

# New Applicants Appeal Procedure

## Smart Start Workforce Grants FY 2026

*Round 4 Appeals covering April, May, and June 2026*

New applicants for the Smart Start Workforce Grants have the right to appeal if they believe any of the following applies.

- reason for ineligibility is incorrect
- approved funding amount is incorrect
- Family Child Care or Group Family Child Care who offers evening care (must meet all classroom eligibility during evening hours)

To view the Smart Start Workforce Grants eligibility criteria and/or the considerations in determining funding, click here: [Smart Start Workforce Grants](#)

The appeals procedure is made available to the public through the Smart Start Workforce Grants website hosted by the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA).

All appeals must be submitted by **February 27, 2026**, in writing to [grants@inccrra.org](mailto:grants@inccrra.org)

Appeals must include the following information:

- Completed Appeal Form.
- A copy of your active DCFS license.
- Documentation to show that program is open and serving children, including number of classrooms, and CCAP eligibility.
- Email communication/documentation that shows you have been in contact with INCCRRA help desk, or specific counselor, regarding any issues you were experiencing that kept you from being able to submit your application. (specific to appeal reasoning)

The decision rendered is final.

**Appeals due to missing the deadline to apply, without a valid reason, will not be reviewed. The deadline to apply for Round 4 is January 30, 2026.**

**Appeals due to not submitting their funding request or requested information by the deadline, will not be reviewed. The deadline to submit all required documentation and reporting is February 13, 2026.**

**Appeals submitted after February 27, 2026, will not be accepted.**