



## Early Learning Coalition of Escambia County



### What is Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)?

**Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)** is a legislatively mandated program designed to prepare every four-year-old in Florida for kindergarten and build the foundation for their educational success. The VPK program gives each child an opportunity to perform better in school and throughout life with quality programs that include high literacy standards, accountability, appropriate curricula, substantial instruction periods, manageable class sizes and qualified instructors. VPK is free for children who are four years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> of the program year and reside in Florida.

**The Early Learning Coalition of Escambia County is now accepting applications for the 2023-2024 Program Year.**

All eligible four-year old children are entitled to participate in one of the VPK program options.

1. School Year Program – 540 instructional hours with class size 20 or fewer students
2. Summer Program – 300 instructional hours with class size of 12 or fewer students.
3. Specialized Instructional Services – Services for children with disabilities and an IEP.



**You can apply for VPK online at <https://familyservices.floridaearlylearning.com>**

You must have a valid email address to apply online. If you do not currently have an email address, the system will give you options to create one. Once you create your account you will need to check your email for an activation link. Click the link which will take you back to the online system so you can complete the application process. Be sure to write down your email address and password so you can return to your application at a later time.

You will be required to upload/scan two documents:

1. Verification of child's age (usually a birth certificate or Florida immunization record)
2. Verification of residence (must reside in Florida, lease, current utility bill, or current check stub)



Once you have completed the application process, the Early Learning Coalition of Escambia County will review your on line application. Once the application is approved you will receive a confirmation email informing you to sign back into your account so you can print your "Certificate of Eligibility" (COE) and take to the VPK program provider of your choice.

Parental choice is a priority for the VPK program. You are encouraged to make an informed decision about your VPK provider. Eligible providers include private centers, public schools, and faith-based programs that meet VPK programmatic and quality standards.

If you need assistance in selecting a VPK program provider, you may contact the Early Learning Coalition Child Care Resource and Referral office at (850) 595-5915 for a listing of approved providers in your area.

If you have additional questions or need assistance with the VPK application process, please contact Hope Wilson, VPK Eligibility Coordinator at (850)607-8556 or (850)741-8304.

