Child Care Services Start-Up Grant Application Guide

Child Care Services Start-Up Grants assist child care providers and programs who are soon-to-be licensed or have been licensed for less than six months with purchasing items or making improvements that are required by licensing or the Fire Marshall.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **Who can apply for Start-Up Grants?**

   Any program that is actively providing early learning services to children ranging in age from birth to school-age and was licensed for the first time within the past 6 months OR

   - Is soon-to-be licensed with the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) or Tribal Government and has been visited by a licensor OR
   - Is a new program (less than 6 months in operation) that is licensed or is licensed-exempt OR
   - Is an existing program that is expanding to take more children

   If licensed by DHS, a program must have no current negative actions. Licensing violation such as a temporary immediate suspension, revocation, or a maltreatment determination where the facility was found responsible will prevent the issuance of a grant and/or will cause withdrawal of a grant.

   You may receive only one Start-Up Grant. A program cannot receive both a Start-Up Grant and a Regional Grant in the same fiscal year (July 1 – June 30).

2. **How much money can my program apply for?**

   The limit for Start-Up Grants is $2,000 for Family Child Care programs and $3,000 for Child Care Centers.

3. **What items can my program apply for?**

   Programs may apply for funds to support the start-up of child care and school-age care services through the categories listed in this guide. Please see pages 4-8 of this document for examples of eligible items.

   These grants can be used to cover the cost of materials for outdoor play area fencing or other minor construction projects as required by licensing to ensure child safety or meet other program standards. <u>All materials must be new and must be purchased from a retail store, not a private party</u>. 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.

   These grants can be used for technology and software to create, enhance, and maintain business management systems. This includes costs associated with accessing the internet, such as installation or equipment, and website costs for start-up, maintenance, or ongoing subscription fees.

   Eligible items that are for 100% business use will be funded at 100%. Items that are shared with a household or organization (such as a church) will be funded at 50%.

4. **What items are not eligible?**

   Due to a federal rule, Start-Up Grants may not be used for the following:

   Major Construction or Renovations: Major renovation means 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. Funds may be expended for minor remodeling of the designated child care space and for upgrading the designated child care space to assure that providers meet state and local child care standards, including applicable health and safety requirements.

   Religious-based Curricula, Activities, Materials, or Counseling: Child care programs are allowed to purchase and/or use religious-based curricula or items in their program if they choose, but they must use their own funds; they cannot use Child Care Services Grants.

   Expendable Supplies: Expendable supplies (diapers, wipes, soap, paper products), except as it pertains to Personal Protective Equipment (cleaning products, hand sanitizer, masks) used for recommendations from the Minnesota Department of Health to keep children and staff safe during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

   Office supplies that are not directly used for early childhood quality improvement activities: Ink and paper used to print invoices for families would not be an allowed use of grants. Ink and paper used to print curriculum, worksheets, or a newsletter for families in the program would be allowed.

   One-time field trips for children

   Child care tuition (scholarships)

   Items prohibited by licensing

   All materials must be new and must be purchased from a retail store, not a private party.

   CCDF federal restrictions can be reviewed at https://ccdf-fundamentals.icfcloud.com/restrictions

   In addition, grants are not allowed to be spent on items considered to be part of the cost of doing business. This includes the following items:

   - Accounting and legal fees
   - Advertising
   - Banking service charges
   - Cleaning
   - Food
   - Insurance
   - Licenses
   - Taxes
   - Rent or mortgage
   - Transportation
   - Utilities

5. **If my program receives a grant, what requirements do I have to meet?**

   Your program will need to sign a Participation Agreement that details the requirements. Please read the agreement carefully before signing.

6. **If my program receives a grant, how will my program receive the money?**

   All grants are paid on a reimbursement basis and after all requirements are completed.

7. **When is this grant available?**

   It is available on an ongoing basis, subject to available funds.

8. **How does my program apply for this grant?**

   Please contact your local Child Care Aware of Minnesota Grants Administrator for additional guidance about this grant funding. You must fill out the application form and mail it to the address listed at the end of this document.

GRANT SPENDING CATEGORIES

The following charts give suggestions for items that you may want to purchase with your grant. This is not an all-inclusive list, but it will help you identify which spending category to use when describing your proposed purchases on the budget pages of the application.

Health and Well-Being	
Children do better when early care and education programs are safe and healthy, provide nutritious meals and snacks, and offer many opportunities for active play. This foundation allows children to take full advantage of learning opportunities.	
Household alarms and detectors	**Transportation safety**
• Smoke alarms • Carbon monoxide alarms • Radon detectors • Lead content detectors (for toys and other child items which could be put in the mouth)	• Appropriate child restraint systems for the ages of the children in care • Safety helmets for children riding bicycles or tricycles • Strollers that meet safety specifications
Household emergencies	**Household safety**
• First aid kits • Fire extinguishers • Choke tubes (for gauging choking potential of small objects) • Disaster kits / • Hand-washing kits and posters • Healthy habits posters • Food group activities • Safety kits and posters	• Safety gates • Appliance locks • Electrical outlet covers • Refrigerator thermometer • Hot liquids thermometer • Window blind and curtain cord tension or tie-down devices • Air purifiers, humidifiers, dehumidifiers • Light fixtures containing shielded or shatterproof bulbs / • Fireplace, heater and wood-burning stove screen covers • Closet door latches to prevent a child from being trapped inside a closet • Locks for cabinets or locked storage units for medicines and cleaning agents • Panic hardware for exterior doors
Child safety	**Facilities and operations**
• Child toothbrushes and individual toothpaste containers • Cribs, mattresses that meet safety standards • Cots, mats and linens for sleeping • Highchairs that meet safety standards • Changing tables	• Egress windows • Lead-free environment • Facility improvements such as repairing steps, installing railing if flagged by licensing. • Gates
• Playground safety surfacing • Large outdoor umbrella • Sandbox covers • Infant bucket swings for outdoor playground swing sets • Swings with soft or flexible seats • Fencing / • Shock-absorbent or loose material such as sand under outdoor climbing equipment • Outdoor play equipment that meets safety standards • Replacement of wooden barriers that contain creosote or arsenic • Guardrails on stairs	• Antibacterial wall dispensers • Secured garbage cans and wastebaskets, hands-free covered waste disposal cans • Purchase of safe plastics that do not contain polycarbonates for serving food • Consultation with a Child Care Health Consultant in Family Child Care Homes for health, safety, nutrition, infectious disease control and/or advice on the care of a child with special needs • Bibs and Eating utensils • Special needs items such as positioning equipment, eating utensils, cups and plates, adapted toys

Teaching and Relationships with Children

Children do better when early care and education teachers and providers are caring and engaging, have quality learning environments, use a research-based curriculum, and support children's transitions to kindergarten. Teachers and providers make a big difference in children's lives. These practices help build relationships and give children what they need to learn and grow.

Aligned Curricula

These tools align with the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIPs) and meet Parent Aware curriculum requirements:
ParentAware.org/programs/full-rating-resources/

Room equipment and furniture

- Tables
- Chairs
- Coat, cubby units
- Storage units
- Centers (book, listening, writing)
- Computer table
- Cots or mats
- Classroom activity carpets
- Activity mats and gyms
- Classroom displays

Active Play

- Bicycles, Tricycles, Wagons
- Scooters, scooter boards
- Balance beams
- Tumbling mats
- Play tunnels or hoops
- Basketball hoops, balls
- Playground equipment (climbers, swing sets, slides)
- Large unit blocks
- Rocking boats
- Parachutes
- Large motor games (such as bean bag, ring toss)

Manipulatives

- Materials that link, construction sets
- Puzzles
- Beads, lacing sets
- Pegs and pegboards
- Pre-writing stencils
- Pounding benches
- Tools and tool benches
- Block play materials
- Small design blocks
- Sensory materials
- Manual dexterity vests

Science and technology

- Exploration kits
- Nature activities and materials
- Magnifying glasses, microscopes
- Weather charts
- Magnets
- Prisms
- Science kits
- Computers, tablets
- Educational software
- Minerals/rocks

Social Concepts

- Costumes
- Play masks
- Dramatic play equipment
- Dolls, doll houses and furniture
- Other play buildings (e.g., barn, firehouse, school, etc.)
- Animal collections
- Puppets
- Plush animals
- Miscellaneous such as purses, cameras, phones
- Multicultural games, activity kits, craft kits and books
- Bilingual language materials
- Youth cookbooks
- Cooking utensils, pots, pans, and food items
- Woodworking materials
- Posters

Cognitive Development and Perception

- Age-appropriate books
- Storytelling kits and materials
- Materials that promote phonological awareness.
- Materials that promote print awareness
- Materials that promote alphabet awareness.
- Early language concept activities such as object matching, sorting
- Infant and toddler toys
- Geometric forms and boards
- Patterning activities and materials
- Math awareness materials
- Tactile numbers and tracing activities
- Measurement kits
- Clocks and time activities and materials
- Calculators, money
- Discovery boxes

Sensory

- Music, Headphones, rhythm instruments
- Art supplies including stencils and sponges
- Sand and water tables and toys
- Feely boxes
- Sensory balls
- Sight and sound tubes

Assessment and Planning for Each Individual Child

Children do better when their teachers and providers know them well, understand their levels of development, and use the information to plan instruction. Assessment information is accurate and fair when it is gathered in a way that includes observation in natural settings, and a child assessment tool that is valid and reliable.

Purchase of an assessment tool for use in your program. See list of approved assessment tools on the Parent Aware website: ParentAware.org/programs/full-rating-resources/

- Camera or video camera for recording classroom activities (Does not include special lenses, etc.)
- Journaling materials
- Laptop, tablet, or desktop computer for on-line assessment

Professionalism

Children do better when their teachers and providers have professional preparation that includes higher education coursework, combined with on-going training and support. These qualifications have been found to be consistent predictors of program quality, strong child-adult interactions, quality learning environments, and positive child outcomes.

Learning Opportunities	Professional Resources
- Face-to-face training approved on Develop - Credit-based classes - Online learning approved on Develop - Professional organization conferences approved on Develop - CDA - Early childhood conferences - Fee-for-service mentoring, coaching, and/or consultation - Costs of supporting a T.E.A.C.H. recipient	- Textbooks, subscriptions to education and professional journals - Child care association fees - Professional texts - Laptop or tablet for taking online courses

Relationships with Families

Children do better when families are engaged in their children's education and development. Building two-way relationships with families helps strengthen a sense of belonging among all children in the program as they experience respect and support for their home cultures and languages.

- Face-to-face training approved on Develop about communicating with families - Technology related to communicating with families (text programs, etc.)	- Bulletin boards - Newsletters - Family events - Parent conferences

Requirements (Program Materials Required by Licensing)

These items may be required by licensing. You should consider purchasing these items if you don't already have them in your program or if they are in poor repair.

Room Equipment and Furniture

- Tables
- Chairs
- Coat, cubby units
- Storage units
- Centers: book, listening, writing
- Computer table
- Cots or mats
- Classroom activity carpets
- Activity mats and gyms
- Classroom displays

Active Play

- Bicycles, Tricycles,
- Wagons
- Scooters, scooter boards
- Balance beams
- Tumbling mats
- Play tunnels or hoops
- Basketball hoops, balls
- Playground equipment, climbers, swing sets, slides
- Large unit blocks
- Rocking boats
- Parachutes
- Large motor games, such as bean bag, ring toss

Manipulatives

- Materials that link, construction sets
- Puzzles
- Beads, lacing sets
- Pegs and pegboards
- Pre-writing stencils
- Pounding benches
- Tools and tool benches
- Block play materials
- Small design blocks
- Sensory materials
- Manual dexterity vests

Science and Technology

- Exploration kits
- Nature activities and materials
- Magnifying glasses, microscopes
- Weather charts
- Minerals/rocks
- Magnets
- Prisms
- Science kits
- Computers
- Educational computer software

Social Concepts

- Costumes
- Play masks
- Dramatic play equipment
- Dolls, doll houses and furniture
- Other play buildings (e.g., barn, firehouse, school, etc.)
- Animal collections
- Puppets
- Plush animals
- Posters
- Miscellaneous such as purses, cameras, phones
- Multicultural games, activity kits, craft kits and books
- Bilingual language materials
- Youth cookbooks
- Cooking utensils, pots, pans, and food items
- Woodworking materials

Cognitive Development and Perception

- Age-appropriate books
- Storytelling kits and materials
- Materials that promote phonological awareness.
- Materials that promote print awareness.
- Materials that promote alphabet awareness.
- Early language concept activities such as object matching, sorting
- Geometric forms and boards
- Patterning activities and materials
- Math awareness materials
- Tactile numbers and tracing activities
- Measurement kits
- Clocks and time activities and materials
- Calculators, money
- Discovery boxes
- Infant and toddler toys

Sensory

- Music, Headphones, rhythm instruments
- Art supplies including stencils and sponges
- Sand and water tables and toys
- Feely boxes
- Sensory balls
- Sight and sound tubes

APPLYING FOR A START-UP GRANT

Training Requirement: Participate in 12 hours of training, approved by Achieve, which can be found on Develop (www.developtoolmn.org). All required training must be completed before receiving reimbursement. The cost of participating in this required training is your responsibility. However, you may choose to include the cost of the required training as part of the grant application by applying for dollars within the Professional Development category.

Participation Agreement: Your program will need to sign a Participation Agreement that details all requirements. The agreement lays out the responsibilities of programs receiving grants. Please read the agreement carefully before signing

Two-Year Requirement: If you are awarded a grant, your program will be required to provide active licensed or license-exempt child care services in Minnesota for a minimum of two years from the date of your award letter. If for any reason your program ceases to provide active child care services within the required timeframe, you will be required to repay grant dollars on a prorated basis.

Reimbursement Timeline: All documents required for requesting reimbursement must be submitted by the date indicated on your award letter for Grant Administrator review. Grant Administrators have the right to:

- Ask for clarification (or pictures) of any grant item before approving AND
- Refuse reimbursement for any purchase that doesn't match the original request or intended purpose

Expenditures: Be specific on your expenditure pages. Only items that were approved on your application will be reimbursed. If any substitution needs to occur, this **must** be approved by your local Grant Administrator, prior to making the purchase. A budget change can only occur once in a grant cycle.

Grant Payment Information: All Start-Up Grants are paid on a reimbursement basis after all requirements are completed.

Grant Application Review Process: Once you submit application, it will be reviewed by a review committee. Each application is reviewed by three review committee members and a scorecard is used to rate the applications. Funding is awarded to the highest scoring applications. A denial or award letter will be sent to you via email or U.S mail.

Before Applying: below is a list of steps to complete prior to completing your application.

- Create a Develop Membership ID (Directions can be found at www.developtoolmn.org).
- Link your Develop Membership ID with your program's Organization ID and list yourself as an employee.
- Please contact your local Grant Administer with questions or concerns.

SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

Fill out your application form completely in ink. Your application should be neat and easy to read and stapled together in order. Do not submit grant applications in folders or binders, professionally bound or store-bought.

1. Send in one complete packet, including the application with all required attachments stapled to it.
2. Keep one copy of the completed application form and all required attachments for your records. You will need to refer back to your application if you are awarded a grant.
3. Mail or email the original completed application packet to:

> CAPLP
> Attn: Kelli Rohrer
> 891 Belsly Blvd
> Moorhead, MN 56560
> grants@caplp.org

Checklist

Your application packet must include:

☐ The application form, including the participation agreement, with all questions completed.

☐ Copy of your current child care license, if applicable, and documentation from your licensor that the items in your grant application are needed to meet licensing requirements.

☐ Estimate or bid (*if applicable*). This is required for the installation of fences, windows, or construction, as required by licensing, or equipment assembly projects. This bid must be from a licensed and bonded contractor. See https://www.dli.mn.gov/business/residential-contractors-remodelers-roofers for more information.

☐ Pictures (*if applicable*). A picture from a catalog or online is recommended if the item(s) may be questioned by the reviewers.

Child Care Services Start-Up Grant Application

Organization Applying for Grant (Business or name that will be on license): _____

Organizational ID# in Develop: _____ (*if available*)

DHS License or Certification #: _____ (*if available*)

Tribal License #: _____
(If tribally licensed, please include a copy of your tribal license)

Program is license exempt: ☐

Program Type:
☐ Licensed Child Care Center   ☐ Family Child Care   ☐ School-based license exempt program
☐ Head Start   ☐ School-age only   ☐ Certified Center

Original license date if licensed _____

LOCATION

Address: _____   City: _____

Zip Code: _____   County: _____

Phone #: _____

Mailing Address *(if different than above)*: _____

City: _____   Zip Code: _____   County: _____

Are you currently caring for or willing to care for children on the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

If yes, CCAP provider ID#: _____

PRIMARY CONTACT

Contact Name (First/Last): _____

Email Address: _____

Phone #: _____

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Anticipated Licensed Capacity: _____   Number of Classrooms/Groups: _____

Please enter the number of children by age group for which you provide care. In addition, enter the number of high needs children in each age group. A child should be counted as "high needs" if they are from low-income families (at or below 200% poverty rate) or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, including children with diagnosed disabilities or developmental delays, who are English language learners, who reside on "Indian lands," who are migrant, homeless, or in foster care.

Total number of children currently enrolled: _____

Number of infants: _____   Number of infants who meet the high needs criteria: _____
Number of toddlers: _____   Number of toddlers who meet the high needs criteria: _____
Number of preschoolers: _____   Number of preschoolers who meet the high needs criteria: _____
Number of school-age: _____   Number of school-age who meet the high needs criteria: _____

Please fill out the section below if the information is known. If not known, it can be left blank. This information is for data collection purposes only and does not affect the scoring of a grant application.

Race of Children Enrolled
Number of American Indian/Alaskan Native: _____   Percent of enrolled: _____
Number of Asian/Pacific Islander: _____   Percent of enrolled: _____
Number of Black/African American: _____   Percent of enrolled: _____
Number of Hispanic/Latino: _____   Percent of enrolled: _____
Number of Bi/Multi-Racial: _____   Percent of enrolled: _____
Number of White: _____   Percent of enrolled: _____

Number of enrolled children speaking English as a second language: _____   Percent of enrolled: _____

What kind of programming will/is your organization licensed for? (*Select all that apply*)
☐ Part day (less than 5 hours per day)
☐ Full day (5 or more hours per day)
☐ Full week (5 or more days per week)
☐ Part week (less than 5 days per week)
☐ Evenings (after 6 p.m.)
☐ Weekends (Saturday and/or Sunday)
☐ Full year
☐ School year only
☐ Other _____

Has your licensor visited your location?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Licensor's Name: _____
(To apply for a Start-Up Grant, you must have had your first visit with your licensor)

What date do you plan to open for business? _____

Has the Fire Marshall visited your location?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No
(If yes, include a copy of the Fire Marshall's report)

PROPOSED EXPENDITURES

Item Requested	Cost	Description of Use	Required by Licensing?	Required by Fire Inspection?
TOTAL	$			

PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

Program Responsibilities

I understand to be eligible to apply for and receive a Child Care Services Start-Up Grant, my program must have been licensed for the first time within the past 6 months, will soon be licensed and has been visited by the licensor, is a new program (less than 6 months in operation) that is exempt from licensing, or is an existing program that is expanding to take more children.

I understand that if my program knowingly submits false or fraudulent information during any part of the grant application process, my program will no longer be eligible for funds. Any funds reimbursed during this grant process would be required to be repaid and appropriate authorities would be notified.

Upon application and notification of funding award, my program agrees to:
- Provide active licensed child care in Minnesota for a minimum of two years from the date of the grant fund notification.
- Enroll interested families participating in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) without discrimination if my program has vacancies.
- Not use funds to supplant expenditures for which there is another federal, state, tribal and/or local public funding source.
- Make services available to families regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, public assistance, age, sexual orientation, or familial status.
- Participate in any requested surveys and report forms related to funding awards.

I understand the prior to receiving any funds, my program must:
- Register my program's Organization Profile in Develop, The Minnesota Quality Improvement and Registry Tool (developtoolmn.org); create and name classrooms on the Classrooms tab; and complete the number of children served at the time the application is submitted, including all questions regarding them.
- Ensure that all staff in a child care center or providers in a family child care home document their training and education in Develop. This means each person must:
  - Hold a current Individual Membership in Develop (including a Career Lattice step) AND
  - Identify you as their current employer by listing the MN DHS License ID# or Develop Organization ID# for your program AND
  - Be verified as an employee AND
  - Be connected to a classroom with the correct employment title.
- Complete the training requirements:
  - 12 hours of Achieve-approved training taken by me or members of my staff.

Data Sharing

I understand that by signing this participation agreement, I am agreeing to allow Minnesota Department of Human Services to share information with contracted agencies for the following purposes:
- Administer the grant application process
- Analyze data on use of grant funds
- Analyze the effectiveness of the grant administration process

The data that could be shared about my program is listed below:
- All data submitted, on paper or via www.developtoolmn.org, related to my program's participation in grant activities and grant documentation, including all information in my Organization Profile.
- The Learning Records of any early education professionals who have reported employment my Organizational Profile in Develop.
- Information on purchases made with the funds.

- Information regarding the grant administration process, including fund reimbursement to my program.

Disbursing Funds

I understand that if my program is awarded a grant, funds are:
- Paid on a reimbursement basis after training requirements are verified, unless otherwise noted.
- Reimbursed **only if funds were used in the intended purpose** as per the grant application and award letter.

_____ _____

Print Name   Name of Program

_____ _____

Signature   Date

SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

Fill out your application form completely in ink. Your application should be neat and easy to read and stapled together in order. Do not submit grant applications in folders or binders, professionally bound or store-bought.

1. Send in one complete packet, including the application with all required attachments stapled to it.
2. Keep one copy of the completed application form and all required attachments for your records. You will need to refer back to your application if you are awarded a grant.
3. Mail or email the original completed application packet to:

    CAPLP
    Attn: Kelli Rohrer
    891 Belsly Blvd
    Moorhead, MN 56560
    grants@caplp.org

Checklist

Your application packet must include:

☐ The application form, including the participation agreement, with all questions completed.

☐ Copy of your current child care license, if applicable, and documentation that the items in your grant application are needed to meet licensing requirements.

☐ Estimate or bid (*if applicable*). This is required for the installation of fences, windows, or construction, as required by licensing, or equipment assembly projects. This bid must be from a licensed or registered contractor. See https://www.dli.mn.gov/business/residential-contractors-remodelers-roofers for more information.

☐ Pictures (*if applicable*). A picture from a catalog or online is recommended if the item(s) may be questioned by the reviewers.