Preschool Development Grant Child Care Start-Up and Expansion Micro Grant Guidance

Colorado Shines Brighter Birth-5 Preschool Development Grant

Colorado received a federal Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) renewal grant to implement strategies to strengthen the early care and learning sector across the state. The PDG B-5 grant will be used to maximize the number of high-quality early care and education options available to families, especially families identified as vulnerable and underserved such as those living in rural areas and families of infants and toddlers.

PDG B-5 Child Care Start-Up and Expansion Micro Grants

The PDG B-5 Child Care Start-Up and Expansion Micro Grants are available to new child care programs pursuing a child care license, as well as existing licensed child care programs across the state. Child Care Start-Up and Expansion Micro Grant awards are structured to encourage the opening of new licensed child care programs and to support existing programs to expand or better serve children in targeted areas. Prioritization for funding will be given to programs that serve infants and toddlers or serve children in child care deserts as defined by the Colorado Department of Human Services Office of Early Childhood (OEC).

Family child care homes will be eligible for up to $3,000 in expenses, and child care centers will be eligible for up to $6,000 in expenses. Actual funding amounts may vary. Proposals will be prioritized based on scoring criteria related to strategic priorities identified in Colorado’s PDG B-5 needs assessment.

Child Care Licensing Specialists and Early Childhood Councils will provide support at the local level including offering consultation to prospective programs on how to become licensed child care programs, and assisting existing licensed child care programs to expand their licensed capacity.

“Programs” refers to both licensed and unlicensed family child care homes or child care centers that serve children from birth to age five. To be eligible for the Child Care Start-Up and Expansion Micro Grants, new or unlicensed programs must be preparing to submit an application for a permanent child care license in Colorado. Existing programs cannot have any outstanding violation corrections from a recent inspection or be under the adverse licensing process. Programs that receive 100% of funds from public sources such as Head Start/Early Head Start or the Colorado Preschool Program will not be eligible.

Priority Areas for Funding

To qualify for a Child Care Start-Up and Expansion Micro Grant, programs must submit an application to request funds for a project. Scoring criteria will be utilized to award funding to programs that are achieving at least one of the following:

- Opening a new licensed family child care home that will commit to serving two children under the age of two upon opening
- Opening a new licensed child care center with an emphasis on programs that will include at least one infant or toddler classroom
Allowable Uses of Child Care Start-Up and Expansion Micro Grant Funding

Programs that choose to apply for Child Care Start-Up and Expansion Micro Grant funding must explain how the proposed project will assist with applying for their child care license or increasing the number of child care slots in Colorado. Allowable costs must fall under the following categories:

1. **Licensing Costs** - Participating programs may utilize funding to pay for licensing application fees as well as background check and fingerprinting costs to ensure that programs verify that staff are qualified to work with children. More information about Child Care Licensing Fees can be found here.

2. **Training and Professional Development** - Participating programs may utilize funding to pay for required professional development activities for themselves or their staff. Allowable activities include family child care home pre-licensing classes, and required pre-service training for centers. Both training fees and hourly/salary costs for staff to complete the trainings are allowable costs. If a course is available for free on PDIS, a fee-based training for the same course will not be covered.

3. **Early Learning Materials** – Participating programs may utilize funding to purchase developmentally appropriate learning and safety materials as required by Colorado Child Care Facility Licensing regulation, such as:
   a. Mats, cots or cribs as required by licensing with appropriate mattress, bedding, and safe sleep materials
   b. Evacuation equipment for infants
   c. Buggies, strollers or related moving equipment for walks for infants and toddlers with proper restraints
   d. Gross motor equipment for infants/toddlers
   e. Appropriate equipment or furniture for feeding infants and toddlers
   f. An adult rocking chair for infant programs
   g. Diaper changing station and handwashing station materials
   h. First aid materials and safety gates
   i. Additional justification will be needed for non-consumable materials for the child care learning environment (both indoors and outdoors)

4. **Technology** - Participating programs may utilize funding to purchase technology that will provide access to professional development opportunities (including video conferencing software and purchasing computers or tablets with video capabilities), and other hardware and software that will support business administration and/or attendance tracking. (Please note: the Attendance Tracking System is available at no cost to providers.)

5. **Child Care Health Consultants** - Programs may utilize funding to cover the cost of initial health consultation to open their program. Existing programs may utilize funding for consultation for program expansion. Consultation costs can be covered for up to two months.

6. **Coaching** – Participating programs may utilize funding to initiate coaching to obtain guidance on quality
practices for program expansion or changes in license-type. Coaching hours will need to be requested as part of the application process and approved before execution. The number of coaching hours will need to be justified based on the scope of the project. These costs are capped at $800 total for the project.

7. **Handbooks, Marketing Materials and Record Keeping** – New programs may apply for the cost of creating a parent handbook, employee handbook, marketing materials; storing employee and/or child files; and developing a website for their program. These costs are capped at $500 total for the project.

8. **Personal Protective Equipment** – New programs may utilize funding to obtain personal protective equipment and sanitizing products to ensure that materials used in the program are clean for use. For existing programs, these purchases are limited to the program changes included in the proposal.

**Exclusions**: Capital projects are not allowed due to restrictions included in the PDG B-5 federal funding guidelines. Capital improvements cover both major and minor renovation costs, which include incidental alteration/renovation such as knocking down or building up walls, constructing fences, etc. Such expenditures for additions, improvements, modifications, replacements, rearrangements, reinstallations, renovations, or alterations to capital assets that materially increase their value or useful life will not be allowed as part of this grant opportunity. If your program is looking for capital funding or other support, please review this guidance document that has information about other funding sources.

**Initial and Ongoing Licensed Program Eligibility Criteria**

Each applicant must meet each of the following requirements in order to be eligible for and apply for the Child Care Start-Up and Expansion Micro Grant program:

**For new programs:**

1. Minimum 18 years of age.
2. First time applicant for a Colorado Child Care License.
3. Applicant must be able to pass all required background checks.
4. Apply for a permanent child care license to serve children six weeks through age five in the state of Colorado.
5. Commit to submitting a complete application for a Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) fiscal agreement AND indicate acceptance of CCCAP on your ColoradoShines.com program profile after receiving your child care license.
6. Submit an [application for PDG B-5 Child Care Start-Up and Expansion Micro Grant](#) funds. Download the budget template for the proposal, and submit it through the application link. Agree to connect to your local Early Childhood Council to continue receiving guidance during the application process and after receiving a child care license.

**For existing programs:**

1. Hold a current, permanent child care license.
   - Programs cannot have any outstanding violation corrections from a recent inspection or be under the adverse licensing process.
2. Serve children six weeks through age five.
3. Have a Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) fiscal agreement AND indicate acceptance of CCCAP on the ColoradoShines.com program profile.
4. Submit an application for PDG B-5 Child Care Start-Up and Expansion Micro grant funds. Download the budget template for the proposal, and submit it through the application link.

Business Processes for Micro Grant Distribution and Tracking

Early Childhood Councils will serve as administrators for the Child Care Start-Up and Expansion Micro Grant program. Programs will submit an application, and the OEC will notify programs and Early Childhood Councils of approved applications. Early Childhood Councils will invoice the Office of Early Childhood upon approval of a program’s application in order to distribute funds. An additional 10% indirect cost will be added to proposal budgets for Early Childhood Councils to administer the grants, which will allow for total project costs to be $3,300 for family child care home requests and $6,600 for child care center requests.

All Child Care Start-Up and Expansion Micro Grant funding is accessible through a General Accounting Encumbrance (GAE), which is a payment structure whereby each participating Early Childhood Council can draw down from the GAE with proper approval.

Limit one Child Care Start-Up or Expansion Micro Grant award per program for the duration of the PDG B-5 grant program (2020-2022).

Contract, Expenditure Deadline, and Reporting

Programs must sign a Memorandum of Understanding with their local Early Childhood Council if approved for grant funds. Programs selected to receive funds must also collect documentation for all services provided (invoices/purchase orders) and purchases made (receipts) with funds from the Child Care Start-Up and Expansion Micro Grant program. Funds must be spent by December 30, 2020 and awardees must work with their Early Childhood Councils to submit documentation for all expenses.

Child care programs that receive Child Care Start-Up and Expansion Micro Grant funding should demonstrate specific and measurable progress within four months of award. For example, a new program will start their operations within four months of award, or an existing program will open its expanded services within four months of award.

Click here for more information on federal discretionary post-award requirements.

Deadlines

There will be multiple grant application and notification deadlines for the 2020 program year, pending available funds.

Deadline Notification

Round 1 September 20, 2020 at midnight Week of October 5, 2020 Round 2 (if funds still available) October 18, 2020 at midnight Week of November 2, 2020 Round 3 (if funds still available) An announcement will be made the week of November 2, 2020 if a third round will be added. 2021 Funding Additional rounds of funding for 2021 will be announced in early 2021.

Questions can be emailed to your local Early Childhood Council or cdhs_pdg@state.co.us.
*The project described is supported by the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Initiative (PDG B-5), Grant Number 90TP0054-01-00, from the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Office of Child Care, the Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.*