



PROVIDENCE EARLY LEARNING INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT PROGRAM INFORMATION & INSTRUCTIONS

About

In partnership with City of Providence Mayor Brett Smiley, LISC is administering the Providence Early Learning Infrastructure Support Program providing technical assistance support along with the opportunity for grant funding to support the planning and renovation of child care and early learning environments. A total of \$1,570,350 is available through a competitive application process for licensed providers serving infant through pre-kindergarten aged children, with prioritization given to proposed physical space improvements that support compliance with regulations, remediating areas that pose risks to children's health and safety, and supporting facilities to improve their quality rating and standing (ex. BrightStars, RIDE CECE Standards). Grants are available in two categories:

- Planning
- Capital for Small-Scale Repairs and Renovations

These categories are described in greater detail below.

This is a reimbursement-based grant program. If approved for grant funding, grant-funded expenses must be approved, incurred and paid for during the grant term prior to receiving reimbursement (evidence of expense and payment such as invoices and cancelled checks will be required).*

**If you are approved for funding to address an urgent, documented health and safety issue, you may be eligible to receive an advance of grant funds by meeting certain milestones in your grant-funded project. LISC will work with you individually to determine if your project is eligible for a funding advance.*

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 (prevailing wage)**. Capital grants can also be used to cover costs associated with relocation or disruption of services during construction. Examples of possible uses include:*

- *Repair/replacement of unsafe fencing or installation of additional fencing to meet licensing regulations*
- *Installation of safety egress where required by health and safety rules and regulations*
- *Installation of safety surfacing under structures that are otherwise deemed in compliance with ASTM and CPSC guidelines*
- *Costs to remove unsafe equipment*
- *Remediation/improvement of a direct facility-related item because of a compliance or regulatory visit*
- *Purchase/installation of shade structures in an outdoor space*
- *Purchase/installation of handwashing sinks*

Organizations may apply for both a planning and a capital grant.

Eligibility Criteria

Nonprofit and for-profit licensed child care or early learning providers located in Providence and operating in good standing in the State of Rhode Island are eligible for this grant program. Organizations must also meet the following criteria:

- Provide service to DHS subsidized children through the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) 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 November of 2024.
- Must be assigned a Unique Entity ID through [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) – if you do not have one, you can visit [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) to be assigned a number ([click here to view a reference guide for getting your Unique Entity ID](#) or [click here to watch a video demonstration](#))

Programs applying for **capital grant funding** should be aware that all contractors used must be licensed and insured. Proof of licensure and insurance may be requested. **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 requirements (above), the Early Learning Facilities Project funding priorities include:

- The level to which programs are 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:
 - Major health and safety concerns
 - Maintenance of state licensure
 - Improvement of overall quality of facility

Expansion of high-quality space, especially for those looking to expand preschool and pre-K capacity

- Programs seeking MBE/WBE contractors/design professionals (visit the State's directory of certified MWBE entities here: <https://dedi.ri.gov/divisions-units/minority-business-enterprise-compliance-office/minority-business-enterprise-mbe>)

Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed and scored based on a rubric by a committee of stakeholders that will be led by the RICCELFF and City of Providence. The committee will make funding recommendations to the City who will make final award decisions. 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 **February 17 through May 19th** with award notification by June 16th.

Online application can be found at riccelff.org.

- If you are unable to complete an online application, please contact the RICCELFF team at riccelff@lisc.org or 401-331-0131 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 the RICCELFF team at riccelff@lisc.org or 401-331-0131 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 which can be found here: <https://lisc.tfaforms.net/427> If you are having difficulty with the online application, please contact us for support.

Information about Your Program:

- The legal name of your organization (as written on your business tax return)
- Type of organization (sole proprietor, limited liability corporation, nonprofit, etc.)
- Unique Entity ID (sam.gov)
- The name and address of the program applying
- The name of the Executive Director/Owner/Principal
- The grant 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

- Are eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch
- Have IFSPs/IEPs
- Are involved with Child Welfare/DCYF
- Are English/Dual Language Learners
- Receive Head Start or Early Head Start services
- Are homeless
- The program's current BrightStars rating
- If the program is a Head Start or Early Head Start provider, a State Pre-K, or a Pathways partner
- 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
- 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 December of 2020).
- Description of your organization's plan to solicit minority- and women-owned businesses in the hiring of professionals for proposed grant-funded work.

- 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:
 - Most recent independent audit, account review, or tax return
 - Year-to-date financial statement for the current fiscal year (balance sheet and an income statement/profit and loss statement)
 - 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
- 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 (prevailing wage). 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 or 401-331-0131.

Example

Specific Capital or Planning Request: <i>Install sinks in infant and toddler classrooms</i>				
Is issue based on State Licensing Regulation, Environmental Rating Scale (ERS) Indicator, Comprehensive Early Childhood Education (CECE) Program Standard or Other Criteria	Cite specific licensing regulation, ERS indicator, CECE or other specific standard	Details of concern	How will this request address the issue	Estimated time frame and cost for this item
<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 than 3 minutes for hand washing</i>	<i>Installing additional child sinks will minimize wait times for children</i>	<i>(see above estimate/time frame)</i>

Example

Specific Capital or Planning Request: <i>Renovate or replace playground fencing on south side of playground to meet 4 foot requirement</i>				
Is issue based on State Licensing Regulation, Environmental Rating Scale (ERS) Indicator, Comprehensive Early Childhood Education (CECE) Program Standard or Other Criteria	Cite specific licensing regulation, ERS indicator, CECE or other specific standard	Details of concern	How will this request address the issue	Estimated time frame and cost for this item
<i>Licensing Regulations and CECE Standards</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 7th</i>