

Dear Colleagues;

I hope the holiday weekend allowed you to take some much needed time to relax and celebrate the 4th, despite the weather. I wanted to share “a preview of coming attractions” regarding the upcoming American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funded “**Child Care Achieving Stabilization Grant Program**” (CCASP).

This email will give you a brief overview about the grant funding, who is eligible to apply, and the timeline. In addition, we will be posting this information on our consumer education website at

<https://www.nh-connections.org/covid-19/financial-resources/>

on the “Latest Updates” and ARPA Tabs. It is important to visit the site often as information will be updated over the next few weeks and months to include the grant funding process, eligibility, upcoming webinars and virtual office hours, application instructions, information about the necessary data you will need to collect, technical assistance resources, allowable uses of funds, FAQs, and much more.

Meanwhile, here are some details to get you started:

How much funding is available and over what time period can it be used?

This ARPA funding stream is called “Stabilization Funds.” This is designated for distribution to child care programs based on a percentage of their operating expenses relative to program size plus the optional add-ons for incentives activities (described in the chart below). \$42,891,368 will be used for stabilization grants. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis while funds are available.

The **Child Care Achieving Stabilization Grant Program (CCASP)** funding can be allocated or spent up until September 30, 2023. In addition, if funded, once you submit your signed award acceptance and agreement you can invoice for the funds any time before September 30, 2022. *This means you can decide whether to take the award in the calendar year 2021 or 2022 (or a portion in each year) based on your tax and business situation.*

How are program/provider awards going to be calculated?

Awardees will be funded based on the following chart. The actual base rate percentages will be determined after the initial application review period (those submitted by August 16). The incentive awards are calculated on a percentage of the award amount. For example, if your operating budget is \$100,000 and you receive an award based on 40% of your operating expenses, the base award would be \$40,000 and then your incentive add-ons equal 10% of your base award; your incentive award would be \$4,000 (10% of your \$40,000 equaling a total award of \$44,000.00).

CCASP GRANT AWARD FUNDING FORMULA CHART*

ROUND ONE Funding Category	Tier One Group	Tier Two Group	Tier Three Group	Tier Four Group
	FCP/LEP Home Providers/Licensed and LE Centers with 25 children and under capacity	Child Care Centers and LE Facilities with 26 to 75 child capacity	Child Care Centers and LE Facilities with 76 to 125 child capacity	Child Care Centers and LE Facilities with 126 child capacity and above
Base Award Amount**	10 to 60% of operating expenses	10 to 50% of operating expenses	10 to 40% of operating expenses	10 to 30% of operating expenses
Incentive Add-Ons Available through the application - % is calculated on the % of operating expenses base rate awarded, not total operating expenses				
100% Staff Funded Child Care	5% of base award rate	5% of base award rate	5% of base award rate	5% of base award rate

Non-traditional Hours	2% of base award rate			
Tuition Increase Freeze	3% of base award rate			
Child Care Scholarship Enrolled Provider	1% of base award rate			
Child Care Scholarship Children enrolled	3% of base award rate			
Professional Registry	2% of base award rate			
Total Available Incentive Add-on % for Round One	16% add-on to base rate of up to 60% of operating expenses	16% add-on to base rate of up to 50% of operating expenses	16% add-on to base rate of up to 40% of operating expenses	16% add-on to base rate of up to 30% of operating expenses

* Base award is calculated after initial 30-day application submission period and based on the size of the application pool, the program sizes and the full operating budgets. The range shown in the chart is not a guarantee of any particular % of funding to any program.

** Base award can be used for up to 75% for allowable operating expenses and income losses from March 1, 2020 to September 30, 2022) plus required 25% minimum for increasing staff wages for duration of grant.

What are the “incentives add-ons” and do I have to apply for them?

In addition to the base award rate (75% for allowable expenses and income loss plus a minimum of 25% for staff incentives, such as wage increases and/or bonuses) optional incentive add-ons are available. Add-ons are calculated on a percent of the base award amount percentage, not full operating expenses.

Applying for these extra funds is totally optional, but we strongly encourage you to consider taking on one or more of the incentives. They include:

- **Free Staff Child Care** = incentive for providing all the applicant’s child care staff with 100% free child care (for their own children and/or those under the legal custody of the staff person such as grandparent/grandchild) for the duration of the grant, as long as they remain employed by the applicant. This includes current and incoming staff. Programs with child care staff as clients and not employees, should work with the employers of those staff members, but are not obligated, but encouraged to provide them with free or significantly reduced child care tuition.
- **Non-traditional hours** = incentive to add option for a minimum of one time block of non-traditional hours (early am, pm, weekends) for duration of grant.

- **Tuition Increase freeze** = incentive to agree to maintain existing tuition rates as of date of application through September 30, 2022.
- **Child Care Scholarship provider enrollment** = Incentive to become an enrolled childcare scholarship provider or continue as an enrolled childcare scholarship provider for duration of grant.
- **NH Child Care Scholarship Children enrolled** = Incentive to have child care scholarship children enrolled in program on date of application.
- **Professional Registry** = incentive to have all staff enrolled and update their professional registry listing for the duration of the grant along with updating their profile quarterly in NHCIS for the duration of the grant.

Who is eligible to apply for the CCASP Grant Funds?

This grant program is open to all NH licensed and license-exempt (enrolled) programs and providers including licensed centers and facilities (early childhood and school age), family child care and family group homes, licensed-exempt family/friend/neighbor and afterschool programs (licensed and license-exempt enrolled) providing child care services during regular and non-traditional hours.

In accordance with federal guidelines, awards are not available for traditional summer camps, municipal programs (unless they meet the child care requirements and operate throughout the school year), or part time preschool programs unless they offer a wrap-around child care component. Head Start and Early Head Start Programs may apply for the child care portion of their program only. Programs/providers must be open as of the date of application or temporarily closed (and reopening by fall) due to COVID-19 or as a regular seasonal closure (such as afterschool programs). Programs/providers that are not licensed by the Child Care Licensing Unit must be enrolled in the NH Child Care Scholarship Program (more information available at <https://www.nh-connections.org/> on the Providers Resources tab) beginning on Tuesday, July 13 before they can receive funds, but may apply while their application is being processed. All applicants must agree to utilize 25% of their base award for “staff incentives”. This can be wage increases, current and incoming staff bonuses, or other methods for recruiting and retaining staff. The plan for incentives is not due until after the grant is awarded and the program/provider has time to consider what ideas will work best for their operation.

What is the application process?

This is a little different than the previous COVID grant programs. The federal guidelines require a rolling application process and this is not a “first come, first serve” program. This means that you can begin your application process as early as July 12, 2021 or submit anytime throughout the fall, while funds are available. The application process has a number of steps including a brief “intent to apply” notification, preparation of your average monthly operating budget, assembling some basic data and then submitting the online documentation through the NH Connection Information System (NHCIS) portal. It may sound complicated, but it is easy to follow and if you applied for the CRRSA funds you have already done half the work. There will also be continued TA support, webinars, and office hours available to assist you in this process.

If you do not have already have a NHCIS Program Profile or have not accessed yours yet please let us know in your “Intent to Apply” notice that will be available **beginning July 12** at <https://www.nh-connections.org/covid-19/financial-resources/> under the ARPA and Latest Updates tabs, along with other materials and instructions. Our CRRSA team will reach out to you and help you get your profile updated or established. If you do not hear back from us within a

few days after you submit your “Intent to Apply”, do not hesitate to email us at eccp@dhhs.nh.gov or utilize the “Support” button on NHCIS home page at log in

How can I learn more about the Child Care Achieving Stabilization Grant Program (CCASP)?

We recommend you start by joining us on Monday, July 12 for ARPA/CCASP WEBINAR: REGISTER NOW - For more information or to register please go to <https://www.nh-connections.org/covid-19/financial-resources/> under the ARPA and Latest News tabs. Here you can register now, or you can revisit this tab after the webinar to watch the recorded version.

What if I have questions?

First, please check the <https://www.nh-connections.org/covid-19/financial-resources/> under the ARPA and Latest Updates tabs and then save your questions for the July 12th webinar. If your question is not answered during the webinar, do not hesitate to email us at eccp@dhhs.nh.gov or participate in our virtual office hours.

What is the grant program timeline and upcoming activities?

While the new activities and information will be added regularly, here are the latest highlights

Monday, July 12

- ***ARPA/CCASP Grant Application Period Begins*** – see “Intent to Apply” and other materials at <https://www.nh-connections.org/covid-19/financial-resources/> under the ARPA and Latest News tabs beginning on Monday, July 12
- ***ARPA/CCASP WEBINAR 12:30-1:30 PM – REGISTER NOW*** for the ARPA Funded: Child Care Achieve Stabilization Grant Program (CCASP) Webinar. Register at <https://www.nh-connections.org/covid-19/financial-resources/> under the ARPA and Latest News tabs. This Webinar will take place on Monday, July 12, 2021 from 12:30-1:30 PM.

Thursday, July 15

- ***Pre-Recorded ARPA/CCASP WEBINAR*** – Along with the recorded version of Monday’s Webinar check out our CCASP Application Basics – Understanding and Completing the Operating Expense Application Chart <https://www.nh-connections.org/covid-19/financial-resources/> under the ARPA and Latest News tabs.

Wednesday, July 14, 21 and 28

- ***ARPA/CCASP VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS 12:00 to 1:00 PM*** – Please join us for our open forum virtual office hours any time during the hour to ask the Bureau team questions or listen to updates/answers on your colleagues questions. Watch for additional sessions focused on specific provider types such as licensed programs, family child care, license-exempt home and facilities providers, afterschool, etc. No sign up necessary, just check out the link on <https://www.nh-connections.org/covid-19/financial-resources/> under the ARPA and Latest News tabs.

Monday, August 2

- ***ARPA/CCASP Online NHCIS Documentation site available*** - Make sure you are ready with your application materials to submit your documentation on the New Hampshire Connection Information System through your Program Profile – don’t have one or haven’t updated yours don’t wait! – tell us on your “Intent to Apply” or email us at eccp@dhhs.nh.gov

- **ARPA/CCASP ONLINE DOCUMENTATION SUBMISSION “HOW TO” WEBINAR – REGISTRATION OPENING SOON** - Please join the BCDHSC team as we walk you through the NHCIS documentation submission process for CCASP from start to finish from 12:30-1:30 PM. Can't make it? – it will be recorded and posted at <https://www.nh-connections.org/covid-19/financial-resources/> under the ARPA and Latest News tabs.

Monday, August 16

- **First ARPA/CCASP Application Review Period Begins at 12:00 Noon** – Have all your application materials and information in by this date and time and you will be part of the first group of applications reviewed and notified about funding. Not to worry if you cannot make this date – this is a rolling application process and you will be able to apply throughout the fall, as funds remain available. Remember this is not a first come, first serve grant program.

Friday, August 20

Target date for initial awardee notices to begin - Through NH Connections Information System portal, applicants will be notified if they have been funded in phases based on the Tier groups listed in the Funding Formula Chart – be sure to check out your status through the NHCIS portal beginning Friday, August 20 at 5:00 PM.

Again, thank you for all you continue to do for New Hampshire's families.

Regards,

Dianne Chase, Assistant Bureau Chief and the ARPA/CCASP Team

Consumer and Provider Website: <https://www.nh-connections.org/>