



November 20, 2023

**Child Care Center Manual Procedure Letter No. 42
Child Care In-Home Aide Manual Procedure Letter No. 15**

**TO: All Child Care Center Manual Holders
All Child Care In-Home Aide Manual Holders**

FROM: Matt Damschroder, Director

SUBJECT: 2023 Child Care Stabilization Sub-Grants Application Process Phase 4

Background

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 was signed into law on March 11, 2021, issuing \$14.99 billion in Supplemental Discretionary funds to states. Supplemental Discretionary Funds support states efforts to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and rebuild a better child care system. Section 307.230 of Amended Substitute House Bill No. 33 of the 135th General Assembly re-appropriated authority for the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) to expend the Supplemental Funds to be used, in part, for workforce supplements, program business development supports, mental health and special needs services. As a result, Phase 4 stabilization grants are being implemented.

Phase 4

ODJFS has established several child care stabilization sub-grant opportunities. These sub-grants are available to the following program types: ODJFS regulated child care centers and in-home aides (IHA), as well as Ohio Department of Education (ODE) licensed preschool (PS) and school-age (SA) programs that are approved to provide publicly funded child care (PFCC). ODJFS regulated child care programs do not need to be participating in PFCC to be eligible to apply for these sub-grants, however, ODE programs must be approved to provide PFCC at the time of application.

The sub-grant opportunities include Operating/New Pandemic Costs, Workforce Recruitment/Retention, Access Development, and Mental Health Workforce and Family Support.

Payment

Payments are based on the program's license capacity as of October 31, 2023 for child care centers, and for ODE PFCC PS and SA programs, using the formula below which consists of a base payment determined by program type plus an additional per child dollar amount. If a



program is licensed after that date, the maximum funding amount is based on the capacity at the time of licensure. Programs' total sub-grant maximum funding amounts will not exceed \$330 x total license capacity. Maximum funding amounts for ODJFS certified in-home aide providers do not include a per child amount.

Base payment + (per child amount x program capacity) = Maximum Funding Amount

Example- A medium-sized center with a license capacity of 80 children would receive a base payment of \$15,000 plus \$26,400 (the per child amount of \$330 multiplied by 80) to equal the total amount of \$41,400.

The charts below indicate the maximum funding amounts by program type:

Table with 3 columns: Program Type, Base Payment, Per Child Amount by License Capacity (as of 10/31/2023). Rows include Centers - XX Large (200+), X-Large (151- 199), Large (100 - 150), Medium (50 to 99), and Small (49 or less).

Table with 2 columns: Program Type, Maximum Funding Amount. Row includes In-Home Aides with a funding amount of \$3,000.

Application and Expenditure

The application for these sub-grants will be accessed in the Ohio Professional Registry (OPR). Guidance and requirements are available on the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association's (OCCRRA) website at www.occrra.org. Eligible providers must submit an application through the OPR, via a program's organization dashboard at https://registry.occrra.org/. When considering the amount to apply for, programs should determine the amount of expenses they will have in the expense period listed below.

The chart below is a summary of the application and allowable expense periods. Funds are dispersed according to this schedule. Reconciliation for the full amount issued in each previous



phase is required prior to applying for the next sub-grant. If a program does not request all eligible funding in this phase, they may return to the OPR and request up to the maximum funding amount, as long as the application period is still open.

Phase	Application Period	Expense Period	Reconciliation Due
4	November 20, 2023 at 12:00 p.m. – January 12, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.	July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	July 31, 2024

Programs that apply must select at least one, some, or all of the sub-grants; however, funds cannot be used toward an expense previously paid for with stabilization grant funding. Unused funds per phase cannot be carried forward.

Payments will be processed approximately four weeks to six weeks after the date the application is approved. Programs can see the status of their application in the program’s organization dashboard in the OPR. Sub-grants will be awarded as long as ARPA funding is available.

Qualifications

Stabilization sub-grants are available by application to Ohio child care programs who qualify by meeting basic criteria outlined by the federal government. Child care programs are to be:

1. Licensed/certified by ODJFS or ODE PFCC.
2. In “Open” status as verified in OCLQS and serving children. A temporarily closed child care center that reopens during the application period can apply for sub-grants for expenses incurred during the entire expense period for Phase 4.
3. In good standing as of the date of application
 - a. Programs not in good standing include:
 - i. Programs in enforcement during the qualification period
 - ii. Programs who have had their Provider Agreement for Publicly Funded Child Care terminated, within the five years prior to this application, due to misuse of funds.
 - b. If a program is in good standing at the time of application but is later determined not in good standing prior to the funds being awarded, the funds will not be awarded.
4. Compliant with all applicable Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) and Ohio Revised Code (ORC) requirements which include Child Care and Development Block Grant Funds health and safety requirements and the completion of comprehensive background checks.



5. In agreement with sub-grant terms by certifying that the child care program will, for the duration of the sub-grant:
 - a. Use funds only for the categories and purposes indicated
 - b. Implement required ODJFS policies including OAC and ORC, orders from the State of Ohio, and to the greatest extent possible, implement policies in line with guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). (CDC).
 - c. Pay full compensation and maintain full benefits to staff and agree not to involuntarily furlough employees
 - d. Implement a hiring bonus and a retention policy. If this option is selected, this policy should include:
 - i. A 6-month period that the staff member agrees to remain with the program in exchange for receipt of Workforce Recruitment/Retention funds.
 - ii. Document the date the hiring and retention bonus is issued.
 - iii. A written agreement between the professional and program articulating that the professional agrees to remain employed by the program for at least 6 months from the date of hiring bonus and/or retention.

Reconciliation

Programs are required to complete a reconciliation for each sub-grant phase. Phase 4 reconciliations must be submitted no later than July 31, 2024.

Reconciliations will be located in the program’s organization dashboard in the OPR. Programs should retain receipts, invoices and documentation for expenses used toward these sub-grants. Reconciliation guidance will be located at www.occrpa.org.

Sub-Grant Opportunities

Operating/New Pandemic Costs Sub-Grant (Centers, IHA, and ODE PFCC PS and SA):

Child care programs will be eligible for funds intended to assist with costs incurred as a result of the federal public health emergency. This sub-grant can be used for:

- Paying personnel costs; including maintaining/increasing wages or benefits such as health, dental, vision, paid sick leave or family leave, retirement contributions
- Paying ongoing costs including rent, mortgage, utilities, insurance
- Conducting facility maintenance, renovations, including those that address COVID-19 concerns as well as improvements that make child care programs inclusive and accessible for children and families with disabilities. Note: Construction or major renovations are not permitted. 45 CFR 98.2 defines “major renovation” to mean “(1) 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 (2) extensive alteration of a facility such as to significantly change its function and purpose, even if such renovation does not include any structural change.” In other words, funds may be spent on renovations such as



painting, carpeting, and other activities that neither add to the permanent value of the property nor significantly alter the function or purpose of the facility.

- Purchasing personal protective equipment (PPE) worn to minimize exposure to hazards that cause workplace injuries and illnesses must be either approved by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) or authorized for use by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA), including under emergency use authorization.
- Purchasing sanitizer, classroom dividers, cleaning supplies, temporary sinks, thermometers, and COVID-19 testing, covering other expenses that facilitate business practices consistent with safety protocols.

Workforce Recruitment/Retention Sub-Grant (Centers and ODE PFCC PS and SA): This sub-grant can be used for personnel costs including:

- Paying sign-on and retention bonuses, ongoing premium or hazard pay, transportation costs to/from work
- Creating substitute pools, providing administrative support
- Funding recruitment activities to increase early childhood workforce
- Supporting early childhood professionals through coaching as well as training and professional development on topics including communicable disease, first aid, CPR, sudden infant death syndrome, medication administration, shaken baby syndrome, emergency preparedness and response planning, transportation, handling and storage of hazardous materials. This includes Ohio Approved training.
- Supporting staff access to COVID-19 vaccinations including paid time off for vaccine appointments and to manage side effects, transportation cost to appointments
- Assisting with background check expenses

Access Development Sub-Grant (Eligible program types are noted by each sub-grant): These sub-grants can be used for costs incurred when:

- Expanding the number of current classrooms or reopening classrooms closed due to the pandemic to serve additional children or serve new age groups. This does not include construction to build a program or construct a new room, but can include: adding or expanding infant/toddler, or school-age care, or care for children with special needs (Centers), or expanding hours of operation to include non-traditional hours weekdays 7:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. or between 12:00 a.m. Saturday to 6:00 a.m. Monday (Centers)
- Engaging in the expansion of programming to include therapeutic child care by partnering with an Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) certified community mental health agency to provide ongoing mental health services to children and staff. Child care programs identified by the community mental health agency to participate in the pilot program will enter into a partnership agreement/MOU with the community mental health agency. This includes community mental health agencies that operate a child care program. All selected child care programs will implement therapeutic child care built upon evidence-based mental health practices. (Centers)



Mental Health Workforce and Family Support Sub-Grant: (Centers and ODE PFCC PS and SA) Programs may use sub-grant funds to support costs related to the mental health and well-being of their children and employees. This sub-grant can be used for the following:

- Coaching, training, local team building, resiliency, stress reduction and developing staff in mental health and social-emotional development topics
- Organizing stress reduction and wellness experiences for children
- Addressing staffing patterns and schedules to support staff mental health
- Purchasing program materials, and supplies to promote mental health and social-emotional learning in the classroom
- Providing family engagement activities to strengthen mental health and wellness, like take-home toolkits and onsite family game nights
- Providing childhood mental health supports (e.g., infant/toddler and early childhood mental health consultation services, targeted programming, etc.)

Questions

Please contact the Child Care Policy Help Desk with questions about funding and license capacity at 1-877-302-2347, option 4.

Please contact OCCRRA with questions regarding the application and process at support@occrra.org or 614-396-5959.