

Professional Advisory

Use of the titles “early childhood educator” (ECE) and “registered early childhood educator” (RECE)

The intent of this advisory is to prevent misuse of titles and to assist members of the College of Early Childhood Educators (College) and the public with the identification of the legal and professional parameters that govern the use of the following professional titles and designations:

- “early childhood educator” (ECE)
- “registered early childhood educator” (RECE)
- “éducatrice / éducateur de la petite enfance”(EPE)
- “éducatrice / éducateur de la petite enfance inscrite” (EPEI)

This professional advisory addresses the responsible, professional use of the protected titles and designations. Only individuals who are members in good standing of the College of Early Childhood Educators (College) can use the titles and designations.

December 2017



Use of the Title

The *Early Childhood Educators Act* (ECE Act) recognizes early childhood education as a profession and prohibits any person, other than a member in good standing of the College, from using the titles protected under it. Protected titles include early childhood educator and registered early childhood educator; the designations ECE and RECE, and their French equivalents.

The protected titles and designations tell families, employers, colleagues and members of the public that early childhood educators are accountable professionals who have met the education and training requirements for entry to the profession, and whose practice is guided and informed by the *Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice*.

Standard IV of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* requires members to use the professional designation RECE in documentation used in connection with their practice. College members use their designation on:

- Reports
- Correspondence
- Letterhead
- Business cards
- Email signatures
- Professional materials
- Websites

The professional designation RECE cannot be modified in any way. It must be written in all capital letters with no periods in between, and should appear after a person's last name. If the individual has more than one professional designation, the designations should be separated by commas.

The protected title and professional designation is not interchangeable with an employment title. For example, the position titles Designated Early Childhood Educator (DECE) or Early Childhood Assistant (ECA) are employment titles only, and cannot be used in place of the professional designation.

If a College member's Certificate of Registration has expired or has been revoked, cancelled or suspended:

- A notation will be entered on the College's public register;
- The person may no longer use the title "early childhood educator" or "registered early childhood educator" or the designations ECE or RECE;
- The person may no longer represent or hold out that she or he is a member of the College;
- The person may no longer engage in the practice of early childhood education or hold herself or himself out as able to do so¹.

¹ Subject to certain exceptions. See "Who is Required to Join" on the College website.

Misuse of Title

It is an offence under the ECE Act for an individual who is not a member in good standing of the College to use the protected titles or their abbreviations. Upon conviction, a person is liable to a fine of up to \$5,000 for a first offence and up to \$10,000 for a subsequent offence. The College may also apply to a court for a court order that requires a person to comply with the legislation.

On occasion, individuals who are not early childhood educators claim that they are. This is illegal. The College posts on its website (<https://www.college-ece.ca/en/Public/unregulated-persons>) a list of individuals who are not members of the College and cannot legally practice the profession of early childhood education or use the protected titles.

College of Early Childhood Educators

438 University Avenue, Suite 1900

Toronto ON M5G 2K8

Telephone: 416 961-8558

Toll free: 1 888 961-8558

Fax: 416 961-8772

E-mail: communications@college-ece.ca
college-ece.ca

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français sous le titre: *Avis professionnel: Emploi du titre d'« éducatrice de la petite enfance » ou d'« éducateur de la petite enfance » (EPE)*

If you require an accessible format and/or communication support, please contact a College staff member or the College at 1-888-961-8558 / communications@college-ece.ca