



Policy Name:

**WAITING LIST**

**Policy Type:** Programming

**Date Revised:** November 27, 2025

**Supersedes:** February 3, 2010

**Originally Issued:** February 3, 2010

**1. POLICY: Waiting List**

- 1.1. RisingOaks Early Learning Ontario (hereafter referred to as 'RisingOaks') aims to implement established waiting list procedures and to grant spaces in a fair and equitable manner.
- 1.2. RisingOaks has established the following priority system for offering available spaces to those on the waiting list:

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | • Children of RisingOaks employees (to facilitate their ability to work)                                                                                                                                                          |
| 2. | • Children in care who need to move into the next age group                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 3. | In no specific order: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children in care who need to increase their days of care</li><li>• Siblings of children already enrolled*</li><li>• Children of RisingOaks' board members</li></ul> |
| 4. | • Children wishing to transfer from one RisingOaks centre to another                                                                                                                                                              |
| 5. | • All other applicants                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

\* A new school-age enrolment is not eligible to increase priority for an infant, toddler, or preschool space unless the school-age child has been attending for a minimum of 4 months.

- 1.3. Notwithstanding the above priority system, applicants who are eligible under the Region of Waterloo's Subsidy Access Pilot, Crisis Spaces Pilot and/or those requesting full-time care will receive priority within a given group when a full-time space is being filled.
- 1.4. RisingOaks is committed to using the OneList central registry and waitlist provided by the Region and encourages all who require care to register with OneList.
  - 1.4.1. If a family calls or visits the centre looking for immediate care, a space is available and efforts to fill that space from OneList have been ongoing for a minimum of two-weeks, the supervisor may offer the space without the family signing up to OneList.
- 1.5. It is the applicant's responsibility to keep their OneList account up to date.
- 1.6. Once offered a space, the applicant will have 48 hours to respond to the offer of enrolment.



Policy Name:

**WAITING LIST**

- 1.7. Applicants who do not respond to an offer of enrolment or who decline the space but request to remain on the waiting list, will be removed from the list after a 2<sup>nd</sup> offer is declined or not responded to.
  - 1.7.1. If an applicant is removed from the waiting list, their application can be reactivated in OneList upon request. In doing so, the supervisor will back date the application to the original application date.
- 1.8. Applicants may request a status update on their waiting list application. The centre supervisor will consult OneList and provide a status update to an applicant upon request, noting the following:
  - 1.8.1. Their current position on the waiting list – in general or specific terms depending on how many children are in front of them, and
  - 1.8.2. How that position is affected by priorities for placement

**2. RELATED DOCUMENTS:**

- 2.1. Waiting List procedures

**3. APPROVALS:** Original copy with signatures is on file at head office.

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Chief Executive Officer - CEO

Date -----

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Director of Operations

Date -----

Policy Reference: **WAITING LIST PROCEDURES**

**Date Revised:** November 27, 2025

**Supersedes:** December 20, 2016

**Originally Issued:** January 4, 2011

## **1. PROCEDURE: New Waiting List Applicants**

- 1.1. The centre supervisor and assistant will receive an automatically-generated email from OneList when a new child is added to one of their waiting lists.
- 1.2. Within 72 hours, the supervisor or assistant will log into OneList to review and respond to the new request. At this time, he/she will confirm if the child has been added to waiting lists at other RisingOaks centres and if so, check the comments added to the child's record.
  - Every effort will be made to streamline communication from RisingOaks.
- 1.3. All new applicants will be assigned a priority group code in OneList.
- 1.4. An email will be sent to the applicant to acknowledge receipt of their request, confirm RisingOaks' priorities for waiting list placement and which priority group that child falls into.
- 1.5. The supervisor will add a comment to the OneList account to document their actions.

See section A of the OneList Internal Control document for more details.

## **2. PROCEDURE: Preparing to Offer a Space**

- 2.1. Calculate your current subsidy/crisis spaces % for full-day programs.
  - $\text{Subsidy children} + \text{crisis children} / \text{total operating spaces in the centre.}$
- 2.2. Review the Subsidy Access Pilot Operating Guidelines and connect with families whose subsidy status is listed in OneList as required but Unknown.
- 2.3. If the centre has experienced difficulty with filling a space for a particularly room, it is advisable to take time to confirm child care needs with those on that specific waiting list before offering a space.
  - Download a full Waiting List Report for that class. Filter the list by priority grouping, then start date and/or age at the time the space is available.
  - Send an email to this group advising that you anticipate a space will become available in the next month (or specify timeframe). Ask families to confirm if they are still interested in this space and to respond within 48-hours.
  - Remove a child, upon request of the parent, as a result of this exercise.

## **3. PROCEDURE: Offering a Child Care Space**

- 3.1. When a space becomes available, the Supervisor will review the waiting list and identify potential applicants to call based on the priority list as outlined in the Waiting List policy.



Policy Reference:

## WAITING LIST PROCEDURES

- Refer to the Subsidy Access Pilot Operating Guidelines for priorities if your centre is participating in the subsidy access pilot. If so, those guidelines supersede these procedures.
- 3.2. Notwithstanding the priority system, applicants requesting full-time care will receive priority within a given group when a full-time space is being filled.
- When filling spaces in an Infant program, the Supervisor will look at the age of potential applicants in relation to the maximum age for the program. The supervisor will need to consider the following:
    - a. How many families are looking for care on the waiting list?
    - b. When will a spot come available in the toddler program?
    - c. If a spot in the toddler room will come available 1-2 months after the child turns 18-months, proceed with offering the spot to this child.
    - d. If a toddler spot will not come available for 3-4 months after the child turns 18-months, move to the next family on the list.
      - If the waiting list has been exhausted, then proceed with offering the available space(s) to the older infants.
- 3.3. Once potential applicants have been confirmed, including taking into account the responses to the exercise outlined in Section 2, the Supervisor will contact the first family to offer them a space. This applicant will have 48 hours to respond to the offer.
- If there is no answer, the Supervisor will leave a detailed message by voicemail and email wherever possible.
  - Messages must indicate the following:

“Please note that if you do not respond to this offer of enrolment or you decline the space but request to remain on the waiting list, you will be removed from the list after a 2nd offer is declined or not responded to. Should you be removed from the waiting list, you may follow up with us later to have your application reactivated with the original application date”.
- 3.4. If you did not already do the steps outline above in section 2, and you are unable to reach the first applicant, the supervisor will immediately contact the second and third applicants. Do NOT offer them a space at this point. Rather inquire if they are still in need of care as a space may be available soon. Make note of their response.
- This is done to save time. If the first applicant turns down the spot and the 2<sup>nd</sup> applicant indicated that they do not require care in the near future, then you can skip the 2<sup>nd</sup> applicant and proceed to offer the space to the 3<sup>rd</sup> applicant giving this family 48 hours to respond.
- 3.5. Repeat steps 3.3 and 3.4 until the space has been filled or your waiting list has been exhausted.



Policy Reference:

## **WAITING LIST PROCEDURES**

- 3.6. Within 48 hours of contacting each applicant, the supervisor or assistant will add a comment to the child's file in OneList and, if applicable, "Place" the child within the OneList system.
- 3.7. Upon request, or if an applicant does not respond to an offer of enrolment or declines a space for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time at your centre, the supervisor will remove the child from that centre's waiting list and/or all RisingOaks waiting lists – depending on the circumstances.

### **4. PROCEDURES: Responding to Status Requests**

- 4.1. Under the CCEYA, parents may contact the centre to request a status update on their waiting list request with the expectation that RisingOaks can confirm what # they are on the list. When a status request is received the supervisor/assistant will get their contact information and let them know that they will look into it and get back to them within 48 hours.
- 4.2. The supervisor/assistant will log into OneList and download the Waiting List Detailed Report. Filter the list by Priority Group, then application date.
  - Also take into account their preferred start date and the age of their child (as they may now need a space in a higher age group).
- 4.3. Where possible, respond to the parent via email. See sample email attached.
- 4.4. Add a comment to their OneList account to indicate that you provided a status update on xx date and the position you referenced at that time.

### **5. ATTACHMENTS:**

- 5.1. OneList Instructions/Internal Control document
- 5.2. Subsidy Access Pilot Operating Guidelines
- 5.3. Email Templates

### **6. APPROVALS:**

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Chief Executive Officer - CEO

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Date

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Director of Operations

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Date

## **Template A – Detailed Overview of how the list works.**

Hello (enter first name)

I just took a look at the waiting list for RisingOaks-xx for the xx-day xx program. It's hard to say exactly when a spot for xx might become available. As of right now, there are about xx – xx (e.g., 13-15) people ahead of you on the list. That being said, this could change if someone in a higher priority group joins the list. You are in the priority 5 group – with the general public looking for care.

Here is an overview of our priority groups:

- 1 Children of RisingOaks employees (to facilitate their ability to work)
- 2 Children in care who need to move into the next age group
- 3 In no specific order:
  - Children in care who need to increase their days of care
  - Siblings of children already enrolled
  - Children of RisingOaks board members
- 4 Children wishing to transfer from one RisingOaks centre to another
- 5 All other applicants

So, if someone in a higher priority group joins the list, your position moves down.

It's a bit confusing, but I wanted to give you a sense of how our system works. At this point in time, our program is full. There often is a bit of movement in January and the next natural transition time would be the end of June. We confirm our summer-September enrolment for current families in March, so perhaps check in with the centre in April – May.

If something happens to come up before then, the centre will contact you. You are welcome to call back in the future to request a new status update.

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## **Template B – More General - For Families #1–20 on the Waitlist**

Subject: RisingOaks Waitlist Update

Hello (first name),

Thank you for checking in. I've reviewed the waitlist for RisingOaks – (centre name) for the (days) (program/age group) program. At the moment, your child is approximately #(exact number) on the list.

Please note that many factors can affect your waitlist position. Our system includes several priority groups, so your number may shift if a family in a higher priority category joins the list or if a current family's needs change.

Generally, we do not anticipate any openings in this program until at least (insert timeframe – e.g., January, late spring, early fall, etc.). Natural transition points tend to occur in January and again at the end of June, with summer–September enrolment typically confirmed in March.

If a space becomes available sooner, the centre will contact you directly. You're welcome to check back anytime for an updated waitlist status.

Thank you for your patience,  
(Your name)

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**Template C – More General - For Families #21–100 on the Waitlist**

Subject: RisingOaks Waitlist Update

Hello (first name),

Thank you for your inquiry. I've reviewed the waitlist for RisingOaks – (centre name) for the (days) (program/age group) program. At this time, there are approximately (X) families ahead of you on the waitlist.

Because our waitlist includes several priority groups, your position may shift as families in higher priority categories join or as current families transition to new age groups or schedules.

Given the number of families ahead of you and the limited movement we expect, it is unlikely that a space will open before (insert timeframe – e.g., the next 6–12 months, next school year, etc.).

If a spot becomes available sooner, we will reach out to you right away. You're also welcome to check in for an updated number at any time.

Thank you for your interest in RisingOaks,  
(Your name)

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## **Template D – More General - For Families #100+ on the Waitlist**

Subject: RisingOaks Waitlist Update

Hello (first name),

Thank you for reaching out. I've taken a look at the waitlist for RisingOaks – (centre name) for the (days) (program/age group) program. Currently, there are more than (100 / 150 / 200 / 300 — insert as appropriate) families ahead of you.

With such a long waitlist and limited movement within the program, it is unlikely that we will be able to offer a space for your child. Priority groups may also shift the list as children in care transition to new age groups or as families in higher priority categories join.

If circumstances change and a space becomes available, the centre will contact you. You are welcome to check in again in the future for an updated status.

Thank you for considering RisingOaks,  
(Your name)