The Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate (ECAC) is a professional credential for individuals working in early learning centers in Louisiana.

1. The Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate (ECAC) Requirement
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The Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate (ECAC) Requirement
The EC Ancillary Certificate (ECAC) Requirement - July 2019

1. **ECAC Requirement:** Beginning on July 1, 2019, directors are responsible for verifying that lead teachers in Type III early learning centers have the ECAC as a minimum credential within 24 months of their start date as a lead teacher.
   - Directors will be asked this as part of their Program Partner Assurances.

2. **Training for the ECAC:** As of July 2018, there were changes in the requirements for candidates completing training for an ECAC.
   - Teachers earning a CDA or technical diploma should attend a BESE-approved preparation program.

3. **Supports for the ECAC:** Teachers can receive support for earning the ECAC.
   - Scholarships are available to attend approved training programs
   - Teachers who earn the ECAC can qualify for increased tax credits, possibly qualifying for the highest annual refunded amount (~$3,300) within two years.
What is the ECAC?
What is the ECAC?

The EC Ancillary Certificate (ECAC):
- Is a professional credential for teachers that are working in early learning centers
- Is issued by the Louisiana Department of Education at no cost when a teacher demonstrates the one of the qualifying credentials:
  - CDA or Technical Diploma completed at an approved ECAC Program
  - Associate degree in early childhood
  - Bachelor’s degree or higher
- Allows teachers to qualify for increased refundable tax credits, earning up to $3,300 each year

As of July 2019, owners and directors in Type III early learning centers will be required to meet the ECAC requirement to maintain their Type III license.
Who needs the ECAC?
Who Needs the EC Ancillary Certificate (ECAC)?

- **Beginning on July 1, 2019**: Lead teachers in Type III early learning centers will be required to have an ECAC as a minimum credential within 24 months of their start date as a lead teacher.

Here are a few examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start date as Lead Teacher</th>
<th>Deadline for ECAC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Began working as a lead teacher before July 1, 2017</td>
<td>Must have ECAC as of July 1, 2019.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Began working as a lead teacher after July 1, 2017</td>
<td>Must be in the process of earning ECAC, and must have earned within 24 months of start date as lead teacher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### For teachers who begin working in early learning centers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hired as a Lead Teacher</th>
<th>Qualify for ECAC</th>
<th>Apply for ECAC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ● Once working as a lead teacher, you have 24 months to earn the ECAC. | ● Complete a credential that qualifies for the ECAC.  
  ● You may be able to use a scholarship for:  
    ○ ECAC Programs to complete a CDA or technical diploma  
    ○ AA or BA in early childhood | ● With a completed qualifying credential, you can submit an application for the ECAC.  
  ● Applications and evidence of the credential are submitted at Teach Live LA. |

**The ECAC can also be used as a qualifying credential for directors. In this case, directors must earn the ECAC prior to becoming a director.**
How do you qualify for the ECAC?
How do you qualify for the ECAC?

Teachers and directors can qualify for the ECAC by demonstrating the completion of one of four credentials:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. CDA and a high school diploma or equivalent</th>
<th>Training must be completed at a BESE-Approved ECAC Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. A technical diploma in early childhood</td>
<td>Training must be completed at regionally accredited college or university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. An Associate degree in early childhood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. A bachelor’s degree or higher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Qualifying for the ECAC: Using a CDA

Method 1: Qualify with a CDA and high school diploma/equivalent

Attend a BESE-Approved ECAC Program:
- Training for the CDA must be completed at an ECAC Program.
  - ECAC Programs are high-quality teacher preparation programs designed for child care teachers. There are 22 program around the state, with new programs still being approved.
- Teachers at Type III centers may use LA Pathways Scholarships to attend an ECAC Program.

Additional Information:
- Teachers who had completed 36 hours or more of CDA training as of July 1, 2018, are not required to attend an ECAC Program. They may complete CDA with any trainer or program.
- Teachers who cannot access an approved ECAC Program may apply for an Approved Program Waiver, allowing them to complete CDA training at any location. The waiver should be earned prior to completing CDA training and prior to applying for the ECAC.
- The LA Pathways CDA Assessment Scholarship is available to help complete the CDA credential.
Method 2: Qualify with a technical diploma in early childhood

Attend a **BESE-Approved ECAC Program**:
- Technical diplomas in early childhood must be completed at an approved [ECAC Program](#).
- ECAC Programs are high-quality teacher preparation programs designed for child care teachers. There is currently one technical diploma ECAC Program (Unitech).
- Teachers at Type III centers may use [LA Pathways Scholarships](#) to attend an ECAC Program.

**Additional Information:**
- Teachers who had begun a technical diploma in early childhood prior to July 1, 2018 may complete the program, even if it is not an approved ECAC Program.
- Teachers who cannot access an approved ECAC Program may apply for an [Approved Program Waiver](#), allowing them to complete a technical diploma with any trainer. The waiver should be earned prior to completing coursework and prior to applying for the ECAC.
Method 3 and 4: Qualifying with an Associate or Bachelor’s Degree

Earn Degree from a Regionally Accredited College/University:

- Associate degrees must be completed in an early childhood related field.
- Bachelor’s degrees or higher may be completed in any subject area.
- Teachers at Type III early learning centers may use LA Pathways College Tuition Scholarships to support the cost of tuition if they are completing a degree related to early childhood.
Renewing the ECAC

*Teachers and directors who have earned the ECAC must renew the ECAC every three years through an online application process.*

The ECAC must be renewed every three years at no cost to the individual.

- The EC Ancillary Certificate may be renewed at the request of the individual’s employer. The application must include documentation of:
  - 45 clock hours/4.5 CEU/a 3 credit-hour course of training in early childhood care and education, and
  - 80 hours of work experience with young children or families with young children in the past three years

- Individuals who earned the ECAC through a CDA may use a renewed CDA to meet renewal requirements.
Where do you apply for the ECAC?
Where do you apply for the ECAC?

Once the qualifying credential is completed, teachers and directors apply for the ECAC through the Teach LA Live Portal. Renewal applications are also submitted through Teach LA Live.

Teach LA Live:

- Every applicant should create an account with Teach LA Live
- Initial applications and renewal applications can be submitted through the Teach LA Live Portal
- Applicants need to include evidence of their qualifying credential with the application:
  - For CDA Applications: Include CDA certificate, high school diploma/equivalent, and transcript from approved ECAC Program
  - For Technical Diploma, AA and BA: Include transcript showing the degree completion

How to access the Teach LA Live Portal:

- The Teach Live LA Portal can be accessed at https://ldoe.force.com
- Detailed directions for ECAC Applicants can be found here.
Supports for Early Childhood Teachers
There are several supports available for early childhood teachers that are working to meet the requirements for the ECAC.

1. **Louisiana Pathways Scholarships**: There are several types of Louisiana Pathways Scholarships that may be available for teachers or directors that are working towards completing their ECAC.

2. **School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC)**: Once the ECAC is earned, it may be used to qualify for increased SRTC levels.
   - Based on recent SRTC changes, teachers with an ECAC may be able to qualify for the highest level of SRTC (≈$3,300)
Louisiana Pathways Scholarships

There are three types of Louisiana Pathways Scholarships that may be accessed to support individuals working towards their ECAC.

In order to qualify, individuals must be working in a Type III center while completing coursework. Details are on the Louisiana Pathways Website.

1. **ECAC Program Scholarship:** May cover the full cost of tuition and fees to attend an approved [ECAC Program](#) for qualifying *teachers* working in Type III centers. Teachers may not already qualify for the ECAC.

2. **CDA Assessment Scholarship:** May cover the cost of the CDA Assessment (≈$450) for teachers and directors working in Type III centers that are have completed training and portfolio.

3. **College Tuition Scholarship:** May support the cost of completing college level coursework towards an AA or BA in an early childhood related field for teachers or directors working in Type III centers.
School Readiness Tax Credits

Aligning the SRTC with the ECAC:

• Beginning in 2018, teachers who have the ECAC and qualify for the staff SRTC will be able qualify for level 2 tax credits (≈$2,200).

• In 2019, teachers who have earned the SRTC in years prior and have the ECAC will be able to qualify for level 3 (≈$2,800) and level 4 (≈$3,300)

• Important: Teachers must submit documentation of their earned SRTC to Louisiana Pathways to qualify for these higher tax credit levels. An original version of the SRTC tax form must be mailed back to Louisiana Pathways in order to qualify for increased levels.

Individuals who earn the ECAC will have their qualifying certificate shared with LA Pathways (unless they have opted out). Individuals are responsible for reading and responding to any mailed information and requests from LA Pathways related to tax credits.
Approved ECAC Programs
ECAC Programs prepare early learning center teachers to manage a successful learning environment in Louisiana’s unified early childhood system.

ECAC Programs prepare teachers to:

1. Lead classroom interactions that promote child learning and development.
   • Programs integrate opportunities to learn about and practice with CLASS.
   • Candidates receive many opportunities for practice.

2. Use high-quality instructional tools that align with Louisiana’s Standards.
   • Coursework provides guidance on using Tier I curriculum.
   • Programs prepare teachers to use Teaching Strategies GOLD.

3. Apply a foundational knowledge of child development and learning.
   • Coursework includes key knowledge on child development.
   • Program results in a qualifying credential for the ECAC.
How do ECAC Programs Work?

As of July 2018, teachers and directors that are beginning training for a CDA or technical diploma that will be used towards an ECAC must attend a state approved ECAC Program.

Approved ECAC Programs:
- There are 22 state approved ECAC programs that offer training for the CDA or technical diploma that can be used to earn the ECAC
- Programs cover a wide range of provider types (in-person, blended online) and organization types (colleges, CCR&R, companies and school districts)
  - Early Learning Louisiana will be expanding to serve all parishes by 2021, providing multiple training options to teachers in most parishes.
- Coursework provides support for teachers through coaching, formative observations, and feedback on classroom practices.

Teachers may be able to use LA Pathways Scholarships to cover tuition costs at ECAC Programs.
What if I Can’t Access an ECAC Program? 
Approved Program Waiver

If an individual cannot access an ECAC Program, they may be considered for an Approved Program Waiver. The Approved Program Waiver does not excuse them from the ECAC requirement.

The Approved Program Waiver is for individuals who cannot access an ECAC Program, but need to complete training for the ECAC. The waiver should be earned prior to completing any training at an unapproved program.

There are three circumstances in which individuals are considered for Approved Program Waivers:

1. Individuals living in an unserved parishes with no ECAC program
2. ECAC Program for the region is full
3. Other geographic availability concerns

Individuals who receive a waiver are allowed to complete their training with any trainer. They must still have an ECAC as a minimum credential within 24 months of their start date as a lead teacher.
Resources and Help
Next Steps for Teachers:

- Identify when you will need to have the ECAC (24 months after start date as lead teacher)
- Decide how you would like to qualify for the ECAC
- Enroll in qualifying training for the ECAC
- Apply for the ECAC through Teach LA Live
Next Steps for Directors:

- Verify that your lead teachers will meet the July 1, 2019 requirement:
  - Who will need the ECAC as of July 1, 2019 (teachers who have been in a lead teacher position since July 1, 2017)?
  - When will the lead teachers in your center need their ECAC?
  - How are they earning the ECAC?
- **NEW:** Use the [ECAC Staffing Map](#) to create your plan of action!
- Be prepared to sign your Program Partner Assurances this spring, committing to meeting the ECAC requirement.
Important Resources for the ECAC

General Information:
• Information about the ECAC can be found in the ECAC FAQs.
• In October, all Type III Directors received the October 2018 ECAC Director Letter.
• Directors should complete the ECAC Staffing Map to make a plan for assisting lead teachers in meeting the ECAC goal.

Attending an Approved ECAC Program:
• All approved ECAC Programs are kept up-to-date on the ECAC Program List.
• Louisiana Pathways provides information about scholarships on the Louisiana Pathways Website.
• The Teach Live LA Portal should be used to apply for the initial and renewal ECAC.
• Follow the directions on how to use Teach Live LA, The User Guide for ECAC.
• Teachers who cannot access an approved ECAC Program may apply for an Approved Program Waiver, allowing them to complete CDA training at any location.
  • The waiver should be earned prior to completing CDA training and applying for the ECAC.
Throughout 2019 the Department will continue to provide information and resources to teachers and directors that have questions about the ECAC.

Routine Webinars:
• The Department will host monthly webinars for the field reviewing the requirement for the ECAC.
• This webinar will be shared in the EC Newsletter, with slides and recordings posted online.

EC Newsletter and Website:
• The Department will post reminders and key information related to the ECAC in the EC newsletter.
• The Department will post any new guidance documents or questions on the existing Preparing and Certifying Teachers page of the EC website.

Answers to Individual Questions:
• Questions should be submitted to earlychildhood@la.gov
  • Certificate specific questions can be submitted to certification@la.gov.