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BUREAU OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT & HEAD START COLLABORATION

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Dear Child Care Providers,

DHHS is pleased to announce the availability of one-time awards of quality discretionary funding to NH child care programs. The purpose of the funds is to recognize and support continuous improvement in the quality of child care programs in New Hampshire. Funds are available from the ARPA Discretionary Program and the CCDF discretionary funds for quality.

As often occurs with discretionary funding, DHHS is able to document the amount of remaining funds in a given fiscal year only after year-end reports are completed across the Department and must act quickly to ensure that funds are allocated in a timely manner. Therefore, we appreciate your understanding of the quick response time for these grants. **The deadline for applications is Wednesday, September 6, 2023, 11:59 PM.**

What child care programs are eligible?

- Granite Steps for Quality (GSQ)-enrolled child care programs;
- Licensed Plus (LP) programs;
- Non-GSQ or non-LP licensed child care centers;
- Non-GSQ or non-LP licensed family child care; and
- License-exempt facilities and family, friend and neighbor care.

For GSQ enrolled and Licensed Plus programs, this award will serve as the Annual Quality Incentive award for calendar year 2023.

Are there any other eligibility criteria for programs to receive funds?

Yes. You are eligible for these funds if your program meets the following criteria:

- You are currently open and provide care during the regular school year (not summer only programs).
- You are a fully licensed center or family child care provider or a license-exempt facility or family/friend/neighbor provider (with a fully approved application or one in progress with a plan to complete the requirements within 60 days).
- You plan to remain open through spring 2024.
- Your program is located in New Hampshire.
- You provide child care and are a program in "good standing."
- You answer all of the questions on the confirmation survey.
- You agree to spend the funds in the expense areas detailed in the confirmation.

- You agree to expend the funds within one year of receipt, submit a financial report on the amount spent in each category of expenses by August 31, 2024, and keep on file in your program any receipts or invoices for these funds in case of audit.
- You agree to complete the upcoming NH Child Care Workforce Survey (coming in fall 2023 to include all staff) and a quick “how we spent our funds” update survey in mid-February 2024.

How can programs use the funds?

Grant funds may be used for any of the following program quality expenses:

- Infant/Toddler Quality (5% requirement if you serve this age group)
- Personnel Costs: Benefits, Recruitment and Retention (e.g., health insurance, premium pay, bonuses, employee child care, family leave, etc.) or costs of recruitment or retention (including employee, sole proprietor or independent contractor)
- Program Evaluation
- Child Screening and Assessment
- Implementation of Program Standards, Guidelines, etc.
- Accreditation
- Mental Health and Wellness for Children, Families and Staff
- Health-related program Standards
- Professional Development and Support
- Use of Outcome Measures for Program Improvement
- Program Supply, Availability and Access
- Minor Renovations and Environmental Improvements
- Communication and Public Awareness

What must my program do to accept these quality funds, and what if we want to decline?

We recognize how busy you are and have made the process for you to respond as quick and easy as possible!

Here is the process to apply for or decline funds -

To accept quality funds: Please complete and submit the application (acceptance and confirmation) for each of your sites, found at the following link: <https://NH CC Quality Incentive Awards>

Applications must be submitted no later than Wednesday, September 6, 2023 by 11:59 PM. No exceptions will be made. You must answer all questions. As promised, we are making the process as simple as possible. You will not even need to submit an invoice – all the work will be done for you!

To decline the quality funds: Please complete questions 1 through 5 only. Your response is critical in order for DHHS to determine the amount of quality funding per program, and to meet federal requirements for documentation.

Be sure to CLICK THE DONE BUTTON AT THE END TO SAVE AND SUBMIT YOUR ANSWERS

How much money will my program receive?

The total amount of funding for awards is approximately \$3,145,000, which includes \$1,850,000 in ARPA Discretionary Funds and \$1,295,000 in CCDF Discretionary Quality Funds. Your program’s award will vary by a number of factors, including type of program, program quality designation, and number of program applications received. Awards for GSQ programs will also be based on license capacity.

For example, if all eligible programs apply:

- Licensed Plus Programs awards could be approximately \$8,550
- GSQ programs serving from 1-25 children could receive about \$9,600, while programs serving 200 or more children could receive about \$19,200
- Non-GSQ centers could receive about \$3,245 and family child care – about \$2,500
- License exempt (LE) facilities could receive about \$2,000, and LE family, friend and neighbor providers - \$1,500.

As noted, all examples are estimates subject to change.

What is the timeline for my program to receive the funds?

Programs approved to receive an award may expect to receive funds no later than the end of September.

What if I have questions about the application?

If you have questions about the application, please email us at the following address. We will get back to you just as soon as possible.

ECCP@dhhs.nh.gov

DHHS is excited about supporting your efforts to enhance the quality of your program and hope you will submit an application!

My best,



Debra Nelson, MS
Bureau Chief