



**COLORADO**  
**Office of Early Childhood**  
Department of Human Services

# Federal Stimulus Funding FAQ

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# Child Care Stabilization and Sustainability Grants

**The Child Care Operations Stabilization Grants and the Workforce Sustainability Grants are two different grant opportunities; however, eligible providers can apply for both grants using one application.**

- [Child Care Operations Stabilization Grant](#) helps offset existing operational expenses. Providers are encouraged to pass along financial relief to families in their care.
- [Workforce Sustainability Grant](#) supports the recruitment and retention of qualified staff through new offerings.
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## Top questions

1. **What is the timeline for these grants?**
  - The Stabilization and Sustainability Grant application opens on January 21, 2022 and closes September 30, 2022. The application is rolling and you can apply at any time before the closing date to begin receiving monthly payments.
  - If your application is completed before January 28, 2022, you will receive your first payment by February 11, 2022.
  - To continue receiving monthly grant payments, child care providers must complete a monthly attestation process.
  - All grant funds must be fully spent by September 30, 2023, and may be used to reimburse past expenses since the start of the pandemic on January 31, 2020.
2. **Who is eligible to apply for the Stabilization Grant?**

All open and licensed or CCCAP qualified exempt child care providers who were in operation on March 11, 2021 may receive funds. This includes programs that serve birth to age five and school-aged children.
3. **How will award amounts be determined?**
  - Grants are non-competitive and the award totals are based on licensed capacity and Colorado Shines quality rating at the time of application. Bonus awards will be added for providers serving infants and toddlers, children with special needs, or providing care during non-traditional hours.

- Information you enter into the application will not alter your award total. You can review how the monthly payments will be calculated [here](#).
4. **Who is distributing the grant?**

The Office of Early Childhood (OEC) is partnering with MetrixIQ, a Denver-based technology company, to distribute this funding.
  5. **Where can I find the application for this grant?**
    - MetrixIQ will send an email to all eligible providers on January 21, 2022 from [coecstimulus@metrixiq.com](mailto:coecstimulus@metrixiq.com). The email will have a unique link that will take you to your application.
    - If you believe you should have received an application link and did not receive one, please fill out a help desk request at [help.coecstimulus.com](https://help.coecstimulus.com). Select “Technical Issue - Application” as the category and “I did not receive a link” as the subcategory.
  6. **Will I receive funds monthly or weekly?**

Payments will be distributed monthly for nine months.
  7. **Once I start receiving the grant, how much time do I have to spend the funds on allowable uses?**

Providers have until September 30, 2023 to fully spend their Child Care Operations Stabilization Grants and Workforce Sustainability Grants.
  8. **I need help with the application. Who should I contact?**

If you need any support filling out the application or if you have questions about what is being asked, please fill out a help desk request at [help.coecstimulus.com](https://help.coecstimulus.com).
  9. **Where can I find more information about this grant?**

Additional resources, guidance, and technical assistance opportunities are available at [coecstimulus.com](https://coecstimulus.com).

## Eligibility

1. **What defines open and operational?**
  - “Open” means the provider has an open child care license and is not in the revocation process. Programs on probation are still eligible.
  - “Operating” means the provider is actively giving in-person care. Virtual services do not count for the purposes of this grant program.
  - “In operation on March 11, 2021” means the provider was in existence as a child care program on that date, even if the provider was temporarily closed and/or not actively giving in-person care on that date due to COVID-19 related safety measures and/or financial hardship.

2. **I am a provider that has not been able to stay open during COVID-19, but has continued to renew my license. Am I still eligible for these grants?**
- Eligible providers who were temporarily closed during the pandemic may qualify for these funds pending review of documentation supporting the temporary nature of the closure and plans to remain open through the duration of the grant.
3. **What defines temporary closure?**
- A temporary closure is one where your staff is still on your payroll, your license is still active, and you plan to reopen to in-person care within 30 days. Temporary closures of physical care due to COVID-19 related safety measures and/or financial hardship are permitted. Providers that are closed due to natural disaster may still be eligible to receive funds during the closure and should contact their licensing specialist.
4. **Can providers in public school districts apply for and receive these grant funds?**
- Yes, all open and licensed or CCCAP qualified exempt child care providers who were in operation on March 11, 2021 may receive grant funds. This includes programs that serve birth to age five and school-aged children.
5. **What is the time frame for a provider to become licensed in order to receive the grant funding?**
- Child care providers must have been in operation on March 11, 2021 either as a family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) provider or as a provider operating as license-exempt and become licensed or CCCAP qualified exempt prior to completing their application to receive the grant funding. The licensing process can take 60-120 days to complete.
  - Newly licensed or CCCAP qualified exempt providers will have to attest that they were providing Family, Friend, Neighbor (FFN) or license-exempt care as of March 11, 2021 in order to receive the payment.
6. **If a program was in operation on March 11, 2021, but in the meantime, sold their program to a new operator, is the new operator eligible for these grants?**
- Possibly. If a program was in operation on March 11, 2021 **AND** the facility never closed operations and only the governing body changed, the new operator may be eligible to apply for these grants.
  - The Office of Early Childhood's licensing team will evaluate specific situations like these on a case-by-case basis. Please fill out a help desk request at [help.coecstimulus.com](http://help.coecstimulus.com) if you have questions.
7. **Are providers allowed to apply for more than one stimulus grant (e.g. Stabilization, Emerging and Expanding Grants, CIRCLE grants, etc)?**
- Yes, providers are encouraged to apply to all available grants for which they are eligible.
  - For entitlement grants, such as the Child Care Operations Stabilization and Workforce Sustainability Grants, eligible providers will need to complete a brief

application and will receive funding without going through a competitive or need-based process.

- For competitive grants, such as the Health and Mental Health Grants or the CIRCLE Grants, programs will have to demonstrate eligibility and, due to the grant's competitive nature, may or may not receive funding.

**10. How does a program become CCCAP qualified exempt?**

- CCCAP qualified exempt providers are providers who are legally exempt from licensing but can still contract with their county CCCAP program and provide care to families receiving CCCAP. Usually, these providers are the family, friend, or neighbor (FFN) of the child they are caring for.
- The FFN provider has also met all Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) health and safety requirements.
- CCCAP Qualified Exempt Providers must meet certain county requirements. [Contact your county department of human/social services](#) for details.
- More information on becoming a CCCAP qualified exempt provider [can be found here, under Qualified Exempt Provider Requirements](#).

**11. Are child care programs that are open for part of the year (e.g. closed/only open in the summer) eligible for these grants?**

- **Providers that are only open during the summer:** These providers will receive funding only for the months they are open. Providers should submit an application for grant funding for the first month they are open and providing care.
- **Providers that are closed during the summer:** These providers are eligible for the full 9 months of payment, but are not eligible to receive the funds while they are closed over the summer months. Providers should complete monthly attestations and receive grant payments only during the months they are open and providing care. For example, a provider that is open during the school year and closed during the summer may receive grant payments in the spring and fall but not during the summer break.

## **Award Amount**

**1. How is the award amount determined?**

- Both the Child Care Operations Stabilization Grant and the Workforce Sustainability Grant will be allocated through a formula based on a provider's licensed capacity and their Colorado Shines quality level at the time of submitting their application. The award amount will not change if the provider's capacity or rating changes during the nine-month payment period.
- Bonus awards may be distributed through a tenth-month payment for providers serving infants and toddlers, children with special needs, or providing care during non-traditional hours.

**2. What is my allocation if I do not have a Colorado Shines rating?**

- Providers who **only** run programs for school-aged children with a license type of a school-aged care center (SACC) and do not have a Colorado Shines rating will be assigned a default rating of Level 1.
- Providers who run **both** preschool and school-aged programs and have a license type of a child care center (CCC) should have a Colorado Shines rating and can apply their rating to the whole cohort in their care, including those in school-aged programs.

**3. Why is the award allocation correlated to a provider's Colorado Shines rating?**

Colorado Shines ratings indicate to families when programs have taken the extra step to engage in continuous quality improvement activities. There are extra costs associated with maintaining high-quality programming, which are reflected in the higher formula amounts for the award.

**4. If I offer child care for children older than 5 years, how will my award amount be calculated?**

Both grants will be based on the licensed capacity and Colorado Shines quality level of a child care provider, regardless of what ages they serve.

**5. What age range defines infant and toddler care?**

- Child care licensing regulation defines “infant programs” as care for children between the ages of 6 weeks and 18 months.
- A toddler program provides care for children between the ages of 12 months (when walking independently or with a health care provider's statement indicating developmental appropriateness of placement in a toddler program) and 36 months.

**6. What is the definition of non-traditional hours?**

Non-traditional hours include care provided in the evening and overnight (between 6pm - 6am), and during the weekend.

**7. Will these grants be considered earned income at the end of the tax year?**

- The federal stimulus funding is subject to the same tax rules as regular grant funding. CDHS will issue 1099s to providers receiving grant payments in accordance with IRS regulations.
- Providers should contact the Colorado Department of Revenue, Internal Revenue Service, or a tax professional for guidance on specific tax situations.

**8. What happens if I miss a monthly attestation?**

- Providers who do not complete their attestation by the 15th of each month will not receive their payment for that month. If a provider misses an attestation, they can still receive their 9 payments, but it will be over a longer period of time.

## Allowable Uses

### 1. Can family child care homes use the Stabilization and Sustainability Grant for self-compensation?

- The Child Care Operations Stabilization grants have some flexibility in how they are used, but the Workforce Sustainability Grants must be used by family child care homes to support themselves and their staff (if applicable) with benefits, compensation, early childhood professional development, and hiring additional staff or related workforce support. See this document for [allowable uses of funds](#) for both grant programs.

### 2. Can any of the grant funds be used for new construction?

- No, federal stimulus funds cannot be used for new construction or major renovation projects. Minor facility maintenance or improvements may be allowed using Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) stimulus funds.
- The only funds approved for construction are from the State's General Fund, specifically the [Emerging and Expanding Grant](#) and the [Employer-based Facility Child Care](#) grant program.

### 3. What are the compliance and reporting requirements for these grants?

- Awardees must recertify their grant activities and provide additional grant monitoring information each month of the grant period to continue receiving monthly payments.
- MetrixIQ will send reminders to awardees to recertify application information each month.
- Providers will be asked to report their total expenditures by category of allowable use.
- Awardees must keep documentation to show how grant funds were spent, upon request, which may include: payroll records, receipts for purchases, account statements for lease/rent/utility payments, or other documentation to show how funds were spent.
- More information on compliance and reporting will be available by February 11.

### 4. What are some ways to use the Sustainability Grants for Workforce Retention?

Examples of high impact, allowable uses of the funds include:

- Reasonable compensation for current staff
- Staff benefits and fringe
- Employee health and mental health resources
- Early childhood professional development opportunities
- Hiring additional staff
- Other related workforce recruitment and retention activities

### 5. Am I required to reduce family tuition in an amount equal to half of my grant award?

- Providers should prioritize relief for families by an amount equal to 50% of their base grant award. You will be asked to report the total amount of financial relief that was passed on to families, but you will not be penalized if you are unable to meet the 50% target.
- Financial relief for families can include a new or continuation of tuition reduction, forgiveness of unpaid parent fees or tuition for children still in care, and/or other financial relief, such as waiving fees and offering free services.
- Financial relief to families should not impact your revenue. The amount of the reduction in private-pay tuition revenue should equal the grant award amount dollar-for-dollar. The grant serves to offset lost private-pay revenue and may be used to cover approved expenses that would otherwise be covered by private-pay tuition.

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# Licensing Incentive

**This stimulus grant provides a one-time bonus incentive to unlicensed providers who become newly licensed or CCCAP qualified exempt. The goal of this incentive is to increase the number of licensed child care providers in the state and to increase families' access to safe, quality child care.**

**1. What is the timeline for this incentive?**

Providers will automatically receive a one-time incentive bonus once they have completed the licensing or CCCAP qualified exempt process and have submitted the required information and certification forms to the grant payment vendor. The licensing incentive bonus opportunity will end on September 30, 2023, or when the budgeted funds are fully spent, whichever comes first.

**2. Who is eligible to apply for this incentive?**

- All new child care providers or existing child care providers that operate as a family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) provider, CCCAP qualified exempt, or as a provider operating as licensed-exempt are eligible for the licensing incentive bonus. Providers must have initiated the licensing process **after** October 1, 2021 to be eligible for this incentive.
- Unlike some of the other stimulus grants, child care providers do **NOT** have to have been in operation on March 11, 2021 in order to be eligible for the licensing incentive bonus.

**3. What does it mean to be license-exempt?**

- License-exempt is any individual or program meeting one of the statutory exemptions found at 26-6-103 C.R.S. for “exempt” child care. This includes:
  - Someone who regularly watches not more than four children who are not related to the caregiver, with no more than two children under the age of two;
  - Someone who cares for siblings from one family not related to the caregiver in addition to the caregiver’s own children.

**4. What are the incentive bonus amounts?**

Providers who become newly licensed will receive a \$5,000 bonus. Providers who become CCCAP qualified exempt will receive a \$500 bonus. Providers cannot receive both bonuses.

**5. How can I begin the process for this incentive?**

[Apply to be licensed](#) through the existing license application process. The licensing process can take around 60-120 days to complete.

**6. How will providers receive the incentive bonus?**

Providers will automatically receive a one-time incentive bonus once they have completed the licensing or CCCAP qualified exempt process and have submitted the required information and certification forms to the payment vendor, MetrixIQ.

**7. I need help with this incentive. Who should I contact?**

Licensing specialists are available to guide providers through the process and answer any questions. Contact [your licensing specialist](#) for information regarding your facility or technical assistance.

**8. Are providers allowed to apply for this incentive as well as other stimulus grants (e.g. Stabilization, Emerging and Expanding Grants, CIRCLE grants, etc)?**

- Yes, providers are encouraged to apply to all available grants for which they are eligible.
- For entitlement grants, such as the Child Care Operations Stabilization and Workforce Sustainability Grants, eligible providers will need to complete a brief application and will receive funding without going through a competitive or need-based process.
- For competitive grants, such as the Health and Mental Health Grants or the CIRCLE Grants, programs will have to demonstrate eligibility and, due to the grant's competitive nature, may or may not receive funding.

**9. How will you reach out to family, friend and neighbor providers to make them aware of this opportunity?**

The Office of Early Childhood will promote these opportunities in a number of ways. Most importantly, we will work with trusted partners in communities with whom family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) providers already know and work. We will also share opportunities through our traditional communication channels, such as through [email](#) and our [website](#).

**10. Who will provide support to family, friend and neighbor providers to help them get licensed?**

- Outreach Specialists will provide wrap-around technical assistance and support to the family, friend, and neighbor providers going through the licensing process. The Outreach Specialists will also support the hand-off to the Licensing Specialist once an individual applies to become licensed. The Outreach Specialists will also coordinate efforts with Family Child Care Home Navigators to provide additional support to programs wanting to become licensed.

**11. Where can I find more information about this grant?**

Additional resources, guidance, and technical assistance opportunities are available at [coecstimulus.com](http://coecstimulus.com) and the [Child Care Licensing webpage](#).

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# Quality Incentive

**This stimulus grant provides a one-time bonus incentive to any open licensed provider who was in operation on March 11, 2021 and commits to increasing their quality level through the Colorado Shines quality rating system. The goal of this incentive is to support the increase in the number of high-quality child care providers in the state.**

**1. What is the timeline for this incentive?**

Providers will automatically receive a one-time quality bonus once they have completed the rating process. This incentive opportunity will end on September 30, 2023, or when the budgeted funds are fully spent, whichever comes first.

**2. Who is eligible to apply for this incentive?**

- All licensed child care providers who were open and in operation on March 11, 2021 **AND**
- The provider was rated at a Level 2 or below after October 1, 2021.
- Providers who are currently rated at Level 3-5 are not eligible for this bonus.

**3. What are the quality bonus amounts?**

- Programs serving infants and toddlers that move from a Level 1 to a Level 2 will receive a \$2,000 bonus as a home and a \$2,500 bonus as a center.
- Programs serving infants and toddlers that move from a Level 2 to a Level 3-5 will receive a \$3,500 bonus as a home and a \$4,000 bonus as a center.
- Centers that do not serve infants and toddlers will receive a bonus of \$1,500 to move from a Level 1 to a Level 2 and \$2,000 to move from a Level 2 to a Level 3-5.

**4. How can I begin the process for this incentive?**

To initiate a quality level increase, providers should apply through the existing [Colorado Shines QRIS system](#). Additionally, the program must have a signed MOU with their Early Childhood Council to receive their Quality Improvement award from the Council.

**5. How long will the rating process take?**

The expected time for completing the rating process is 4-6 months.

**6. What is the rating process like?**

Ratings are performed by a Colorado Shines Rating Administrator through a contract with Clayton Early Learning. Ratings require an onsite assessment and data collection. Find out more on the [Colorado Shines QRIS website](#).

**7. How will I receive the incentive bonus?**

The provider will receive the incentive from their Early Childhood Council and will, therefore, need to sign an MOU with their Council prior to completing the rating process.

**8. I need help with this incentive. Who should I contact?**

- Start with the Quality Improvement Navigator at your local Early Childhood Council. You can find your Council by visiting the [Early Childhood Council Leadership Alliance](#) website.
- The Colorado Shines Help Desk can also help you along the quality-improvement journey. If you have questions related to your Colorado Shines QRIS application, please call 1.844.447.4441, option 1 or send an email to [cdhs\\_coshines@state.co.us](mailto:cdhs_coshines@state.co.us).

**9. Are providers allowed to apply for this incentive as well as other stimulus grants (e.g. Stabilization, Emerging and Expanding Grants, CIRCLE grants, etc)?**

- Yes, providers are encouraged to apply to all available grants for which they are eligible.
- For entitlement grants, such as the Child Care Stabilization and Sustainability Grants, eligible providers will need to complete a brief application and will receive funding without going through a competitive or need-based process.
- For competitive grants, such as the Health and Mental Health Grants or the CIRCLE Grants, programs will have to demonstrate eligibility and, due to the grant's competitive nature, may or may not receive funding.

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# CIRCLE Grants

**The Community Innovation and Resilience for Care and Learning Equity (CIRCLE) fund provides grants to licensed or qualified exempt child care providers and other partners for implementing innovative solutions for tough child care challenges that have been worsened by the pandemic.**

**1. What is the timeline for this grant?**

This grant is not open for applications yet. The Office of Early Childhood (OEC) is working with a vendor to administer the grant. OEC expects the application will open in late February 2022.

**2. Who is eligible to apply for this grant?**

- a. A licensed child care center or family child care home, or a qualified exempt provider.
- b. A local Early Childhood Council.
- c. Any other approved community-based or education-based entity or government agency that proposes eligible/allowable grant activities.

**3. What projects are eligible for a CIRCLE grant?**

Eligible projects include those with a focus on:

- Improving the affordability of child care for families who are not in CCCAP with tuition subsidies or scholarships, developing public-private partnerships, or employer-based cost-sharing approaches.
- Increasing access to child care for children from birth through three years old.
- Strengthening business practices of child care programs.
- Ensuring equitable access for children with special needs and dual-language learners.
- Improving early childhood transitions.
- Improving workforce preparation.
- Improving affordability of child care for families.
- Improving outcomes for children.
- “Other innovative practices” that address systemic challenges for early care and learning providers or improve outcomes for children and families.

**4. Is there a maximum amount someone can receive for the CIRCLE grants?**

The Office of Early Childhood is in the process of designing the implementation of this grant. Additional information on the maximum award amount for the CIRCLE grant will be released when the application opens.

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# Emerging and Expanding Child Care Grant

**The Emerging and Expanding Child Care Grant Program was created to expand access and availability of licensed child care throughout Colorado, especially in child care deserts.**

**1. What is the timeline for this grant?**

The grant is now closed and is no longer accepting applications. Current awardees' facilities must be open and running by the end of the grant period, June 30, 2022.

**2. Who is eligible to apply for this grant?**

- Currently open and operating licensed programs, serving children birth to five, with a permanent or provisional license which are expanding their current licensed capacity; OR
- An applicant actively pursuing a child care license through the Division of Early Care & Learning.
- Programs must serve children ages birth to five to be eligible.
- Programs that receive 100% of funding from public sources such as Head Start/Early Head Start or the Colorado Preschool Program are not eligible.

**3. What are the grant award amounts?**

- Family child care homes can receive up to \$50,000 and child care centers can receive up to \$200,000.
- This is a competitive grant and programs may or may not receive funding.

**4. How can I apply for this grant?**

The grant is now closed and is no longer accepting new applications.

**5. What information will I need to complete the grant application?**

- Complete required licensing paperwork which includes:
  - Your signed application and fee for the license type you are applying for
  - A change request form with the correct fee
  - A letter of support for your project (this is only required if you are leasing or renting your space).
- [Consult with your Early Childhood Council](#) to complete the budget template for your project. The budget template is a download included in the grant application. Your budget will need to include the following:
  - An outline of the amount of funding being requested
  - A breakdown of the projected expenses and a justification of the cost.
- Have a description of your project available (you will be asked to describe your project in the application).
- If you are renting or leasing your location you will also need a letter of support from your landlord that will need to be uploaded with your application.

**6. Who do I contact if I need support?**

- Please direct all questions to your [Early Childhood Council](#), your licensing specialist or the Colorado Shines helpdesk at 1.844.447.4441.

**7. What is considered a "Program?"**

- "Program" refers to both licensed child care centers and family child care homes and those seeking a license serving children birth to age five. Existing programs that have outstanding violations from a recent inspection or are under the adverse licensing process must meet these requirements before funds can be awarded.
- Programs that are actively seeking a license should submit [an original application](#) and receive a pending license number before they apply. Programs that are expanding or increasing their capacity should submit a [change request form](#) and fee.

**8. Is it possible to receive more than one Emerging and Expanding Grant?**

- Yes. If you previously received an Emerging and Expanding Grant and you would like to expand your facility again (or open another facility), you can receive an additional grant up to the total for which you qualify.

**9. Are there plans to add indirect funding to Emerging and Expanding grants to cover administrative costs for Early Childhood Councils?**

- The statute for this grant does not authorize the use of indirect funds for the Emerging and Expanding grants, however, the Office of Early Childhood is providing 10% of authorized funding to support Early Childhood Councils for their role in administering Emerging and Expanding Grants.

**10. Can a family child care home apply for an Emerging and Expanding grant if they change their license from the standard to experienced license in the fall of 2022?**

- No, current licensed child care programs must fully use their Emerging and Expanding grant to expand their programs by June 30, 2022.

**11. For expansion, it can be difficult to find locations that support outdoor playground requirements. What is OEC doing to make this requirement less of a hurdle in the near term?**

- In the [draft child care center rule package](#) currently in the State Board of Human Services rulemaking process the Department has included an Outdoor Space Hardship in Section 7.702.74B.

**12. We are building from the ground up and may not be able to complete construction by June 2022. Can we still apply for an Emerging and Expanding Grant?**

- No, the program must be open and operating on or by June 30, 2022.

**13. Are providers allowed to apply for this grant as well as other stimulus grants or incentives (e.g. Stabilization, Emerging and Expanding Grants, CIRCLE grants, etc)?**

- Yes, providers are encouraged to apply to all available grants for which they are eligible.
- For entitlement grants, such as the Child Care Operations Stabilization and Workforce Sustainability Grants, eligible providers will need to complete a brief application and will receive funding without going through a competitive or need-based process.
- For competitive grants, such as the Health and Mental Health Grants or the CIRCLE Grants, programs will have to demonstrate eligibility and, due to the grant's competitive nature, may or may not receive funding.

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# Employer-Based Child Care Facilities

**This grant program will provide financial assistance to employers to construct, remodel, renovate, or retrofit a child care center to provide licensed child care services on- or near-site to its employees.**

## 1. What is the timeline for this incentive?

- The first application round is complete. The second application round is expected to open in winter 2022.
- The Office of Early Childhood is accepting information from interested Employer-Based Child Care projects through [this Google Form survey](#). Those who complete the survey will be sent the second round application when it becomes available. It is not required to submit this form prior to completing an application, but it is highly encouraged so you can receive updates about the application.
- Initial funding will be available through June 30, 2022 or until funds are exhausted. There will be multiple rounds of awards pending available funds.

## 2. Who is eligible to apply for this grant?

- The grant program provides funding to construct, remodel, renovate, or retrofit a child care center on the site or near to the site of the entity's property to provide licensed child care services to the eligible entity's employees.
- For-profit, non-profit, and government entities can apply for this grant. The focus of these grants is for non-child care entities to create on-site or near-site child care for their employees. Even if an entity is working with a child care partner, the non-child care entity should submit the application.

## 3. What are the grant award amounts?

- First-round applicants were able to apply for up to \$800,000. Award amounts for the second round of applications may differ and will be communicated when the application opens.
- For-profit companies will have to put forth a minimum match of 50% of the project total.
- Non-profit organizations and government entities will have to put forth a match of at least 25%.

## 4. Are there any other specific distance requirements tied to the child care center and the employer?

There is no specific definition for near-site child care locations as the distance may be different for rural versus urban communities. Applicants will need to detail this information in their business plan to explain how the location serves their employees.

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## Free 101 and 103 Coursework

**Through this program, individuals can take Early Childhood Education (ECE) 101 and 103 at no cost to them. ECE 101 and 103 are the minimum coursework required to become an early childhood teacher. The goal of this program is to bring new professionals into the field and provide unemployed individuals, immigrants, and recent graduates a pathway to become an ECE educator without the up-front cost.**

❖ [Fact sheet for students \(Spanish\)](#)

### Additional questions

1. **Are ECE 101 and 103 free at all community colleges across the state (i.e. both those in and out of the Colorado Community College System)?**  
Currently, only Colorado Community College System campuses are participating. The list of 4-year institutions is available on the [fact sheet for students](#).
2. **Will ECE 101 and 103 be available through community colleges online?**  
Yes, this opportunity covers in-person or online fees and tuition at community colleges and equivalent courses at 4-year universities. An appeal process for out of state students working in Colorado will be established soon.
3. **I already paid for my ECE 101 and 103 classes. Will I get reimbursed?**
  - If you took the courses in the fall 2021, your coursework is eligible for reimbursement by your school. Courses taken before fall 2021 are not eligible for reimbursement.
  - Starting in Spring 2022, fees and tuition will be waived by your school during the enrollment process so there are no up-front or out-of-pocket costs.
  - Ask your early childhood employer if they might consider reimbursing your past education expenses through the [Child Care Operations Stabilization and Workforce Sustainability Grants](#).
4. **Does ECE 101 and 103 without any verified hours of experience qualify individuals to be an Early Childhood Teacher?**  
No, individuals will still need the appropriate number of [verified hours of experience](#) to be qualified to teach in an early care and education classroom.
5. **Can students take additional courses other than ECE 101 and 103 under this program?**  
No. If students would like to take additional coursework beyond ECE 101 and 103, they will need to apply for scholarships through the Workforce Recruitment and Retention Programs or the Apprenticeship Program, which will be announced in spring 2022.

There will also be scholarships for the T.E.A.C.H. program, apprenticeships, and CDA scholarships.

**6. Who can I contact if I have more questions?**

- Students who have questions about the status of reimbursement or waived fees should contact their financial aid office.
- Institutions of higher education with questions about this funding opportunity should contact Sondra Ranum <[Sondra.ranum@dhe.state.co.us](mailto:Sondra.ranum@dhe.state.co.us)> at the Colorado Department of Higher Education.

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## More FAQs

Find out more about stimulus funding opportunities at [coecstimulus.com](https://coecstimulus.com).

### General Funding Information and Eligibility

1. Will providers be allowed to apply for more than one grant or will they only be allowed to receive from only one?
  - Providers are encouraged to apply to all available grants for which they are eligible. Many of the grants will function like “entitlement grants,” meaning that all eligible providers will receive funding through a formula based on licensed capacity and quality level without a competitive or need-based process.
  - For these entitlement grants, such as the Child Care Operations Stabilization Grants and Workforce Sustainability Grants, eligible providers will still need to complete a brief application.
  - There are also competitive grants, such as the Health and Mental Health Grants or the CIRCLE Grants, in which programs will have to demonstrate eligibility when they apply and, due to the competitive nature, may or may not receive funding. Information about eligibility will be published when the grants come available.
2. Are there any financial opportunities available for those with visual, or other disabilities who are considering opening a business in early childhood education?

While there are no specific funding opportunities for providers with disabilities, all licensed child care providers and CCCAP qualified exempt providers in Colorado will be able to receive Child Care Operations Stabilization Grants, Workforce Sustainability Grants, and more. Please note, programs that serve children with special needs will qualify to receive bonus funds. If an organization is interested in creating an innovative support program or training program for providers with disabilities, a CIRCLE Grant might be an appropriate funding stream.
3. How does a program become CCCAP qualified exempt?

CCCAP Qualified Exempt providers are family, friends or neighbors (FFN) that a CCCAP family has specifically requested to care for their child and that have met all Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) health and safety requirements. More information on becoming a CCCAP qualified exempt provider [can be found here, under Qualified Exempt Provider Requirements](#).
4. Can any of the grant funds be used for new construction?
  - No, federal stimulus funds cannot be used for new construction or major renovation projects. Minor facility maintenance or improvements may be allowed using Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) stimulus funds.

- The only funds approved for construction are from the State's General Fund, specifically the [Emerging and Expanding Grant](#) and the [Employer-based Facility Child Care](#) grant program.

**5. Where are the grant funds coming from?**

The funding for all of these activities comes from four sources:

- [The federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act \(CRRSA\)](#)
- [Colorado House Bill 20B-1002](#)
- [The federal American Rescue Plan \(ARP\) Act](#)
- [Colorado Senate Bill 21-236](#)

## General Technical Assistance

**1. How do we tap into the technical assistance for the grants?**

Technical assistance will be available to all providers and programs applying for the various funding opportunities. For the Child Care Operations Stabilization Grants, Workforce Sustainability Grants, and CIRCLE Innovation Grants, the selected vendors for administering these grants will also provide technical assistance once the application(s) has opened. Family Child Care Home Navigators will be available at Early Childhood Councils in early 2022 to support licensed family child care home providers and those interested in becoming licensed family child care home providers to connect with resources. Additionally, the Office of Early Childhood will publish guidance documents in multiple languages for most strategies to help understand eligibility, application requirements and more.

**2. Who will give Family Child Care Home Providers guidance on applying for these different grants?**

Technical assistance will be available to all providers and programs applying for the various funding opportunities, with expertise to support the unique questions from Family Child Care Home providers. Additionally, the Family Child Care Home Navigator Program will fund each Early Childhood Council to hire a Family Child Care Navigator to help connect Family Child Care Home providers to support and resources, including those offered through these stimulus opportunities.

## Early Childhood Council Services

**1. How will the funds for availability and outreach of child care, especially for infants and toddlers support Early Childhood Councils to fund local referral systems?**

- These funds embed local outreach and reporting of provider slot availability, one piece of the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) system, in each of the Early Childhood Councils.
- This project will include a technological enhancement to the Colorado Shines system so that providers or Early Childhood Councils can enter open slot

information and it will display on the public-facing Colorado Shines provider search portal.

- 2. Collecting supply and demand data has traditionally been a function of Child Care Resource & Referrals (CCR&Rs). Will CCR&Rs be integrated with Early Childhood Councils?**

The function of regularly collecting open slot information and understanding providers' unique capacities, such as to care for children with special needs, will be at the local Early Childhood Council level through this project. Early Childhood Council staff will then upload this information into the existing system to support Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) staff and parents searching for care through the online search portal. This new approach is being tested as the pandemic demonstrated that close working relationships, often easier to form at a more local level, are necessary to effectively gather open slot and provider information.

- 3. What CCR&R data system will be utilized to collect child care supply data?**

The child care supply data will be entered into the Colorado Shines data system to be viewed by Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) staff. Additionally, system enhancements will be made so that the public-facing Colorado Shines child care search portal can also display provider slot availability.

- 4. Will funding continue or will this be a term-limited contract for an employee hired?**

The roles will be limited to the duration of the stimulus funding period. However, part of the work will include an evaluation of the success of these roles to inform ongoing funding decisions.

## **Apprenticeship Program**

- 1. Will you be looking at the already approved United States Department of Labor Apprenticeship Program that is offered by the Red Rocks Community College Early Childhood Council?**

The Office of Early Childhood is in the process of designing the implementation of this project and partners will be announced in the coming months.

## **Teacher Peer Mentorship**

- 1. Will this be open to Family Child Care Home mentors as well?**

Yes. Early childhood professionals in all child care settings can apply to participate in this pilot project.

## **CCCAP Teacher Salary Increase**

- 1. Will family child care homes be able to apply for the CCCAP Teacher Salary Increase? If so, how will that work?**

Family Child Care Home providers will be able to participate. The Office of Early Childhood is in the process of designing the implementation of this work. More information will be available soon on how to access this funding.

## **Reducing CCCAP Family Co-payments (Parent Fees)**

- 1. Since counties control CCCAP amounts, how can providers ensure they are receiving the grant amounts if they have recently signed their agreement?**

The funding to reduce co-payments for CCCAP families will not increase the total amount that providers receive for providing care to a CCCAP child. Rather, the portion of the care that is paid by the CCCAP family will decrease and the portion of the care that is paid by the county will increase. Because the increased cost is experienced by the county, the funding to support this strategy is included in the county's CCCAP allocation. CCCAP families benefiting from the new parent fee structure should have received notification of the decrease in parent fee from the County Department of Human Services effective August 1, 2021.

- 2. Are the lower funds mentioned for CCCAP copays etc. only offered for centers? Are these funds also for home providers to help their families?**

The reduced co-payments apply to all families who participate in CCCAP and in all care settings. The funding to reduce co-payments for CCCAP families will not increase the total amount that providers receive for providing care to a CCCAP child. Rather, the portion of the care that is paid by the CCCAP family will decrease and the portion of the care that is paid by the county will increase. Because the increased cost is experienced by the county, the funding to support this strategy is included in the county's CCCAP allocation.

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