

Frequently Asked Questions

For Parents

Postponing VPK Enrollment

Background: A law that took effect July 1, 2016, extends VPK eligibility for 4-year-olds with birthdays from Feb. 2 through Sept. 1. Parents can enroll their child in the state’s free, voluntary prekindergarten (VPK) education program that year or wait until the following year when their child is 5.

This allows parents of younger 4-year-olds to postpone the year their child begins VPK, enabling the child to begin kindergarten and start first grade as a slightly older, more mature student. Children in Florida are not required to attend either the state’s prekindergarten or kindergarten programs, but are required to attend school the year they turn 6 by Feb. 1.

Four-year-old children with birthdays from Feb. 2 through Sept. 1 are eligible to enroll in VPK that year or postpone it to the next. The law does not affect 4-year-olds with birthdays from Sept. 2 through Feb. 1.

1. How do I know what year or years my child may be eligible for?

It is based on your child’s birthdate.

 4 Years Old	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
2/2/15 thru 9/1/15		Not eligible	Not eligible	Not eligible
9/2/15 thru 2/1/16		Not eligible	Not eligible	Not eligible
2/2/16 thru 9/1/16 *			Not eligible	Not eligible
9/2/16 thru 2/1/17	Not eligible		Not eligible	Not eligible
2/2/17 thru 9/1/17 *	Not eligible			Not eligible
9/2/17 thru 2/1/18	Not eligible	Not eligible		Not eligible
2/2/18 thru 9/1/18 *	Not eligible	Not eligible		

* Two years of eligibility

2. Can my child attend VPK for two years?

No. Each child is eligible to attend VPK once. Some families will have a choice to send their child to VPK in one year or another based on the child’s birthdate.

3. Why can’t all parents have the option to choose the year their child attends VPK?

Florida law requires children to attend school the year the child is 6 by Feb. 1. Not all children would be able to go to VPK a year later because they would turn 6 by Feb. 1.

4. How do I postpone my child's enrollment in VPK?

On the online system where families enroll for VPK (called the Family Portal). The Family Portal can be found at <https://familyservices.floridaearlylearning.com/>.

5. When can I begin my child's VPK application in the Family Portal?

Beginning Jan. 1 of the program year. For example, you may apply for the 2017-18 program year beginning Jan. 1, 2017.

6. What happens if my child already has a certificate of eligibility for the 2016-17 program year and I want to send my child to the 2017-18 program instead?

You may postpone your child's VPK for the 2017-18 in the Family Portal, if your child did not attend a 2016-17 VPK program. If your child has already attended VPK, but not more than 70 percent of the program, please contact your early learning coalition to apply for a reenrollment into the subsequent program year.

7. Can I change my mind to postpone my child's VPK once they have started kindergarten?

No. Florida law states a child is no longer eligible for VPK once they enroll in kindergarten.

You will find more information about VPK at www.floridaearlylearning.com. You may also contact the Office of Early Learning's VPK Unit by phone at 1-866-447-1159 or by email at VPKquestions@oel.myflorida.com.