

Appendix B: Frequently Asked Questions – Child Care Challenge Grant

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

1. What is the purpose of the Iowa Child Care Challenge Fund?

The purpose of the Child Care Challenge Grant fund is to encourage and enable businesses, nonprofit organizations, and consortiums to establish local child care facilities and increase the availability of quality, affordable child care for working Iowans. To support this work, the fund will award competitive grants to support community and regional initiatives. Iowa Workforce Development is seeking collaborative applications that propose new, cutting-edge ideas as well as proven strategies.

2. Who will decide which applications receive funding?

IWD and DHS will identify an application panel to review and score proposals.

3. What will Iowa Workforce Development take into account when determining grant awards?

IWD and DHS will evaluate applications based on a number of criteria including but not limited to the scoring guidance referenced in the to the scoring rubric, whether the plan includes community engagement by including community partners or incorporating existing community programs.

4. Are applicants required to identify specific project goal(s)?

Yes, all applications must include performance measures that logically connect a project's goal(s) with proposed activities and a timeline. Performance measures should include to the extent possible whether the expected results were achieved.

5. How will IWD and DHS ensure Child Care Challenge Funds are used as intended?

IWD will review programmatic and financial reports to evaluate grant progress. In addition, IWD may provide ongoing technical assistance to grantees, may schedule site visits and may coordinate in-person or desk reviews as needed. IWD will consult with DHS regarding any questions on use of DHS portions of the funding.

6. How does the match work?

The Child Care Challenge Fund provides a state match for regional investments of in-kind (labor

and materials) and private dollars. Applicants can request approval for an amount up to the amount of money they have secured for the project up to the maximum award of \$250,000. The private funds must be expended first, matching state dollars may be drawn down once all private funds are expended.

7. What are allowable expenses?

IWD portion of funds can be used to support new construction of a child care facility, rehabilitation of an existing structure as a child care facility, or the retrofitting and repurposing of an existing structure for use as a child care facility. It cannot be used for administrative expenses of operating the program or implementing the project.

DHS funds may be used for minor remodeling and upgrading child care facilities to assure that providers meet State and local child care standards, including applicable health and safety requirements. Funds may be used for minor renovations related to meeting requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

As required by Federal Law 98.56, funds shall not be used for the following: purchase or improvement of land or the purchase; construction, or permanent improvement of any building or facility including major renovations, 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.

8. Who can apply for the grants?

Eligible applicants for the Child Care Challenge Grant include businesses, non-profits and consortiums in good standing with the State of Iowa. IWD encourages applicants to cultivate partnerships to enhance project activities and outcomes. If an employer is not the lead applicant, applicants are required to include a letter of commitment from an employer as a key project partner with the application submission.

DHS funding may only be used on licensed child care centers and registered child development homes or those actively moving towards registration or license within 90 days of approval of funds.

9. When is the application due?

December 3, 2021

10. When will awardees be notified?

As soon as the applications have been reviewed and decisions have been made regarding the

awarding of funds.

11. What is the project timeline for expending the funds?

Successful applicants for the Child Care Challenge Grant must provide proof to IWD that privately raised funds have been expended in full, at which time, then matching funds may be drawn down. Awardees must be able to draw down state funds by June 30, 2022. All matching funds must be utilized within 12 months of receipt and any unexpended matching dollars must be returned to IWD thereafter

12. Is there a maximum award?

Funding from IWD \$250,000

Funding from DHS \$750,000

13. Will all applications be awarded?

Submission of an application does not guarantee an award.