



## **CITY OF PROVIDENCE EARLY LEARNING FACILITIES GRANT INFORMATION & INSTRUCTIONS**

### About

In partnership with City of Providence Mayor Jorge O. Elorza, LISC will be providing grants to child care operators in the City specific to improving early learning facilities with priority given to supporting compliance with existing regulations and remediating areas which pose significant risks to children's health and safety.

Grants are available in two categories:

- Planning
- Renovation

These categories are described in greater detail below. Improvements may be made to either indoor or outdoor spaces. Eligible organizations are licensed child care providers and early learning centers in the City of Providence. A total of \$315,000 of funding, made available by the Mayor Elorza, is available for providers serving infant through pre-kindergarten aged children.\* Organizations must serve high-needs children and must be actively engaged in the BrightStars process in order to be eligible for these grants. If your program does not serve any high-needs children (as defined later in these instructions) and if you are not active in BrightStars, you are not eligible for this grant.

*\*There is also a small, competitive pool of private funding, made available by LISC, accessible for licensed school age child care facilities who serve a substantial percentage of DHS subsidized children and are actively engaged in the BrightStars process.*

Priority areas for grant funding include:

- Addressing major health and safety concerns
- Providing support to programs working to make facility changes that enable them to maintain state licensure
- Providing support to programs working to improve the overall quality of their facility
- Providing support to programs with a need to expand their space, especially for those looking to expand preschool and pre-K capacity
- Providing support to programs requiring facility assessment and/or design plans for space improvements

## Purpose of Grants

1) **Planning Grant** - *Planning grants are intended to provide child care and early learning facilities with resources to develop a comprehensive indoor and/or outdoor facility plan. Examples of possible uses include:*

- *Hiring a professional to conduct an overall facility assessment to help determine major health and safety concerns and develop a staged facility improvement plan*
- *Hiring an architect or other qualified design professional to conduct a feasibility assessment of a proposed new site for programs needing to move to new spaces/locations to comply with regulations*
- *Hiring an architect or other qualified design professional to develop plans for making necessary improvements to the program to bring program into full licensing compliance and/or to improve health and safety and other features that will support movement through the BrightStars quality tiers*
- *Hiring a design professional to complete a comprehensive playground plan*

2) **Capital Grant**– *Capital grants can be used for renovations to address issues related to licensing compliance, health and safety and physical space barriers to quality improvement and/or expansion of quality programming. Please note that any work performed with these grant funds must be completed by a licensed contractor with appropriate insurance. Further, the contractor must comply with and maintain documentation regarding compliance with the Fair Labor Standard Act and the Davis Bacon Wage Act. Capital grants can also be used to cover costs associated with relocation or disruption of services during construction.*

The majority of this funding is for space that impacts infant, toddler and preschool aged children; however, a very limited pool of private funding is available for spaces serving school aged children. Programs applying for planning or capital grants to improve school age spaces must serve a minimum of 30% DHS subsidized children. Due to the limited funding available, school age applications will be highly competitive. Organizations may apply for both a planning and a capital grant.

## Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility is limited to nonprofit and for-profit licensed child care or early learning providers operating in good standing in the State or Rhode Island. Family Child Care providers are eligible so long as they are a registered business operating in good standing in the State of Rhode Island. Organizations must meet the following criteria:

- Provide service to at least 30% DHS subsidized children with greater priority given to programs serving even higher percentages of high needs children. If you do not serve at least 30% DHS subsidized children, alternate proof of charitable purpose will be required.
- Must be BrightStars rated with a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).
- Must be able to clearly demonstrate the capacity to manage the project and have a plan to complete the proposed project(s) in a timely fashion and no later than April of 2022.

Programs applying for **capital grant funding** should be aware that all contractors used must be licensed and insured. Proof of licensure and insurance will be required. **Labor costs must comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Davis-Bacon Wage Act (prevailing wage)**. All construction must follow proper building and fire codes.

#### Funding Priorities

For applicants who meet the qualifying eligibility and priority requirements (above), the Early Learning Facilities Project funding priorities are as follows:

- Programs currently enrolling children with high needs
- Programs actively participating in BrightStars who can demonstrate a commitment to quality
- Programs proposing to provide some level of matching funding for the project (though there is no match requirement)
- Programs that can demonstrate the capacity to manage the proposed project
- Programs that can demonstrate long-term site control (i.e. own the building or have a favorable long-term lease)
- Programs seeking grant funds to address the following priority issues:
  - Compliance with State Licensing Regulations
  - Health and Safety- Overall Building Condition
  - Health and Safety- Playground
  - Physical space barriers to program quality and/or quality expansion

#### Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed by a committee of stakeholders that will be led by the RICCELFF and City of Providence. Applicants will be notified of the status of their application within 45 days of the application deadline.

In addition to the eligibility requirements and identified priorities outlined above, selection will also be based on:

- The clarity and completeness of the application,
- The applicant's demonstrated ability to carry out the project in a timely manner,
- An assessment prior to the final decision to award funding, either done by phone, virtual meeting or on site, and
- The availability of funding.

The decision for acceptance of an application will be made at the discretion of LISC's Rhode Island Child Care and Early Learning Facilities Fund in partnership with the City of Providence.

#### How to Apply

- Review online application deadlines: applications for Planning and/or Capital Grants will be accepted from **August 1<sup>st</sup> through August 31<sup>st</sup>** with award notification by September 24th.

Online application can be found at [riccelff.org](http://riccelff.org).

- If you are unable to complete an online application, please contact Megan Ressler at [mressler@lisc.org](mailto:mressler@lisc.org) or 401-519-5689 for technical assistance. Incomplete proposals will be returned to the applicant and may be re-submitted before the deadline.
- If your organization has multiple sites you must submit separate applications for each site.
- Providers may apply for planning and/or capital grants, but must submit separate applications for each grant request. The RICCELFF may request further information and/or clarification from applicants.
- Please contact Megan Ressler at 401-519-5689 or [mressler@lisc.org](mailto:mressler@lisc.org) with questions.

### What You Will Need to Apply

PLEASE NOTE: this list is for REFERENCE ONLY, applications must be submitted electronically via the [online application](#).

#### Information about Your Program:

- The legal name of your organization
- The name and address of the program applying
- Type of provider (home-based, center-based, school-based)
- The program's BrightStars rating
- If the program is a Head Start
- If the program is a State Pre-K
- Structure of business (S-corporation/C-corporation, nonprofit, Limited Liability Company, etc.)
- The name of the Executive Director/Owner/Principal
- The contact person's name, title, phone number, and email address
- The program's total licensed capacity broken down by infant/toddler, preschool, and school age
- The program's current *actual enrollment* (children served, not slots) broken down by infants, toddlers, preschool, and school age
- The total numbers of children enrolled who fit each of the following descriptions:
  - Receive DHS Child Care Assistance Subsidy
  - Have IFSPs/IEPs
  - Are involved with Child Welfare/DCYF
  - Are English/Dual Language Learners
  - Receive Head Start or Early Head Start services
  - Are homeless
- Whether the space is owned (if owned, whether there is a current mortgage on the facility) or leased (if leased, what is the term of the lease and the monthly lease payment)

#### Information about the grant request:

- The type of grant being requested: a planning grant or capital grant
- The dollar amount being requested
- If you have received a written estimate from a qualified professional for the proposed work
- The age group(s) served by improvements funded by the proposed grant

- Whether the organization has secured or committed additional funding towards this project and, if so, the amount committed
- A *brief* summary of the grant request
- Whether the project fits any of the following priority areas and, if not, a description of what issue the project addresses:
  - Compliance with State Licensing Regulations
  - Health and Safety - Overall Building Condition/ Building Code Issues
  - Health and Safety - Playground Issues
  - Physical Space Barrier to Program Quality
  - Building/program expansion
  - Other (applicant will need to provide a description)

A Narrative Document:

- Brief summary of your organization including mission, history, goals and key achievements
- Overview of organization's structure and programs
- Summary of key leadership staff and board members (if applicable) including a summary of their qualifications
- Description of the proposed project
- An anticipated project budget – what are the total estimated costs? What other sources of funding have you secured or committed to this project?
- Description of your organization's capacity and plan to complete the project within the allowed time frame (all planning and/or renovation projects must be completed by May 31, 2022).
- A table will be provided within the application to describe how your project aligns with priority objectives of: ensuring licensing compliance, addressing major health and safety concerns, or making improvements that will support the program in achieving a higher level of quality.

Other Information to be uploaded or emailed as an attachment within the Application:

- Financial information:\*
  - 12 Month cash flow projection – A cash flow projection is a breakdown of the money that is expected to come in and out of your business; this includes calculating your income and your expenses

*\* If selected for a grant award, it will be contingent upon providing additional information including the most recent three years of approved business financials (Audit, account review or, if neither are available, tax return)*
- Backup documentation from licensing or other regulating agency and/or BrightStars indicating the regulations or quality standards to be met in order to maintain licensure or move up on the BrightStars rating scale (if available/applicable)
- A written estimate for each project proposed. *Please note that if you are selected to receive grant funding you are required to seek multiple bids (we recommend at least three) and document this process prior to beginning work. In addition, for capital funding, the selected contractor must follow the Fair Labor Standard Act and the Davis Bacon Wage Act. All professionals used must have*

appropriate licensure and must carry proper insurance. Projects must follow all appropriate building and fire codes.

**APPENDIX A**

**RICCELFF IMPROVEMENT PLAN OUTLINE  
SAMPLES**

The following are intended to serve as examples only. Your plan should reflect your site-specific issues. For assistance in completing a facility improvement plan, please complete a technical assistance application or contact us at [riccelff@lisc.org](mailto:riccelff@lisc.org) or 401-331-0131.

Example

<b>Specific Capital or Planning Request:</b> <i>Install sinks in infant and toddler classrooms</i>				
<b>Is issue based on State Licensing Regulation, Environmental Rating Scale (ERS) Indicator, Comprehensive Early Childhood Education (CECE) Program Standard or Other Criteria</b>	<b>Cite specific licensing regulation, ERS indicator, CECE or other specific standard</b>	<b>Details of concern</b>	<b>How will this request address the issue</b>	<b>Estimated time frame and cost for this item</b>
<i>ERS</i>	<i>ITERS - Health Practices</i>	<i>Hand washing not attempted at required times by adults</i>	<i>Installing appropriate sink in classroom will ensure teachers have opportunities to wash hands at required times</i>	<i>\$17,000 – work can begin August 10 and will take 2 weeks</i>
<i>ERS</i>	<i>ITERS - Diapering/Toileting</i>	<i>When the same sink is used for hand washing after diapering and before feeding, it needs to be sanitized between uses</i>	<i>Installing additional sinks in classroom will address this issue</i>	<i>(see above estimate/time frame)</i>
<i>ERS</i>	<i>ITERS - Schedule</i>	<i>Observed multiple instances of children waiting more</i>	<i>Installing additional child sinks will</i>	<i>(see above estimate/time frame)</i>

		<i>than 3 minutes for hand washing</i>	<i>minimize wait times for children</i>	
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Example

<b>Specific Capital or Planning Request:</b>				
<i>Renovate or replace playground fencing on south side of playground to meet 4 foot requirement</i>				
<b>Is issue based on State Licensing Regulation, Environmental Rating Scale (ERS) Indicator, Comprehensive Early Childhood Education (CECE) Program Standard or Other Criteria</b>	<b>Cite specific licensing regulation, ERS indicator, CECE or other specific standard</b>	<b>Details of concern</b>	<b>How will this request address the issue</b>	<b>Estimated time frame and cost for this item</b>
<i>CECE</i>	<i>It is required that the space for outdoor gross motor play be enclosed by a 4 foot high fence</i>	<i>On the south side of the playground, the 20 year old fence has sunk into the ground to a height of 40 inches</i>	<i>A renovation of the old fence to restore the height to 48 inches or the installation of a new fence will address this concern</i>	<i>Renovation for \$8,000 (3 days to complete), or new installation for \$18,000 (1 week to complete) – work can begin August 7<sup>th</sup></i>