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Early Care &
Learning Council
United Way of Rockland County



PRE-K FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How do I apply for Pre-K?

Go to www.childcarerockland.org, > WHAT WE DO > Pre-Kindergarten. Print out the application that corresponds with your school district. Complete the application and return it to us with required documentation no later than the April 1, 2021 deadline.

Q: Why doesn't everyone who applies get Pre-K?

The state allots each district a set number of slots. If there are more eligible children than there are slots, a lottery is held.

Q: Is it really a lottery or do I need to submit my application as soon as possible? (Is it first come, first served?)

Yes, there is a lottery. All completed applications will be entered into the lottery no matter what day they were submitted, provided we receive them by April 1st via email or fax, or if mailed, postmarked by April 1st. It is most important that you carefully complete the application before submitting it. There is no need to rush to return it, provided we receive it no later than April 1, 2021.

Q: When is the Pre-K lottery?

The Pre-K lottery generally takes place before the end of April.

Q: When do we find out if our child was selected for a Pre-K spot? Are we notified if we don't get a Pre-K spot?

If you submitted a completed application you will be notified by mail before the end of May. Your letter will state whether or not your child was selected for a Pre-K slot.

Q: Does my doctor have to fill out the medical form included in the application?

Your doctor can complete our form or use his/her own form provided all the information we request is included.

Q: Must my child be immunized?

Yes, NYS mandates that all children are required to be vaccinated. The only exemptions are for medical reasons. Some children are on delayed schedules. Families must submit a plan from their doctor stating their catch-up schedule.

Q: Are the hearing and vision tests required?

They are required. If you do not provide a form from your child's doctor, a screening will be done by your school district.

Q: Is my child's BMI required?

Yes, but you do have the option as a parent to opt your child out of the study. If you choose to opt out, attach a signed note stating that choice.

Q: Do I have to select 3 programs if there is only one program I want my child to attend?

You do not have to make 3 choices. If there is only one program you would like your child to attend, make that your only choice. Your program choices *do not* affect your chances of getting a Pre-K slot.

Q: Does my school district offer full day Pre-K?

Not all districts offer full day Pre-K. North Rockland, Nyack, South Orangetown, and Suffern offer full day. Clarkstown, Nanuet, and Pearl River only offer a half day Pre-K class.

Q: What if my choices are not available? Will I lose my Pre-K slot?

If your choices are not available you will not lose your slot. Our Pre-K Coordinator will assist you in finding alternate programs.

Q: If my child's Pre-K application includes an error or is missing information, will my child be automatically disqualified?

No. If you are missing any documentation or information, you will be given an opportunity to complete the application. It is very important that you circle on the application the best way you can be reached. If the Pre-K Coordinator cannot reach you and the application is not complete, your application will not be considered for the lottery.

Q: Why must proof of income be provided when applying for *full day* Pre-K?

When applying for full day Pre-K as a resident in the Nyack, South Orangetown, or Suffern school districts, you will need to provide income verification. Proof of income and language (English language learner) are eligibility requirements. If you earn more than the requirement for free and reduced lunches, you do not need to submit income verification, but you can still apply for Pre-K. Once all income eligible children are placed, if there are open spots remaining and your child is selected from that pool, you will be notified.

Q: Does it matter which application I complete? Are they all the same?

Choose the application that corresponds with the school district in which you reside. If you live in a district that offers both full and half day (North Rockland, Nyack, South Orangetown, or Suffern), you will be applying with one application. Please select the Clarkstown, Nanuet, or Pearl River Pre-K application (half day only) if you reside in one of those three districts.

Q: If I use last year's application will it be accepted?

No, you must use the appropriate application. Only the 2021-2022 application will be accepted for the 2021-2022 Pre-K school year. If you submit an application from another school year, you will be required to re-submit the proper application.

Q: How are Pre-K programs handling Covid-19 regulations pertaining to mask wearing for children and for Pre-K program staff?

As per New York State Education Department regulations, children are required to wear masks during Pre-K instructional hours. If your child attends a program for child care beyond the Pre-K hours, as per OCFS licensing guidelines, they can remove their masks when Pre-K instruction is finished. Staff are required to wear masks at all times. Programs should allow for mask breaks as needed for children and staff.
