



RURAL CHILD CARE PLANNING GRANT GUIDELINES

Child care is a challenge across rural communities in Iowa and across the nation. However, the solutions are often more complicated than the construction of a new facility. Many factors need to be carefully analyzed to determine the feasibility for development of a child care center, expansion of an existing one or support for in-home providers. Through greater understanding of their geographic market, demographics, competition, financials, and other factors, communities can be armed with the information needed to take proactive steps towards addressing child care challenges. Funding from the programs will empower communities to assess their current child care environment and develop strategies.

The program, defined in Iowa Administrative Code, is administered by the [Center for Rural Revitalization](#), a division of the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA), in consultation with the Governor's Empower Rural Iowa Initiative Task Forces.

TIMELINE

June 28, 2023 | Application Window Opens

Application available through [iowaGrants.gov](https://iowagrants.gov)

July 17, 2023 | Grant Informational Webinar

[Register for the webinar](#) to be held on Monday, July 17 at 2 p.m. CT. This webinar will be recorded and posted on the grant website.

August 30, 2023 | Application Deadline

Deadline to submit an application for funding is 11:59 p.m., August 30, 2023.

October 15, 2023 | Funding Decision Notification

Applicants notified of funding decisions by October 15.

October 15, 2023 – June 30, 2025 | Funding Period

All project activities and incurred expenses must occur within the eligible contracted funding period of October 15, 2023 – June 30, 2025. Funding is awarded on a reimbursement basis after expenses have been incurred for approved project activities.



ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Eligible Use of Funding

The program provides funding for planning initiatives addressing child care needs through a professional third-party partner.

Eligible Applicants

The following entities are eligible to apply:

- City and county governments or federally recognized tribal governments physically located in Iowa;
- Federally designated nonprofit agencies and foundations;
- Public and private schools that serve grades pre-K through 12 and are physically located in Iowa; and
- Higher education institutions located in Iowa.

The study must take place in and benefit a community in Iowa with a population of 20,000 or fewer and not contiguous to a city with a population of 40,000 or greater. If a county-wide application, the applicant must be within one of the 88 least-populous counties in Iowa. Any eligible applicant may submit an application that includes one or more partners and may apply on behalf of multiple cities or an entire county if the county is one of the 88 least-populous counties in Iowa.

Eligible Project Requirements

Requirements for Rural Child Care Planning Grant awards include, but are not limited to the following:

- Applicants must demonstrate the capacity for grants administration.
- Applications must provide 1:1/2 cash match.
- Applications must agree to contract with a professional third-party partner for completion of the market study and strategic goals.
- Applicant communities must identify the third-party organization in their application that will conduct the planning process.

FUNDING

Grant Request Amount

Grant Recipients will be awarded \$10,000.

Match Requirement

Applicants are required to demonstrate investment in the project process by providing a minimum of \$5,000 cash match. The cash match must be secured, dedicated to eligible expenses, a legitimate part of the project and be expended within the eligible funding period. Cash match constitutes actual cash contributed to direct project expenses by the applicant or other funding sources. The minimum \$5,000 match requirement may be raised through a combination of public and private sources but may not include in-kind donations of goods or services, unsecured funding or loans. Funding from state government already being used as match from another program, including other funds from the IEDA, cannot be used to meet the match requirement.

Funding Period

All project activities and incurred expenses must occur within the eligible contracted funding period of October 15, 2023 – June 30, 2025. Funding is awarded on a reimbursement basis after expenses have been incurred for approved project activities within the eligible funding period. Expenses incurred before or after the eligible funding period are not eligible for reimbursement.

Disbursement of Funds

Disbursements will be made on a reimbursement basis. Disbursement claims must be for an amount equal to or greater than \$1,000 per request. All claims must be made through IowaGrants.gov. When submitting a claim, the following items are required:

- An invoice and proof of payment.
- A status report for the claim period. Status reports must be received once a quarter. If no funds are requested, recipients should still file a status report.
- The IEDA may request additional documentation as needed.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Quarterly Reports

Each quarter, the recipient must provide an update on the percentage towards completion and a narrative of the activities taken place.

Recipients shall also provide a narrative description of any deviations from the proposed timeline, tasks and objectives during the reporting period. If the reported deviations will have an impact on the remainder of the project, the recipient must also notify the program manager via email.

Final Report

- The final report will be submitted via IowaGrants.gov within 120 days of the project completion date.
- IEDA will withhold 5% of project funds until the final report is received and approved by the program manager.
- The final report shall contain the following information:
 - Executive Summary
 - Timeline of the completion of each goal or objective
 - Narrative description of grant activities undertaken to support the project
 - Narrative description of the achievements of the project
 - The benefit the end product provides or will provide
 - Narrative description of any deviation from the original budget, timeline or any grant activity

ONLINE APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Applicants must submit an application via IowaGrants.gov, an online application portal.

Applications will not be accepted in any other format. Late, incomplete or ineligible applications will not be accepted. Applicants must create a login to view the full application for the program.

REVIEW PROCESS

Applications will be reviewed for completion, eligibility, and adherence to published guidelines. Eligible applications will be referred for a competitive review by a volunteer panel, including the Governor's Empower Rural Iowa Initiative Task Force members, IEDA staff, and expert professionals (grant review committee). The grant review committee reserves the right to recommend conditional funding and partial funding. Funding recommendations will be submitted by the committee to the executive director of the IEDA for consideration and approval. The applicant's authorized official will receive award notification. All funding decisions are final.

SCORING RUBRIC

Eligibility Review

Applications must demonstrate evidence of the following:

- Applicant is eligible
- Funding request meets eligible project and expense requirements
- Request includes proof of cash match
- Request includes proposal from professional third party partner
- Project duration does not exceed contract period
- Application is complete and submitted through IowaGrants.gov

Application Review

The Rural Child Care Planning Grant Scoring Rubric will be used to evaluate applications. Each section has criteria and corresponding point values to ensure a fair review process. The rubric is on a scale of 45 points.

1 – APPLICANT PROFILE: 5 points possible		
5	3	1
Applicant clearly identifies strategic priorities and appropriateness in initiating the study.	Applicant adequately identifies strategic priorities and appropriateness in initiating the study.	Applicant does not adequately identify strategic priorities and appropriateness in initiating the study.

2 – PURPOSE: 5 points possible		
5	3	1
Proposal clearly identifies the identified child care challenge as well as how this study will address the challenge and how the information will be broadly shared publicly.	Proposal adequately identifies the identified child care challenge as well as how this study will address the challenge and how the information will be shared publicly.	Proposal does not adequately identify the identified child care challenge or how the information will be shared publicly.

3 – TIMING: 5 points possible		
5	3	1
Proposal clearly identifies recent momentum, demonstrating excellent timing for completion of the market study.	Proposal identifies recent momentum, demonstrating appropriate timing for completion of the market study.	Proposal does not adequately identify recent momentum, demonstrating unappropriated timing for completion of the market study.

4 – THIRD PARTY PARTNER: 5 points possible		
5	3	1
Proposal identifies professional third party partner to complete the market study. Partner proposal demonstrates exceptional experience and clear objectives.	Proposal identifies professional third party partner to complete the market study. Partner proposal demonstrates adequate experience and objectives.	Proposal identifies professional third party partner to complete the market study. Partner proposal includes minimal information.

5 – PARTNERS: 5 points possible		
5	3	1
Proposal identifies and describes in detail the community roles of a variety of partners.	Proposal identifies and briefly describes the roles of a variety of partners.	Proposal does not adequately identify or describe the roles of partners.

6 - BUDGET: 5 points possible		
5	3	1
Project budget and intended use of funds are clear and appropriate.	Project budget and intended use of requested funds are identified and adequate.	Project budget and intended use of requested funds are unclear or inadequate.

7 – BUDGET LOCAL SUPPORT: 5 points possible		
5	3	1
Majority of the applicant match is from local, including county and city government, or private sources.	Over half of the applicant match is from local, including county and city government, or private sources.	Less than half of the applicant match is from local, including county and city government, or private sources.

8 – CASE FOR SUPPORT: 5 points possible		
5	3	1
Case for support is exemplary and merits investment from the State.	Case for support is adequate.	Case for support is inadequate or does not merit State investment.

9 - GRANTSMANSHIP: 5 points possible		
5	3	1
The application is clear, concise and well composed.	The application is clear.	Application is unclear or poorly composed.

CONTACT

Potential applicants are encouraged to review all published material and contact Rural Community Revitalization Program Manager Liesl Seabert at 515.348.6154 or rural@iowaeda.com with questions well in advance of application deadlines.