

Childcare – Expansion Funds

Cumberland County Childcare grant program will fund new and expanded childcare facilities to help close the childcare supply/demand gap. The focus of this grant is to address the significant barrier for many childcare businesses, around the cost associated with making physical plant changes to comply with licensing regulations or to expand capacity.

Five key principles of the County Grant Program:

- Maintain and increase the supply of high-quality childcare, particularly in underserved areas and for families with low incomes or high needs.
- Boost low-income parents' ability to work and provide continuity of care for children.
- Stabilize the childcare workforce and support program quality and child development.
- Make use of short-term financial resources for long-term assets.
- Align Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and child care stabilization funds (CCSF) funding with other pandemic relief efforts and federal resources.

Cumberland County will work with an experienced vendor, whom will develop a grant application process, evaluation criteria, and provide Cumberland County State & Local Fiscal Recovery grant funding and technical assistance to address these business challenges thereby increasing childcare capacity within Cumberland County. Vendor technical assistance will include support developing a business plan, coaching through the licensing process, support to earn a Quality for ME rating, learning best practices for managing a childcare business, and providing one-on-one support with a business advisor.

Funding

The funding is intended to support Gaps in financing between what is available from the state, what the grantee is contributing and delta of the project. Total funding for this project is \$1,000,000.00

Timing of Applications

Applications will be accepted on an on-going basis as long as resources are available and must be in the form prescribed by Cumberland County. The County will review applications on a first-come, first-served basis. Cumberland County reserves the exclusive right to determine whether an application meets the requirements of the Program.

Eligible Costs:

Costs associated with Renovating an existing building or constructing a new building. Grant awards received may be used for the following purposes:

- Purchasing or renting a building and renovating it to deliver high quality child care. Selected examples include adding a window to allow for egress and to add natural light, removing a wall to increase the size of a room, adding an accessible ground-floor bathroom and installing a fire alarm system.
- Constructing a new building that is designed to enhance a child's development.
- Buying educational materials for the new children to be served. Selected examples include books, musical instruments, developmentally appropriate toys and consumable supplies, such as paper, paint and chalk.
- Acquiring indoor furniture and fixtures for the increased capacity. Selected examples include tables, chairs, cribs and sleeping mats.
- Creating an outdoor learning environment that accommodates the additional children. Selected examples include building pathways, gardens or activity centers, such as a mud kitchen.
- Buying playground equipment to include more children. Selected examples include swings, sandboxes, shade areas, playsets and energy-absorbing material.
- Procuring health and safety supplies and other materials required to increase your licensed capacity. Selected examples include first aid kits, electrical outlet covers and gates.