

Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts 2022 Request for Application Frequently Asked Questions

Application Process (AP)

AP-1: I own multiple centers all operating under different legal names. I am interested in all centers applying for the expansion grant. Is it more advantageous to apply as a lead with partners or is it better for each location to apply individually? Also, are there any factors in choosing the lead agency?

The advantage to applying as a lead with partners is mostly consolidation of fiscal accounting. Each awarded grantee does need to have dedicated accounting for the program. Also, for ease of oversight, this set up is preferred. Separate applications are required for each lead agency which would be time consuming. The agency that applies as lead should be the most capable in managing the fiduciary matters of the program. If there is no difference between sites, then the decision of which agency applies is completely up to you.

AP-2: We are a partner agency that has provided PA PKC services for several years. We have a PRI score since we are a partner agency. Do we get bonus points for having provided services for consecutive years as a partner agency?

Yes. You are considered a current grantee as a partner agency and should enter your most recent PRI.

Eligibility (E)

E-1: I am a religious entity but meet one of the eligible provider types, can I apply?

Yes. If an entity meets one of the eligible provider types for the PA PKC program, they are eligible to apply. If awarded, some religious organizations may have a different contracting process from other agencies.

E-2: Can a non-profit corporation that operates child care centers (STARS 3 and 4) in different locations be the lead agency for the grant and request slots that will be distributed at each location? Is this considered applying as a third party or as a child care center.

It depends. If the non-profit organization is the legal entity of the child care locations then apply as a child care (same legal name, tax IDS and MPIs). If the non-profit organization is not the legal entity but each child care holds its own legal name and tax ID and MPI numbers that are distinct from the non-profit agency, then the non-profit

could apply as third party and would need to partner with the child care agency (or agencies).

Proposed Service Area, Locations, and Risk Score Calculations (PLR)

PLR-1: Our agency has not completed a community-needs assessment recently, but a few other community agencies have. Are we able to use data from these assessments in our application for PreK Counts? Also, the guidance is limited on exactly what to include in a community-needs assessment. Could more detail be provided?

If other community agencies have already conducted needs assessments these could be used, if they include some, if not all the elements listed below. The goal of the community-needs assessment is to assess the current landscape, detail why new pre-kindergarten services are lacking in the proposed area, and to assist in creation of prioritization planning, based on the data collected.

A prescribed way to complete a community-needs assessment is not provided because there are multiple ways to go about understanding a community's current assets and needs. Community-needs assessments for the PKC application should, at minimum, contain:

- Information pertaining to the relevant age grouping of children impacted (3-4 years old),
- Income levels of families (300% FPL),
- Risk factors (multiple sources of data could be used here including, but not limited to, school district data and/or health systems data),
- Pre-Kindergarten landscape info (what other services are available in the area being served).
- Needs assessments should be local (zip code level) and/or regional (school district, municipal, and/or county) in nature.

Partnerships (P)

P-1: What happens if a partner agency applies to be a direct grantee? For example: a grantee has 15 funded slots as a partner agency and has signed the letter of commitment for the upcoming year but wishes to apply for 30 slots as a direct grantee. Do / can those 30 places supplant the partnership slots, or would they be considered additional slots bringing the total slots to 45? Can the partnership slots be returned if the application is successful?

An eligible agency may apply to be their own lead agency regardless of their status as a partner agency. In developing the application to be a lead agency, the agency should consider the actual capacity of the program.

If the actual capacity is only 30 slots and the agency already partners for 15 of those slots, the agency should consider:

- whether they want to apply for 15 additional slots as a lead agency and maintain the current partnership, OR
- apply for all 30 slots as the lead; which would mean if awarded the full 30 slots, the 15 partner slots would be returned to the lead agency.

The first scenario is preferred to avoid damaging the partnership relationship; however, the second scenario is allowable. Partnering agencies should always review the formal partnership agreement held between lead and partner before making such decisions.

P-2: If a school district is the lead agency in a grant and they partner with a community-based organization, can the school district operate the program to include teachers, and the community-based organization be the fiscal agent to pass through funding to the school district?

In the described scenario, the community-based organization would be the lead agency and would partner with the district. The community-based organization should be the applying agency in this instance.

Collaborations (C)

C-1: In the collaboration section under the head start subsection, if the local head start grantee refuses to commit to an MOU, and or any type of formal collaboration agreement, how would points be scored in this area? Would the response need to explain the meetings, and other times where collaboration was discussed, but never finalized?

Yes, include information regarding attempts at collaboration (meeting dates would be helpful data) and the results. The narrative explanation factors into the scoring, if the applicant shows attempts at collaboration were made.