



**Child Care Center Manual Procedure Letter No. 47
Family Child Care Manual Procedure Letter No. 40**

TO: All Child Care Center Manual Holders
All Family Child Care Manual Holders

FROM: Kara B. Wentz, DCY Director
Matt Damschroder, ODJFS Director

SUBJECT: 2024 Infant Toddler Infrastructure Grants for Licensed Early Care and Education Centers, Preschool/School Based Programs, and Family Child Care Home Providers

Background

Section 423.105 of Amended Substitute House Bill No. 33 of the 135th General Assembly appropriated \$15 million per year for infant and toddler infrastructure grants in communities with high infant mortality rates to rebuild the infant and toddler workforce and to increase access to infant and toddler child care. Since the pandemic, early care and education programs have struggled to maintain an adequate workforce and have closed classrooms. These grants are intended to offset the higher costs associated with lower staff to child ratios for infants and toddlers and the additional spacing, equipment and supplies needed to care for this population.

In December 2023, the Ohio Department of Children and Youth (DCY) announced infant toddler infrastructure grants through Child Care Center Manual Procedure Letter (CCCMPL) No. 43 and Family Child Care Manual Procedure Letter (FCCMPL) No. 36.

Second Round of Competitive Grants

On June 25, 2024, DCY announced that a second round of competitive infant toddler infrastructure grants will be available to eligible programs for the purposes of workforce supports, technical assistance, facility improvements, and classroom supplies. Grant funds may also be used to: 1) reopen an infant/toddler classroom; 2) convert a closed classroom to an infant/toddler classroom; or 3) expand programs for infant/toddler space.

What is a competitive grant?

Competitive grants allow qualifying agencies to compete for funding through an application process. Competitive grants are not entitlements and not every application will be approved for funding. The provider's infant toddler infrastructure grant application will be scored, with the highest scores receiving funding.

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Who qualifies for these grants?

DCY licensed early care and education (ECE) centers, preschool/school based programs and family child care (FCC) home providers who meet the requirements listed below are eligible for the 2024 infant toddler infrastructure grants.

Applicants can use the following checklist to determine whether they qualify and to prepare for the online application process:

Check Box	Applicant Requirements and Grant Criteria
	The program is located in one of fifteen Ohio counties with the highest infant mortality rates: Ashland, Auglaize, Coshocton, Cuyahoga, Erie, Guernsey, Hamilton, Highland, Hocking, Lucas, Mahoning, Montgomery, Pickaway, Scioto or Seneca County. (Determined by Ohio infant mortality rates from 2018-2022.)
	The program is licensed by DCY by close of business on July 19, 2024 and in good standing.*
	The program has an active provider agreement to offer or deliver publicly funded child care (PFCC) by close of business on July 19, 2024.
	The program is a type that can be licensed to care for infants and toddlers. This includes ECE centers, preschool/school based programs, FCC type A and type B home providers. (Preschool special education programs, child day camps, in home aides and out of state programs are not eligible.)
	The program cares for or intends to care for infants and toddlers during the life of the grant resulting in net new infants and toddlers to the program. (Definitions: "Infant" means a child who is under eighteen months of age. "Toddler" means a child who is at least eighteen months of age but less than three years of age. "Net new" means the count number of infants and toddlers that has increased in your program from the total previously reported number on the date the application was submitted.)
	The program agrees with grant terms by certifying that the early care and education program will, for the duration of the grant, use funds only for the purposes indicated.

* Programs not in good standing include: Programs in enforcement during the qualification period. Programs who have had their PFCC provider agreement terminated, within the five years prior to this application, due to misuse of funds. If a program is in good standing at the time of application but is later determined not in good standing prior to the funds being awarded, the funds may not be awarded.



My program has received grant funds before. Can I apply for these 2024 infant toddler infrastructure grants?

Providers that are 2023 infant toddler infrastructure grant recipients or 2024 program expansion access grant recipients are not eligible to apply for the 2024 infant toddler infrastructure grants.

How many infants and toddlers will providers be expected to add and what are the maximum grant award amounts?

The table below outlines, by program type, the required number of additional infants or toddlers to be added to the program, number of infants or toddlers to be PFCC approved, and maximum request amounts:

Program Type	Infant Toddler Program Expansion Criteria	Maximum Amount Programs Can Request
ECE Centers and Preschool/School Based Programs	Must care for at least 4 additional (net new) infants or toddlers, 2 of which are PFCC approved.	\$125,000
Type A FCC Home Providers	Must care for at least 2 additional (net new) infants or toddlers, 2 of which are PFCC approved.	\$10,000
Type B FCC Home Providers	Must care for at least 1 additional (net new) infant or toddler who is PFCC approved.	\$5,000

If the existing early care and education license needs to be amended to provide care for infants or toddlers, providers are to submit a license capacity amendment in accordance with rules 5101:2-12-02, 5101:2-13-02, or 3301-37-02 of the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC).



How many grants are available in each of the fifteen counties?

The table below outlines, by program type, the **estimated** number of available grants for each of the fifteen identified counties:

County	Estimated Number of Grants for ECE Centers & Preschool/School Based Programs	Estimated Number of Grants for Type A FCC Home Providers	Estimated Number of Grants for Type B FCC Home Providers
Ashland	1	1	1
Auglaize	1	1	1
Coshocton	1	1	1
Cuyahoga	35	14	48
Erie	1	1	2
Guernsey	1	1	1
Hamilton	36	14	49
Highland	1	1	1
Hocking	1	1	1
Lucas	12	5	17
Mahoning	6	2	8
Montgomery	11	5	16
Pickaway	1	1	1
Scioto	1	1	2
Seneca	1	1	1

* In counties where programs did not ask for the maximum amount of funding, remaining funds will be awarded to the highest scoring applicants within that county on a rotating basis until all county funding is exhausted.

How do providers apply for these grants?

Before applying, providers should: 1) ensure that they meet eligibility criteria, and 2) determine the amount of grant funds that they will request by calculating the costs associated with expanding their infant and toddler care and education program.

Then, applications are to be submitted by using this link: <https://forms.office.com/g/thcVVhfTdb>

Carefully enter the required information into each field of the application. Applications with a program number and program name that does not match the Ohio Child Licensing and Quality System (OCLQS) information will not be scored.

There are no additional points awarded for submitting earlier in the process. **The goal is to have a complete and well-developed application.** Programs may resubmit an application in order to correct errors at any point during the application submission period window. At the end of the



application period, the last application per license number is the application that will be considered.

Awarded programs will receive an award notification email with further details and instructions.

What is the timeframe for these grants?

The table below is a summary of the infant toddler infrastructure grants timeline:

Grant Announcement	Application Submission Period	Review & Scoring Period	Award Notification Emails Sent
June 25, 2024	July 8, 2024 at 8 a.m. through July 19, 2024 at 5 p.m.	July 20, 2024 through August 15, 2024	After August 15, 2024

How will applications be reviewed and scored?

During the review and scoring period, points will be assigned to each application based on established criteria (for example: children per slot with both parents in the workforce, evening care provided, or weekend care provided). Specific scoring criteria will be provided in the grant frequently asked questions (FAQ) document.

What is the process for awarding funds for these competitive grants?

Infant toddler infrastructure grant funds will be based on allocations determined by the budget for each program type starting with the applicant with the highest points by program type in each county, until funding is exhausted.

How will the payments be made to awarded programs?

Payments will be processed in two installments using the provider's banking information on file in OCLQS.

ECE center and preschool/school based program award recipients will receive the first half of the funding requested on the application after the grant has been awarded. Then, these program types can request the second half of the total grant amount requested after they have enrolled and cared for at least four new infants or toddlers within 120 days of the grant award date. Two of the four new infants or toddlers must be approved to receive PFCC.

FCC award recipients will receive the first half of the funding requested on the application after the grant has been awarded. Then:

- FCC type A providers can request the second half of the total grant amount requested after they have enrolled and cared for at least two new infants or toddlers approved to receive PFCC within 120 days of the grant award date.



- FCC type B providers can request the second half of the total grant amount requested after they have enrolled and cared for at least one new infant or toddler approved to receive PFCC within 120 days of the grant award date.

For all provider types, instructions for submitting requests for the second half of the program's awarded grant funds will be detailed in the program's grant award email.

How can programs use their grant funds?

The grant funds may be used for workforce supports, technical assistance, facility improvements, and classroom supplies. Grant funds may also be used to reopen an infant/toddler classroom; convert a closed classroom to an infant/toddler classroom; or expand programs for infant/toddler space.

Are there any restrictions on expenses for these grants?

Yes, expenses for construction or major renovations (building a program or constructing a new room) are not permitted. 45 CFR 98.2 defines "major renovation" to mean "(1) 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 (2) extensive alteration of a facility such as to significantly change its function and purpose, even if such renovation does not include any structural change." In other words, funds may be spent on renovations such as painting, carpeting, and other activities that neither add to the permanent value of the property nor significantly alter the function or purpose of the facility.

What are the grant expense reporting requirements?

Providers will be required to submit a final report as outlined in the program's grant award email. The report will include, but not be limited to, the following information:

- Number of children, by ages and if they are participating in PFCC
- Number of staff, by role
- Detailed information on how the funding was spent

Questions?

Please contact the Family and Customer Support Center at 1-877-302-2347, option 4 or childcarepolicy@childrenandyouth.ohio.gov with any questions.