# **Announcement**

The Cabinet for Health and Family Services –the Department of Community Based Services(DCBS), Division of Child Care (DCC) is pleased to announce a funding opportunity designed to increase high-quality early education services in Kentucky by providing Matching Grant Funds for Desert Areas of Kentucky. This grant opportunity will be utilized to combat the decrease in programs in Kentucky’s child care desert areas. There is an anticipated 30 awards or until the funding runs out. Applications will be received until December 31, 2022.

There will be a webinar held on January 21st at 1:00pm EST. The link is as follows: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83263997811>.

Submit all questions and applications via email to Jessica Cain at [Jessica.Cain@ky.gov](mailto:Jessica.Cain@ky.gov).

# **Background and Purpose**

The Division of Child Care has seen a decline in child care services in specific counties across Kentucky within the past several years. With this decline in services, families are left without options of care, forced to quit their jobs, or utilize services that could be detrimental to the wellbeing and safety of their children.

The Division of Child Care is committed to changing the early education environment for our most vulnerable population to encourage safe, healthy, and quality atmospheres that encourages learning at a young age. The Division of Child Care will utilize The American Rescue Act funds to increase quality child care services by providing matching funds to those that are starting new child care facilities in counties that are considered child care deserts.

DCC is looking to increase the capacity for child care services in counties across the state that are considered child care deserts. This will assist in ensuring there are high-quality child care options in Kentucky while assisting the providers financially to start a new facility.

The goal of the Desert Area Matching Grant is to provide enough financial stability to get child care facilities established in the desert counties. This financial support would allow for providers to focus on high-quality services and initiate a functional child care structure in their community.

Building the child care structure within counties that are lacking regulated, high-quality services will assist parents in choosing programs that are best suited for their children and their families. This will assist in strong support systems for our youngest citizens and build high-quality structures for children to come in our most vulnerable areas.

# **Key Definitions**

**Child Care Desert -** A **child care desert** is any census tract with more than 50 children under age 5 that contains either no **child care** providers or so few options that there are a lack in services. Please see attached list, only categories 2-4 are qualified to apply.

**Matching funds-** As it applies to this grant, based on the amount the center can provide the Department for Community Based Services will match that amount in accordance to the grant up to 100%.

# **Requirements**

* Provide a business plan that includes an environmental scan of the community
* Provide a budget of the program
* Only un-licensed centers are qualified to apply
* Provide a plan on becoming a 3 star rated center within two years of opening the program.
* Provide how many slots are looking to secure within the center space and age groups
* Program must show proof of matching funds
* Program must be applying to become a Licensed Type I or a Licensed Type II Facility in a desert community in Kentucky. The list of counties is attached at the end of the RFA
* Program will have to ensure that they accept children on child care assistance
* Program will have to ensure that they accept infants and toddlers
* Provider must be a level 3,4, or 5 stars rated program within two years of opening the program
* All providers must complete the business training within the 6 months of the grant
* Program must be licensed within 12 months of receiving funds
* Center must stay open for a minimum of two calendar years

Failure to meet any of the above stated requirements will result in federally mandated need to return 100% of the DCBS portion matched funds.

# **Application Template and Considerations for a Competitive Application**

Information in this section will provide direction to the applicant in completion of the application.

***Program Description/Work Statement***

***Business Plan and Environmental Scan***: Section Maximum points= 60

* Up to 20 points awarded for a thorough business plan explaining implementation of the business.
* Up to 20 points awarded for Environmental Scan of the community needs and other child care facilities in the community.
* Up to 20 points awarded on a one-year budget that will explain the business income and expenses.

***Program Implementation:*** Section Maximum points= 100

* Up to 60 points for each of the six questions in this section, based upon quality of response and ability to demonstrate that children will receive high-quality services.
* Up to 20 points explaining services that will be provided.
* Up to 20 points explaining partnerships and collaborative efforts with other early childhood professionals within the community to provide ongoing supports and services to the children within the community.

***Staffing***: Section Maximum points= 40

* Up to 20 points based upon the quality of the response.
* 20 additional points based upon the described qualifications of staff policy and procedures.

***Program Assurances***: Section Maximum points= Zero points

Failure to fully complete the Program Assurances in the affirmative will result in disqualification of the proposal.

**Address of Applicant Agency**:

Fully complete with street address, city, state, zip code, and county of the applying program. The address provided should align with that of the program applying for funding.

**Applicant Eligibility:**

To meet application eligibility for the Desert Area Matching Grant Opportunity, the applicant must:

1) Provide a business plan that explains the plans of the business which includes an environmental scan, the county which the facility will be in, budget for a year, and number of slots looking to have available within each age range.

2) Provide verification of matching funds available.

3) Provide verification of residency in Kentucky.

Verifications will occur. ONLY applications in which ALL assurances are verified will be considered for funding.

**Summary of Grant Request (5 points):**

This section of the application asks for the following information:

**Amount of funds requested**

Include the amount of funds requested. The provider must show proof of available funds and the amount requesting cannot exceed $100,000.00. The funds requested may not exceed the amount of funds that the provider has of available funds.

**County which center must reside in**

The child care facility must reside in one of the following counties listed in the appendix of the RFA, which are considered child care desert facilities.

**APPLICATION**

*(Please return to Jessica Cain via email at* [*Jessica.Cain@ky.gov*](mailto:Jessica.Cain@ky.gov)*)*

Applicant Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Facility Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Facility Address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Facility County:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Facility Phone Number:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Program Description/ Work Statement**

Each question must be answered completely with enough detail to understand exactly what is being proposed.

**Partnership and Collaboration:**

This section has two questions which ask applicants to describe collaborative relationships.

Collaborations play a key role in supporting a successful early education program and significantly impact multiple aspects of a program’s operation.

Question 1: Early Intervention/ text response character limit 5000 (20 points)

* *Detail the programs’ inclusion policies and practices.*
* *How will your program work with community members and Early education professionals to collaborate services within your community?*

Question 2: Community Members/ text response character limit 5000 (20 points)

* *Does your program collaborate with any community members around early education or family support services? Yes or No*
* *If so, what type of programs or services would you be collaborating with?*

**Program Implementation:**

This section has five questions.

Question 1: Classroom Capacity Building/ yes/no response and text response character limit 5000 (20 points)

* *What type of care is most sought out within your community?*
  + *Infant and toddler care*
  + *Preschool care*
  + *Afterschool care*
  + *Special needs care*
  + *Medically fragile care*
* *What types of care are you planning to provide?*
* *What is your plan to provide services to each one of these groups?*

*How many slots would your program be able to serve through this grant opportunity?*

* *Infants 0-12 months:*
* *One Year old’s – 12-24 months:*
* *Two year old’s – 24-36 months:*
* *Three year old’s- 36 to 48 months:*
* *Preschool Age Children: 4 and 5 year old’s:*
* *Afterschool Age Children: 6 to 12 years of age:*

Question 2: Continuity of Care/ text response character limit 5000 (20 points)

Relationships are at the heart of high-quality care. It is the trusting relationship children establish that build the foundation for all later development. Applicants should describe the model(s) that will be used to structure classrooms to assure children can build strong relationships.

* *Describe the program’s approach to assure continuity of care. How will classrooms be structured to assure children build positive and long-term relationships with their caregivers and with other children?*

Question 3: Curriculum/ text response character limit 5000 (20 points)

Children have unique development needs. Applicants should describe the program’s curriculum model, and the ways in which this model meets these unique needs. Applicants should reference the *Kentucky Early Learning Standards* in crafting a response to this question*.*

* *Describe the programs’ type of curriculum used for each age group. Describe the ways in which the Kentucky Early Learning Standards will be used in coordination of the curriculum to ensure all developmental areas are being reached.*

Question 4: Family Engagement/ text response character limit 5000 (20 points)

Including a child’s family in the early childhood experience is an important element that contributes to the overall success of a program and the children receiving services. Family engagement extends beyond point-in-time events, and requires vigilant planning, and an understanding of the diverse situations of each family.

* *Describe How you will include families in your program’s activities and the child’s early education success.*

Question 5: Business Responsibilities/ text response character limit 5000 (20 points)

Most providers got into the field for their love and passion of children and caring for them, not so much for their love of business reports and calculations. 80 % of child care providers that close their business do so because they have mad poor business discissions and were unable to keep the doors open,

* How are you going to ensure that your business is sustainable?
* What tools will you utilize to ensure you are making sound business discissions?
* What Business training have you or other partners had to ensure business knowledge is implemented?

**Staffing:**

This section asks one question related to staffing.

Question 1: Staffing/ text response character limit 5000 (40 points)

Staff recruitment is a barrier for most centers at this moment but are critical to ensuring the quality of programming. While recruitment allows for the acquisition of distinctive teachers, retention helps maintain classroom and program consistency. The applicant’s response should detail both recruitment and retention strategies and should include information regarding the provision for salaries and benefits to entice applicants and retain qualified staff.

* *How will funds be utilized to recruit and retain staff for your program?*

**Fiscal Documentation / Budget:**

will be assessed during the application process to ensure stability of the facility.

*Please attach a detailed budget that will explain the financial stability of this project for your facility. You can attach a word or excel document to your email upon submission.*

**Program Assurances**

Applicants must provide assurance that they understand and have the capacity to meet the requirements for the program as outlined within the application assurances. Applicants will be asked to check each assurance box to indicate whether they can comply with the assurances.

**Failure to respond in the affirmative by checking each assurance box will result disqualification from funding consideration.**

# **Formatting Requirements**

# **Submission of Application**

# **Evaluation of Application**