



Applicant Handbook

Cycle 2

An initiative led by



هيئة أبوظبي
للطفولة المبكرة
Abu Dhabi Early
Childhood Authority

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About ECA

The Abu Dhabi Early Childhood Authority (ECA) is a government entity, based in Abu Dhabi Emirate, that supports holistic early childhood development. We oversee the Early Childhood Development sector in Abu Dhabi with a mind that is committed to the highest standards and young children are at the heart of all we do.

We help young children flourish by playing vital roles:

We are an Enabler

We broaden the capabilities of our partners to support holistic child development

We are a Policymaker

We develop coordinated and aligned policies and laws

We are a Knowledge Hub

We inform decision-making through research, data and evidence

We are a Disruptor

We transform how people think about and address the needs of young children

One of the most important things we can do as a society is to invest in our children early, which is why our primary focus is on children aged 0-8 years old. Our target age group has been identified on the basis of the latest scientific research. By 3 years of age, a child's brain is already more than 80 percent of adult size. By 5 years of age, it's grown to about 90 percent of adult size. The age range we focus on is also consistent with the definition of early childhood applied by international organizations such as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO) as well as the World Bank.



About the Parent-friendly Label™

The Parent-friendly Label™ (PFL) is a voluntary workplace award program that provides a range of criteria your organization can adopt in order to be recognized and awarded for your parent-friendly policies and practices. Among a wide range of benefits, eligible organizations that earn the PFL will be entitled to display it as a symbol of their commitment in this area.

Working families in the UAE often need to make difficult tradeoffs in order to fulfil their various commitments, and we know they can require additional support at work and at home. By encouraging more parent-friendly workplaces, we can establish a culture, policies and ways of working that are more compatible with the needs of working parents of young children aged 0-8. This, in turn, would have a positive social and economic impact on our community.

Parent-friendly workplaces demonstrate a deep understanding of family needs by offering a work culture and environment that is compassionate towards working parents. This is primarily manifested through offering flexibility for working parents, actively welcoming back new mothers and fathers and providing sufficient parental leave, among other measures.

Research has demonstrated that by empowering parents to play a more active role in their children's lives during the early years from 0-8, a positive and lifelong impact is generated, thereby benefiting the community as a whole. When you support working parents, you are also supporting the development of future generations to come, as well as the future of the UAE.

In support of the Parent-friendly Label program, Eltayib Adam, UNICEF Representative to the Gulf Area, said: "UNICEF is pleased to note the progress being made by Abu Dhabi's Early Childhood Authority (ECA) when it comes to family-friendly policies, in particular with the Parent-friendly Label. The aspiration to match the policies with internationally recognized standards and progressively work towards UNICEF's recommended best practices is praiseworthy."



Research suggests that parent-friendly policies and practices in the workplace can:



Reduce parental stress and parent absenteeism in their children's lives ¹

Increase chances of women realizing their full potential, while contributing both at home and to the economy ²

Enable fathers to be more involved in the early years, supporting children to have better developmental outcomes, potentially leading to less behavioral problems and improved cognitive and mental health ³



Lower rates of acute infant, chronic illnesses and decrease likelihood to variety of infections when mothers are supported to nurse their babies ⁴

Research has also shown that a parent-friendly workplace committed to supporting families with young children can reduce parenting stress and promote wellbeing, which in turn can lead to greater productivity and support business objectives.⁵

¹ UNICEF, "Family-Friendly Policies –Handbook For Business, 2020

² UNICEF, "Family-Friendly Policies –Handbook For Business, 2020

³ United States Department of Labor, "Why Parental Leave For Fathers Is So Important For Working Families" 2016;

⁴ CNN, "The benefits of paid leave for children are real, majority of research says", 2015;

⁵ Family-Friendly Policies –Handbook For Business, 2020;

Many businesses have found that the adoption of parent-friendly policies and practices can:

77%

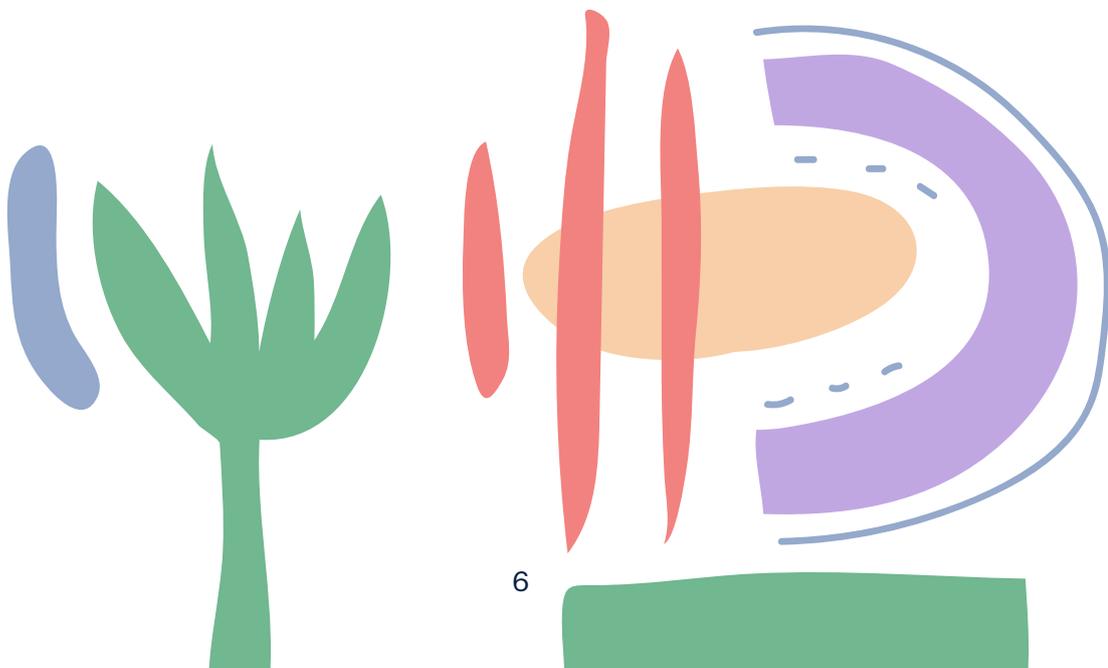
Increase company attractiveness, with 77% of respondents to one study in Australia reporting that it affected their choice of employer ¹

Increase productivity and employee motivation as a result of more flexible working conditions ²

Have a positive impact on recruitment, retention, loyalty and morale, among a wide range of cultural and reputational benefits ³



1 Australian Government – Australian Institute of Family Studies, “Fathers and parental leave”, 2019
2 Forbes, “The Connection Between Employee Engagement And Wellness”, 2019
3 UNICEF, “Family-Friendly Policies –Handbook For Business”, 2020;



Eligibility Criteria

To determine if your organization is eligible to apply for the Parent-friendly Label™ (PFL), it is important to consider the following questions:

Does your organization operate in the private sector, semi-government sector or third sector?

Does your organization have a valid trade license issued in the UAE?

Can your organization demonstrate a commitment to parent-friendliness?

If you answered “yes” to all these questions, then you may be eligible to apply.



What are the benefits of the Parent-friendly Label™ (PFL)?

The Parent-friendly Label™ (PFL) offers a number of benefits to its recipients, including an opportunity to learn from leading practices as well as public recognition of your organization in the adoption and implementation of parent-friendly policies and practices.

The primary benefits include:

Workplace impact

Positive employee/family wellbeing and business outcomes realized through the implementation of parent-friendly policies.



Impact on employees' wellbeing

When employees feel supported by their employer to balance their work and family commitments, they can better deal with stress, which results in improved wellbeing. Employees' wellbeing is a key factor in determining an organization's long-term success.

Increased employee loyalty

Employees that work in parent-friendly workplaces value the care and support provided by their employers, creating greater loyalty to the organization.

Higher productivity

Parent-friendly policies such as extended parental leave, employee wellbeing programs, and flexible working have been shown to have no negative impact on productivity, and in most cases, have a positive effect.

Increased employer competitiveness

Employers that are known for prioritizing families and parents enjoy reputational benefits and are often regarded as employers of choice, especially for more experienced employees that, due to their age group, are most likely to have children.

Knowledge sharing

Access to success stories and experiences from peers and the wider community.

Evaluation Report insights

All applicants will receive a customized Evaluation Report that includes the outcome of your application, key highlights, areas of opportunity, evaluator observations, evaluator recommendations around areas of opportunity, and the unique innovative practices and initiatives that you implement which stood out to the evaluators.

Recognition

Label recipients will receive the Parent-friendly Label™ Plaque for display in their offices, a congratulatory letter from the Leadership and be recognized through traditional and social media channels. Organizations that apply but don't earn the Label receive a Participation Appreciation Certificate.

Brand Guidelines

Recipients will be provided with a set of brand guidelines for use in their internal and external communication efforts.

Communications campaign

Targeted outreach designed to provide recipients with public recognition of their efforts both in the media and through ECA-owned social media channels.

What are the two levels of the Label?

The Parent-friendly Label™ (PFL) is awarded at one of two levels.



OR



Level 1: Parent-friendly Label™

Employers that demonstrate evidence of the adoption of parent-friendly policies based on Level 1 criteria.

Level 2: Parent-friendly+

Employers that meet or exceed global leading practices in parent-friendly policies based on Level 2 criteria.

Specific organizational targets have been defined for each level, and those for 'Parent-friendly+' are more comprehensive and ambitious.

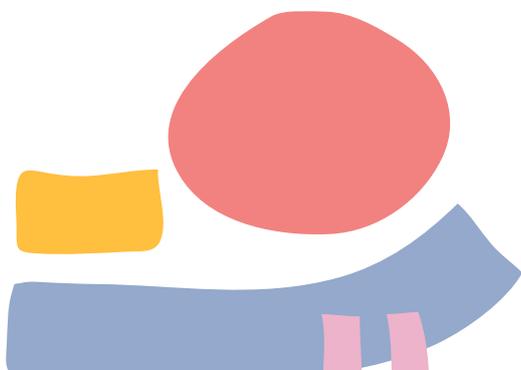
Your Label will remain valid for 2 years, however, after 12 months of earning it, you will be asked to submit an update and show progress on your action plan in order to maintain the certification for another 12 months.

How will my organization be assessed?

To ensure the credibility and integrity of the Parent-friendly Label™, the assessment will be conducted by an independent third party. Eligible applicants will be assessed against 19 criteria spanning 5 categories. 8 of these criteria are mandatory and 11 are optional. Applicants will need to achieve 8 of the mandatory criteria and 6 of the optional criteria.

The criteria and targets were thoroughly developed and validated through a number of key activities:

- 1 Gathering research and data from leading global institutions such as UNICEF, the OECD, International Labor Organization, among others
- 2 Understanding global leading practices from 16 countries, such as Nordic nations, as well as global leading organizations
- 3 Reviewing 9 existing single and multi-award programs in family-friendliness globally
- 4 Collaborating with private sector companies and working closely with experts in the field to cross-check against the UAE context to ensure market needs and conditions were accounted for

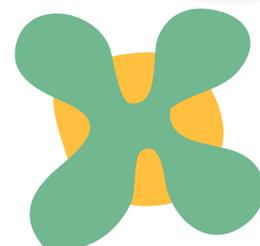


5 Given the nature of the Education Sector, with a focus on being present with children to best support their development, we took the time to understand their experience, needs and challenges through a series of focus groups with the UAE's education regulators, education Operators (covering 60+ schools), several nurseries and higher education institutions. Based on their insights, we amended the criteria in two major ways:

- We made having a flexible work policy optional. This is a policy which documents the applicant's flexible working arrangements, including the types of flexibility available (e.g. hours, location, part time, job sharing). This policy places focus on output and outcomes achieved rather than set hours of work. Employees with access to this policy should include at a minimum those that are pregnant, returning from parental leave, or caring for a Child of Determination.
- The second criteria we amended is that we make offering childcare a mandatory criteria. This means that employees are supported by their employers to access childcare support, including when childcare is not available, such as during school holidays.

We have already seen a variety of policies and practices the Education Sector has implemented to further support working parents within their organizations. Some of these include:

- Offering 10 days paternity leave, double the UAE labor law requirement
- Counseling and in-house occupational health available for employees and their families
- A pool of substitute teachers ready and available to take on lesson plans and lead classrooms in cases of emergency leave
- Access to nurseries for employee children, with the flexibility to extend pick up as needed



The 19 criteria fall within 5 overarching categories:

A

Parental Leave

Dedicated leave days and arrangements provided to parents to support them before, during and on return from the birth **OR** foster care of their child

B

Flexible Work

Flexible work practices are accommodated to allow for caring responsibilities and changing family arrangements

C

Family Care

Employees are supported and empowered to make choices to reconcile work and caring responsibilities

D

Family Wellbeing

Support for the emotional, mental, and physical wellbeing of employees and their families is offered

E

Culture

Parent-friendly policies and practices are embedded into organizational culture through training, professional development, monitoring and feedback mechanisms

Judging Panel

A judging panel made up of members from leading public institutions is tasked with reviewing the label applicants and making recommendations on selection.

Clarification Sessions

During the assessment process, a clarification session will be held between the evaluators and the applicant, where necessary.

i. Assessment Criteria

'Yes' indicates that this component of the relevant criteria will be assessed. If 'NA', this component is not applicable to the assessment of that criteria. There are also areas where a numerical value has been added to be evaluated against when required.

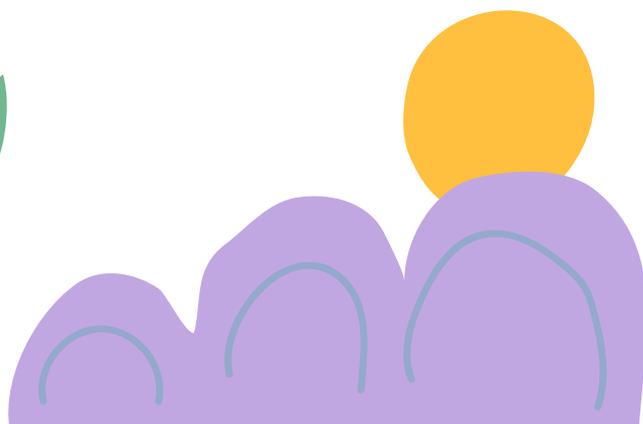
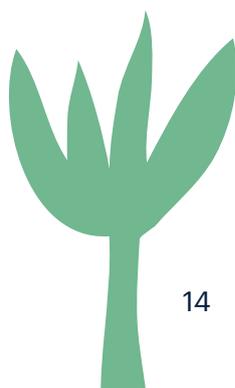
The assessment of some components will be based on responses provided to a Parent-friendly Experience Survey which you are responsible for sharing with your employees. This is a mandatory component of your application. These areas have been indicated and highlighted when they are included.

A- Parental Leave:

i. A1. Maternity leave – Mandatory

Parental leave granted to women before and after the birth **OR** foster care of a child, to allow mothers to heal, nurture, care for and bond with their child.

Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Number of paid maternity leave calendar days offered	90 days	136 days
Flexibility in how maternity leave is taken (i.e. deferring leave days to later or spreading part-time over a longer period)	Yes	Yes
Option to take unpaid leave along with maternity leave	Yes	Yes



ii. A2. Paternity leave - Mandatory

Parental leave granted to men before and after the birth **OR** foster care of a child, to allow fathers to nurture, care for and bond with their family.

Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Number of paid paternity leave working days offered	5+ working days	10+ working days
Flexibility in using paternity days (i.e. deferring leave days to later or spreading leave days over a longer period)	Yes	Yes
Option to take unpaid leave along with paternity leave	NA	Yes
% of employees who agree that it is important to take paternity leave	60%	80%
% of employees who agree that fathers are supported by peers to take their full paternity leave benefit	60%	80%
% of employees who agree that fathers are supported by leadership to take their full paternity leave benefit	60%	80%

iii. A3. Special parental leave - Optional

Special leave provisions for prenatal **OR** foster care appointments, illness during pregnancy, miscarriage, stillbirth or loss.

Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Fully paid maternity leave in cases of stillbirth after 6 months	Entire maternity leave benefit (90 days)	Entire maternity leave benefit (136 days)
Number of days offered for antenatal or foster care appointments	2 days paid	Policy does not limit
Additional leave in the case of miscarriage (before 24 weeks)	2 weeks unpaid	2 weeks paid
Additional maternity leave in cases of multiple births in a single pregnancy	Yes, unpaid	Yes, paid
Additional paternity leave in cases of multiple births in a single pregnancy	Yes, unpaid	Yes, paid

iv. A4. Leave transition support - Optional

Employees are provided with support as they depart on, remain on and return from, extended parental leave through regular manager communication, transitional flexible work arrangements and re-integration programs.

Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Communications sent prior to parental leave detail support options available to employees to help their transition back to work	Yes	Yes
Option for employees to be invited to work events during parental leave	Yes	Yes
Availability of a formalized training / coaching / mentoring program for employees to support them before they take leave or upon their return	NA	Yes
Option for employees to have regular touch points with managers while on leave	NA	Yes
Option for transitional working arrangements upon employee's return to work	NA	Yes

v. A5. Employee benefits while on unpaid parental leave - Optional

Employee receives benefits while on unpaid leave such as continuity of their health insurance, ability to apply for roles to progress career, access to organizational communications, surveys and trainings, and inclusion in remuneration reviews, team events and activities.

Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Employee benefits are protected throughout the duration of parental leave	Access to at least 70% of employee benefits offered by the organization	Access to all employee benefits offered by the organization are provided

B- Flexible Work:

i. B1. Flexible work policy - Mandatory Flexible work policy - Optional (Education sector applicants)

Policy which documents the organization’s flexible working arrangements, including the types of flexibility available (e.g. hours, location, part time, job sharing). This policy places focus on output and outcomes achieved rather than set hours of work. Employees with access to this policy should include at a minimum those that are pregnant, returning from parental leave, or caring for a Child of Determination.

Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Documented flexible working policy includes flexible hours and remote working	Yes	Yes
Policy includes job share, part time, annualized hours and other options	job share, part time, annualized hours	L1 + at least 2 additional options
Specific provision for parents to work flexibly to attend school events	Yes	Yes
Flexible work arrangements are embedded in employee contracts	NA	Yes
% employee satisfaction with flexible work arrangements	60%	90%
% employees who agree that flexible working is promoted, supported and role modeled at all levels	NA	80%
% employees who agree that they feel comfortable requesting their manager to work flexibly	60%	80%

ii. B2. Short term flexible work - Optional

Entitlement for employees to work remotely for short periods to accommodate caring responsibilities or care emergencies e.g. loss of childcare or childcare illness.

Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Short term flexible working practice in place for cases of childcare emergencies or childcare illness	Yes	Yes
Access to emergency medical leave days for childcare emergencies or hospitalization	NA	Yes

iii. B3. Flexible working job evaluation and progression - Optional

Employees working flexibly are able to progress in their careers, and organizational processes provide fair review of performance for those working flexibly.

Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Job evaluation guidelines consider flexible working	Yes	Yes
Employees can challenge reviews on the basis that working flexibly negatively impacted their performance evaluation	NA	Yes
% of employees who agree that using flexible working can still advance their careers	NA	80%



C- Family Care:

i. C1. Nursing - Mandatory

Employees are able to take paid breaks from work to pump or nurse their baby where applicable, and a private and hygienic maternity space with storage facilities, power, microwave, seating and baby change facilities is available. Extra support could include access to a lactation specialist, hospital-grade breast pumps, sanitation equipment, fresh towels, lockers, parenting books, wireless speaker, window access, adjustable lighting, WIFI and charging station.

Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Number of nursing break hours per day	2 hours/day	Policy does not limit
Availability of an onsite maternity room, a private, hygienic room, where the mother is comfortable and can store and heat milk	A private and hygienic maternity room with fridge and microwave provided + option for suitable alternative	L1 + at least 3 of the listed "extras" + option for suitable alternative

* This criteria applies to organizations with a physical office space and who do not already offer flexibility of remote work to new mothers.

ii. C2. Childcare - Optional Childcare - Required (Education sector applicants)

Employees are supported by their employers to access childcare support, including when childcare is not available, such as during school holidays.

Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Forms of childcare assistance e.g. direct financial support, vouchers, discounts, domestic helper training, domestic helper search, dedicated facilities (such as a kids' corner or onsite childcare that is compliant with all applicable regulations)	Availability of at least 1 form of childcare assistance	Availability of at least 3 forms of childcare assistance
% of employees who agree that they are satisfied with the support offered to access childcare support (e.g. childcare discounts, on-site daycare, etc.)	60%	80%

iii. C3. Caregiver education - Optional

Information and resources are made available for employees on relevant topics including babies, toddlers, children, and Children of Determination specifically.

Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Parenting education resources are offered (i.e. seminars on parent topics, educational materials, access to ECA's Parents Platform)	Yes	Yes
Structured parenting training is offered (an example of this can be experts and facilitators providing on the ground training for expectant parents)	NA	Yes
Targeted caregiver training that covers different caregiver and parenting styles for different needs is offered (example can be providing first-aid nanny training)	NA	Yes

iv. C4. Child of Determination caregiver support - Optional

Employees caring for a Child of Determination can access additional support and/or benefits through their employer.

Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Policy in place (or included within another policy) to support employees caring for a Child of Determination	Yes	Yes
Employers provide at least two forms of support to parents caring for a Child of Determination	30 or more days paid, 30 unpaid of additional maternity leave	L1 + at least 2 additional benefits
% of employees who agree that the support for parents caring for Children of Determination is clearly defined	NA	80%
% of employees who agree that support for parents caring for Children of Determination is sufficient	NA	80%

D - Family Wellbeing:

i. D1. Employee wellbeing support - Mandatory

Programs and services available to promote the emotional, mental and physical wellbeing of employees and their families.

Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Formalized wellbeing support for emotional and mental wellbeing including stress management support, mental health and counseling services	Availability of physical health targeted programs and family wellbeing activities	Availability of physical health targeted programs and family wellbeing activities and at least one type of mental health support (examples include stress management, mental health, post-natal depression support)
PRO/admin support is offered to new parents	Yes	Yes
Peer-led family support groups are available	NA	Yes
Formalized manager training and education in awareness and application of wellbeing support, potentially including but not limited to first aid courses or CPR training	NA	Yes

ii. D2. Worker protection on parental leave - Mandatory

Employee rights are protected and cannot be undermined due to eligible parental leave or the utilization of nursing hours.

Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Protection from termination during pregnancy and parental leave	Yes	Yes, and for a period of 6 months from childbirth

iii. D3. Women's leadership and career programs - Optional

Dedicated support for women to advance in their careers given the specific challenges they often face in balancing family and work responsibilities.

Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Support programs for women's leadership advancement or career progression are available based on merit	Yes	Yes, and they address specific groups (i.e. mothers)
Structured support and mentorship networking opportunities	NA	Yes
% of employees who believe women's leadership and career programs offered at their organization are effective	60%	80%
% of employees who agree that their organization clearly communicates programs and services that promote the emotional, mental and physical wellbeing of employees and their families	60%	80%

E-culture:

i. E1. Manager enablement and support - Mandatory

Managers are knowledgeable of parent-friendly policies and implement them in line with the intention for which they were created. Employees feel comfortable and supported utilizing the parent-friendly policies that are available to them.

Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Training or awareness sessions are provided to managers periodically to enable them to implement parent-friendly policies and practices seamlessly	Yes	Yes
% of employees who agree their manager is supportive of their caregiving responsibilities	60%	80%
% of employees who agree that their manager is supportive of employees utilizing parent-friendly policies	60%	80%
% of employees who agree that their manager applies parent-friendly policies consistently across the team	60%	80%

ii. E2. Internal promotion of parent-friendly policies - Mandatory

Parent-friendly policies are documented and promoted within the organization to all employees.

Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Promotion of parent-friendly policies throughout organization, including ensuring they are easily accessed by employees	Yes	Yes
% of employees who feel they have a good understanding of the parent-friendly policies available to them	60%	80%
% of employees who agree that they know how and where to access information on parent-friendly policies	60%	80%
% of employees who agree they are comfortable utilizing the parent-friendly support provided by their organization	60%	80%

iii. E3. Policy monitoring and impact - Optional

Organizations review the utilization of parent-friendly policies, including identifying potential areas for improvement, and use that intelligence to inform policy changes.

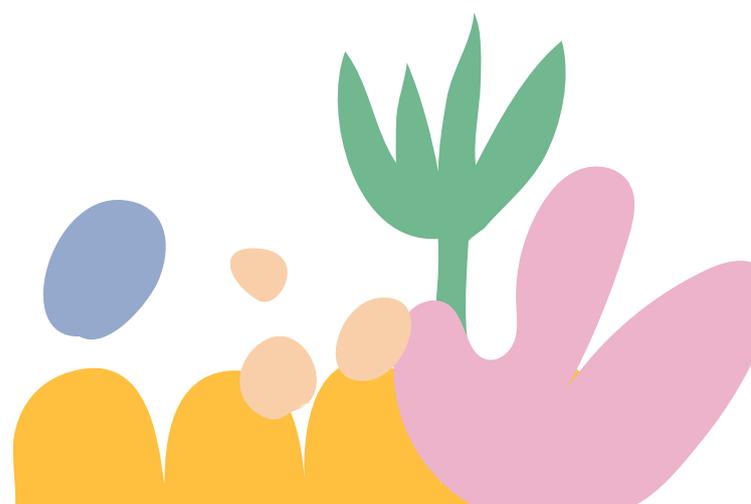
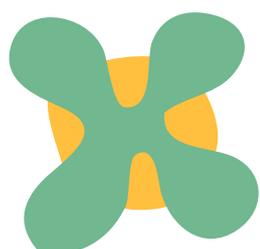
Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Measures are in place and reviewed regularly to ensure that policies and practices are delivering parent-friendly outcomes as intended	Yes	Yes
Organizations take action to update policies in line with the outcomes of the policy reviews	NA	Yes
% of employees who agree they are satisfied with parent-friendly policies	60%	80%



iv. E4. Employee listening and impact - Optional

Organizations can illustrate that they have collected feedback from employees on parent-friendly policies, have introduced creative solutions to meet employee needs, and can demonstrate with data the impact of these initiatives.

Components of measurement	Parent-friendly	Parent-friendly+
Organizations can demonstrate that they have a mechanism in place to collect employee feedback and ideas on parent-friendly policies	Yes	Yes
There is a structured and well-governed process in place by which employee feedback and suggestions are reviewed, piloted, tested and implemented where applicable	NA	Yes
The positive impact of improvements in policy can be demonstrated through credible data analysis	NA	Yes
% of employees who agree that they can provide feedback on parent-friendly policies	60%	80%
% of employees who feel that their feedback will be taken seriously	60%	80%



Innovation

Applicants are encouraged to share details about how they have been innovative in the delivery of parent-friendly processes and supply supporting evidence. The more information provided, the better the evaluator will be able to assess the level of creativity applied.

When sharing your innovative solutions, please keep in mind how your organization has gone above and beyond to support parents and their children's needs: whether this was done through a policy, new programs or projects, onsite office changes, or other actions taken to enhance their experience.

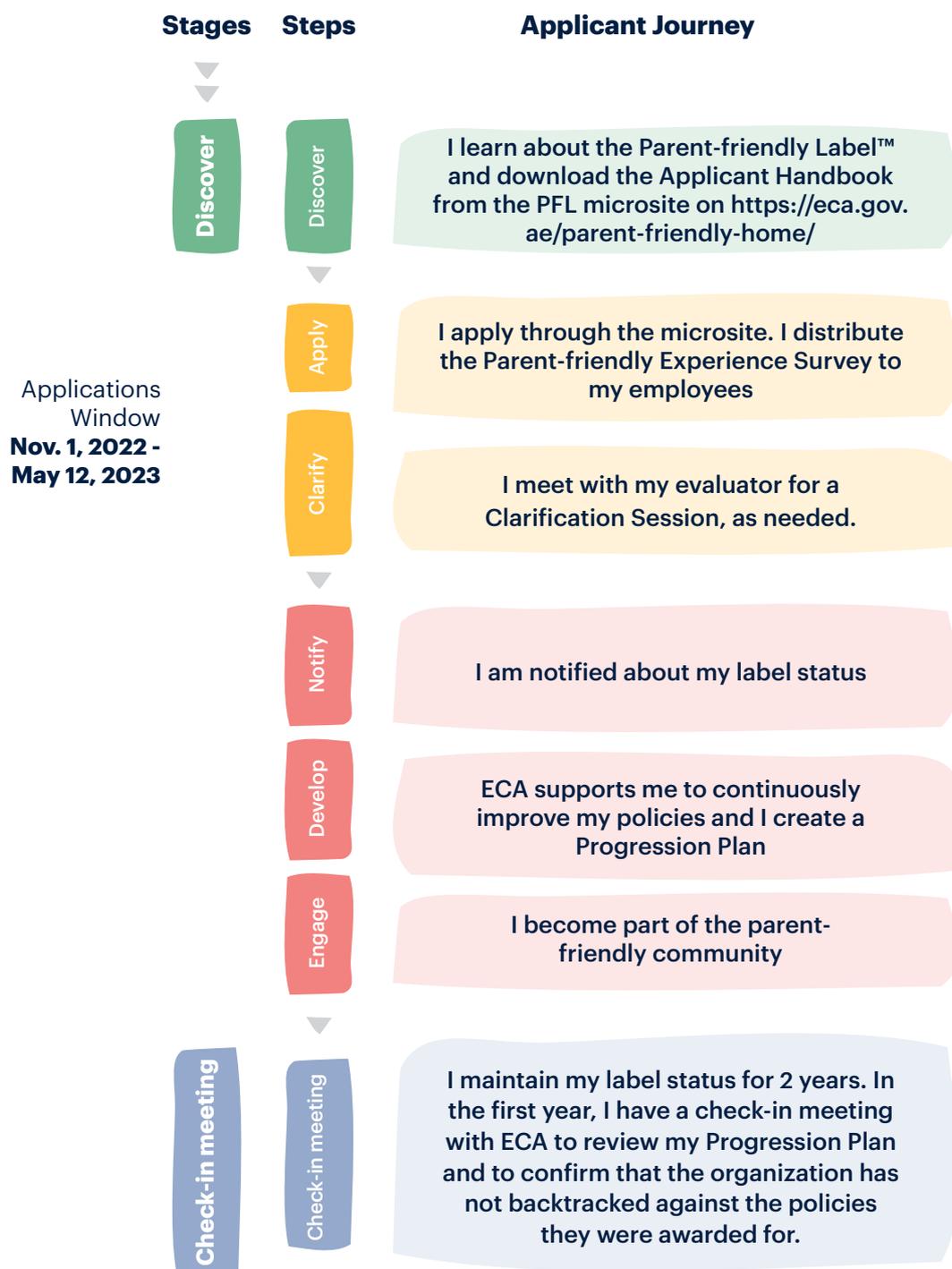
ii. About the Parent-friendly Experience Survey

As a mandatory part of your application, you will be required to share a brief Parent-friendly Experience Survey with your employees. These questions were designed to specifically assess how employees view current parent-friendly practices within their own organization. Employee responses to the survey will be anonymous and will be collected and analyzed by an independent 3rd party to prevent bias and maintain privacy.

The Parent-friendly Experience Employee Survey response rate is based on the size of your organization (total number of employees in the UAE), ensuring the right coverage of employee participation based on statistical best practices. Throughout your application journey, we aim to support you.

The Applicant Journey

Interested in joining the parent-friendly community? Here's what you need to know!



i. How to Apply

STEP 1

Review this Applicant Handbook in order to better understand the criteria.

STEP 2

Complete the application form on <https://eca.gov.ae/parent-friendly-home/>, upload all required documentation, and submit your application before the deadline. Once your application is received, an independent evaluator will conduct a clarification session with you, if necessary.

STEP 3

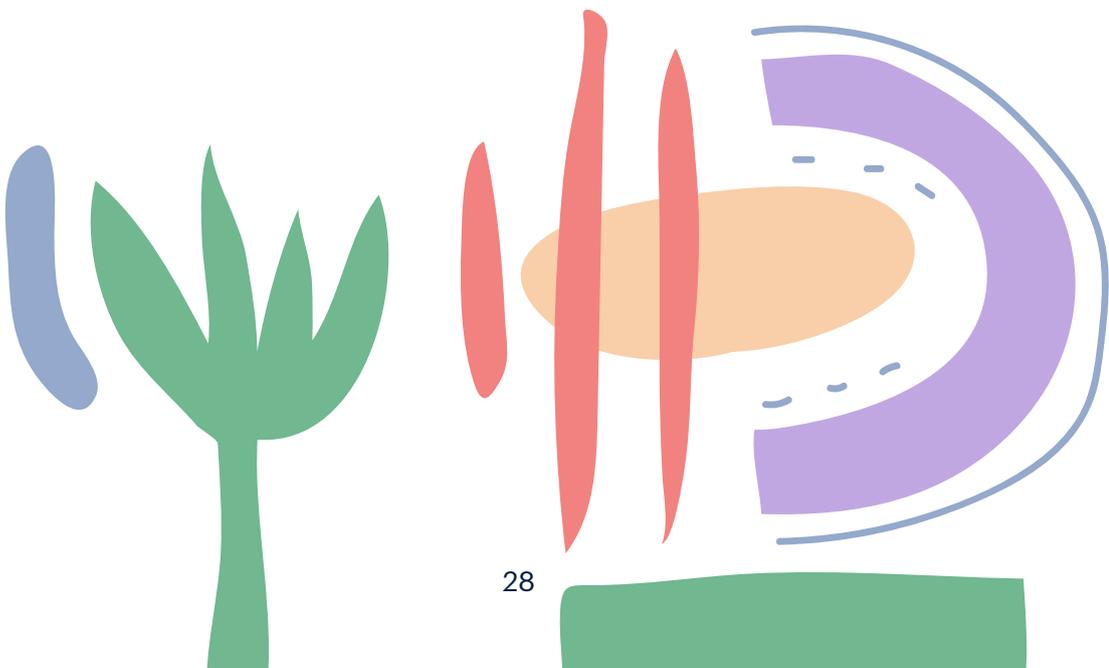
Circulate the Parent-friendly Experience Survey to your employees, keeping in mind that this is a mandatory component of your application process.

ii. After You Apply

- The ECA will communicate with you, as needed, to answer any additional questions you may have.
- Once assessment is complete, the ECA will personally notify all applicants of their status and recipients will be recognized for their achievement.
- Applicants that have not yet achieved the Parent-friendly Label™ will be provided with an Evaluation Report and a Feedback Session on how they can better prepare for the next cycle through the development of a Progression Plan.
- Recipients will become a part of the parent-friendly community and start receiving benefits.
- Recipients will receive the Parent-friendly Label™ brand guidelines so that you can share the achievement with your people and inspire other organizations to follow your lead in being a parent-friendly workplace.

Journey Checklist

- Submit the Application Form online
- Circulate the Parent-friendly Experience Survey to your employees
- Attend the Clarification Session, if needed.
- Receive your organization's Evaluation Report
- Attend the Feedback Session
- Establish your Progression Plan and secure endorsement from your management
- Receive your Parent-friendly Label™ Plaque and the Parent-friendly Label™ Brand Guidelines
- Collaborate with ECA on how to share your story
- Communications campaign to promote your organization as parent-friendly



Quality Assurance

To ensure the credibility and integrity of the Parent-friendly Label™ (PFL), a series of checks and balances for quality assurance and control have been put in place throughout the assessment process.

Selection

Application assessment will be conducted by a professional vendor with a trusted reputation and extensive experience to ensure complete fairness and integrity throughout the assessment process. ECA and its personnel will not be directly involved at any stage of the evaluation process.

Evaluation

Evaluators will receive extensive training on the PFL's criteria to ensure complete understanding of the framework and the assessment criteria.

Reporting

Applicants will be communicated with as needed to respond to additional questions or request evidence or clarification to ensure every part of the application is accurate and complete for assessment. Applicants who have not yet achieved the Parent-friendly Label™ will also have the opportunity to receive feedback in order to better understand the results of their application and how they can improve for the next cycle if they wish to re-apply.

The purpose of the Parent-friendly Label™ is to encourage and reward the adoption of parent-friendly policies and practices across workplaces in the private, semi-government and third sectors in the UAE. ECA recognizes, however, that a conflict of interest could potentially arise when entering a professional relationship in the course of business activities with organizations who may choose to apply to the Label.

In order to ensure the neutrality and independence of the selection of Parent-friendly Label™ applicants and avoidance of undue influence, ECA has implemented the following to retain the integrity of the Label:

1. Contracted a third-party evaluation firm with a strong reputation of ensuring independence to conduct the assessment and analysis of all submitted applications
2. Included as part of the Parent-friendly Label™ recipient selection process, a Judging Panel made up of independent senior stakeholders from leading public institutions across the UAE, who will be reviewing and recommending the list of successful applicants
3. If any applicant organization has an existing relationship or is collaborating with ECA, then this will be disclosed to the Judging Panel

Notification to ECA of Changes

Organizations are responsible for notifying the ECA of all significant changes that impact their implementation of the PFL criteria within 90 days of their occurrence. Significant changes include, but are not limited to, those listed below.

Focal Points

If the change relates to the organization's focal point, please inform the ECA immediately of the new focal point's name, title and contact details.

Leadership

If the change relates to the organization's leadership, please inform the ECA immediately of the new leader's name, title and contact details.

Ownership Changes

ORGANIZATIONS WORKING TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE LABEL – The new owner must sign and submit a letter of intent signifying the organization's intent to continue to pursue the Parent-friendly Label™.

ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE EARNED THE LABEL – The new owner must send ECA a signed letter reporting the new ownership. The letter must state either the organization's current implementation of the Label criteria will not be impacted and why, or the organization's current implementation of the Label criteria will be impacted and what plans the organization has to ensure that all requirements will continue to be met.

Organization Mergers

The organization must send a letter signed by the CEO describing the changes. The letter must state either the organization's current implementation of the Label criteria will not be impacted and why, or the organization's current implementation of the Label criteria will be impacted and what plans the organization has to ensure that all requirements will continue to be met.

In addition, if the merger results in more than one organization, only the organization that applied for the Label and underwent an assessment may claim Parent-friendly Label™ designation. In order for the new organization to claim Parent-friendly Label™ designation, it must apply for the Parent-friendly Label™ separately.

Confidentiality

All data and information submitted by applicants will be used exclusively for the purposes of assessing their application for the Parent-friendly Label™ (PFL), and individual responses will not be shared with third parties outside of the evaluation parameters. This extends to ECA's selected evaluation vendor, ensuring a fair application assessment.

PFL recipients will be announced publicly, but the individual policies and practices or other organization-specific data shared as part of the application process will not be shared without written consent and authorization from the organization.

Data may be anonymized and aggregated for the purposes of understanding overall trends, and general aggregated data about applicants and the assessment process may also be used in communications by ECA. Organizations may also self-disclose their own individual data in any of their communications should they wish to do so.

Contact details

Do you have any additional questions?

You can always reach out to our team and we will get back to you!

E-mail: pfl@eca.gov.ae

Phone: **Abu Dhabi Government Contact Center (800-555) or
PFL Team (+971 56 533 7474)**

<https://eca.gov.ae/parent-friendly-home/>

You can also check out our <https://eca.gov.ae/parent-friendly-home/pfl-faq/>
for more information.

PFL UAE PFL_UAE

An initiative led by



هيئة أبوظبي للطفولة المبكرة
Abu Dhabi Early Childhood Authority

