



## DHSP Childcare and Family Support Preschool Lottery Frequently Asked Questions

### Who is eligible to enter the DHSP Preschool Lottery?

Cambridge residents with age eligible children can enter the DHSP Preschool Lottery. For the 2019 lottery for enrollment in the 2020-2021 school year, children with birthdays between April 1, 2016 - January 1, 2018 are considered age eligible.

### How do I enter the DHSP Preschool Lottery?

Lottery applications are accepted in October for the following school year. Your child is considered age-eligible for preschool enrollment when they are between the ages of 2 years 9 months – 4 years 5 months. **For example, to enter the lottery in October 2019 (for enrollment in the 2020-2021 school year), your child's birthday needs to be between April 1, 2016 – January 1, 2018.**

In order for your lottery application to be considered complete, you must submit the following documents:

- **DHSP Preschool Lottery Application**
- **Proof of Income and Family Size:** Tax return and 4 consecutive pay stubs (or last 30 days) or current award letters for any benefits you are receiving (TANF, SSI, SNAP, WIC, etc.)
- **Proof of Child's Age:** Child's birth certificate or child's passport
- **Proof of Address:** Lease, mortgage, letter from housing provider, utility bill dated within the last 2 months, or Doubling Up Form

### Where can I get an application for the DHSP Preschool Lottery?

DHSP Preschool Lottery Applications are available at the following locations:

- [cambridgema.gov/DHSP](http://cambridgema.gov/DHSP)
- [finditcambridge.org](http://finditcambridge.org)
- DHSP: 51 Inman St., 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Cambridge, MA 02139
- Center for Families: 70 Rindge Ave. (back of the building), Cambridge, MA 02140
- Cambridge Public Schools Student Registration Center: 459 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02138

### Where can I return an application for the DHSP Preschool Lottery?

In October, you can return your application and supporting documents in person to the following locations:

- DHSP: 51 Inman St., 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Cambridge, MA 02139
- Center for Families: 70 Rindge Ave. (back of the building), Cambridge, MA 02140
- Cambridge Public Schools Student Registration Center: 459 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02138

We can't receive DHSP Preschool Lottery applications electronically because of the confidential information included in the supporting documents.

**How do I increase my odds of getting a seat in a DHSP Preschool?**

The more programs you select the better your chances are for getting a seat. If there are any programs that you wouldn't be able to send your child to because of hours or location, please **do not** select them. If you are selected for a seat in a program that you aren't able to send your child to, you forfeit your seat and are waitlisted for the other programs you selected.

**When will I find out if my child has a seat in a DHSP Preschool?**

You will find out in December following the lottery.

**If I am offered a seat in a DHSP Preschool, do I need to confirm that I want to enroll my child in the program?**

Yes. All families who are offered a seat will be asked to accept or decline the seat by January 31<sup>st</sup>. If we do not hear from a family by January 31<sup>st</sup>, we will offer the seat to another child on the waitlist

**How will you fill mid-year openings in the 2019-2020 school year?**

Any seats that open during the 2019-2020 school year will be filled with age-eligible children who were selected for a seat for the 2020-2021 school year. We will then pull additional children as needed from the short-term waitlist to fill the openings for the 2020-2021 school year created by filling the open seats in 2019 - 2020.

**Is there sibling preference in the DHSP Preschool Lottery?**

Siblings of children that are enrolled in one of our Preschool programs at the time of the lottery are prioritized, but are not guaranteed a seat.

**Can I enter my child in the DHSP Preschool Lottery if I am a City of Cambridge or Cambridge Public Schools employee, but not a Cambridge resident?**

As always, Cambridge residents are our top priority. For the 2019 lottery for enrollment for the 2020-2021 school year, City of Cambridge and Cambridge Public Schools employees who are not Cambridge residents will be able to enter the lottery. We will reevaluate the ability of City of Cambridge and Cambridge Public Schools employees who are not Cambridge residents each year prior to the lottery. In

place of the Proof of Address documentation, City of Cambridge and Cambridge Public Schools employees who are not Cambridge residents are required to submit proof of employment.

**What do I do if I am waitlisted from the DHSP Lottery?**

As seats open up, we will contact families from the waitlist to offer the open seat. The waitlist will remain in place until we start accepting applications for the next lottery (October of the following year). In October of the following year, the waitlist expires and families with children that are still age-eligible are welcomed to enter the lottery again for the next year’s enrollment.

If you need help finding an alternative program, there are the following resources for finding preschools:

- Find It Cambridge: [finditcambridge.org](http://finditcambridge.org) or 617-652-5232
- Birth to 3rd Partnership: [cpsd.us/departments/b3](http://cpsd.us/departments/b3) or 617-349-6554
- Department of Early Education and Care: [eeced.force.com/EEC\\_ChildCareSearch](http://eeced.force.com/EEC_ChildCareSearch)
- Center for Families: 617-349-6385

**How much does it cost to attend a DHSP Preschool?**

The DHSP Preschool tuition rates are on a sliding scale based on income. The scale is released each year with the DHSP Preschool Lottery materials.

In the Department of Human Service Programs, we strive to make our programs accessible to all Cambridge families. We accept vouchers and we also offer significant tuition assistance for families that qualify. The amount of tuition assistance a family receives is based on gross family income, household size, and personal hardship.

For the 2020 – 2021 school year our tuition rates are:

Gross Family Income	Tuition Rate Per Day	Tuition Rate Per Week	Average Rate Per Month**
\$204,001 – above	\$78.46	\$392.30	\$1,726.12*
\$153,001- \$204,000	\$62.77	\$313.85	\$1,380.94*
\$122,401 - \$153,000	\$47.08	\$235.40	\$1,035.76*
\$102,001 – \$122,400	\$37.66	\$188.30	\$828.52*
\$0 - \$102,000	The base daily rate for tuition is \$37.66. All families with a Gross Family Income between \$0 - \$102,000 will qualify for some tuition assistance. The amount of the tuition assistance will be based on gross family income, household size, and personal hardship.		

\*The monthly rate can vary month to month based on the number of billable days in each month. Our calculation for the average rate per month is based on 22 billable days.

**How do I apply for a scholarship?**

You do not need to fill out any additional paperwork! We use the documents you submit to enter the lottery to calculate tuition rates including tuition assistance.

**If I would be paying the top rate, do I need to submit proof of income and family size?**

If your income falls in the top range, you do not have to prove income or family size. You do still need to prove the child's age and address though.

**What are the hours of operation of the DHSP Preschools?**

All of the DHSP Preschools run 12 months a year and 5 days a week (Monday – Friday). The Haggerty, Kennedy/Longfellow, M.L. King and Windsor Preschools run from 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. The King Open, Morse, and Peabody Preschools run from 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

**Are there any part time seats in the DHSP Preschools?**

We do not offer part time seats in any of our programs. All seats are for 5 days a week and 12 months a year.