**ELCNWF School Readiness Fee Waiver Policy and Procedure**

EFFECTIVE DATE: November 1, 2026
REVISED DATE: TBD
NEXT REVIEW DATE: June 2027

References: Chapter 1002.84, F.S.
6M-4.400, F.A.C.

A. Policy Purpose
To establish and maintain standard procedures by the Early Learning Coalition of Northwest Florida (ELCNWF) for determining and approving a School Readiness (SR) family's copayment fee waiver request.

B. Responsible Staff
The Operations Director and Eligibility Program Manager share responsibilities for Coalition's SR family copayment and fee waivers.

Policy:

A. ELCNWF will follow the requirements established in Florida Statutes (F.S.) and rules in the Florida Administrative Code (FAC) regarding family copayments and fee waivers.

Procedures:

A. Copayments for a family with at-risk children that provides no income documentation at the time of eligibility determination will be set at $0 initially, and the family will continue to have a $0 copayment until redetermination.
B. Copayment waivers. ELCNWF may waive the copayment on a case-by-case basis for "At Risk Children". Temporary waivers may also be granted on a case-by-case basis for families below 100% of the federal poverty level (FPL). Waivers must have a start and end date. The request for a copayment waiver must be documented in the case file at the time of initial authorization for care and at each redetermination. Qualifying events for a fee waiver include, but are not limited to:
    1. Child's parents/guardians are incarcerated
    2. Child's parents/guardians are in residential treatment
    3. Child's parents/guardians are incapacitated
    4. Death of a child's parents/guardians
    5. Child's parents/guardians experience a natural disaster
    6. Child's parents/guardians experience an emergency situation such as fire or robbery
    7. Child's parents/guardians are homeless or are in a homeless shelter
    8. Child's parents/guardians are unemployed
    9. Whereabouts of child's parents/guardians are unknown.
    10. Unusual circumstance as approved by the Executive Director