



POWER Ohio began in October of 2018 and was expanded in June of 2019 to allow more professionals to participate by changing the eligibility requirements for child care programs where the professionals are employed.

POWER Ohio Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

1. What programs are eligible for POWER Ohio wage supplements?

Programs already SUTQ rated are eligible for POWER Ohio if at least 50% of the children in the program receive publicly funded child care (PFCC).

Programs which are licensed but not yet SUTQ rated are eligible for POWER Ohio if at least one child in the program receives PFCC.

2. What is the purpose of the program?

The "POWER" in POWER Ohio stands for Powering Optimal Wages and Encouraging Retention. This investment in professionals while they are furthering their education helps programs in meeting the education requirements for Step Up To Quality (SUTQ). Programs participating in publicly funded child care (PFCC) must be rated in SUTQ by July 1, 2020. Wage supplements also support keeping these qualified staff at their existing programs to increase retention.

3. Is there a prioritization process for POWER Ohio applications?

Applications will be processed in the order in which they are received for all eligible professionals.

4. What is a wage supplement?

A wage supplement is additional monies issued to the professional to increase their current wages while the professional is furthering their education. Tied to educational achievements, payments are based upon the professional's role, education and retention milestones.

5. How do I apply for POWER Ohio wage supplements?

Applying is simple. Log into the Ohio Professional Registry (OPR) <https://registry.occrra.org/> and review your employment and account information in your profile to make sure it is up-to-date. Then click on applications and select the POWER Ohio application. Upload your wage documentation and click submit.



Program Eligibility Questions:

- 1. Before the June 2019 expansion of the POWER Ohio program, I was not eligible for POWER Ohio because my program was already SUTQ rated. Am I eligible now?**
Yes, if at least 50% of the children in your SUTQ rated program receive PFCC, you are eligible for POWER Ohio.
- 2. Prior to June 2019, I was not eligible for POWER Ohio because my unrated program did not serve at least 50% PFCC. Am I eligible now?**
You are eligible for POWER Ohio if at least one child in your licensed, but unrated program receives PFCC.
- 3. Before June 2019, I was not eligible for POWER Ohio because my program was already registered for SUTQ, even though it was not rated and at least 50% of the children in my program received PFCC. Am I eligible now?**
If your program has registered for SUTQ but is not SUTQ rated, you are eligible for POWER Ohio if at least one child in your program receives PFCC. If your program is rated, you are eligible for Power Ohio if at least 50% of the children in your program receives PFCC.
- 4. What happens if my program is eligible when my application was approved and then the program no longer meets the eligibility requirements?**
Eligibility is verified at the point of application. As the goal of the program is to have programs rated by 2020, a professional with an approved application can receive the remaining payments related to a CDA or to an Associate's Degree, as long as they meet the education and employment requirements.
- 5. What if the program where I am employed was rated and had their rating removed or withdrew from SUTQ. Am I eligible to participate in POWER Ohio?**
Yes, you are eligible as long as the program is licensed and if at least one child in the program receives PFCC at the time you submit your POWER Ohio application.

Additional Questions for Professionals in Eligible Programs:

- 1. I am currently enrolled in an accepted Associate's Degree seeking program and am taking classes this semester. Will the credit I receive this semester count toward the accumulation required?**
Yes, completion of the course with a passing grade is required so any class you are taking when you register for POWER Ohio will be included in the accumulation. Classes completed after registration count in the accumulation.



2. I am a family child care provider and the lead teacher for my program. Do I qualify for the teacher payments or the director/administrator payments?

You qualify for the director/administrator wage supplement. Teachers who work at your family child care home qualify for the Teacher/Family Child Care Educators wage supplement.

3. I am currently obtaining a Child Development Associate Credential (CDA). When should I apply to POWER Ohio?

You should apply for POWER Ohio at the point you start your CDA commitment.

4. I am currently obtaining a CDA. Can I still receive POWER Ohio wage supplements?

If you have not completed 120 hours toward your CDA, then at the time of completion of 120 hours you are eligible for a wage supplement. If you have already completed 120 hours in the CDA program, you are eligible for the wage supplement at the time of completion of your CDA.

5. I recently received my CDA or accepted Associate's Degree, can I still receive retention payments?

No, retention payments are intended to support professionals who earn their CDA or accepted Associate's Degree while working at their current program to encourage them to remain at their current program.

6. I have my Bachelor's degree in a related field, can I apply for POWER Ohio wage supplements?

Unfortunately, you are not eligible for POWER Ohio wage supplements. The POWER Ohio wage supplements are for those professionals who are beginning or continuing their education for a CDA or an Associate's Degree.

7. Are POWER Ohio wage supplements available for initial or renewal CDA Credentials?

At this time, POWER Ohio is for initial CDA Credentials only.

8. Do all courses to obtain an accepted Associate's Degree count toward POWER Ohio wage supplements?

Yes, all courses to obtain one of the accepted Associate's Degrees count toward the wage supplement.



9. What, if anything, is required from my employer to participate?

A monetary commitment from employers is not required to participate in POWER Ohio wage supplements. Employers need to confirm continued employment for the professional's role of at least working 20 hours per week at multiple points throughout the program. This may consist of a letter on letterhead for retention payments.

10. How will I receive payments?

Once you have completed a payment activity listed on the chart, upload your documentation (transcript, credential, continued employment verification) in the appropriate section (credential, education or employment) in your OPR profile. Once verified, the payment will be processed and a check will be sent to the address provided by the professional.

11. Do I have to pay taxes on the supplement I receive?

The wage supplement is considered income for IRS purposes. Participants will receive an IRS-1099 form at the end of the year if they received \$600 or more during the calendar year. Recipients are responsible for reporting and paying any personal income taxes due.

More POWER Ohio information including eligibility, benefits, wage supplements and accepted Associate's Degrees is available at:

<https://occrpa.org/wp-content/occrpa/wd/wd-power-ohio-10-01-2018.pdf>