



Te Tāhuhu o
te Mātauranga
Ministry of Education



Te Kāwanatanga
o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

Starting an early childhood service

Applying for a centre-based education and
care service licence



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Introduction

To apply for a licence to operate an early childhood service, a person involved in the governance of the proposed service needs to complete our EC1-CB form and attach appropriate documentation.

In this publication, you will find details about the application process and the documentation that needs to be submitted with a centre-based early childhood service licence application. It also has information about the required statutory declaration and sole trader declaration.

This is a guide only and further information may be required to help assess an application on a case-by-case basis.

Before starting your application see our guides:

- Introduction to early childhood education services
- Starting an early childhood service – A guide for people starting a centre-based service

You can find these on our website.

[Guides and factsheets – Ministry of Education](#)



Do you need a licence?

If you want to provide early childhood education and care service, you will need a licence.

An early childhood education and care centre is defined in the Education and Training Act 2020 as premises used regularly for the education or care of 3 or more children (not being children of the persons providing the education or care, or children enrolled at a school being provided with education and care before or after school) under the age of 6:

- by the day or part of a day, but
- not for any continuous period of more than 7 days.

Who doesn't need a licence?

In most situations, you do not need an early childhood education and care licence if you are:

- a registered school
- a hostel
- an Oranga Tamariki residence
- a health or hospital institution run by the Ministry of Health or Health NZ
- a hospital care institution
- a children's health camps funded by state services to provide education services
- premises where all the children who are present are members of the same family and in the care of a family member or a caregiver who is not acting for gain or reward.

However, you will still need a licence if there are 3 or more children under the age of 6 who are the children of:

- staff members
- people attending the premises as residents or students.

Two hours per child per day

You do not need a licence if your premises is providing education and care to 3 or more children under 6 years old, but where each child stays no more than 2 hours a day.

Parents and care givers must also be:

- near by
- contactable
- able to resume responsibility for their child at short notice.

There's no limit on how many 2-hour blocks can be provided across the week. An individual child can attend on different days (and for more than 4 hours across the week) if they are there for 2 hours or less a day.

If you are providing this service, you must still comply with the requirements for limited attendance childcare centres under the Health and Safety at Work Regulations.

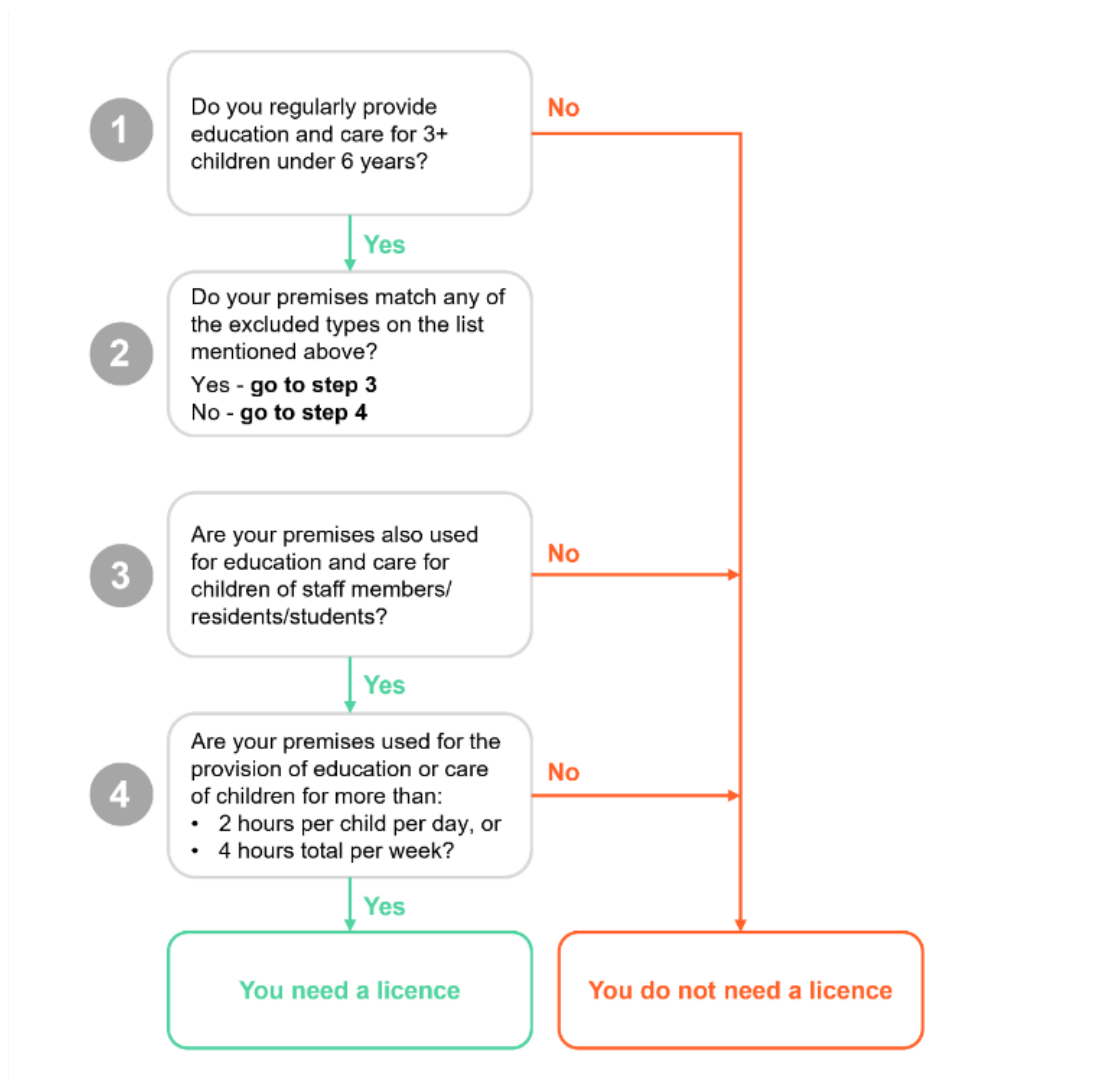
Four hours a week

You do not need a licence if your premises is providing education or care to 3 or more children under 6 years old for no more than 4 hours in a week. You can have the children for more than 2 hours if the weekly total is no more than 4 hours.

Parents and caregivers must also be:

- nearby
- contactable
- able to resume responsibility for their child at short notice.

Figure 1 Do I need a licence decision flowchart



Before you apply for a licence

There is a lot of work that needs to be done before thinking about applying for an early childhood service licence.

You must have your premises ready, ensuring they comply with the Building Act, Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 and the centre-based education and care service licencing criteria.

The following assessments, approvals and registrations must be completed:

- Health assessment report
- Building evacuation scheme signed off by Fire and Emergency New Zealand
- Emergency management plan – emergency supplies must be ready.

Policies need to be developed and staff/employees must be ready to start work.

Requirements from legislation, regulations and licensing criteria for the type of early childhood service you want to start need to be met.

Our website and regional statistics

For more information about starting a centre-based early childhood service see our website:

[Introduction to early childhood services – Ministry of Education](#)

[Starting a centre-based ECE service – Ministry of Education](#)

Look at the Education Counts website to get an idea of how many and what types of early childhood service are already in your area, to assess demand.

[Information about early childhood services – Education Counts](#)

Guides

For more information about early childhood services and how to start a centre-based education and care service, see our guides, *Introduction to early childhood services* and *Starting an early childhood service – a guide for people starting a centre-base service*.

[Guides and factsheets – Ministry of Education](#)

Talk to us

Once you have done your research, contact your regional Ministry of Education office to talk to us. We will explain more details about the application process and answer any questions you may have.

Talking to us gives your application the best chance of being successful.

[Regional offices – Ministry of Education](#)



Probationary licence application

A probationary licence is the initial licence you need to apply for. A full licence assessment is carried out by the Ministry within 12 months of getting a probationary licence.


During the full licence check, the Ministry of Education will assess policies, practices and curriculum implementation in action.

Application fee

There is a non-refundable application fee of \$2,817.50 (including GST). We need proof of payment before we review your application.

The form

The form that needs to be completed to apply for a centre-based service is the EC1 - CB.

 <p>Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga Ministry of Education</p>	<p>Application to Become a Centre-based Early Learning Service Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008</p>	<p>EC1-CB</p>
<p>(OFFICE ONLY) DATE RECEIVED</p>		
<p>Before completing this form, contact your local Ministry office so we can explain what the application process involves.</p> <p>This application must be completed by a person involved in the governance of the proposed service.</p> <p>This application will incur a non-refundable application fee of \$2,817.50 inclusive of GST.</p> <p>Privacy Statement</p> <p>This application form collects personal information to assess your application under the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 (the regulations). We also use this information to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make licensing decisions, such as whether your service meets the requirements of the regulations and licensing criteria • maintain accurate records, including data quality and compliance, ongoing regulatory compliance documentation and historical licence data • investigate complaints or incidents, ensuring we can follow up on issues or safety concerns • produce directories, reports, and statistical analysis, which may be shared publicly or with government agencies for transparency and oversight • share relevant information with the Education Review Office (ERO) to support their evaluation and review functions • communicate important updates, including changes in regulations, licensing requirements, or professional development opportunities relevant to your service. <p>The information collected in this form, unless otherwise stated, will not be disclosed to any third parties unless it is authorised or required by law.</p> <p>If you don't provide the information required in this form, the Ministry of Education (the Ministry) may not be able to process your application.</p> <p>This could result in delays, or your application being declined. If you would like to discuss the information that is collected in this application process, please contact your Ministry regional office.</p> <p>Individuals have the right to request access to and correction of personal information. If you or anyone named in this application would like to request access to or correction of your personal information, please contact your Ministry regional office.</p>		
<p>EC1-CB (April 2026)</p>	<p>Page 1 of 16</p>	

You can download the form from our website.

[Application form and fee – Ministry of Education](#)

Documentation

You need to provide documents related to your service management, staffing, building and curriculum.

For some of these documents, you will need to contact other organisations. For example, contact your local council for documents relating to the Resource Management Act 1991 and Building Act 2004.

To help you with contact details for these organisations, see our list of useful contact information.

[Guides and factsheets](#)

General requirements

Governance

A list of the names and roles of all persons to be involved in the governance of the service.

Relevant regulation:

[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations 2008, Regulation.6\(3\)\(b\) – New Zealand Legislation](#)

Governance police vetting

Police vet (less than 3 years old) for each individual involved in the governance of the service who is not a children's worker.

Relevant regulation:

[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations 2008, Regulation 8\(a\) – New Zealand Legislation](#)

Certificate of Incorporation (if applicable)

Certificate of Incorporation as a company, charitable trust, or incorporated society.

Charitable tax status (If applicable)

IRD notification of charitable tax status.

Evidence of staffing

To demonstrate compliance, your application must be accompanied by evidence of staff being employed or engaged and ready to commence work when the licence is issued.

Also provide copies of completed safety checking records and results for all children's workers who will be working at your service.

Relevant regulation:

[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations 2008, Regulation 47 – New Zealand Legislation](#)

Relevant licensing criteria:

[GMA105 Human resource management – Ministry of Education](#)

[GMA106 Safety checking – Ministry of Education](#)

Teaching qualifications and practising certificates

Certified copies of recognised teaching qualifications and practising certificates for the Person Responsible and people counting towards qualification requirements.

Relevant regulations:

[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations 2008, Regulation 6\(3\)\(a\) – New Zealand Legislation](#)
[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations 2008, Regulation 44 – New Zealand Legislation](#)
[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations 2008, Schedule 1 – New Zealand Legislation](#)

First Aid certificates

Certified copies of First Aid certificates from an accredited first aid training provider.

Relevant regulations:

[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations 2008, Regulation 6\(3\)\(a\) – New Zealand Legislation](#)
[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations 2008, Regulation 44 – New Zealand Legislation](#)
[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations 2008, Schedule 1 – New Zealand Legislation](#)

Relevant licensing criterion:

[HS119 First aid qualifications – Ministry of Education](#)

Supervision Plan

A supervision plan that shows staffing and that children are supervised at all times.

Provide evidence that adult to child ratios are maintained:

- in the indoor and outdoor areas
- over staff breaks
- during any periods of administration (non-contact).

Relevant regulations:

[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations 2008, Regulation 6\(3\)\(a\) – New Zealand Legislation](#)
[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations 2008, Regulation 44 – New Zealand Legislation](#)
[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations 2008, Schedule 1 – New Zealand Legislation](#)

Health report

Premises and facilities Health Assessment Report from your local National Public Health service.

More information about what the report is and how to organise one, visit Health New Zealand's website.

[Early learning service health assessments – Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora](#)

Relevant regulation:

[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations 2008, Regulation 9\(2\) – New Zealand Legislation](#)

Evidence of where the contact person lives

Evidence that the service provider contact person resides locally. For example, a copy of a utility bill, tenancy agreement.

A person will generally be considered to 'reside locally' if they live within the geographical boundaries serviced by the local Ministry of Education office. If you are unsure whether the contact person would meet this requirement, contact your local Ministry of Education office to discuss further.

Relevant regulation:

[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations 2008, Regulation 3 – New Zealand Legislation](#)

Plans, policies and procedures

Staff safety checking procedures

Your procedure for safety checking all children's workers before employment or engagement, in accordance with the Children's Act 2014.

If you engage a children's worker who has lived overseas, it is recommended that there is a process to obtain a copy of a police certificate from the person's country of citizenship and from any country they have lived in for a year or more within the last ten years. This is in addition to the New Zealand Police vet part of the safety check.

Relevant licensing criterion:

[GMA106 Safety checking – Ministry of Education](#)

Police vet and risk assessment procedure

Your procedure to obtain a Police vet and conduct a risk assessment of the information in the vet for:

- non-teaching and unregistered employees before they begin work at your service, and
- contractors and their employees before they have, or are likely to have, unsupervised access to children.

Relevant legislation:

[Education and Training Act 2020, Schedule 4 – New Zealand Legislation](#)

Child protection policy

A written child protection policy that meets the requirements of the Children's Act 2014. The policy should contain:

- provisions for the identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect
- information about how your service will keep children safe from abuse and neglect
- how your service will respond to concerns of child abuse and neglect.

Relevant licensing criterion:

[HS125 Child protection – Ministry of Education](#)

Social competence

A process for providing positive guidance to encourage social competence in children.

Relevant licensing criterion:

[C110 Developing social competence – Ministry of Education](#)

Evacuation scheme

The building's operative evacuation scheme for public safety (fire evacuation scheme), approved by Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

Relevant regulation:

[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations 2008, Regulation 9\(1\)\(c\) – New Zealand Legislation](#)

Emergency plan

An emergency plan and supplies to ensure the care and safety of children and adults at the service.

Relevant licensing criterion:

[HS105 Emergency plan and supplies – Ministry of Education](#)

Information provided to parents

Written or digital information so parents know how to access:

- the regulations and licensing criteria
- information about changes to your service's licence status
- your most recent ERO report
- names and qualifications of each person counting towards qualification requirements
- details about the expenditure of any Ministry of Education funding received by your service
- your procedure for parents to follow if they wish to make a complaint about your service.
- information about:
 - their child
 - fees charged by your service
 - how they can be involved in your service
 - any planned reviews and consultation.

Relevant licensing criterion:

[GMA102 Information provided to parents](#)

Enrolment form

A copy of the enrolment form that will be used by your service.

Relevant licensing criterion:

[GMA109 Enrolment records](#)

Annual plan (for new service providers only)

The service's annual plan should identify 'who', 'what', and 'when' in relation to key tasks the service intends to undertake in the next 12 months.

Relevant licensing criterion:

[GMA107 Annual plan – Ministry of Education](#)

Annual budget (for new service providers only)

The service's annual budget needs to include:

- staffing costs, including leave entitlements
- professional development costs
- equipment and material costs for the ongoing purchase of new equipment and consumable materials
- provision for operational costs (such as electricity, telephone, food purchases and other day-to-day items) and maintenance of your premises as appropriate.

It should also include the expected revenue from your funding sources.

You will need to provide access to your annual budget at the probationary licence assessment visit.

Relevant licensing criterion:

[GMA108 Annual budget – Ministry of Education](#)

Building consents and diagrams

Compliance with the Resource Management Act 1991

A copy of the centre's resource consent with any attached conditions showing that the premises comply with the Resource Management Act 1991 in respect of their use as an early childhood education and care centre.

Relevant regulation:

[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations, Regulation.9\(1\)\(d\) – New Zealand Legislation](#)

Compliance with the Building Act 2004

Evidence that the building complies with the Building Act 2004 in respect of its use as an education and care centre.

New builds

For new builds or recently renovated premises provide:

- a code of compliance certificate (issued under section 95 of the Building Act 2004)
- a compliance schedule (issued under section 100 of the Building Act 2004).

In certain circumstances, these may also be considered evidence of compliance:

- Certificate for Public Use (issued under section 363A of the Building Act) or
- Certificate of Acceptance (issued under section 96 of the Building Act)

Contact your local Ministry of Education office for more details.

[Regional offices – Ministry of Education](#)

Premises built before 1992

For premises built before 1992 and have not had building or renovation work, provide evidence of the age of the building.

Warrant of fitness

If your premises also requires an annual building warrant of fitness (issued under section 108 of the Building Act), you do not need to send in a copy of this document – it will be sighted during the licensing assessment visit.

Relevant regulation:

[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations, Regulation.9\(1\)\(e\) – New Zealand Legislation](#)

Relevant legislation:

[Section 95 of the Building Act – New Zealand Legislation,](#)

[Section 100 of the Building Act – New Zealand Legislation](#)

[Section 363A of the Building Act 2004 – New Zealand Legislation,](#)

[Section 96 of the Building Act 2004 – New Zealand Legislation](#)

[Section 108 of the Building Act – New Zealand Legislation](#)

Floor plan and site plan

Floor plan

A floor plan of buildings showing metric measurements and uses of each area.

To help with the assessment of your application, indicate any defined activity space where appropriate (that is, where your service has designated areas/spaces for the use of children of a specific age and/or number of children).

Site plan

A site plan of the entire premises showing metric measurements and uses of each area.

To help with the assessment of your application, indicate any defined activity space where appropriate (that is, where your service has designated areas/spaces for the use of children of a specific age and/or number of children).

Premises definition

To be granted one licence the premises must:

- be situated on a single site; and
- be for the exclusive use of the centre or hospital-based education and care service.

If the premises comprise of 2 or more components:

- each component must be immediately adjacent and connected to at least one other component; and
- children must have safe access to each component.

In this regulation:

- **component** means any land or building that forms the part of the premises
- **premises** means the premises from which the centre will operate, or from which the hospital-based education and care service will be provided.

Relevant regulations:

[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations, Regulation.9\(1\)\(a\) – New Zealand Legislation](#)
[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations, Regulation 20A – New Zealand Legislation](#)

Fees and funding forms

Application fee

Evidence that the application fee of \$2,817.50, inclusive of GST, has been paid into our bank account.

RS3 funding form

A completed RS3 funding form is not a required document at the time of the EC1 application, but we recommend that you include it. The RS3 can be submitted later but is required before the licence can be granted.



Statutory declaration

You will need to declare that the information you have provided is true and sign it in front of an authorised witness.

[Making a statutory declaration – New Zealand Government](#)

The statutory declaration form is included as part of the EC1 – CB application form.

Example of the statutory declaration

13. Statutory Declaration by Service Provider

- This statutory declaration must be completed and signed by the applicant identified in Section 1 in front of the authorised person under Section 9 of the Oaths and Declarations Act 1957.
- Service providers that own or operate more than one service may wish to photocopy this part of the form once completed. Please note that the statutory declaration should be no older than 3 months if you intend to use it for subsequent licence applications.
- For more information about the statutory declaration, see section 13, note 2. This also tells you what you must do if any circumstance arises which might make this statutory declaration incorrect.

STATUTORY DECLARATION
(First Schedule, Oaths and Declarations Act 1957)

TO ACCOMPANY APPLICATIONS FOR LICENCES TO OPERATE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE CENTRES

I, _____ of _____
(Insert full name of person completing application) (Insert place of abode)

_____ (Insert occupation)

Note: To complete this declaration – you must tick one of the options have/do not have

I SOLEMNLY AND SINCERELY DECLARE THAT:

I am a [director/controller/officer] of _____ [entity] which is applying for a probationary licence for an early childhood service. I have full authority to make this declaration on [entity]'s behalf.

To the best of my knowledge, I, and each person who is involved in the governance of the proposed service:

a	<input type="checkbox"/> have <input type="checkbox"/> do not have	any previous conviction for any offence
b	<input type="checkbox"/> have <input type="checkbox"/> do not have	any involvement in, or association with, an organisation that has been convicted of an offence
c	<input type="checkbox"/> have <input type="checkbox"/> do not have	any history of health conditions that may affect the individual's ability to comply with the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act), the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008, and any regulations made under section 636 of the Act
d	<input type="checkbox"/> have <input type="checkbox"/> do not have	any property order or personal order under the Protection of Personal and Property Rights Act 1988 to which the person is, or has been, subject
e	<input type="checkbox"/> have <input type="checkbox"/> do not have	any sum of money owed, or previously owed, to the Crown, including in respect of bodies that the individual has been involved in managing
f	<input type="checkbox"/> have <input type="checkbox"/> do not have	any adjudication of bankruptcy under the Insolvency Act 2006 or the Insolvency Act 1967
g	<input type="checkbox"/> have <input type="checkbox"/> do not have	any prohibition on being a director or promoter of, or being concerned or taking part in the management of, – (i) a company under the Companies Act 1993; or (ii) any other body corporate

h	<input type="checkbox"/> have <input type="checkbox"/> do not have	any current or previous role as a governing member of an entity or organisation that became insolvent, including being placed in liquidation, receivership, or voluntary administration
i	<input type="checkbox"/> have <input type="checkbox"/> do not have	any prohibition against acting as an employer or an officer of an employer under the Employment Relations Act 2000 to which the individual is, or has been, subject
j	<input type="checkbox"/> have <input type="checkbox"/> do not have	any previous involvement in an early childhood service in respect of which – (i) an application for a licence was refused; or (ii) a licence was suspended or cancelled
k	<input type="checkbox"/> have <input type="checkbox"/> do not have	previous registration with the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, and that registration was cancelled for any reason.

I understand that:

- This information is required for the purpose of enabling the Ministry of Education to determine whether members of the service provider, including the applicant, are suitable to be involved in the governance of the proposed service.
- This information is required pursuant to regulations 6(3)(b) of the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008.
- I must complete this application on behalf of myself and each person to be involved in the governance of the proposed service. See Section 13, note 1 for clarification.
- It is an offence under section 111 of the Crimes Act 1961 to make a false declaration where that declaration would amount to perjury if made on oath in a judicial proceeding.
- Where I have answered in the affirmative to any statement above, I have attached all the relevant details in relation to the matter.

Note: Do not complete the following section until you are in front of the authorised person witnessing your declaration. After the declaration is made and signed, there must not be any alterations. (Refer to Section 15, note 2)

I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the Oaths and Declarations Act 1957

Your signature _____

Declared at _____ this _____ day of _____
(Place, for example, town or city) (insert day, e.g. 21st) (insert month and year)

Before _____ (Signature of person taking declaration)
(Justice of the Peace or other person authorised to take a Statutory Declaration)

_____ (Full name of person taking declaration)

_____ (Capacity, e.g. Barrister, Justice of the Peace)

*Service Provider means in relation to an early childhood education and care centre, the body, agency, or person who or that operates the centre.

Statutory declaration witness

Section 9 of the Oaths and Declarations Act 1957 lists those who are authorised to take a statutory declaration.

[Section 9 of the Oaths and Declarations Act 1957 – New Zealand Legislation](#)

It is your responsibility to ensure that the person you select is authorised to witness your declaration.

You will need to sign the statutory declaration in front of the authorised person you have chosen.

You should check that the person completes the form with:

- their signature
- their full name
- the capacity under which they are signing the declaration. For example, a Justice of the Peace or a barrister of the High Court.

After the declaration is made and signed, there must not be any alterations.

Who the statutory declaration must cover

When the governance of the proposed service is made up of a group of people, the statutory declaration needs to cover the officers of the organisation that has identified itself as the service provider. In most cases, the deed of incorporation for the legal entity will determine this. The following table outlines the most common scenarios for service providers.

If the service provider is...	Then the statutory declaration should cover...
An incorporated society	the office holders (such as Secretary, Treasurer and President)
A trust board	the board members
A company	the company director(s)
An individual person (whether registered as a legal entity or not)	only that person
An unincorporated body	the people who identify themselves as being part of the governing body

Other matters that need to be declared

The Secretary can require a statutory declaration for any other matter considered relevant.

The Secretary requires the applicant and those involved in the governance of the service to declare if any governance members were previously registered with the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, and if registration was cancelled for any reason.

Relevant legislation:

[Regulation 7 of the Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations 2008](#)

Getting information from the people covered by the statutory declaration

As the person signing the statutory declaration, you must satisfy yourself that the information supplied is correct. How you collect this information from the other people covered by the statutory declaration is up to you and your organisation. There is a range of ways that this might be done, including:

- information gathered through your recruitment or election processes
- personal knowledge of the person
- verbal assurances
- written attestation
- seeking Police vets in relation to past convictions
- individual statutory declarations from each person covered (so that the statutory declaration to the Ministry of Education becomes a composite of individual declarations to the applicant).

Deciding how to respond to the statements on the statutory declaration

You must tick one of the options at the beginning of each statement.

If the service provider is a group of people and an affirmative answer applies to one or more people you must answer in the affirmative on the statutory declaration.

Most of the statements are relatively straightforward. People will know if they have any convictions, adjudications of bankruptcy, etc. The main exception will be statement (c) regarding health conditions. It is important to be clear about the difference between:

1. a mental/physical condition that might prevent people from managing their role in complying with the conditions of a licence or obligations under the regulations and
2. any other condition that would not have this kind of impact.

Relevant factors to consider might include, for example, health problems that require frequent hospitalisation or sick leave, or that might render a person unconscious or quickly incapacitated. Frequency and severity of those conditions might also be relevant.

Answering in the affirmative (i.e. 'have') to any of the statements on the statutory declaration

If you answer 'have' for any statements, you must attach all relevant information in relation to the matter. Answering 'have' to any statement does not automatically exclude the service provider from being deemed fit and proper to hold a licence. All decisions about granting or not granting a licence are made on a case-by-case basis, at the Secretary's discretion.

What to do if something changes

What needs to be done if, for example, new people become part of the service provider, or people's circumstances change that make the statutory declaration incorrect?

A service provider must notify the Ministry of Education as soon as practicable if any of the circumstances under (a) to (k) on the statutory declaration form have changed for any person who is covered by the statutory declaration.

Relevant regulation:

[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations 2008, Regulation 35 – Legislation New Zealand](#)

You do not need to notify us every time someone new becomes part of the service provider unless that person's circumstances make the information you have provided on the statutory declaration incorrect.

Verbal or written advice of a change of circumstances will be accepted and a new statutory declaration will not be required.

We will review the new information and decide whether the service provider continues to be fit and proper to hold a licence.

Given the range of unique circumstances that may be identified, all decisions are made on a case-by-case basis at the Secretary's discretion.

Important: If you intend to use the statutory declaration in subsequent licence applications for other services you may own or operate, it should be no older than 3 months to be accepted.

Equity index number and sole trader declaration

The equity index (EQI) measures the extent an early childhood service draws children from low socio-economic communities. The EQI is used to determine eligibility for Equity Funding.

The EQI is worked out on the basis of enrolled children's addresses and information taken from the New Zealand Census 2006. The EQI for casual services is determined using the average for all other ECE services in the same area.

For sole traders, the equity index number is considered personal information, as it is information about an identifiable person (the sole trader). So, we must obtain consent from sole traders to disclose the equity index number relating to the services they operate.

The information (i.e. your service's equity index number) we seek to release does not contain other personal information and is calculated based on the children attending your service at a service level. The privacy of the children and families using services is protected, as data in the Integrated Data Infrastructure is governed by robust confidentiality rules and is de-identified.

We intend to provide each service with their number once calculated. Decisions have yet to be made on publishing equity index numbers. If we decide to publish equity index numbers, we will seek your permission separately.

In the event you do not agree to the index being released or withdraw your consent in the future, we will develop a bespoke equity index number for your service. This number may not accurately reflect the current circumstances of the children attending your service, which may affect your service's entitlement to equity funding.

Your consent will remain valid for the duration of your licence to operate your early childhood service. Should there be a change in ownership of your service to someone who intends to operate as a sole trader, we will seek a separate consent from the new owner when they apply for their licence.

How to send us your application

You'll need to print the form. Sign it. Scan and email or post your completed form (along with other required documents) to your Ministry of Education regional office. You may like to keep a copy for your personal records.

[Regional offices – Ministry of Education](#)

If we need more information

If we need more information from you, we will contact you and ask you to provide it to us within 10 working days.

We will start assessing your application once we have received all the required information and payment of the application fee.

Visit to your proposed service

If you meet the requirements on the application form, we will contact you to make a time to visit your proposed service premises.

Before we arrive, set up your premises as if they are ready for children to attend. For example:

- the building works should be completed
- the education programme should be ready
- furniture and equipment should be installed, and
- administrative systems should be in place.

Make sure the service provider contact person, and any other staff you want to be there, can be there when we visit.

We will look at all aspects of your centre, including:

- the building
- the children's resources
- teaching qualifications and ratio requirements
- health and safety considerations
- governance and management considerations.

We may take notes, photos, or other evidence to support our assessment.

For a full list of the areas we will check, and other documents you will need to provide, see the centre-based EC3 assessment tool. Ask your regional office for a copy.

How long it takes to get a decision

The regulations require us to take all reasonable steps to make a decision as to whether your application is successful within 30 working days of receiving your complete application.

We need all information and payment of the application fee before we can start assessing your application.

Relevant regulation:

[Education \(Early Childhood Services\) Regulations 2008, Regulation 11 – Legislation New Zealand](#)

If your application is successful

If your application is successful, we'll email or post you your licence. The licence shows details about your service, such as the hours children may attend and the number of children you are allowed to have.

The initial licence you receive may be issued for a lower maximum number of children than the service can be licensed for. In determining the maximum number, consideration is given to how many children are ready to enrol and your staffing numbers. As you increase enrolments and staffing, you can apply to increase your maximum number using an EC8 form.

You must display your licence at your service for parents and visitors to see.

If your application is not successful

We will let you know if your application is declined and provide the rationale for that decision.

Full licence

A full licence assessment must be carried out by the Ministry within 12 months of you getting a probationary licence. During the full licence check, the Ministry of Education will assess policies, practices and curriculum implementation in action.



**Te Tāhuhu o
te Mātauranga**
Ministry of Education



**Te Kāwanatanga
o Aotearoa**
New Zealand Government

He mea tārai e mātou te mātaurangakia rangatira
ai, kia mana taurite ai ōna huanga.

We shape an education system that delivers
equitable and excellent outcomes.

