

Minnesota Facility Revitalization Grant Manual

212 North Third Avenue, Suite 310
Minneapolis MN 55401

(612) 473-6020

grants@firstchildrensfinance.org



First Children's Finance

Introduction

First Children's Finance (FCF) is pleased to offer Facility Revitalization Grants, funding for which is provided through the federal American Rescue Plan Act and an appropriation of those funds through the Minnesota Department of Human Services. These grants are available to Minnesota child care programs through June 2024 as part of the State of Minnesota's ongoing effort to stabilize the child care sector.

Grants will be awarded to both family child care providers, child care centers, certified centers, and legal unlicensed providers registered with CCAP, and will be distributed across geographic regions. Particular emphasis will be given to high need areas and child care businesses serving low-and moderate-income families. The intent is to assist existing child care businesses with facility revitalization support, help new providers meet licensing requirements, and expand the number of child care slots available to help stabilize the child care market across the state. FCF's mission is to grow the supply and business sustainability of excellent child care.

The application will open at 9:00 a.m. on March 29, 2022. At this same time, a technical assistance help line will be live for calls from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Monday-Friday and from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings during each two-week period that the grant program is open for applications. This help line number is 612-473-6020. Interpreter services are available and may be connected by phone or by appointment arranged by emailing grants@firstchildrensfinance.org.

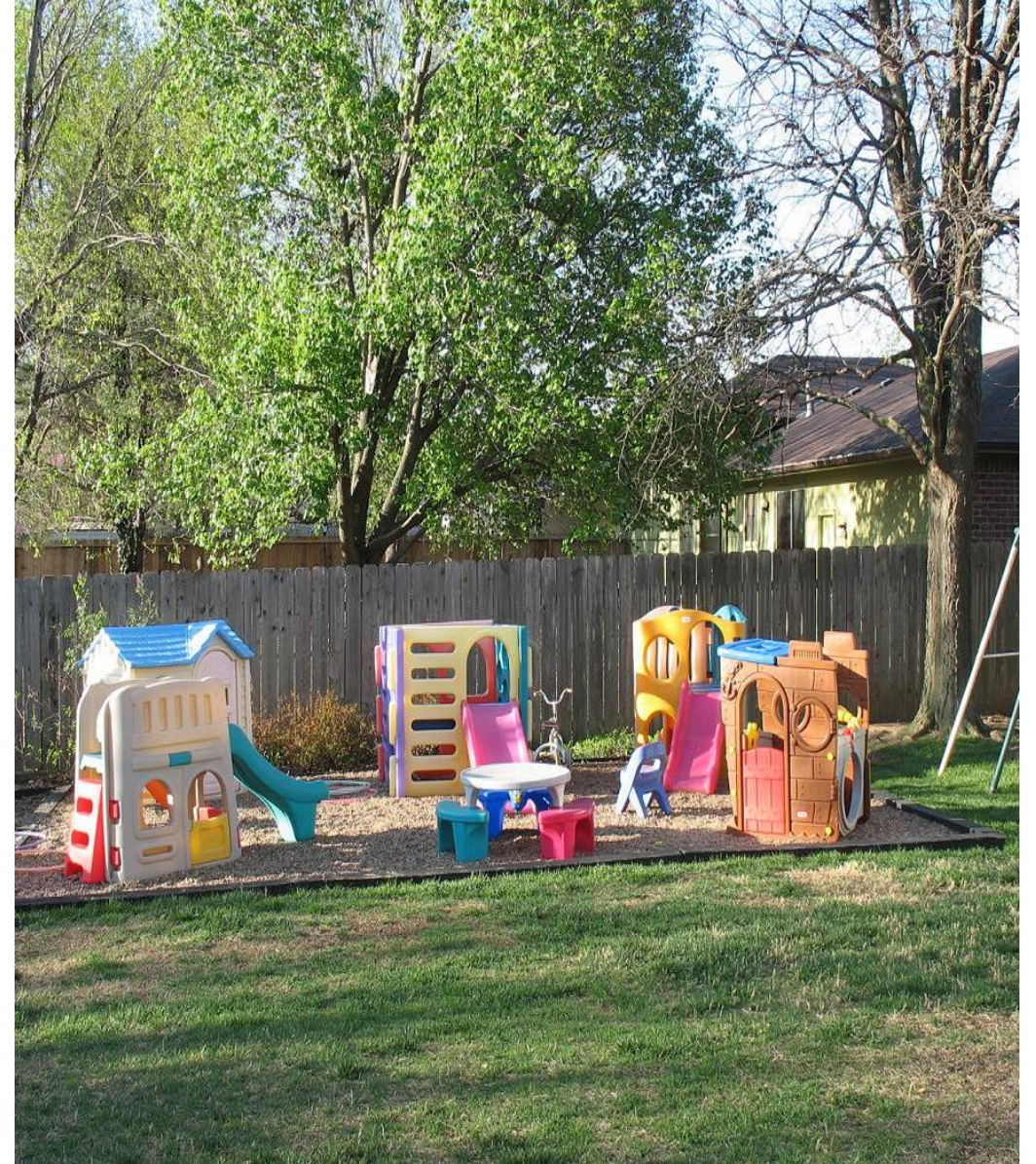


First Children's Finance

Grant Purpose

Applicants may apply for facility improvements, minor renovations and related equipment and services, including assistance to meet licensing requirements needed to establish, maintain, or expand licensed and legal unlicensed child care and early childhood education sites.

These grants are allocated from the federal Child Care Development Fund, which prohibits spending on new construction or major renovation of facilities. By statute, major renovation is defined as structural changes to the foundation, roof, floor, exterior or load-bearing walls of a facility, or the extension of a facility to increase its floor area; or extensive alteration of a facility such as to significantly change its function and purpose, even if such renovation does not include any structural change. Grants may be used for minor repairs and upgrades to child care facilities, child care-related equipment and services, and costs related to meeting health, safety and licensing needs.





Eligibility

All facilities must be located within Minnesota. Applicants must be a licensed family child care provider; the director or owner of a licensed or certified child care center; a legal, unlicensed provider who is registered for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP); or a new provider seeking licensure. New start-ups without a license must show proof that their license application has been submitted, provide a copy of their background clearance study and any items requested in the grant must be the final needs not yet addressed from the pre-licensure checklist.

Timeline

Applications will be accepted on a quarterly basis with the following deadlines:

- March 29, 2022 – April 12, 2022
- May 15, 2022 – June 1, 2022
- July 15, 2022 – August 1, 2022
- October 15, 2022 – November 1, 2022
- January 15, 2023 – February 1, 2023
- April 15, 2023 – May 1, 2023
- July 15, 2023 – August 1, 2023
- October 15, 2023 – November 1, 2023
- January 15, 2024 – February 1, 2024
- April 15, 2024 – May 1, 2024

Because 10 grant rounds are planned over the next two years, please wait to apply until your project is ready to implement. **It is not necessary to apply in the first round!**

Because we hope to fund as many child care providers in Minnesota as possible, please use exact costs in your budget, and request only what you need.



Minimum and Maximum Grant Size by Provider Type

- \$100 – \$20,000 – Licensed Child Care Centers – both Nonprofit and For-Profit
- \$100 – \$10,000 – Certified Child Care Centers
- \$100 – \$15,000 – Licensed Family Child Care
- \$100 – \$500 – Legal, Non-Licensed Provider Registered with CCAP

Providers may apply for, and grants may be awarded for amounts less than the highest grant award levels, listed above. As funding is limited, not all applications can be funded, and some may be funded partially. Between \$2 million – \$2.25 million will be available during each quarterly cycle.

Applications should reflect actual costs and should not be rounded to the nearest dollar. Applications may include more than one item. More than one application may be submitted between Spring 2022 and Spring 2024, but combined grant totals may not exceed the maximum grant size above.



Uses are restricted by statute and further defined by DHS:



No construction or major renovation, defined as:

- Structural changes to a foundation, roof, exterior or load-bearing wall, or extension of floor space.
- Extensive alteration of a facility that Significantly changes its function and Purpose, even if such renovation does not include any structural change.



Eligible Uses must be **NECESSARY** to the operation of your child care program*

Building Projects Specific to Child Care Program: minor renovations/improvements

General Renovation/Repair

- Removing and/or replacing drywall, carpet, studs to repair damage
- Repair of damage to load-bearing studs providing damage does not involve the entire wall and load-bearing wall is not moved
- Add or replace internal doors, locks or floor covering (carpet, linoleum, wood, tile)
- Repair of internal walls, ceilings, floors/floor coverings in child care program space including paint/stain
- Creating sufficient exits per fire marshal that do not require a new hole cut in an exterior wall
- Install or repair indoor sprinkler/fire suppression system(s)
- Repair/replace window(s) and/or external screens due to damage
- Add/repair sick and/or quiet space separate from activity area (within current square footage)
- Creation/renovation of laundry space dedicated to child care program (within current square footage)
- Renovation of attic for office space dedicated to child care program
- Create meeting space or breakroom in child care center (within current square footage)
- Install new or repair existing toilet(s), sinks or vanities
- Add child-care specific bathroom (within current square footage)
- Add or repair kitchenette (within current square footage)
- Add built-in storage units/cubbies/lockers dedicated to child care program
- Ramps, grab bars or other indoor ADA-compliance needs for disabilities
- Abatement of lead, mold, asbestos or radon
- Light fixtures containing shielded or shatterproof bulbs

Continued Minor Renovations Eligible Uses



Minor External/Outdoor Repair

- Repair/replace damaged shingles or siding to comply with licensing requirements
- Repair parking lot potholes or chips in sidewalk or patio if posing health/safety risk
- Fix, add or replace parking lot railings or ramps
- Adding turn-around space in driveway for safety
- New surface for outdoor play area
- Improvement to or installation of outdoor playscapes and related materials
- Tree removal from playground areas
- Fencing (equipment and labor costs if performed by individual/entity other than child care provider or immediate family member)
- Sprinkler system to maintain grass in outdoor play area
- Small, prefabricated storage shed or kit dedicated to child care program for outdoor equipment
- Repair of contaminated well for health/safety reasons
- Minor repair of or add protective guard rails/panels on deck if used by child care program
- Replacement of wooden barriers that contain creosote or arsenic

Minor Renovation/Improvement to Basement

- Minor renovation of basement space dedicated to child care program
- Repair leaks to prevent/mitigate mold
- Drain tile and/or sump pump for health/safety of child care program area
- Convert existing window to egress window to meet licensing requirements
- Add or expand egress window for easier escape access
- Stair and rails to more easily access fire escape/egress

•Any of the above referenced as general renovations/repair, minor renovation/improvement to basement or minor external/outdoor repair may comprise a small portion of conversion or renovation of garage, out-building or community facility, including but not limited to church, school, store front, business, vacant house, community center, pod, or senior center.



Eligible Equipment Purchases or Repair

- Purchase, maintenance or repair of furnace, water heater or air conditioner (100% if used only for child care program; 50% if also used by family or other organization in a shared space)
- Fireplace, heater and/or wood-burning stove screens and/or covers
- Paint and paint supplies/hire painter
- Separation panels to reduce the spread of germs in child spaces or in parent drop-off locations
- Window blind and curtain cord tension or tie-down devices
- Air purifying equipment, sanitizing machines (such as Zono), humidifier, dehumidifier (100% if used only for child care program; 50% if also used by family or other organization in a shared space)
- Fire escape ladder
- Fire, Radon and Carbon Dioxide (Co2) alarms and extinguishers; Lead Content Detector
- Purchase or repair of appliances (refrigerator, freezer, stove, dishwasher, microwave, water cooler, washer, dryer – 100% if used only for child care program; 50% if also used by family or other organization in a shared space)
- Child care program furniture (cribs, cots, changing tables, child-size table and chairs, shelves/cabinets, infant seats, cubbies, storage, high chairs, toddler chairs, potty chairs, etc.)
- Office furniture dedicated to child care program (file cabinet, desk, chair, table)
- Playground equipment and assembly of large equipment (climbers, swing set, slides)
- Signage on the program grounds

Eligible Services and Other Costs

- Permit fees and/or required inspection of completed grant-funded project(s) per local municipalities
- Consultant for designing indoor or outdoor learning environment

*For facility revitalization needs not referenced, please contact grants@firstchildrensfinance.org or call 612-473-6020 for guidance.



Ineligible Projects/Excluded Uses



Building Projects:

- New construction of facility that houses child care program
- New construction of storage sheds (other than prefabricated kit)
- New construction of or new surface/material on decks or patios
- Land Purchase
- Expansion of Building Footprint
- Major Renovation including changes to:
 - Foundation
 - Floor including concrete in basement or sub-floor on upper levels
 - Roof
 - Moving Load-Bearing Wall(s)
 - Exterior Walls including but not limited to addition of new exit or window (other than egress window) requiring a new opening to be cut into an exterior wall/surface
- Complete conversion or renovation of garage, out-building or community facility, including but not limited to church, school, store front, business, vacant house, community center, pod, or senior center.
- New shingles or siding as part of new construction or major renovation
- Installation of central air or replacing a heat source requiring installation of duct work or new ventilation
- Outer (winter) insulation/exterior covering
- Repaving or re-surfacing parking lot
- Constructing new sidewalk
- Landscaping or sprinkler system in area not used by children for play space



Ineligible Projects/Excluded Uses Continued

Equipment:

- Indoor and outdoor COVID-19/variant supplies including but not limited to portable partitions, plastic shields, disposable utensils, dishes, signage, storage containers, masks, gloves, hand sanitizer
- Lawn care or snow removal equipment
- Bean bag chairs
- Office equipment/supplies such as copier, computer, software, printer, ink, paper
- Strollers, wagons, bicycles, tricycles, large motor toys/ride-ons
- Motorized vehicle to transport children

Costs Related to Learning and Play:

- Indoor and Outdoor Toys
- Musical instruments and players
- Books
- Art or Science Supplies or Kits
- Infant/Toddler Manipulatives
- Sensory Play Toys and Equipment
- Wall hangings or décor

Services and Other Costs:

- Relocation/moving expenses
- Architect, Attorney, Accountant, Advertising
- Cleaning services
- Pest control service
- Lawn care or snow removal services
- Debt Service, including loan re-payment or payment for items previously purchased prior to grant award
- Rent/Mortgage, Utilities, Insurance
- Taxes
- Salaries, Licenses
- Transportation



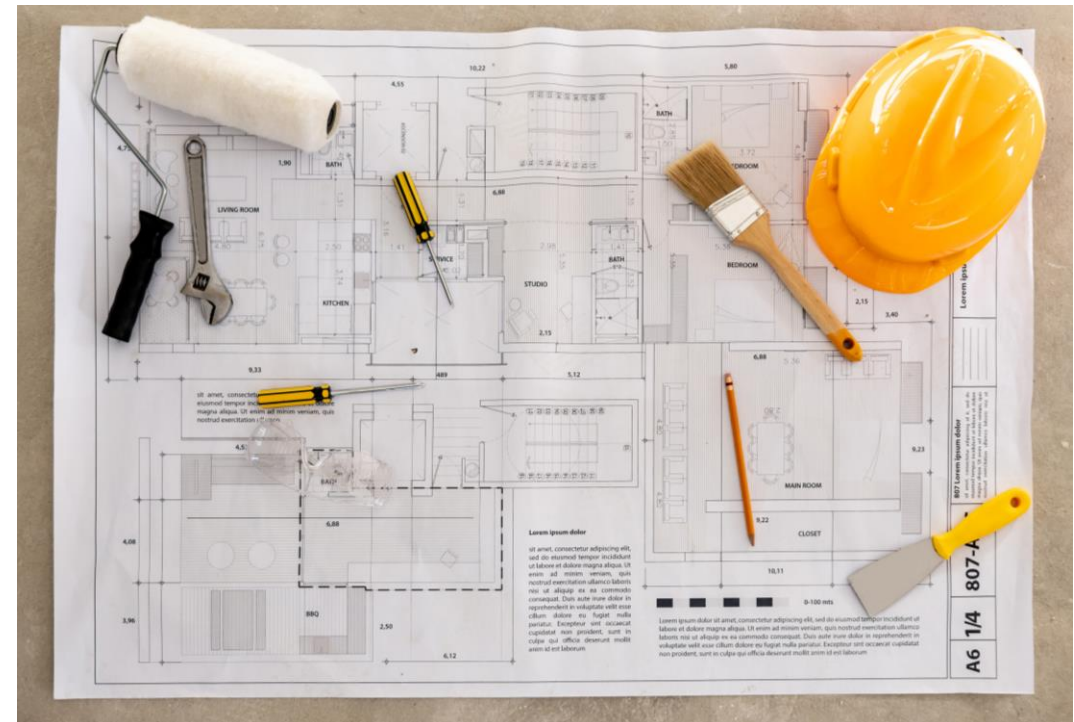
Labor Costs and Contracted Services

In the event that a child care program wishes to have the cost of assembly and/or installation covered by a grant, the labor must be performed by a contractor following applicable state and local laws and regulations regarding registration and licensure. See <https://www.dli.mn.gov/business/residential-contractors-remodelers-roofers> for more information.

An estimate or bid by a contractor is required for the installation of fences, windows, roofing or other minor renovation projects eligible under this program.

Grant recipients and/or their immediate family members are not eligible to be paid for labor costs under this grant program.

Documentation of labor costs paid for by grant funds must include business name, address **and Tax ID of person or entity** performing the work.





Grant Request Parameters

Applicants should limit proposals to items needed to deliver a successful child care program, rather than submitting an application for items that would be nice to have.

Priority will be given to facility-related needs relating to licensure, health and safety of children, and to programs in under-resourced areas. When considering applying for a Facility Revitalization Grant, applicants should ask themselves:

- 1) Do I need the funds requested to keep my business open?
- 2) Will this grant improve the health and safety of children in my care?
- 3) Will this grant preserve or expand the number of children I can serve or jobs I can provide?
- 4) How will this grant improve the quality of care I can provide to children?



Grant Request Parameters

All applications must document a direct link between items/services requested in the grant budget and the provider's ability to run a successful child care program.

Grants may be considered for Fix It Tickets or Compliance Orders relating entirely to facility issues.

Upon completion of all grant projects, providers must remain licensed and actively caring for children other than the provider's own children for a period of two years and remain free from licensing sanctions. This includes temporary immediate suspension, suspension, revocation or a maltreatment determination where the provider was found responsible.

Legal, unlicensed providers are encouraged to work toward licensing, but must remain registered with CCAP and continue to provide care for children other than their own for a period of one year following grant implementation.





Grant Awards

90% of grant awards will be paid up front.

The remaining 10% will be held and paid on a reimbursement basis upon receipt of the final report with receipts matching the original approved budget.



Grant Awards



Grants will be reviewed and awarded on a competitive basis depending on available grant funds for each cycle.

A final report will be due within 6 months of the award notification. If there are unavoidable delays due to supply chain or contractor delays, an extension may be requested in writing. Grantees must receive approval of a delayed report in writing. Before and after pictures will be requested in the report.

As previously stated, public funds comprise the source of these dollars and grantees must sign an attestation that they will remain in business serving children other than their own for a minimum of two years. This requirement will be emphasized throughout this grant manual.

If the child care business closes within the two years, grant dollars must be returned to First Children's Finance on a pro-rated basis for re-allocation to another provider. Likewise, any dollars remaining unused per the original budget must be returned. If one portion of a project costs less than projected and the remaining dollars are needed for another eligible expense, permission to re-allocate the dollars for another area must be requested and granted in writing prior to spending.

Accommodations & Interpreter Services



If you need an accommodation or interpreter services beginning on March 29, 2022 and during any open grant cycle, please contact the grants team at the Help Line: 612-473-6020 or email grants@firstchildrensfinance.org.

During **open application periods**, the help line will be answered:

Daytime/Monday through Friday
9:00 am. – 4:00 p.m.

Evenings – Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.





Application Process



Applications may be submitted through our online portal using any computer, tablet or smart phone. The portal will also allow applications in Spanish, Hmong and Somali.



Each application may cover one licensed; certified; or legal, unlicensed setting only. Providers with more than one setting may submit multiple applications and each application will be evaluated separately. All applicants/grantees may submit more than one application over the next two years, however total grant funds awarded may not exceed the total amount allowed by provider type per setting.



The application must be signed by the owner of the child care business, even if the application is completed by another individual. For example – a center director could complete the application with signature approval given by the center owner. Electronic signatures will be accepted.

Application Grant Portal: Submittable



To apply for a Facility Revitalization Grant, complete an application by going to www.firstchildrensfinace.org/for-businesses/grants and clicking on the "Click Here to Apply" button. This will take you into our Submittable grant portal.



Instructions for creating an account in Submittable:

- You will need to create a free Submittable account or sign in with Google or Facebook credentials to submit to these forms.
- You can [save a draft](#) of your work if you would like to finish filling out the form at a later date. Click the save a draft link for instructions.
- Once you submit your application in Submittable, you will no longer be able to make changes. If you need to provide any additional information or make changes prior to a grant deadline, you will be able to request that your application be re-opened to [edit the submission](#) . Please click the edit the submission link for instructions on how to do so.
- Submittable works best on Google Chrome, Firefox, and Safari. Internet Explorer is not supported. Please make sure you are using a supported browser.
- We will follow-up with you about your submission by email through the Submittable grant portal. Please be sure to [safelist](#) notification emails from Submittable and check the email you used to sign up for your Submittable Account regularly.

Application Questions



Cover sheet and demographics – this information is required for reporting purposes and to ensure equitable distribution across the state and by provider type.

Please describe your child care program and your current or planned capacity. What are your facility revitalization needs? Please outline your intended project.

Why is this project necessary for your child care business? For instance, is this required for licensing? Do you have a correction order? Is it a health/safety need?

How many child care slots will benefit (preserved and/or be added)? Please note – you will be asked to report on this result in your final report.

Please describe in detail how you will use the grant funds, if awarded. Will the grant pay for the entire project or will you use additional resources to complete your facility revitalization project?

Please provide a detailed budget. List each item/service you plan to purchase and corresponding expense documentation. Please use exact costs when possible and do not round to the nearest dollar. Attach corresponding vendor bids/quotes where available. For equipment and supplies, a list of pricing from your intended seller should be included. Before and after pictures will be requested in the final report.

****Note: Grant dollars may not be used retroactively for items or services purchased prior to the date that FCF receives the signed grant agreement following grant award notification.****



Grant Agreement & Attestation Summary

A copy of the complete required Grant Agreement and Attestation can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

**Remain in
Business for
2 Years**

**Remain
Licensed in
Good
Standing**

**Spend ONLY
as approved**

**Submit Final
Report with
Receipts**

**Final 10% of
grant award
reimbursed
with receipts**

**Return
unused grant
dollars or
any
disallowed
portion**



CAUTION!

If grantees do not follow the terms outlined in the grant agreement, a referral will be made to the Minnesota Department of Human Services and may result in discontinuation of future payments (including 10% withheld for reimbursement for this grant), recoupment of payments already made (including some or all of the 90% grant up front), and/or additional action related to the funds and the provider license under Minnesota Statutes, chapters 119B, 245A, 245E, and Minnesota Statutes, section 245.095.

Additionally, you may be ineligible for other Department of Human Services public programs per [Minnesota Statutes, section 245.095 LIMITS ON RECEIVING PUBLIC FUNDS.](#)

These programs include Licensing (your license may be suspended or revoked), Parent Aware Ratings (your rating may be revoked and you will be excluded from seeking a future rating); and funds, including but not limited to Parent Aware grants, TEACH scholarships, REETAIN bonuses, Child Care Aware Regional Grants and reimbursement through the Child Care Assistance Program. Referral to another agency may be made by the Minnesota Department of Human Services if necessary, such as the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.



Additional Attachments

- W-9

Grant dollars are considered taxable income. First Children's Finance will issue a 1099 for the grant award. Grantees should work with their tax advisors on how to calculate eligible business expense deductions when reporting the grant to the IRS for tax purposes. If the remaining 10% is paid in a subsequent calendar year, a 1099 will be issued for both years, reflecting the corresponding amount paid in each year.

- Grant Payment

Grantees will need to indicate preference for a check or an electronic (ACH) direct deposit bank transfer. If electronic transfer is selected, applicants must submit their bank routing and account information for direct deposit. An ACH Bank Transfer Form will be included with grant award notification.

Start-Up Provider Requirements



Start-up providers may apply for a facility grant for items identified on their pre-licensure visit checklist that are eligible uses for the facility grant.

Proof of license application submission and a copy of the background study must be attached to the facility revitalization grant application.

ALL other items on the pre-licensure checklist should be completed first to ensure that the facility grant project is the final step to licensure.

Why? Because of the requirement that providers care for children other than their own for a minimum of two years after grant implementation and licensure, we want to make sure that providers will be successful. Grants up to the maximum size would be a lot of money to repay if something fell through on the background study, licensing, staffing, etc., that would prevent the new provider from meeting the grant terms.





Sectarian Organizations



When a Sectarian Organization holds the Child Care Center license, grants may be awarded for health/safety needs **only** per Minnesota Department of Human Services Rule.

Sectarian is defined at 15 C.F.R. 2301.1 as “that which has the purpose or function of advancing or propagating a religious belief.”

Example of a Sectarian Organization:

A church/synagogue/mosque that holds a license to operate a child care program

Example that is NOT a Sectarian Organization:

A child care provider that rents space from a church/synagogue/mosque

Award Rubric



Grants will be evaluated using an award rubric with a numeric rating assigned in the following categories:

- Whether or not request is needed for licensing
- Whether or not request meets a health/safety need
- Whether Child Care slots are created or preserved
- Whether Child Care jobs are created or preserved
- High need area based on zip code and child care need as determined by the annual First Children's Finance supply gap analysis
- Whether or not high need children/families are served
- Number of sites owned/operated by provider
- Overall purpose/request

Every effort will be made to balance grant allocations by geography, provider type and demographics of the community served. Projects that can be demonstrated to increase the number of child care slots available and/or have an immediate impact on children, particularly for health and safety needs, will be prioritized.



Confidentiality and Data Privacy



Applications will not be discussed outside of First Children's Finance employees, Board of Directors or External Advisory group comprised of key stakeholders or partners. Information will be compiled for reporting to the Minnesota Department of Human Services and Minnesota State Legislature.

As this grant program is funded through the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), First Children's Finance is required to comply with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13.599, as it applies to data created collected, received, stored, used, maintained or disseminated.

When a grant application is submitted, the following is public information: name, address, license, number and age of children served, award amount (if any) and identity of grant reviewers.

Individual provider information will be reported to the Minnesota Department of Human Services licensing authority and/or fraud department as required, if grant agreements are not honored.



Award Process



Complete award review will begin after each application round closes. Depending upon the number of applications in any given grant cycle, it is anticipated that award decisions and notifications will be made approximately four weeks after the application deadline.

Partial Awards

Partial grant awards may be made based on funding available and/or eligibility of items requested in the proposal budget. If a partial award is made, grant funding must be spent only on item(s) approved as identified in the grant award letter.

Application Hold-Over

Funds will be distributed in a balanced manner each cycle. Any eligible application not receiving a grant in any cycle due to insufficient funds may be held over for consideration in the next round. Applicants will be notified if information is incomplete or if further detail is needed. In these cases, applicants may re-apply in the next round.



Denied Applications

Applicants will be notified if their application is denied. Examples for why an application may not be approved for funding include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Application does not meet the grant guidelines for funding;
- Applicant/request is not eligible for the grant program;
- Limited resources available within the grant program;
- Incomplete/inaccurate application; and/or
- Applicant scored lower than other applications submitted.

Grant Notification

Award notification will specify terms of the grant, including which specific items from proposed budget are approved.

Award Agreement

An acceptance of the grant terms will be required, including required attestations, an ACH deposit form and a report form. **The signed grant agreement and attestations must be returned before grant funding will be released.**

Final Report



A final report will be due within 6 months of award notification.

If the project cannot be completed in that timeframe due to supply chain issues or delayed availability of a contractor, an extension may be requested in writing. Approval must also be granted in writing. Reimbursement of the final 10% of the grant award will not be made until the final report is received. Failure to submit the final report will result in no reimbursement payment and grantee will be ineligible to apply for future grants. Additionally, the grantee will be reported to the Minnesota Department of Human Services, which may impact the provider's child care license and/or other payments of public funds.

Report elements will include:

- a. Cover sheet and demographics on provider and children served
- b. Result of funded project/items
- c. Narrative description of impact of grant on child care business (and larger community if applicable)
- d. Data on child care slots preserved and/or added
- e. Data on child care jobs preserved and/or added
- f. Documentation of expenditures matching the budget submitted in application. If actual costs were less than anticipated, adjustments will be made with the final 10% of the grant. If receipts equal or exceed the items listed in the application budget, the remaining 10% will be paid on a reimbursement basis using the same option as grantee initially chose (check or ACH transfer)
- g. Information on whether or not the grant leveraged additional resources for the provider and their source, if applicable
- h. Barriers encountered in implementing grant and/or additional facility revitalization needs, if any
- i. Request for before and after pictures where possible and optional media release.



Technical Assistance

Questions not covered in the manual may be directed by email to grants@firstchildrensfinance.org. Technical assistance will be provided to all applicants and grantees by email and using the help line at 612-473-6020. The help line will be available during each open grant cycle when applications are being accepted. Technical assistance is also available for questions that arise when implementing a grant award or for the final report.

During open application periods, the help line will be answered Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. and on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

