

# **Facility Revitalization Grant Questions**

- 1. How do I create or access my Submittable account? Who do I contact if I am having technical issues with Submittable?**

Go to <https://www.submittable.com>. Please note that all grant-related communication will go to the email used to create the Submittable account. If you need to change your email – please contact Submittable directly.

Technical assistance regarding the Submittable application portal can be requested by clicking the “?” in the upper corner of the portal.

- 2. What if I have additional questions?**

If you have any questions about using your grant award, please email us through "MESSAGES" in the Submittable grant portal - contacting us in this way will bring us directly to your application and will help us to appropriately respond to your inquiry. Please note that you can always see messages sent from us to you through the grant portal.

## **GRANT AWARDS AND PAYMENTS**

- 3. How will I know if my signed grant agreement document has been received?**

When FCF receives your signed grant agreement, the status of your application will change from "In-Progress" to "Accept." This does not happen automatically upon receipt - please allow a minimum of 48 hours during business days for us to acknowledge receipt. Changing the status in the grant portal is the only acknowledgement of grant agreement receipt you will receive. Please watch your email for follow-up questions in case there is any additional information needed regarding your W-9 or ACH forms as we process payments.

- 4. What if I don't return my grant agreement or respond to follow-up inquiries by the deadline?**

Failure to return the grant agreement by the due date provided in the award letter will result in withdrawal of the grant, and the grant status will be changed to "Withdrawn." Likewise, failure to respond to issues regarding your W-9 or ACH within two weeks of an email inquiry will result in withdrawal of the grant. For Round 8, the grant agreement due date is **November 22, 2023**.

- 5. If my center is a nonprofit, do I still need to submit a W-9 and receive a 1099?**

Yes – please indicate on your W-9 that you are a nonprofit organization. How you report grant income is up to you and your tax preparer.

**6. When can I begin my projects or begin making purchases?**

Once you have submitted your signed grant agreement, you may begin your projects. Receipts must be dated on or after the date that the **signed and dated** grant agreement was returned. This date is captured automatically within the grant portal. Please note that dated receipts for the full amount of your grant award are required in the final report and any down payments made prior to the date of your grant agreement will disqualify the item or service for which a down payment was placed. If you are using handwritten or carbon receipts, additional payment verification may be required, there we recommend against using cash as a form of payment as it is much harder to provide verification.

**7. Will I need to keep all my receipts?**

**YES!** Keep all receipts and plan to submit proof of payment documentation. Receipts must show the date and that expenses or purchases have been paid in full.

**8. How much of my grant award will be paid out after award acceptance?**

**90%** of the grant award will be paid to you following receipt of your initial grant award forms. Please allow up to 30 days from the grant agreement deadline for the bank transfer. We will not be able to respond to individual inquiries regarding payment date within that time period. Please note: we use a 3rd party system for payments called Bill.com. You may receive a penny in your account prior to receiving your payment - this is a step the system uses to verify bank account information. Emails from Bill.com may end up in your spam folder.

If bank account information is incorrect or there are any problems with the ACH payment process, you may receive a physical check in the mail.

**9. Why did I get deposit for a penny?**

Grantees may receive notification of a one-time \$.01 deposit to verify bank ACH capability. With this \$.01 deposit notification, you may also be informed of the expected 90% payment deposit date.

**10. The entirety of my grant will be paid to a contractor. Can First Children's Finance just send the grant to my contractor?**

No – FCF can only send the grant payment directly to the child care provider. You will receive a 1099 as reportable income on your taxes, and any agreement for work provided is between you and your contractor. Any dispute or liability on quality of work issue would need to be resolved between you and the contractor, as well.

**11. Why do grant funds cover only 50% of appliances if they are shared with my family or another organization? Children are at my site more than 50% of the time.**

This is a DHS funded grant and this is the percentage allowed by DHS across all grant programs funded by Minnesota DHS. Portable appliances are also subject to 50% reimbursement for shared space.

**12. What if my application is denied – can I apply again in a later round or make changes and apply again?**

There are no additional grant rounds scheduled at this time. Please watch our website for funding updates, or send an email to [grants@firstchildrensfinance.org](mailto:grants@firstchildrensfinance.org) with SUBSCRIBE in the subject line to receive updates on funding opportunities.

## PROJECTS

**13. What if my initial item or my original contractor is no longer available, and/or what if the price/cost changed?**

Please note that you may use a contractor or vendor to complete your project that is different than the estimate in your application, providing the individual does not live with you, does not work for you and is not a close relative if labor is to be paid by the grant. We understand that contractor delays, price changes or supply chain issues may require you to use a different source. We will be verifying that you completed the approved project and/or purchase - not that you used the exact contractor or vendor proposed in your application. If you intended to use a contractor but decided to do the project yourself, please carefully follow the eligible and ineligible uses guidelines. Some items may be eligible when included in a contractor bid that are not eligible for reimbursement when you complete the project yourself, such as purchase or rental of power tools or equipment.

Similarly, you may purchase a different model/color, etc., in acknowledgement that exact items may be out of stock upon grant award notification. We will be verifying that you purchased the item(s) approved in this grant award letter and described in your application - we will not compare model numbers or vendors.

Your project may require additional funds that will need to be covered at your own expense. Grant awards will **not** be adjusted for price increases. Please send a message through your Submittable portal if you have any questions about modifications or item eligibility.

**14. I have a new urgent need. May I modify the use of my grant award?**

Grant applications were scored and awarded based on application requests and it is expected that grant funds will be spent only as awarded in the notification letter. If you experience an urgent need before all grant funds are spent, you may request a modification by sending a message through the Submittable grant portal. Approval is not guaranteed and may require DHS approval. Modifications must be approved in writing prior to spending.

15. **The attestation states that I cannot use funds to supplant expenditures for which there is another federal, state, tribal and/or local public funding source. What does that mean?**

You cannot use these grant dollars for anything for which you have already planned to use other public funding. For instance, if you have stated that you will use a regional grant to install a fence and the regional grant covers the cost of the fence, you cannot state that you will use this grant for the fence as well. If you have another grant or loan that does not cover the full cost of a needed project or service, you can use this grant only for the portion not already covered by the other grant.

16. **Can this grant be used to reimburse a down payment or prior work that had to be made to get a project started, or to pay back a loan that I took out to get a revitalization project done?**

No – grant funds cannot be applied to projects for which a down payment was made prior to return of the signed grant agreement and may not be used to repay loans. Eligible expenses funded by this grant may only occur AFTER grant award notification and AFTER First Children’s Finance has received your signed grant agreement. If you started the project prior to signing your grant agreement but it was finished during your grant period, the project will be ineligible and you may owe grant funds back to FCF. Dates on invoices and receipts will be verified when reconciling final reports.

17. **Does the project need to be done by a licensed contractor, or can it be done by a capable homeowner? Will an inspection be required when my project is done?**

A child care program owner may do their own work and the grant can be used to pay for parts and materials. Please note that you may use a contractor or vendor to complete your project that is different than the estimate in your application, providing the individual does not live with you, does not work for you and is not a close relative if labor is to be paid by the grant. Any documentation of labor costs paid for by grant funds must include business name, address, phone and email address of person performing the work and be verifiable by the FCF staff.

Please check with your local municipality to know if they require permits or inspections for the work you will be doing. You are required to abide by all state and local municipality regulations, but First Children’s Finance will not require a grant-specific inspection. We will ask for before and after pictures in the final grant report.

18. **I am planning to move within the next two years and will continue to provide childcare in my new home. Do I have to remain in the same location providing care for two years after I sign my grant agreement?**

You do not need to remain at the same address as long as you continue to provide child care services in Minnesota for a full two years. If the grant paid for any item left behind, such as appliances, flooring, tree removal or fencing, etc., you will be required to repay a prorated share of those items/services. You will need to report your new address, license number and amount of “down” time when you were not providing child care services due to your move. If there are gaps in service, it will extend the two-year commitment during which your license will be checked.

**19. Some other grant opportunities require matching funds. Does First Children’s Finance allow the Facility Revitalization Grant to be used as a matching grant for other grant programs?**

Yes, FCF allows their grant money to be used as a match. However, do make sure to verify with the other funder that public dollars can be used as a match source. The FRG program is funded through the State of Minnesota which may disqualify some programs for their matching requirements.

## FINAL REPORTS

**20. What is the period for me to use the funds, and will I have to provide a report?**

Applicants should be ready to implement their projects when they apply, as a final report will be due six months after the grant award notification. Final reports will outline the grant impact on your child care business, and must include receipts and photo documentation for all grant spending. There will **no extensions** granted for Round 8. These reports will be due on or before May 31, 2024. Limited extensions *may* be possible for earlier rounds.

**21. When is my final report due?**

**Round 8 final reports are due no later than May 31, 2024**, which is within 6 months after Round 8 grant agreements are completed. Please note that before and after photo documentation of completed projects and proof of payment is required with the report.

A Final Grant Report form will be listed under your active grant in your Submittable account with sections to upload your receipts, pictures, and responses to questions on the impact to your program. You may submit your final report and receipts as soon as your project is completed and do not need to wait until your report deadline. Receipts for all grant expenses must be included and must match the approved list in the award letter.

Please note that you are required to submit proof of payment for each expense allowed under this agreement, and those documents must be dated **ON** or **AFTER** the date that we receive your returned grant agreement. Any receipt included in your final report that is dated prior to the

grant acceptance date will not be allowed or reimbursed, and you may be required to re-pay those funds.

**22. What if I am unable to complete my projects or install my purchases before May 31, 2024?**

You may need to return the grant funds that were initially approved for the projects or purchases that you did not complete or install. Once your final grant report is reconciled by FCF, you will be invoiced for any amount owed. If you used less funds than your initial 90% grant payment, you will be invoiced and expected to pay the funds back in a timely manner.

**23. What do I need to include in the final report?**

You will be asked about impact the grant has had on your child care business. You will need to include itemized receipts and payment documentation for all payments made toward your project, and before/after photo documentation will be requested for each item purchased or project completed for grant spending. The number of child care slots and jobs that benefited (preserved and/or added) will be requested. We also request permission to anonymously share a picture or quote from your materials, which is optional.

**24. What if I lose my receipts for the purchases made?**

Receipts are required as a part of the final reporting on the funds awarded. You will need receipts for your business taxes as well, so every effort should be made to keep receipt documentation for all expenses. If you lose a receipt, contact the seller/contractor for a replacement receipt. For this reason, we also highly encourage you to pay with a check or credit card, as cash cannot be verified. Receipts must include the date of purchase, list of items or services, and total amount paid. If you are using handwritten or carbon receipts, additional payment verification may be required.

**25. What if I have funds remaining after your project/purchase is complete?**

If your project ends up costing less than the 90% initial grant payment, FCF will determine the amount owed back after reconciling your receipts and final report. If the project costs more than the 90% paid up front but less than the full grant award, an adjustment will be made in the amount reimbursed once the final report is reconciled. **Funds may be used only for items approved in your award letter.** If you have any questions about grant utilization or your report, please send a message to the Grants team through your Submittable account. If you have difficulty getting back into your Submittable account or need technical assistance, please email the grants team at [grants@firstchildrensfinance.org](mailto:grants@firstchildrensfinance.org) or call 612-473-6020.