

FEBRUARY 2026

# ROUNDTABLES



FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROVIDERS



**COLORADO**  
Department of Early Childhood



# PROVIDER HANDBOOK

**CO** UNIVERSAL  
PRESCHOOL

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## Key Timelines

February 2-11	Families must accept their pre-registration matches
February 4-11	Providers can add or remove seats
February 16	First matching round
February 18-23	Providers review and decline matches where there is a reason
Feb 25-March 6	Families notified of first round by 5:00 PM and accept or decline by 11:59 PM on March 6
Feb 25-March 15	Providers can add or remove seats
March 16	Second matching round
March 18-23	Providers review and decline matches where there is a reason
March 24-31	Families notified of second round by 5:00 PM and accept or decline by 11:59 on March 31
April 1	Direct enrollment starts for 2026-27 school year

# ENROLLMENT PROCESS: STATUS DEFINITIONS



As the family registration and enrollment process begins, you will see the following statuses within the UPK Portal:

STATUS	DESCRIPTION
Placed	Placement is shared with provider for the provider review period. Family is not yet notified.
Matched	Family notified of the match. Provider can contact family to share program information and answer questions.
Accepted	Family accepts the match. Provider should contact family with instructions for enrolling.
Enrolled	All enrollment documents are completed, including Colorado Universal Preschool's enrollment form.
Withdrawn	A family previously selected you as a provider in their application. If the family is placed in another program or changes their mind and moves their enrollment to another program, their status will show as withdrawn.
Selected	During direct enrollment only- A family has selected your program. Provider needs to take action to accept the selection and offer a match or decline.

*Note: If a family declines their match at your location, the child's record will be removed from your UPK Portal.*

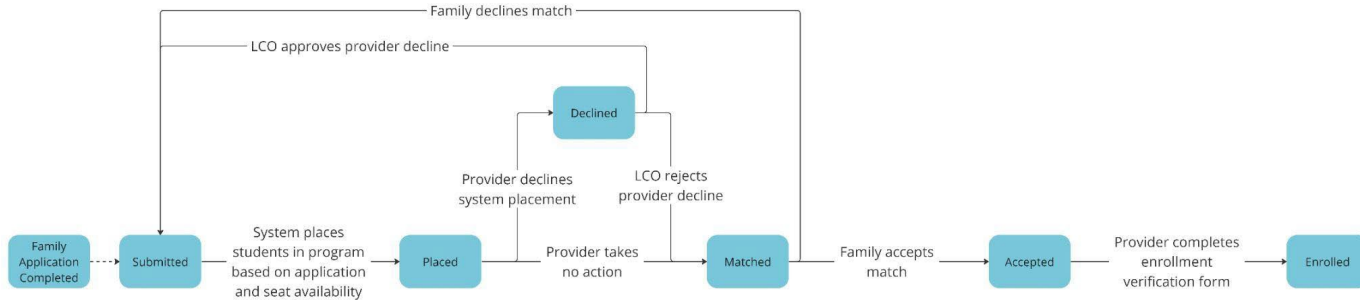
## A FAMILY MATCHED WITH MY PROGRAM: WHAT NEXT?

- The family must now complete the registration and enrollment process – including paperwork – with you, the provider.
- Families have been given your information, and have been told to contact you for next steps.
- We encourage you to reach out to the family and help them with your enrollment process.
- Families must be enrolled in the UPK Portal, with eligibility verified, for accurate payments. You must complete the enrollment form.

# MATCHING: STATUS

## MATCH-TO-PROGRAM STATUS

As the family registration and enrollment process begins, you will see the following statuses within the UPK Portal:



- **Submitted:** After the student submits their registration, the system will place students in programs based on their application and the available seats
- **Placed:** Placed status children are sent to the provider. The provider can take action to decline, or do nothing (do nothing is the equivalent of accept)
- **Declined:** If a provider declines a placement, they must fill out a form and attest to the reason for decline through the decline form. The decline form is sent to the LCO for review.
  - If the LCO approves the decline, the student can no longer be matched with this program in the future. The student will then go through the next round of matching based on any additional providers they selected.
  - If the LCO rejects the decline, the LCO will adjust the status of the child in the program to placed
  - If a provider takes no action, the system will move placed students to matched status at a specified date
- **Matched:** Families have a certain period of time to respond to a match. If the family accepts the match, they will move to accepted status. If the family declines the match, they will be placed in the next matching cycle
- **Accepted:** The family has accepted the match, they will show as “Accepted” status. From here, the provider can enroll
- **Enrolled:** After the family accepts the match, the provider has the option to enroll. The provider should complete the enrollment form to confirm the final step of the application process.

## MATCHING: DECLINES



The Colorado Universal Preschool Program Setup Form provides an approved list of reasons a provider may decline a match with a family made within the online application system. Your program selected these approved reasons while filling out the Program Set-up form based on the boxes you checked from the list below in your program's description.

The following types of programmatic preferences were included in the Program Setup Form if they apply to your program and don't require further action if chosen for a decline reason:

- I have confirmed that this family will not be able to meet my participation requirements as a co-op
- I have confirmed that this child does not meet the language requirement to participate in my program
- I have confirmed this child does not live in the district and is ineligible for my program
- I have confirmed that this child requires specially designed instruction that my location cannot support
- I have confirmed that we do not have an open general education seat in my location
- I have confirmed that this child does not meet additional factors to qualify for Head Start

We also recognize that certain providers may have specific requirements of families in order to participate in their program that are not outlined in the Provider Program Setup Form.

If you need to request to decline a placement based on a requirement that is not listed above and not in the Program Setup Form you must reach out to your LCO for next steps in processing your request to decline. In order for CDEC to approve a decline based on a reason not listed in the Program Setup form, and this requirement is outlined in your program's handbook as approved by licensing that is published in your provider profile, your handbook must be submitted to your LCO as part of the CDEC review process.

After receiving written approval from your LCO, you may decline and choose the following reason:

- I have confirmed that this child does not qualify for my program under my CDEC approved exception

The following decline reasons are only available during pre-registration:

- I am a provider that prioritizes placement for the children of my employees
- This child does not qualify for pre registration because they are not a current student
- This child does not qualify for pre registration because they do not have a sibling that currently attends my program
- This child does not qualify for pre registration because they do not have a family member on my program staff
- You selected the correct Location (District) but the Provider selected does not match our understanding of your continuity of care preference
- You selected the correct Provider but your Program does not match our understanding of your continuity of care preference

CDEC may deny requests for declines.

# MATCHING: HOW TO VIEW AND DECLINE MATCHES

## WHAT ARE THE PROCESS STEPS TO VIEW AND DECLINE “MATCHES”?

1. Login to the Provider Portal at [provider.upk.colorado.gov/welcome](https://provider.upk.colorado.gov/welcome).
2. Navigate to the “Matched” Tab.

The screenshot shows the provider portal interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the logo for 'UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL' and three tabs: 'Locations', 'Matched', and 'Students'. The 'Matched' tab is highlighted with a red box and a red arrow pointing to it, with the text '2. Matched Tab' above it. To the right of the navigation bar is a user profile icon with the initials 'YN' and the text 'Your Name'. Below the navigation bar is a blue header with a dropdown menu showing '2024-2025 Colorado Universal Preschool'. The main content area displays details for 'Universal Preschool 3', including its address '720 19th St. Dever, CO' and an 'Edit profile' button. Below this is a table with four columns: 'Matched', 'Accepted', 'Placed', and 'Enrolled', each with a blue link and the number '0'. Underneath the table is a 'Programs' section with two boxes: 'Extended Day: 41+ Hours per week' and 'Full-Time: 30-40 Hours per week', each with a blue link and '0 students'. At the bottom, there is a green checkmark icon and the text 'Completed: Start Program Set Up Form for 24/25', along with a 'Review' button and a lock icon.

# MATCHING: HOW TO VIEW AND DECLINE MATCHES

## WHAT ARE THE PROCESS STEPS TO VIEW AND DECLINE “MATCHES”?

3. Select the correct year to view in the top drop down menu.
4. Select the correct location to view from the middle drop down menu.

### Pro Tip:

- When reviewing this screen, users have the option to filter by status to better manage matches
- New records will show a “new” tag
- Pre-Registration matches will show the pre-registration element for verification

The screenshot shows the 'Matched' page of the Colorado Universal Preschool system. At the top, there are navigation links for 'Locations', 'Matched', and 'Students', and a user profile 'YN Your Name'. A dropdown menu is open, showing '2024-2025 Colorado Universal Preschool'. Below this, a search bar is present with the text 'Search interested families and children by name or child ID'. A 'Select all' button is on the left. A 'Location' dropdown is open, showing 'Universal Preschool 3'. A 'Status' dropdown is also open, with a 'Status filter' label. The main table displays two records:

Child	Year	Address	Location	Program	Status
<input type="checkbox"/> Brandon RA Current Student	<b>NEW</b> 2020-07-27	1234 Colfax St Denver	Stout Street Children's Center	Full-Time: 30-40 Hours per week	Placed
<input type="checkbox"/> Albert RA Sibling	<b>PRE</b> 2020-07-27	1234 Colfax St Denver	Stout Street Children's Center	Full-Time: 30-40 Hours per week	Placed

Annotations in red text point to specific elements: '3. School year drop down' points to the top dropdown; '4. Location Drop Down' points to the 'Location' dropdown; 'Status filter' points to the 'Status' dropdown; 'New record tag' points to the 'NEW' tag; and 'Pre-Registration Element' points to the 'PRE' tag.

# MATCHING: HOW TO VIEW AND DECLINE MATCHES

## WHAT ARE THE PROCESS STEPS TO VIEW AND DECLINE “MATCHES”?

5. Select the correct program to view in the middle drop down menu.
6. Click on the name of the student to open a pop up to initiate a decline.

The screenshot shows the 'Matched' section of the Universal Preschool website. At the top, there are navigation links for 'Locations', 'Matched', and 'Students', along with a user profile 'YN Your Name'. A dropdown menu is set to '2024-2025 Colorado Universal Preschool'. Below this, a search bar is labeled '5. Program Selection'. A filter menu is open, showing 'Full-Time: 30-40 Hours per week' selected. The main table lists two students: Brandon RA and Albert RA. Brandon RA is marked as a 'Current Student' and is highlighted with a red box labeled '6. Select student'. Albert RA is marked as a 'Sibling' and is also highlighted with a red box. The table columns include 'Child', 'DOB', 'Home', 'Location', 'Program', and 'Status'.

Child	DOB	Home	Location	Program	Status
<input type="checkbox"/> Brandon RA Current Student	2020-07-27	1234 Colfax St Denver	Stout Street Children's Center	Full-Time: 30-40 Hours per week	Placed
<input type="checkbox"/> Albert RA Sibling	2020-07-27	1234 Colfax St Denver	Stout Street Children's Center	Full-Time: 30-40 Hours per week	Placed

# MATCHING: HOW TO VIEW AND DECLINE MATCHES

## WHAT ARE THE PROCESS STEPS TO VIEW AND DECLINE “MATCHES”?

- When viewing the pop up, select the “status” drop down to open the status adjust dropdown menu.

### Pro Tip:

- This pop up will allow the Provider to see application information and take notes.

**To ACCEPT a match, Providers do not take any action. Simply leave the student as “placed”;** the system will move any placed student to matched based on the matching timeline.

The screenshot shows the Universal Preschool interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the logo, 'Locations', 'Matched', 'Students', and a user profile 'YN Your Name'. The main content area displays a pop-up for 'Albert RA #8680738' with a close button. Below the name, it shows 'Date of birth: July 27, 2020'. There are three items listed: 'Universal Preschool 3', 'March 7, 2024', and a link to 'View application'. A red box highlights the 'Status: Placed' dropdown menu, with a red arrow pointing to it and the text '7. Select the status drop down'. Below the status, it says 'Status last changed on March 7, 2024'. At the bottom, there are tabs for 'Family', 'Notes', and 'Documents'. The 'Family' tab is active, showing fields for 'Primary first name' (Test1), 'Primary last name' (February), 'Primary phone' ((555) 555-5555), 'Primary email' (alexander.winston@state.co.us), and empty fields for 'Secondary first name', 'Secondary last name', 'Secondary phone', and 'Secondary email'. The page number '32' is in the bottom right corner.

# MATCHING: HOW TO VIEW AND DECLINE MATCHES

## WHAT ARE THE PROCESS STEPS TO VIEW AND DECLINE “MATCHES”?

8. Select the “Decline” button
9. Enter the decline reason (if none of the available options matches your need to decline, see below)
10. Click Submit

### Pro Tips:

- If none of the options available applies to your reason for declining, you must submit a request to your LCO as outlined on the “Matching: Declines” page of this handbook.
- If the LCO approves the decline, the student is declined from this program and will be placed in a program in the next matching round; the open seat will be placed in the next matching round
- If the LCO rejects the decline, the student will be placed in the program

The screenshot shows the Universal Preschool web application interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the logo, 'Locations', 'Matched', and 'Students' tabs, and a user profile 'YN Your Name'. The main content area displays a student profile for 'Albert RA #8680738' with a date of birth of 'July 27, 2020'. The profile includes details for 'Universal Preschool 3' and a match date of 'March 7, 2024'. A 'View application' link is present. A 'Status' modal window is open, showing three options: 'Placed' (selected with a checkmark), 'Matched', and 'Accepted'. Below these options is an 'Enroll' button and a 'Decline' button, which is highlighted with a red box. A red arrow points from the 'Decline' button to a red text instruction: '8. Select the decline button and decline reason'. The background shows a 'Family' section with fields for 'Primary first name' (Test1), 'Primary phone' ((555) 555-5555), and 'Secondary first name'. A 'Documents' section shows a count of '12'.

# SUPPLEMENTAL HOURS: HOW TO ACCESS YOUR REPORT



## HOW DO I SEE WHICH OF MY STUDENTS QUALIFY FOR SUPPLEMENTAL HOURS?

To pull the report, go to the “Matched” tab (if you have a location then select the specific location), click on the menu icon (three dots) to download the enrollment report into a CSV file.

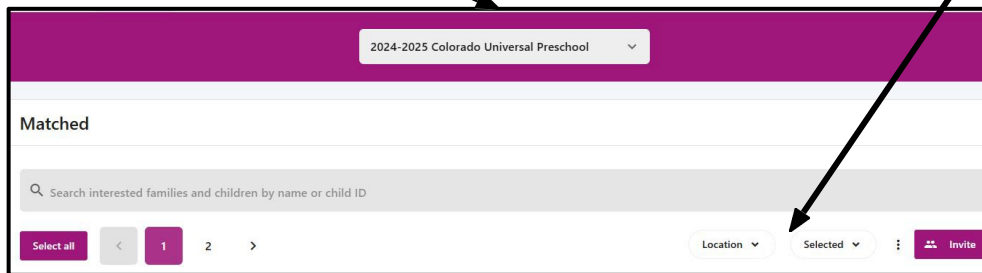
Once in the report, you can find the information in the column titled “Child Eligibility: Hours Per Week (HPW).” No matter the order of the numbers of the HPW, the child is eligible for all hours including the highest number listed in the report. These values indicate the number of hours per week the child is eligible for, such as:

- 10 HPW = Eligible for up to 10 hours of free preschool per week
- 10 HPW, 15 HPW = Eligible for up to 15 hours of free preschool per week
- 10 HPW, 15 HPW, 30 HPW = Eligible for up to 30 hours of free preschool per week

The new column “Supplemental Hours Award” shows whether a student has been verified for supplemental hours. If the value in that column is “TRUE,” the child’s eligibility for 30 hours has been verified. Any other value or lack of value means they are not yet eligible for 30 hours. The “Supplemental Hours Award Date” column is the date of the determination. [More details on accessing and reading your provider download can be found in this guide.](#)

Choose the program year from the drop down menu

Click the menu icon to download your report into a CSV file.



## SUPPLEMENTAL HOURS: 2026-2027 Award Notifications

- **What you need to know for 2026-2027:**
- Before each matching round and biweekly throughout direct enrollment, we will send the communication below to the following groups:
- **Families eligible for supplemental hours:** These are families who submitted their application within the validation window and meet 265% FPL (Federal Poverty Line) income, plus one additional qualifying factor.
- **Families ineligible for supplemental hours:** These are families who do not meet the 265% FPL (Federal Poverty Line) and/or do not have any other qualifying factors, but have selected at least one full or extended day option.



# This month's FAQs

**Q. What do I do if I have a child who has shown up in my portal as wanting a match for the remainder of this year (25-26) and I can't get a hold of the family?**

A. The state requires that you try to contact the family at least three times over two weeks. If you still cannot reach the family, contact JI UPK Team and ask that the child be withdrawn. **DO NOT** decline the child in these circumstances.

**Q. One of my families who is continuity of care with me missed the window. What are my options?**

A. You can contact JI to reduce your seats before the matching round by 1 to hold a seat for this child and then place the child after direct enrollment if they are not matched with you in a matching round. This should not be a common practice and should happen only for those who are currently attending with you and missed the window.

**Q. Under what circumstances can I decline a child?**

A. You can only decline a child if you have an approved reason. Those coincide with the criteria that you checked in your set up form such as being a school district and families need to live within your boundaries, or you are a coop and a family may not be able to meet your participation requirements. If you selected that none of those requirements apply to you, you do not have an approved reason to decline a child. If you need support for a child who is not a good fit, please reach out to Noreen to discuss the situation but **DO NOT** decline.

**Q. When can I put my 2026-27 children into enrolled status?**

A. This year, you can do that immediately if you choose but we suggest that you not move them to enrolled until all of YOUR paperwork has been completed.