

Child Care Restoration Grants



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are Child Care Restoration Grants?

The Child Care Restoration Grants is a program intended to support the economic health of licensed child care providers over the coming months who endure lost revenue due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.⁶

Per public health guidelines, [child care](#) programs will need to operate at approximately 30% reduced capacity in Phases 3 & 4 of [Restore Illinois](#) to allow for social distancing. However, despite reduced enrollments, operating costs for programs will remain constant or increase, as staffing and other the fixed costs such as rent, and utilities will not change. The Child Care Restoration Grants program is designed to help sustain them through this difficult time.

2. Where is the money coming from to fund these grants?

The Child Care Restoration Grants Program is part of the state's Business Interruption Grants (BIG) program and is made possible with funding through the federal CARES Act. There is at least \$270 million dedicated to financially assist child care programs.

3. Who is running this grant program?

The funds will flow through the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) in partnership with the Illinois Department of Human Services. DCEO will contract with the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA) as a third-party intermediary to administer this program.

4. What reporting will be required?

A monthly expense statement will be required on the 15th of each month. An expense statement template will be provided. Receipts do not need to be submitted but must be maintained by the program for five years for federal and state auditing purposes.

5. Will there be assistance offered in filling out the monthly expense statement?

A technical assistance webinar was held the first week of September (and a recording is available online) to provide guidance on how to complete the reporting forms and what expenses can be covered by restoration grant funds.

6. What can these funds be used for and what will be required on the monthly report?

A monthly reporting worksheet is available online. Allowable expenses are directly related to lost revenue or incurred expenses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Examples of allowable expenses include, but are not limited to staff salary, rent/mortgage, insurance, cleaning supplies, contractual services like food serve, cleaning/maintenance and PPE supplies for staff.

7. Can I buy equipment or pay for renovations to improve my space for cleanliness or social distancing?

The use of the CCRG funds is outlined in the certifications and attestations. The CCRG is provided through the Business Interruption Grants (BIG) program and is specifically designed to in-part compensate for revenue lost due to reduced capacity in your program. Purchasing equipment and or renovations would not be an approved expense. For other expense questions, see the [Monthly Reporting FAQ](#).

8. Who can apply for these grants?

Licensed child care homes and licensed centers in good standing with the Illinois Secretary of State are eligible to apply if they can demonstrate a 'business interruption' due to regulatory changes to child care due to public health and safety guidelines due to COVID 19.

Both non-profit and for-profit providers are eligible to apply.

9. Are licensed family child care able to apply for this grant?

Yes. All family child care providers now access the application. The system is pre-populated with a licensed capacity of 12 (including your extended license) for Family Child Care and 16 for Group Family Child to simplify the process. However, just because you can apply does not mean you are eligible. This grant is specifically designed to provide relief to those providers who have been forced to reduce the number of children in care due to DCFS emergency rule limits. You will be asked to supply your current capacity and enrollment in the application process.

10. What if we are currently renewing our DCFS license?

This will not affect your ability to apply for the grant dollars.

11. Where do we find the DCFS licensing information for Phase 3 & 4?

The information from DCFS can be found at:

www2.illinois.gov/dcfs/brighterfutures/healthy/Documents/Day_Care_Guidance.pdf

12. What does it mean to be in good standing with the Illinois Secretary of State?

The Illinois Certificate of Good Standing, sometimes called the Certificate of Existence, shows whether a business has a good standing status with the Secretary of State. This document is used to verify the existence of most business entities in the state to include registered partnerships, corporations and Limited Liability Companies (LLC) in Illinois that are authorized to transact business in the state.

13. Will a certificate of good standing from a year ago be accepted?

The certificate of good standing must have a 2020 date.

14. Do I need to do anything before the actual application in order to 'qualify' to apply?

Two things are needed before you can apply for a grant.

1. The application will be made available through the Gateways to Opportunity Registry Director Portal. Your Registry membership needs to be current and you will need access to the Director Portal for your program in order to complete the application. You can ensure both of these things are done in preparation for the application being made available.

[Join or Renew Gateways Registry Membership](#)

[Request Access to the Director Portal](#)

This grants program is also 'exempt' from the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) so there is nothing else you need to do to 'qualify' to apply for this grant.

2. A DUNS number is required to ensure that programs are not on the federal 'disbarred' list. A DUNS number can be accessed online for free at <https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do>. It is important to note that obtaining a DUNS number is free, however there are companies that advertise they will provide a DUNS number for a fee. These companies should not be used. ONLY use the link above and www.grants.gov to request a DUNS number and do not pay a fee. Be careful to not accidentally be redirected to a different website for this service. A DUNS number cannot be received by phone.

15. What can I do now to start preparing to apply for a Child Care Restoration Grant?

You can start to gather the information/documents listed below to prepare:

- Your current DCFS license number
- Access to the Gateways Registry Director Portal
- Your DUNS number
- A W-9
- A current certification of 'good standing' issued by the Illinois Secretary of State's Office.
 - *NOTE: if you are registered as a 'sole-proprietor' with the Internal Revenue Service, all you need is your DCFS license.*

16. Is there an appeal process for Restoration Grants?

Yes. An appeal process can be found on the CCRG webpage at www.ilgateways.com/financial-opportunities/restoration-grants. Programs can appeal if they are not able to apply or have been found ineligible. Programs can also appeal the grant funding amount.

17. What if my licensed center capacity on March 1, 2020 listed in the application is incorrect?

We encourage you to apply and (if found eligible) receive the grant based on the capacity listed in the application portal. Then use the appeal process found on the CCRG web page to appeal the grant funding amount.

18. How do we apply if we have 3 different sites?

Restoration Grants are a site-based grant, each site must apply separately.

19. If I received a stipend as an emergency child care provider, can I still apply for this grant?

Yes.

20. If we receive adult/child food care program funding where should that be accounted for in the funding percentages section of the application?

Please do **NOT** include adult/child food care program funding in your funding percentages.

21. Are programs required to be offering full time care?

Yes. Programs are required to be offering full-time care, defined as a program that is open and offering at least 8 consecutive hours of care per day, five days per week.

22. Can I apply for a grant if I am still closed and not caring for children?

No. You must be open and caring for children when you submit the full grant application in order to qualify for a grant.

23. If our program is not scheduled to open until after August 14, 2020 when round one of the grant applications closes, can we still apply?

Programs must be open and caring for children by August 14, 2020 to apply for a grant in round one. You would not be eligible for round 1 of the funding, but your program could apply in round 2 of the grants to be released in September to cover lost revenue/incurred expenses for the months of October and November, 2020.

24. Can we apply if we plan to have the children return on Aug. 4th with limited capacity. If we provided service through zoom during the months of April through current?

You must be open and caring for children in your program in order to apply for the CCRG. The application period is open until August 14th - so if you open your program on August 4, 2020 - as long as you apply after that date, you are eligible. Your award amount will be pro-rated for the days in July and August you are not open and caring for children.

25. How will grant amounts be based?

The grant funding formula takes into account several factors including the licensed capacity on March 1, what area of the state you live in, if you have achieved an ExceleRate Circle of Quality, and if you are in a disproportionately impacted area (DIA). A list of DIA zip codes can be found at the following link:

https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/SmallBizAssistance/Documents/BIGDIAZipCodeList_062520.pdf

26. What if your capacity was reduced because you lost private paying clients?

Reduced capacity is not determined by enrollment but instead, it is determined by what your licensed capacity was prior to March 2020 compared to what the new maximum capacity is based on the DCFS emergency rule.

27. Will there be programs who will not be awarded any amount? Or will all programs be awarded at least some dollars?

All applications successfully completed, received within the open application period and deemed eligible for the program will receive an award. This is NOT a lottery system.

28. Will state funded child care programs have priority over private programs?

No. The only programs who are prioritized in the application process are those programs located in the Disproportionately Impacted Area. The list of DIAs can be found here:

www2.illinois.gov/dceo/SmallBizAssistance/Documents/BIGDIAZipCodeList_062520.pdf

29. When will the application for the Child Care Restoration Grant program be released?

The first-round grant application was released on July 24, 2020 closed on August 14, 2020. The second-round grant applications will open in late October to cover expenses in October and November.

30. When will I get the money?

Initial funds will be distributed to awardees in August 2020.

31. Am I eligible to apply if I am a for-profit child care providers?

Yes. Licensed non-profit and for-profit providers are eligible to apply if they can demonstrate a 'business interruption' due to COVID and they are open and currently caring for children.

32. Will there be an information-session offered when the applications are released to explain the program and process to apply?

Technical Assistance Webinars discussed the Restoration Grant and walked through the application process in the Gateways Registry Director Portal. The webinars provided information on what documents to collect, and what information you need to have ready before you apply.

You can view the live recordings in [English](#) or [Spanish](#). To view webinar recordings, you will need to enter your name and email address.

33. Is this program just for providers who care for low-income children through the IDHS Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)?

No. Any provider in the state of Illinois who meets the eligibility criteria is encouraged to apply.

34. Is this a one-time grant payment or will this grant program be around for as long as we are operating under the Restore Illinois plan?

How much and for how long grants are available is reliant on the amount of total funds dedicated to the Child Care Restoration Grants Program. The current appropriation is at least \$270 million.

35. Why is the Child Care Restoration Grants program only for licensed providers? License-exempt programs are also struggling.

We know all child care providers are underpaid in the best of times. However, the Child Care Restoration Grants are specifically designed (and funded) to compensate for a 'business interruption'. Because License-exempt Family Child Care Providers have not been required to reduce their capacity as a result of COVID-19, they do not meet the criteria. In fact, License-exempt family child care providers were allowed to care for additional children during COVID-19.

For License-exempt Centers, because they are outside the jurisdiction of the state's licensing and regulatory agency – the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) we have no mechanism by which to affirm what their enrollment was and if/why it is reduced now. The funds for this program are administered by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) and are subject to a federal/state audit to ensure funds are used in accordance with the authorizing legislation.

We are currently collecting data to try to assess the needs of License-exempt centers and will look to secure other funding sources (TBD) to provide relief to those programs struggling as a result of COVID-19.

36. If I make a mistake in any part of my application, am I disqualified?

No. If there is additional information/clarification needed for your application to be processed, someone will notify you regarding what supporting documents will need to be [re]submitted in order to complete your application. You will have two weeks from original application admission date to supply those documents to the 3rd party administrator. However, an incomplete application can delay distribution of funds. It is in your best interest to submit a complete application with all required documentation.

37. Is the Grant award considered taxable income at the state and federal levels?

Eligible programs receiving grant funding will receive an IRS Tax Form 1099-MISC. Programs should consult their accountants.

38. Can I mail in an application or will it need to be submitted online?

The application will be completed and submitted online through the Gateways Registry Director Portal. You will also need to upload required documents online. There will not be a paper application.

39. If we are NAEYC accredited but do not have an ExceleRate Circle of Quality, will that also be factored into the funding?

No. The four factors which determine your grant award amount are licensed capacity on March 1, 2020, county grouping, quality rating/blended funding with EHS/HS and/or PI/PFA and Disproportionately Impacted Zip Codes (DIA). NAEYC accreditation is not considered in figuring the grant award amount.

40. Is an ExceleRate Circle of Quality required to apply for this grant?

No, you do NOT have to have an ExceleRate Illinois quality rating to be eligible for the CCRG program. Having a level of quality will affect the amount of the award but not your eligibility to apply.

41. Why do ExceleRate Illinois Bronze Circle of Quality programs not receive an add-on to their Child Care Restoration Grant award amount?

The ExceleRate Illinois Bronze Circle of Quality is a training level and does not require additional resources (either investments in quality or reduced revenue due to lower ratio). Consequently, there is no add-on for Bronze Circle of Quality Programs.

42. Why do I not get my add-on for my ExceleRate Illinois Gold Circle of Quality because I have Head Start funding?

Programs who have Pre-School for All and Head Start funding are able to 'layer' funding streams for each child in care. Consequently, programs with a 'blended funding structure' do not experience the 'loss' the Child Care Restoration Grants are designed to address.

For Programs Awarded a CCRG Grant in Round One

43. When are we going to get the next check?

The second round for the CCRG will begin on October 1st. If you have met the criteria for your Round Two award (see below), you will not need to do anything for Round Two. You will be contacted by INCCRRA when your grant has been processed and your check is in the mail.

44. Will it be for the same amount?

The monthly award in Round Two will be the same as your grant award was in Round One. However, this grant period will only cover two months (vs. 3) – October and November. So, the monthly amount will be the same, but the TOTAL amount will not be the same.

45. Do we have to do anything extra to get the second-round check?

In order to be eligible for Round Two, you must submit the following items before November 18, 2020.

- Receipt of Approval Letter – you must sign, date and upload the receipt of approval letter from your first CCRG grant to the Director Portal.
- Monthly Expense Reporting – Monthly expense reporting for July & August must be complete and accepted in the Director Portal.
- Monthly Narrative Reporting – Narrative reports for July & Augusts must be complete in the Director Portal.
 - *Please note once you click on the link and complete the narrative report, it will not show as complete in the Director Portal for 24-28 hours.*

46. What if we can't spend all the funding from the first round?

Programs are encouraged to spend CCRG funding in the appropriate month, however you have until December 31, 2020 to expend funds. All funds must be accounted for in the monthly reporting.

For New Programs Applying for the Child Care Restoration Grant Program

47. When will the application open?

The second-round application for new programs opened on October 1, 2020 and will close on October 15, 2020. Your application and all supporting documents must be received in the Director Portal by October 15, 2020 in order to qualify for Round Two of the CCRG.

48. What is the required 'open and caring for children' date to apply?

You must be open and caring for children before the close of Round Two on October 15, 2020.

49. How quickly will we get the check?

It depends. If your application is filled out accurately, you have secured and included your required federal DUNS number and other required documents, your application can be processed within one week and it could then take up to three weeks before you receive your check in the mail.

50. If I was open before October 1, 2020, can I submit expenses and be reimbursed for those through this grant as well?

The Second Round CCRG is not a reimbursement. It is a grant and will cover the months of October and November.

11/23/20

