# **Announcement**

The Cabinet for Health and Family Services – Division of Child Care is pleased to announce a funding opportunity designed to increase high-quality infant and toddler services in Kentucky by piloting Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Contracted Slots. This pilot program will be utilized to combat the decrease in programs currently accepting families using CCAP and to increase infant and toddler care for our most vulnerable population.

There will be a webinar held on February 10th at 1:00pm EST. The link is as follows <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89086516025>

Submit all questions and applications via email to Jessica Cain at Jessica.Cain@ky.gov.

Applications must be received by midnight on Monday, February 28, 2022.

# **Background and Purpose**

The Division of Child Care has seen a decline in infant and toddler services within the past seven years in the state of Kentucky. With this decline in services, there has also been a decline in the acceptance of child care assistance families. This change has dramatically decreased the quality and quantity of infant and toddler care across the state.

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 infant and toddler services by piloting contracted slots for infants and toddlers with local high-quality regulated child care facilities in Kentucky that accepts child care assistance.

Contracted slots are an alternative to the traditional child care assistance system. Instead of funding following the child, as in the traditional system, the Infant Toddler Contracted Slots Program (ITCS), awards funding to a provider. If a child leaves the funded provider, the provider continues to be paid for the slot and is responsible to fill the slot with a different CCAP eligible child.

The goals of the ITCS program include providing fiscal stability for high-quality child care providers serving eligible infants and toddlers and establishing a continuum of care for children and families in high-quality child care settings with a focus on strengthening the link between high-quality child care programs and high-quality pre-kindergarten programs. These goals aim to improve the overall quality of infant and toddler services in Kentucky while strengthening the viability of our child care structure.

Building an infant toddler focused structure with established KY early education programs will allow continued focus on quality programming while building strong transitions from infant-toddler to pre-kindergarten classrooms.

In addition, the program assures continuity of care through the duration of eligibility for the child(ren) served lasts until the child is eligible to transition into pre-kindergarten program. Applicants will be asked to coordinate with their local school district for prioritization to assure that a child who remains eligible for KY CCAP at their third birthday will transition into the Preschool Partnership Program or the local preschool.

# **Key Definitions**

**Slots** are defined for the purpose of this application as Full Day-6 hours plus per day with full week enrollments. Full day, full enrollment is prioritized for Infants and toddler between ages 6 weeks to 36 months of age.

# **Requirements**

* Budget of program
* Facility must provide a credentialed staff member with a CDA or higher in the contracted slot classrooms.
* Program must be a Certified Provider, Licensed Type I Facility, or a Licensed Type II Facility in good standing in the state of Kentucky.
* Program must provide a plan for Developmentally appropriate schedule and curriculum for contract slotted classrooms.
* Providers must pay all staff $10.00 per hour in order to continue to raise compensation through the contract program.
* Provider must be a level one in the in KY All Stars and move to a level three or higher within one year of participating within the Infant – Toddler Pilot Project.
* The provider will have up to a 6 month deferment on contracted slots to assist with transition of children within those slots at the given time of the grant.
* All providers must complete the business training within the first year of the grant.

# **Award**

The Division of Child Care is looking to award 30 Kentucky child care centers to serve infants and toddlers with contracted slots. Each center would be awarded up to 20 contracted slots. Each slot would be paid based on contract payments. The contract payment would consist of daily pay regardless of attendance. Incentive payments would be awarded each time an audit shows 90% enrollment or higher.

# **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***

***Partnership and Collaboration***: Section Maximum points= 40

Up to 20 points awarded for described collaborative relationships with Early Intervention, based upon quality of response.

Up to 20 points awarded for described collaborative relationships with Head Start or other community entities, based upon quality of response.

***Program Implementation:*** Section Maximum points= 120

Up to 20 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.

***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.

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

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

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Legal name of the applicant agency:

This is the name and address from the program’s DRCC Licensing Certificate, which should also match what the program uses on its federal W-9 form. The application also asks for a “Doing Business As” name (if different from the legal name).

Licensing Certification ID

The licensing certification ID number MUST align with the legal name and address provided in the application. All applicants should have a licensing certification ID number.

Tax ID Number or Federal ID Number

This is the number that an agency uses on its federal W-9 form. Applicants for funds should consult with the person who handles tax, legal, or accounting matters for the agency to determine the federal ID number. Use the number that aligns with the legal name and address provided in this application. The correct number must be provided when requested in order to process an application.

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 Provider Verification:

To meet application eligibility for the Infant Toddler Contracted Slots Programs must:

1) Hold a regular certification of compliance issued by the Division of Regulated Child Care,

2) Be in good standing with STARS and hold at minimum a STAR 3 designation,

3) Currently serve Child Care Assistance Families, and

4) Currently serve or could serve infants and toddlers.

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

Application

Submit all questions and applications via email to Jessica Cain at Jessica.Cain@ky.gov.

Applications must be received by midnight on Monday, February 28, 2022.

Legal Name of Applicant Agency:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Licensing Certification ID:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Tax ID or Federal ID Number:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address of Applicant Agency:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Summary of Grant Request (5 points):

This section of the application asks for the following information:

**Number slots requested \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Include the total number of full day slots being requested. Slots are defined as full day, full week equivalent. Full day, full week enrollees should be prioritized for Infant Toddler Contracted slots.

**Provider Private Pay Cost per Child \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Applicants are asked to include current private pay cost per child infant rate information. This is the cost per child, private pay rate families would be charged for infant care.

**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 infant-toddler programming and significantly impact multiple aspects of a program’s operation.

In order to maximize funding resources and assure a systematic approach to the early learning services provided within communities, pilot providers must commit to avoid enrolling children into programming who are already being served in an Early Head Start program or who are eligible to participate in Early Head Start. The purpose of this requirement is to avoid impact on enrollments in Early Head Start such that federal resources would be supplanted.

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

* *Detail the programs’ inclusion policies and practices.*
* *How will your program work with families and Early Interventionist to reduce or eliminate suspension and expulsion?*

Question 2: Head Start/ text response character limit 5000 (20 points)

* *Does your program collaborate and provide Early Head Start services? Yes or No*
* *If so, how many slots are converted to Early Head Start slots and how many slots would you have available for non-head start children?*
* *Would any collaboration interfere with being able to serve children outside of Early Head Start Participants? Please attach the formal agreement in place with the Early Head Start agency to the application.*

**Program Implementation:**

This section has six questions.

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

* *Will the program open new infant or toddler classrooms/space to implement this initiative?*

Applicants will select either “yes” or “no.”

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

* *Infants 0-12 months:*
* *One Year Old’s – 12-24 months:*
* *Two year old’s – 24-36 months:*

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

Relationships are at the heart of high-quality infant-toddler care. It is the trusting relationship infants and toddlers 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)

Infants and Toddlers 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 infants and toddlers. 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: Comprehensive Services/ text response character limit 5000 (20 points)

Meeting the needs of the whole child is an important component of high-quality infant and toddler care. Applicants should describe how infants and toddlers are assessed to identify potential needs, and the ways in which the program follow up on the results of assessment. Applicants should also describe any comprehensive services that are either provided by the program or coordinated with outside agencies that directly benefit the children and/or the families being served. Comprehensive services discussed might include mental or behavioral health services, vision screenings, hearing screenings, and /or any other relevant services. Agencies that you may work with may include first steps or local agencies that provide therapy services for children.

* *What type of accredited assessment tool is utilized with your infants and toddlers? How will the program assess the needs of the children, and follow up on identified needs with families and assist with receiving services?*

Question 6: Transition/ text response character limit 5000(20 points)

Applicants should provide a detailed response which includes information on how families, children, and other agencies are involved in all levels of the transition process. A goal of this program is to assure children have a smooth transition into the next classroom or if they are eligible for preschool services, the move to preschool.

* *Explain your program’s transition efforts. How will transitions be coordinated for children as they transition between classrooms? How will transitions be coordinated for the children/families who enter and exit your program to and from other early learning programs?*

**Staffing:**

This section asks one question related to staffing.

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

Staffing recruitment and retention 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.

Staff with specified training in the development of infants and toddlers are best suited to provide high quality environments. Although not currently required for this program, staff qualifications including infant-toddler specialization will be prioritized as part of this application process. Therefore, in addition to the 20 points for providing a detailed response regarding recruitment and retention of teachers, up to an additional 20 points will be awarded based upon the qualifications of already hired staff. Applicants are asked to list staff along with their current qualifications. DCC will reserve the right to verify any staff qualifications listed within the application before awarding funding.

*Classrooms should be staffed with teachers and assistant teachers who are trained to provide high-quality learning experiences for infants and toddlers. Staff in the Infant/Toddler pilot classrooms must hold a minimum of a CDA, however applicants with staff holding an infant-toddler CDA and/or infant-toddler related qualifications higher than a CDA will receive priority points for this application.*

* *Do you currently have staff to fill these positions and/or a plan to recruit staff? If you responded, YES, list the staff along with their current level of qualifications of both lead and assistant teachers.*
* *For both YES and NO responses, describe how qualified lead and assistant teachers will be recruited and retained.*

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.*

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**

**Signature Date**