Thank you for considering Commerce Kids. This purpose of this page is to provide basic information regarding our waiting list. Please call (202) 482-1587 to schedule a tour or make any inquiries so that we can meet with you to discuss your individual needs. Below is a description of our waiting list procedures and policies.

1. Applications for enrollment at Commerce Kids must include a desired start date (month and year) for child care and one of the following: (a) your child’s date of birth; (b) your child’s estimated due date; or (c) proof of an adoption application. Commerce Kids cannot accept placeholder applications (meaning applications that do not include a birth date, due date, or proof of adoption application).

2. If you decide to apply for enrollment, there is a $50 non-refundable waiting list processing fee due at the time you place your child on the waiting list. There is also a $25 non-refundable waiting list processing fee for each additional child placed on the waiting list at the same time or subsequent to enrollment of the first child. Any such waiting list processing fees are not applicable toward registration, security deposit, or tuition fees, if and when a child is enrolled in the future.

3. Commerce Kids operates under a priority system for new enrollees. Children are offered open spots in the Center based on the following descending order of priority:

   a. Siblings of children of Federal employees presently enrolled in the program have first priority. If two Federal employee families with children presently enrolled in the Center seek to enroll an additional child at the same time, families with at least one parent employed by the Department of Commerce will receive priority over non-DOC families; otherwise, spaces for siblings of children of Federal employees will be offered according to the date on which the application was received by Commerce Kids.

   b. Children of Department of Commerce employees have second priority.

   c. Children of employees of other Federal agencies have third priority.

   d. Siblings of children of non-Federal employees presently enrolled in the program have fourth priority.

   e. Children of Commerce Kids employees have fifth priority.

   f. Children of Department of Commerce contract employees have sixth priority.

   g. All other applicants have seventh priority.

Because of this priority system, an applicant’s place on the waiting list order is not fixed. Within each category, applicants will be offered space in the program on a first-come, first-served basis; nevertheless, regardless of the date of your application, your place on the waitlist may be moved down by an application subsequently submitted by an applicant from a higher-priority category.
In addition to the priority system outlined in section three of this policy, children currently enrolled in the program receive priority over new enrollees for openings in classrooms other than the infant classroom.

While Commerce Kids requests employment status category (i.e., DOC employee, federal employee, non-federal employee) in the waiting list application, the deciding factor in determining the order of enrollment priority detailed above is the employment category at the time a spot becomes available. As such, Commerce Kids requires that if employment information changes while a family is on the waiting list, the family inform Commerce Kids of this change. When a spot is offered, it is contingent on Commerce Kids having accurate information about employment status category. However, once your child is enrolled, your child’s status will not be affected by a change in either parent’s place of employment.

4. Placement on the waiting list does not guarantee that a space will be available when you want it, even if you are in a high-priority category. The earlier you apply, the greater your chances will be for future enrollment. Commerce Kids requires only two weeks’ notice of intent to withdraw a child currently enrolled in the program; as a result, the availability of space for new enrollees is sometimes known only two weeks in advance. In general, we will not contact you until we can offer you an opportunity to enroll. We therefore encourage you to periodically check on the status of your place on the waiting list and changes in anticipated spaces for new enrollees. In particular, if you apply before the birth or adoption of your child, you should make contact when your child is born or adopted to update your waiting list application with the child’s name and date of birth and updated contact information for you, if applicable.

5. The minimum age at which a child may enroll at Commerce Kids is 12 weeks. Your child’s eligibility for openings in any classroom will be determined by your child’s date of birth. Other than in the limited circumstances detailed below, a child on the waiting list is eligible for two opportunities to enroll after the age of 12 weeks. If a child is offered a space and the family turns it down, the child is entitled to retain his/her place on the waiting list for a second offer. Should the family turn down the second offer of enrollment, the child will be removed from the waiting list and the family must reapply for a place at the end of the priority list for which the family is eligible.

All families should anticipate the possibility of being offered enrollment prior to their desired date of enrollment. If enrollment is offered prior to a family’s desired date of enrollment, and the family accepts such an offer earlier than anticipated, full tuition must be paid from the communicated start date.

Families seeking to enroll infants should particularly consider their willingness and ability to secure a space by paying for it when the child is 12 weeks or younger, even if the desired start-date is past that date. Families that have done this in the past have enjoyed the opportunity to acclimate their child and themselves to the program gradually.
More specifically, if a family desiring to enroll an infant reaches the top of the waiting list when a space becomes available, but before the child is 12 weeks of age, and the next available space is not anticipated until after that family’s desired start date, as stated above, the family may be offered the opportunity to secure space by paying full tuition throughout the duration of the time before the child is eligible for care. Such an offer, if refused, will not count against the family’s two opportunities to accept an offer of space at Commerce Kids after the child reaches 12 weeks of age; however, Commerce Kids cannot guarantee when another space may become available to offer.

6. Your child’s application will be maintained on the waiting list in the order in which it was received, subject to the priority categories outlined above in section 3, until you reach the top of the list. At that time, your child will be offered the next available space in the room for which s/he is age-eligible.

7. While Commerce Kids may verbally advise you of an available space for your child, offers of enrollment, including start date and any corresponding terms, will be communicated in writing.

8. Upon being offered a space, you have two business days to either accept or decline, and such a response must be in writing. Upon acceptance of a space at Commerce Kids, a $25 enrollment fee, $150 security deposit, and first week’s tuition in the classroom in which your child is enrolling, must be paid within three business days in order to secure the slot. Should you change your mind regarding enrollment in the Center prior to your child’s start date, the waiting list processing fee, enrollment fee, security deposit, and first week’s tuition will not be refunded. However, if you enroll as planned, the $150 security deposit will be applied toward your last week’s tuition obligation or refunded entirely when you leave Commerce Kids, consistent with the terms set forth in the Parent Handbook.

9. A family seeking to adopt a child may submit an application for the waiting list once it formally begins the adoption process and can provide documentation of an adoption application. Commerce Kids understands that the adoption process can be both lengthy and uncertain and will work with the family to establish an appropriate start date against which the family’s two opportunities to enroll can be measured.

10. Commerce Kids will consider, on a case by case basis, requested changes to your anticipated start date and waiting list placement that result from complications in the birth or adoption of your child or unanticipated health issues affecting your child.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns not addressed above.

*Revised and approved by the Board of Directors, November 23, 2012*