



# Rhode Island Department of Human Services

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## Child Care Stabilization Fund

### Child Care Stabilization Fund FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

*Q: Am I eligible to receive this grant?*

A: You are eligible to apply for this grant if you are:

- Currently a DHS licensed Family Child Care Home or Child Care Center,
  - If a Child Care Center, you must be authorized to apply on behalf of your program. You may be the licensee, owner, or fiscal manager.
- A license-exempt provider

*Q: If I have more than one Rhode Island location, am I eligible to receive more than one grant?*

A: Yes. Every licensed child care program is eligible for a grant; this includes multi-site programs. Every program with a distinct license number will need to apply individually.

*Q: How do I apply?*

A: The application link will be available on March 29<sup>th</sup> at <http://kids.ri.gov/cabinet/>. You will navigate to the application link to create an applicant profile. This will allow you to save your application and return to the portal to see the status of your application, update any information, or re-apply during a subsequent round of funding.

For guidance on how to set up an applicant profile, visit the grant resources provided at <http://kids.ri.gov/cabinet/>.

*Q: How were stipend amounts determined?*

A: DHS utilized results from the COVID-19 Impact Surveys completed by RI child care providers in the Fall of 2020 to make discretionary determinations of stipend amounts by program type. Through these series of surveys, DHS learned that providers were experiencing an average of 25% reduction in enrollment. The stipend determinations were calculated by accounting for the enrollment reduction and operating costs associated with staffing and keeping classrooms or programs open.



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**Q: How much money will my program be awarded?**

A: DHS aims to issue two stipends per licensed program based on fund availability. Family Child Care Homes, Group Family Child Care Homes, and license-exempt providers will apply for the grant through one application and be issued one payment for both stipend awards.

Child Care Centers will apply for the grant through two separate application windows and will be issued two payment rounds.

The following table summarizes stipend amounts by provider type:

Provider Type	Stipend Amount	Payment Amount
Child Care Center	Varies based on number of classrooms and licensed capacity. Stipends begin at \$4,500.	Varies. Centers will receive two rounds of payments based on two separate grant applications and awards. Stipends are capped at \$50,000 per licensed center per payment round.
Family Child Care Home	\$1,500	\$3,000
Group Family Child Care Home	\$2,250	\$4,500
License-exempt provider	\$400	\$800

**Q: When do I apply?**

A: There are two application windows. Family Child Care Home providers, Group Family Child Care Home providers, and license-exempt providers should submit one grant application during application window 1 only. Because these provider types are receiving program-based stipends, DHS will allow them to submit one application and receive their full award amounts for both stipends in one payment. Child Care Centers are eligible to apply for the grant during both application windows for two rounds of grant funding.

	Timeline	Who should apply?
Application Window 1	March 29, 2021 – May 7, 2021	Child Care Centers Family Child Care Home, Group Family Child Care Home, and license-exempt providers
Application Window 2	July 5, 2021 – July 30, 2021	Child Care Centers only



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*Q: What if I need help completing my application?*

A: RI DHS has provided several resources to assist you throughout the grant application process:

- *View online resources*, including:
  - (1) Provider Memos: One-page summaries of the grant created specifically for Family Child Care providers and Child Care Centers, respectively. These memos include general grant information as well as details around how and when to apply.
  - (2) Process Guide: How to create an application profile within the online application system.
  - (3) Application Tips: How to navigate the online grant application.
  - (4) Provider Checklist: A checklist to prepare you for completion of your grant application.
  - (5) FAQ: A compiled list of frequently asked questions which provides detailed information about the grant.

**Note:** Links to these online resources are located at <http://kids.ri.gov/cabinet/>.

*Watch a webinar.* DHS has developed webinars to guide your program through the grant application process. Your program will receive an email with links to these webinars which detail an overview of the grant, eligibility, how to apply, and how to spend the grant award. Webinars will also be posted online at <http://kids.ri.gov/cabinet/>.

*Attend weekly office hours.* Virtual office hours will be held twice per week during the application period. Providers should attend office hours ask questions about the grant application process and obtain any additional assistance needed. Office hours will be held separately for Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Home providers (including Group Family Child Care Home and license-exempt providers). The schedule of office hours will be emailed to your program and posted online at <http://kids.ri.gov/cabinet/>.

*Contact us!* Reach out to our provider support email address to submit a question or request a technical assistance phone call with our staff: [ChildCareGrants@pcgus.com](mailto:ChildCareGrants@pcgus.com). Both English and Spanish speaking providers may receive assistance through this email inbox.

*Q: My program is a Head Start or Early Head Start program. Are we eligible for this grant?*

A: Yes. Head Start and Early Head Start programs may apply for this grant.

*Q: Will the number of children currently enrolled in my program affect the amount of grant money I am awarded?*

A: No. The number of children currently enrolled in your program has no bearing on your award amount. DHS has requested that you provide the number of children currently enrolled in your program in their continuous effort to understand, assess, and address the impact of COVID-19 on child care providers in Rhode Island.



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*Q: When will I receive the funding?*

A: DHS expects for payments to be made within 30 business days of receipt of a completed application. Providers will elect to receive funds either by direct deposit or by mailed check.

Electing to receive funds by check may delay payment up to an additional 30 business days due to processing and mail delivery.

*Q: What can the funds be used for?*

A: Awarded funds may be used in the following ways:

Allowable use of funds	Examples
Wage/Staff bonuses	Increase in staff wages or one-time staff bonuses
Professional Development/Advanced Coursework for ECE Educators	Professional learning opportunities (formal or informal)
Personal Protective Equipment	Face masks or shields, gloves, hand sanitizer
Capital Improvement Projects	Facility upgrades including plexiglass dividers, flooring, furniture or fixture modifications, etc., Technology upgrades
Occupancy	Rent, mortgage, insurance, utilities (such as gas, electricity, water, cable/internet)
Materials/Supplies	Cleaning supplies, program supplies (crayons, paper, etc.)
Supporting costs due to reduced enrollment	General operational costs

These categories are not all inclusive, or required, but can serve as a recommended guide for programs to plan for spending.

*Q: What is the 20% add-on incentive for Child Care Centers?*

A: RI will incentivize Child Care Centers to commit 20% or more of their grant award in Round 1 to direct payments to their workforce (wages, hazard pay and/or spot-bonuses.) Those programs who successfully execute on this vision will receive an additional payment (20% of the Round 1 grant award) to their Round 2 award.

**Example:** A center commits (minimum) 20% of their stabilization grant in wages (one-time stipend, return to work bonus, hazard pay, etc.) and receives a 20% add-on to their total stabilization grant award value upon attestation of their commitment within their second grant application. The 20% add-on would not need to be applied to wages but would be added to Round 2's stipend for the program's discretionary spending.

*Q: Is there a cap to the amount of funds my program will receive?*

A: Child Care Center stipends are capped at \$50,000 per licensed centers per payment round.



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*Q: How many rounds of payments will be made?*

A: RI DHS aims to approve two stipends to all eligible providers, depending upon fund availability.

Family Child Care Home, Group Family Child Care Home, and license-exempt providers will apply for both stipends through one grant application and will receive one payment.

*Example:* A Family Child Care Home provider submits one grant application during application window 1. DHS approves their application. Both of their \$1,500 stipends are issued in one, lump sum payment to the program totaling \$3,000.

Child Care Centers will apply for each of their two stipends separately, submitting a grant application within both application windows. Child Care Centers will receive two rounds of payments, one for each application submitted. The second Child Care Center grant application will be an abbreviated one. As a component of the second application, DHS plans to request that providers who are re-applying share how they plan to spend their Round 1 awards.

DHS will release more information to Child Care Centers when the second grant application is made available.

*Q: How do I receive the grant money?*

A: There are two payment options:

1. Direct Deposit/ACH
2. Paper Check

**Note:** Electing the direct deposit/ACH option will expedite your receipt of funds. If you elect to receive a paper check, receipt of funds may be delayed by 30 business days due to processing and mail delivery.

*Q: How do I fill out a W-9 Form?*

A: Check out this video to learn how to complete a Form W-9:

<https://www.irsvideos.gov/Business/Resources/HowToCompleteFormW-9>

The W-9 Form form may be downloaded at: <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>

*Q: Does my business have a DUNS number? Where can I find it?*

A: Watch this video (less than 1 minute long) to learn about DUNS numbers and where to find yours:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z1R80AjnI90&list=PLvkTYu1HshZirHpsEQ0RcsF0MQCXhmJ8Z&index=16>

This video will explain how to search for an existing DUNS number or apply for a new one:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ELR9-AAAtc0&list=PLvkTYu1HshZirHpsEQ0RcsF0MQCXhmJ8Z&index=5>



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*Q: Are these grants taxable?*

A: The IRS has published information [[irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov)] indicating that "receipt of a government grant by a business is generally not excluded from the business's gross income under the Federal Tax Code and therefore is taxable." Please consult your accountant or tax professional to understand more about your particular tax situation and how this guidance applies.

*Q: Could I be audited as a result of receiving these funds?*

A: Yes. As these are federal funds, you may be audited to ensure funds were spent appropriately. Please keep a record of receipt of funds as well as a record of how these funds were spent. This may be done by retaining receipts of purchase, documentation of increases in staff wages or stipends/bonuses, or invoices. Additional guidance related to potential auditing or record keeping requirements may be found on the ACF website under Office of Child Care [COVID-19 Resources](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/training-technical-assistance/office-child-care-covid-19-resources) [<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/training-technical-assistance/office-child-care-covid-19-resources>].

*Q: What type of documentation do I need to maintain to document expenditure of these funds?*

A: Applicants must retain supporting documentation including receipts, bank statements, invoices, or similar. Applicants may be asked for documentation before or after the award is made. Accordingly, applicants should have supporting documentation for all eligible expenses and must be able to make those available upon request.

***If you have any additional questions or need technical assistance, please contact:***  
[ChildCareGrants@pcqus.com](mailto:ChildCareGrants@pcqus.com)