

WORK FORCE SUPPORT GRANT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS
For Certified Child Care Centers, Group Child Care Homes, and Family Child Care Homes

Instructions: Please read all instructions and requirements completely before sending the *Work Force Support Grant Application* to the Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC).

Overview: The Work Force Support Grant is an initiative of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL). This initiative is made possible by federal American Rescue Plan Act and Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act stimulus funding. It is intended to provide eligible certified child care providers the opportunity to apply for staff retention grant funds on behalf of their current staff, including employer payroll tax assistance, as well as an option to request additional funds for staff-related expenses the provider or staff incurs to help maintain current staff and recruit new staff.

Provider Eligibility and General Requirements:

- To be eligible for a Work Force Support Grant, a provider must meet ALL of the following requirements when the application is submitted.
 - Held a regular or provisional Certificate of Compliance on or before May 16, 2022;
 - Be open and actively providing child care to one or more child(ren) in attendance at the provider location;
 - Hold a Certificate of Compliance that is not in a Revocation or Refuse to Renew status with OCDEL Bureau of Certification Services;
 - Not be under investigation by the Office of State Inspector General for, or previously convicted of, fraud; and;
 - Not had their Child Care Works (CCW) provider agreement revoked due to fraud.
- All grant funds are contingent upon the availability of state and federal funds.
- **The Work Force Support Grant Application is due by June 17, 2022 to the ELRC office.** Applications received at the ELRC with a postmark date after June 17, 2022 will not be eligible for Work Force Support Grant funds.
- **It is recommended that applications be submitted by email to the ELRC, when possible.**
- An inaccurately prepared or incomplete *Work Force Support Grant Application* will be returned to the provider by the ELRC. The ELRC will not complete the application for providers.
- Providers should contact the ELRC with any questions or to request assistance regarding the Work Force Support Grant.

Staff Eligibility and Grant Funding Determination Requirements:

The ELRC will determine each providers grant award amount based on the information provided on the submitted application and directions from OCDEL. Grant award amounts will be provided in a grant award letter that will be sent to each eligible provider.

Grant funds must be requested and used specifically in the categories listed below.

1. Staff Retention. All current staff must meet the following criteria to be eligible for grant funds when applying:

- Be identified in Group A or Group B as listed below;
- Work at the provider location a minimum of 15 hours per week; and;
- Be a paid employee, on the provider's payroll, at the provider location.
 - An employee is defined as someone working at the provider location who is on the employer's payroll and has state and federal taxes withheld from their paycheck. This requirement must be met when the application is submitted and at the time of grant payment.
 - Volunteers **are not** eligible to receive grant funds. Contracted service staff (such as cleaning, meal, transportation services; etc.) who receive an Internal Revenue Services (IRS) 1099 form, **are not** eligible for grant funds.

Pre-K Counts (PKC) and Head Start State Supplemental Assistance Program (HSSAP) are also eligible if they:

- meet all staff eligibility criteria as outlined above; and
- work directly with children, outside of the PKC and HSSAP program hours, in a DHS certified child care location.

NOTE: Staff who work in various locations within a legal entity/organization must only be included on **one** Work Force Support Grant application. These staff can use their combined work hours to meet the 15 hours per week criteria. The individual staff member is an employee of the legal entity/organization, not the location, based on EIN or tax ID number. It is the responsibility of the legal entity/organization to determine which location includes these staff on their application. No staff can receive more than the identified funding amounts stated above.

A. Group A includes owners/operators (must be associated with direct operation and administration of the child care location); directors; assistant directors; group supervisors; and; assistant group supervisors. Each staff in this group can receive a one-time \$2,000 grant award.

Family Child Care Home staff identified in Group A, other than the owner/operator, must minimally meet the qualifications of an assistant group supervisor. Otherwise, those staff must be included in Group B.

B. Group B includes aides; floaters; other staff working at the child care locations; and; staff that provide transportation. Each staff in this group can receive a one-time \$1,000 grant award.

NOTE: A list of current staff in **Group A** from the Professional Development (PD) Registry must be included with the completed application. If the PD Registry does not have accurate information for your current staff, it will need to be update before applying. Owners/operators must ensure that all current staff have been verified in the PD Registry as being employed at the provider location. Owners/operators must all provide an end date for any staff that are no longer employed at the provider location.

If your provider location or Group A staff are not registered in the PD Registry, please reference the “How to Claim an Unregistered Organization Profile” Tip Sheet document and other PD Registry Tip Sheets at <https://www.pakeys.org/pdregistry/professionals-resources/>.

A list of current staff in Group B **does not** need included with your completed application but must be available when monitoring occurs by the ELRC and/or state/federal agencies.

2. Payroll Tax Assistance. These funds are intended to offset the 7.65% employer portion of payroll taxes associated with payments to eligible staff included on the *Work Force Support Grant Application*. These funds will be paid to owners/operators based on the amount of funds awarded to eligible staff identified in Group A and Group B on your application.

3. Staff-Related Expenses. These funds are optional. They must be used to support staff-related expenses the provider or staff incurs to help maintain current staff and recruit new staff. Child Care Center amounts vary between \$2,500-\$8,500, based on the licensed capacity of the provider. Group and Family Child Care Home amounts are \$2,500 per eligible provider.

Allowable uses for Staff-Related Expenses grant funds include, but are not limited to:

- provide recruitment sign-on bonuses;

- pay for advertisement of vacancies;
- pay for or reimburse staff for costs associated with criminal background clearances; and
- pay for costs associated with mandated staff training related to annual OCDEL Certification requirements.

Unallowable uses for Staff-Related Expenses grant funds include the following:

- Purchase of land, new construction, or major renovations;
- Purchase of gift cards, money orders, gift certificates, travel checks, or any other comparable legal tender;
- Purchase of materials, equipment, or supplies to operate the child care facility;
- Payment of mortgages, utilities, or rental/lease payments for basic facility operations;
- Purchase of alcohol;
- Purchase of vehicles;
- Payment toward staff entertainment, including amusement, diversion, and social activities or any costs directly associated with such costs (such as tickets to shows or sports events, meals, lodging, rentals, transportation, and gratuities) that are not professional development related events;
- Costs of membership in civic, community and social organizations (Kiwans, Lions Club, Rotary, etc.); and
- Purchase of any second hand (used) items, including but not limited to those items from individuals, yard sales and auctions.

Grant Award Requirements

- Providers determined to be **eligible** for grant funds will receive a *Work Force Support Grant Award Letter and Work Force Support Reporting Form* from the ELRC.
 - If a provider has staff leave after an application is submitted, the provider must either shift the funds for that staff from Staff Retention and Payroll Taxes to Staff-Related Expenses or return the funds to the ELRC.
- Providers determined to be **not eligible** for grant funds will receive a letter that includes:
 - a notice that they are not eligibility for grant funds;
 - the reason they are not eligible for grants; and;
 - appeal rights.

Grant Payment and Spending Requirements

- Grant payments to eligible providers will be completed by the ELRC between July 1-September 16, 2022.
- Grant funds must be spent as follows:
 - Staff Retention grant funds, as outlined above, must be used to supplement eligible staff salaries/wages. These grant funds must be paid by the provider, through the employer payroll, to eligible staff that were included on the application within 30 calendar days of receiving payment from the ELRC.
 - Payroll Tax Assistance grant funds, as outlined above, must be used to pay the owner/operator for the employer's portion of payroll taxes of the eligible staff identified in Group A and Group B on the submitted application.
 - Staff-Related Expenses grant funds must be used for expenses that help maintain current staff and recruit new staff, as outlined above, and that are incurred by the provider or staff between July 1, 2022 and January 31, 2023.
- If all grant funds are not spent, providers must contact the ELRC to discuss how to return unused grant funds.

Grant Reporting Requirements

- All providers that receive Work Force Support Grant funds are required to complete, sign, and return the *Work force Support Reporting Form* to the

ELRC by the date listed on the form. This form identifies the amount of grant funds used by the provider.

- Grant funds reported in Group A and Group B Staff Retention and Payroll Tax Assistance cannot be greater than the grant award amount listed in those categories on your *Work Force Support Grant Award Letter*.
- If eligible staff leave before they receive grant funds, the funds for Staff Retention and Payroll Tax Assistance can be used for additional Staff-Related Expenses.
- The Total Grant Funds Used cannot exceed the Total Grant Award.
- If the Total Grant Funds Used amount is less than the Total Grant Award amount, **unused funds must be returned to the ELRC.**
- If the *Work Force Support Reporting Form* is not returned to the ELRC by the date identified, grant funds will need to be repaid to the ELRC.

Grant Monitoring Requirements

- Providers must keep original receipts for all grant funds for their records for review by ELRCs and state/federal agents who may need to review receipts for auditing/monitoring purposes. All grant related documents must be maintained for 7 years.
 - Receipts may exceed the total amount of funds issued with the understanding that the provider is responsible to pay for balances out of their program's operating budget for amounts exceeding the grant award.
 - Original receipts must have at a minimum:
 - a purchase date (between July 1, 2022 and January 31, 2023);
 - the name of the vendor or supplier;
 - a description of purchased items;
 - the cost of each item and evidence of payment – the receipt must show a balance due or, if paid, a balance due of \$0. If the receipt or invoice shows a balance due, proof of payment must be provided either by cancelled check or a document indicating balance due of \$0;
 - the dollar figures for total purchases must equal or exceed the amounts on the Work Force Support Grant Award Letter for each category.
 - Payroll receipts/documentation must also be available for review and include the date of payment and a detailed justification for what and why the additional payment was given to the staff.
- All staff grant funds must be processed through payroll and are subject to applicable taxes (processing through IRS 1099 is prohibited).
- Provider must adhere to IRS guidelines for employers and be responsible for any employer portion of taxes as awards are distributed.
 - If a legal entity is a limited liability corporation (LLC) and must file a Schedule K-1, they must also submit a 1040 Form to document that the appropriate taxes are being paid.
 - For Family Child Care Homes that file taxes with a Schedule C, they must also submit a 1040 Form to document that the appropriate taxes are being paid