement</b>				
Relocating 100-200km	\$1,000	\$1,000	N/A	N/A
Relocating 200-500km	\$2,000	\$2,000	N/A	N/A
Relocating >500km	\$4,000	\$4,000	N/A	N/A
Relocating from overseas	\$6,000	\$6,000	N/A	N/A



Category	Total value	Milestone 1 (on signing the Incentive Recipient Agreement)	Milestone 2 (end of first 6 months)	Milestones 3, 4 and 5 (end of first, second and third years)
Relocating 100-200km with dependants	\$2,000	\$2,000	N/A	N/A
Relocating 200-500km with dependants	\$3,000	\$3,000	N/A	N/A
Relocating >500km with dependants	\$6,000	\$6,000	N/A	N/A
Relocating from overseas with dependants	\$8,000	\$8,000	N/A	N/A

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