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Early Childhood Educators to Receive at Least Two Hours of Non-Contact Time Each Week

Preschools must give teachers two hours a week away from children from 1 November 2027

Description

Every preschool licensed by the Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA) must give each full-time certified teacher at least two hours a week away from the children from 1 November 2027, time meant for lesson planning, recording each child's development and talking to parents. Minister Masagos Zulkifli unveiled [the rule](#) on Tuesday 13 October at ECDA's annual scholarships and training awards ceremony.



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Photo: Ministry of Social and Family Development

Non-Contact Time is protected time, inside working hours, when an educator is not teaching, caring for or supervising children. The rule goes into the Early Childhood Development Centre Code of Practice, which every ECDA-licensed centre follows.

What changes in the classroom

Centres choose when the time is taken. It can be scheduled daily, weekly, every two weeks or monthly, in blocks of at least one hour, as long as it is regular and adds up to at least two hours a week.

It cannot be added on after the school day. Centres must fit it within an educator's normal working hours, without extending them.

Engaging parents and community partners is one of the duties the time is meant for, alongside planning, reflection and preparing learning resources. Two hours is a floor, not a cap, and centres that already give more are expected to carry on.

Who is covered

The requirement applies to full-time early childhood educators certified by ECDA, which means they hold its Letter of Notification.

Early intervention and learning support educators also qualify if the preschool operator employs them and they are based at one centre. Where they work for an operator's headquarters and move between several centres, the employer sets their arrangements.

Why the wait until 2027

Educators have reported struggling to fit planning and paperwork into a day filled by teaching. The two-hour figure came out of consultations with educators and operators and reflects what many centres already do.

The 13-month lead time is for operators to rework manpower and timetables, and ECDA will work with them on how to run the scheme in that period. The change sits under the Quality Preschools 2030 plan.

At the same ceremony, close to 400 student and serving educators received ECDA scholarships, training awards and professional development places. The Government has put more than S\$75 million into early childhood educators' training over the past five years.

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