Tracking Costs for Disasters

Infrastructure Mini-grants for Early Learning/Child Care Providers

OF INTEREST TO

The Office of Early Learning (OEL, the Office) and Early Learning Coalitions (ELCs, coalitions) and other direct subrecipients of OEL implementing federal and state early learning programs, such as the School Readiness Program (SR) and the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program (VPK).

SUMMARY

This program guidance advises ELCs and other subrecipients that receive early learning funding from OEL about available infrastructure (operating costs) mini-grants for eligible early learning/child care providers during disasters and declared states of emergency.

RELATED FEDERAL REGULATIONS/AUTHORITY

Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Block Grant Act

- Section 658E(c)(2)(g) Training and Professional Development Requirements
- Section 658G(b)(1) Activities to Improve the Quality of Child Care

CCDF_ACF_Info_Memo_2017-02 CCDF Spending Flexibility during Federal or State Declared Emergency

Reference: 45 CFR § 98.53, ACYF-PI-CC-99-05, §1002.89(6)(b), F.S., and CCDF State Plan

OVERVIEW

Funds that have been set aside for quality-related activities may be used to provide one-time grants to support/enhance early learning/child care services before, during and after disasters and declared states of emergency. Guidance from the United States Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS), Office of Child Care (OCC) (*see link above to CCDF_ACF_Memo_2017-02*) allows flexibility to lead agencies to operate the CCDF program within the parameters of federal requirements. Based on this guidance, OEL authorizes ELCs and RCMA to award mini-grants to eligible early learning/child care providers using the process and requirements described as follows.

GUIDANCE

Eligibility requirements for Early Learning/Child Care Providers (SR and VPK)

Eligible early learning/child care providers will meet the following requirements.

- Provider has an active SR and/or VPK contract with at least one early learning coalition or Redlands Christian Migrant Association, Inc. (RCMA); and
- Provider does not have a pending/open **contract-related** Corrective Action Plan (CAP) or Probation notice in effect*;
- Provider is currently providing early learning services (i.e. open for business), OR
- Provider is currently preparing to resume operations to provide early learning services.[1]

Criteria does not include (1) VPK readiness rate improvement plans or (2) Quality Improvement Plans (QIP).

[1]*Required re-opening timelines will be set by OEL for each specific declared disaster or emergency event. Please reference related PG Attachments or FAQ files (as applicable) for more details.*

Maximum allowable payments – Provider infrastructure mini-grants

Each eligible early learning/child care provider location may be awarded up to $1,000 per location as a one-time grant per declared disaster/emergency event lasting less than 12 months. Grants may be awarded once per fiscal year for declared disaster/emergency events lasting more than 12 months.

Period of availability

These mini-grants are only available while the disaster or emergency declaration remains in effect. Mini-grant application and approval should be completed before the emergency declaration period expires. Release of mini-grant funds should occur as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days after the emergency declaration period expires.

Types of qualifying Provider infrastructure costs

For purposes of this guidance, OEL defines "infrastructure" costs as expenses necessary to support the delivery system of Florida's early learning program services _at the individual service provider level_. Qualifying SR/VPK provider expenses include one or more of the following types of costs:

- Costs of equipment, supplies or staffing; and
- Costs to operate early learning/child care centers (i.e., rent, utilities, minor repairs, insurance, etc.).

Documentation requirements for awarding Provider mini-grants

Documentation requirements for this mini-grant process are described as follows.

- Early learning/child care provider submits application to attest each eligibility factor (Attachment 1). Only one application form is required per provider, per location;
- ELC/RCMA approves applications and maintains documentation; and
- For each accepted application, ELC or RCMA will submit reimbursement requests as part of their monthly invoice to OEL for any locally authorized mini-grant activities.

OCA coding instructions – requests for reimbursements/Provider mini-grants

Reimbursement requests should be charged to OCA code 97QOO – *School Readiness Quality Development*. Although these costs are reimbursable under existing SR OCAs, ELCs and OEL will need to track expenditures and planned purchases related to each emergency/disaster event. A cost-reporting spreadsheet will be placed in each ELC's Invoice folder on SharePoint for the specified year. For example, for FY2019-20, the file would be located at ELC Coalitions Zone > Coalition Invoices - Restricted > FY 19-20. This spreadsheet must be submitted with a coalition/RCMA's monthly invoice. Please contact your grant manager with questions or requests for assistance.

Definitions

Please refer to PG 240.20, *Tracking Costs for Disasters*.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Sample application – Early Learning/Child care Provider Eligibility Form

EFFECTIVE DATE

Issuance of this guidance represents approval by OEL management of the indicated procedures and related administrative forms. These procedures will be effective as of the date of this guidance listed below.

HISTORY

Original guidance issued April 15, 2020, revised May 12, 2020. Revised May 20, 2021.

AUTHORITY

Reference to any laws, rules and regulations in this guidance document includes revisions to those laws and regulations made after the effective date of this guidance document.

<p style="text-align:center; color:red;">Please direct questions and comments to the Office of Early Learning at
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