



Child Care Services Grants

Fall 2026-Spring 2027

Spotlight on Regional Grants



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What Are Child Care Services Grants?

Child Care Services Grants provide funds to child care programs to help cover the cost of purchasing or replacing supplies, equipment, technology, and training.

There are 3 grants:

- Start-Up
- Emergency
- Regional



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Application Periods

- **Regional Grant** applications are available once per year Sept. 1-25
- **Emergency Grants** are viewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Programs licensed fewer than six months or programs that are expanding may be eligible for a Start-Up grant.

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Who Can Apply?

Any program that is actively providing early learning services to children ranging in age from birth to school-age and is currently licensed with the Minnesota Department of Human Services, licensed by a Tribal Government, legally license-exempt, and certified centers.

If licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services, a program must have no current negative actions. Licensing violations such as a temporary immediate suspension, suspension, revocation, or a maltreatment determination where the facility was found responsible will prevent the issuance of a grant and/or will cause the withdrawal of a grant.

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Annual Grant Award Limits

Programs are limited to one Regional Grant or one Start-Up Grant in the same fiscal year. July 1 – June 30

An Emergency Grant may be awarded to a program that has received a Regional Grant or a Start-Up Grant during the same fiscal year

Funds are paid as a reimbursement after approved purchases are made and verified.

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Grant Amounts

Regional Grants have limits of \$1,000 for family child care and \$2,500 for centers.

Start-Up Grants have limits of \$2,000 for family child care and \$3,000 for centers.
Except for amount limits, all grant policies are the same for both license types.

Emergency Grants have a limit of \$5,000

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Other Financial Supports from Child Care Aware

Visit www.childcareawaremn.org to view details for additional supports for educators working in family child care and child care centers

- Parent Aware
- T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship
- REETAIN Bonus
- CDA Awards
- Foreign Credential Evaluation Scholarship

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Regional Child Care Grants

- offered annually through district offices to eligible programs
- provides funds to help cover the cost of supplies, equipment, technology, and training
- applications are available September 1 - 25

Each year, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families and Child Care Aware determine grant priorities. This year's priorities are strategies and activities that increase the capacity of providers to prepare young children for school and life.

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Who can apply for Regional Grants?

- Any program that is actively providing early learning services to children ranging in age from birth to school-age
- Programs currently licensed with the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth and Families, licensed by a Tribal Council, legally license-exempt, and certified centers
- And programs must have no current negative actions.

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When to Apply

- Apply online* between September 1 - 25
- Grants are awarded after November 1

**A paper application is available under unique circumstances and is due on September 20th*

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Regional Grant Amounts

- Family child care programs* may apply for a grant up to \$1,000
- Centers* may apply for a grant up to \$2,500

**Except for amount limits, all grant policies are the same for both license types*

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Receiving Funds

- Grants are paid on a reimbursement basis
- Reimbursement is processed after purchases are made, training requirements have been met, and purchasing documentation on Develop has been completed
- Purchases must be made AFTER being awarded in November.
- Eligible items that are used 100% for business will be funded at 100%. Items that are shared with a household, organization, or group will be funded at 50%.

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Will I have to pay back my grant award?

These are grants not loans. You would only have to pay it back if:

- You are out of compliance with grant requirements.
- You give up or lose your license* for any reason within two years from the date of your award letter.

**Except for amount limits, all grant policies are the same for both license types*

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Grant Agreement Highlights

A comprehensive agreement consisting of the signed participation agreement and the award letter details will be in effect upon accepting the grant

- An educator* in the center or family child care program must complete 12 hours of approved training. Four of these hours must be in Knowledge and Competency Framework (KCF) areas III, III.D, IX, and/or X
- Keep your business operational for two years after being awarded
- Accept fee payment from the Child Care Assistance Program
- Use grant funds according to the information that you provided on the application

**Job title in Develop must show Director, Assistant Director, Lead Teacher or equivalent.*

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If grantees do not follow the terms outlined in the grant agreement, a referral will be made to the Minnesota Department of Human Services and may result in discontinuation of future payments, recoupment of payments already made, and/or additional action related to the funds and the provider license under Minnesota Statutes, chapters 119B, 245A, 245E, and Minnesota Statutes, section 245.095.

Additionally, you may be ineligible for other Department of Human Services public programs per Minnesota Statutes, section 245.095 LIMITS ON RECEIVING PUBLIC FUNDS.

These programs include Licensing, Parent Aware Ratings; and funds, including but not limited to Parent Aware grants, TEACH scholarships, REETAIN bonuses, Child Care Aware Regional Grants and reimbursement through the Child Care Assistance Program. Referral to another agency may be made by the Minnesota Department of Human Services if necessary, such as the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.

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Culturally Responsive Training and Classroom Items



The Child Care Services Grants legislation includes a priority of cultural responsiveness. The way this priority is met is through the requirement of four hours of training in KCF areas III, III.D, IX, and/or X. Additionally, you may choose to use grant funds for culturally responsive items.

Culturally responsive items and resources promote healthy social and educational outcomes in children and youth and help them understand the world they live in. For the purpose of these grants, the terms “multicultural”, “culturally responsive”, and “cultural competency” are used to refer to child care settings and educators that respond to and reflect the needs of ethnic and linguistically diverse communities.

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Slide 15

- 1 DCYF is still finalizing their Compliance Process and will have an amendment to the Grant Manual and this slide once it's complete.
Anny Vang, 8/15/2025




Eligible Purchases Examples

Health and Well-being: smoke detectors, safety helmets, first aid kit, fireplace cover, air purifier, contagious illness mitigation items

Relationships with Families: Training in KCF area III, parent conference supplies, digital communication tools (such as online daily reports)

Teaching and Relationships with Children: Cots, classroom displays, wagon, puzzles, STEM items, dolls, books, music instruments

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Eligible Purchases Examples

Assessment and Planning: Journaling supplies, Parent Aware assessment tools
<https://parentaware.org/programs/full-rating-resources/>, tablet or laptop computer for online assessment tools

Professionalism: Training (from Develop), early childhood conference fee, laptop computer for taking online courses

Culturally Responsive: books, toys, and displays that depict people from a variety of cultures; dramatic play items that depict a variety of cultures (foods, clothing, baby care, etc.); multicultural music; training on topics of culture and race

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Eligible Purchases

- All materials must be new and purchased from a retailer or an early childhood supplier (such as Kaplan, Community Playthings, etc.); and not a private party such as a cottage industry, or hobbyist.
- If a child care program wishes to have the cost of assembly and/or installation covered by a grant, the labor must be performed by a contractor following applicable state and local laws and regulations regarding registration and licensure.

Check out:
<https://www.dli.mn.gov/business/residential-contractors-remodelers-roofers> for more information.

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Examples of Regional Grant Ineligible Purchases

- Any item prohibited by licensing
- major construction or renovations
- religious-based curricula or counseling
- consumable personal care supplies (diapers, wipes, soap, etc)
- consumable office supplies (paper, staples, pens, etc)
- Fees for care (tuition, scholarships)
- used items
- Items considered "Cost of Doing Business" (business related fees and service charges, utilities, taxes, rent, etc.)
- Food for meals

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How to Apply

Step 1: Develop

- Create a Develop Profile or update your information at www.developtoolmn.org
- Link your Individual Develop ID with your program's Organization ID or review for accuracy. *You can only apply for a regional grant in your Organization Profile.*
- It can take some time for your profile to be verified by Achieve, so start now!

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How to Apply

Step 2: The Application Guide

- Read the guide completely
- Review the 5 priorities and examples of related items that can be purchased
- Fill out the Application Planning List form
 - The Application Planning List will help you explain how your intended purchases relate to the priorities and your goals

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How to Apply

Step 3: The Application Planning List

- The Planning List in the Application Guide will help you successfully complete the application
- The list helps you prepare
 - ✓ your goal for one or more priority areas (what you want to accomplish)
 - ✓ the strategy (the action you will take) to meet each goal
 - ✓ the items that will be needed

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How to Apply

Let's take a tour of the Regional Grant guide and Application Planning List!

[Regional Grant Application Guide](#)

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Things to remember:

- You will be expected to purchase the items exactly as you describe them in your application. You are allowed 1 change – and only if the original item is no longer available. The grant administrator can deny payment for any item not listed on your application.

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Things to remember:

- The grant administrator cannot tell you how to fill out the priorities section of your grant application. Read the instructions thoroughly and fill it out to the best of your ability.

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How to Apply

Step 4: Apply on Develop

- Visit the Develop website and view the Develop guide "Regional Grants – Program Application Instructions"
- Read the instructions completely and prepare all of the required information before applying for the grant
- Using the instructions, and your Application Planning List, fill out and submit your application

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How to Apply

Let's take a tour of the Develop Regional Grant application instructions!

[Develop Regional Grant instructions](#)

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Grant Review

- After you click Submit, you will receive an automated email confirming that you have successfully applied for a grant. Save this email
- Your Grant Administrator will assign three independent Grant Reviewers to review and score your grant application

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Regional Grant Review Process

- Applications are reviewed by a review committee.
- Each application is reviewed and scored by three committee members.
- Grants are awarded based on scores – highest to lowest.
- The number of grants awarded is dependent on the grant budget.

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Grant Results

- By approximately November 1 you will receive the result of your grant application*
- If you are awarded a grant, visit the Develop website and read the guide ["Regional Grants - Award Instructions for Programs \(PDF\)"](#)

**If it is not funded, your application can possibly be put on a waitlist and reviewed later if funding becomes available.*

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Review

- ✓ Regional Grant applications are available Sept. 1-25
- ✓ Develop Individual and Organization Accounts must be complete and up to date
- ✓ Read the Regional Grant Guide and Develop instructions before applying
- ✓ Grant results are communicated after Nov. 1

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Questions?

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