

SPRING 2026 CARES 3.0 **PAYROLL VERIFICATION POLICY UPDATE**

The San Francisco Department of Early Childhood hosted Listening Sessions in March 2024, in partnership with the Family Child Care Association, to inform the payroll verification policy. Throughout Spring 2024 the Workforce Initiatives Team partnered with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to host a series of workshops to support family child care and center owners and operators, in registering with the Employment Development Department (EDD) and setting up payroll in anticipation of implementing a payroll verification policy.

Beginning in Fall 2024, employers of all CARES-eligible educators need to provide payroll verification to receive the CARES 3.0 stipend. Payroll verification allows DEC to ensure that all recipients of CARES 3.0 are employed and paid in compliance with local, state, and federal tax laws.

UPDATES FOR SPRING 2026

If you received the CARES stipend in Fall 2025 then your payroll was verified and does not need to be resubmitted for the Spring 2026. For employees that either did not receive the Fall round of CARES 3.0 or are new to their employment site, payroll verification will be required. All documents must be accurate and submitted no later than April 30, 2026. No late documents will be accepted past the CARES application deadline.

CARES Payroll Verification: Confirming Employment & Acceptable Documents

Employer Administrator Access

You must confirm employment information for each staff in the California Early Care & Education Workforce Registry. If you do not currently have Employer Administrative Access, obtain it by April 1st. You will need to confirm employment details in the Registry by April 30, 2026, for more information, click preferred language ([English](#), [Spanish](#), [Simplified Chinese](#)). Please be sure to remove any educators no longer employed at your site as well to keep your staffing list current.

I use a payroll service

For sites that utilize a payroll service – please supply a payroll register report with the following information (see sample for reference):

- Pay period that includes the month of March 2026
- Name of employee (first and last)
- Hours (must work 20 hour or more per week directly with young children to qualify for CARES)
- Year-to-Date amount paid

Acceptable Documents:

- Payroll ledger/journal
- Payroll summary report
- For the spring, the report should be from January 1, 2026-March 30, 2026 (Quarter 3)
 - If your program is not open for any portion of this time, please email ecestipend@sfgov.org to let us know.

These documents need to be emailed to Payroll.wstkw9mro61s5r3g@u.box.com. The deadline to submit payroll documentation via email, to the email address above, will be April 30, 2026. This is a secure way to submit documents. **No late documents will be accepted.** Once you submit the documents, you will receive a confirmation email letting you know that the documents have been received. If you do not receive this email within 24 hours, please check your spam folder and contact ecestipend@sfgov.org to confirm your submission.

NOTE: Any misrepresentation of valid employment will disqualify you and your staff from future compensation initiative.

I do not use a payroll service

For sites that do not use a payroll service, please complete the following EDD Report form, or submit a copy of the form for the period that includes March 2026:

- E9 or DE9C reports*
 - [Sample DE9 form](#)
 - Must include date of quarter ended, each employee name, and wage information, including PIT wages
 - Signature of employer

*EDD reports shared with DEC as reports submitted to EDD and not filed.

If you need support with this form and/or other payroll questions, please contact Jessica Wan at the Small Business Development Center at qian.wan@sfsbdc.org

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I employ family members

For Family Child Care Providers that employ family members, please see the guidance below:

- If the employed family member is a parent, child, or sibling they need to be on payroll to be eligible for CARES
- If you employ your spouse and they are not on payroll, they need to be on the child care license to be eligible for CARES

My employee is on leave

For employees on leave, please fill out [this form](#) with the following information:

- Employee first and last name
- Employee Registry ID
- Employer program and Administrator name
- Employee hire date
- Employee job title at time of leave
- Employee weekly hours at time of leave
- Employee leave start date
- Employer signature

Please note that all cases of employees on leave will be assessed on an individual basis.

My employee is new

For new employees, we understand they may not appear on payroll with enough hours to be considered eligible. If they are scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week, please submit an offer letter with the following information:

- Employee first and last name
- Employee Registry ID
- Employer program and Administrator name
- Employee hire date
- Employee job title
- Number of hours scheduled per week
- Employer signature



My employee is salaried

For employees that are salaried and for whom regular hours will not be shown on payroll reports, please email ECestipend@sfgov.org with the following information:

- Employee first and last name
- Employee registry ID
- Employer program
- Employee job title
- Average number of hours per week

NOTE: Any misrepresentation of valid employment will disqualify you and your staff from future compensation initiatives