



## COVID – 19 Crisis

# Emergency Funding Assistance for Early Learning/Child Care Providers

## American Recovery Plan (ARP) Act Initiatives

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### OF INTEREST TO

The Division of Early Learning (DEL, the Division), Early Learning Coalitions (ELCs, coalitions), Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA) and other subrecipients of DEL implementing federal and state early learning programs such as the School Readiness (SR) Program and the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education (VPK) Program and private early learning/child care providers not contracted with a coalition (Providers).

### SUMMARY

This program guidance addresses the methods for tracking costs associated with the COVID-19 crisis. It also provides coalitions and providers guidance about emergency funding assistance for early learning providers, their staff, and families affected by the Coronavirus Pandemic.

### AUTHORITY

#### Related Federal Regulations/Authority

[Public Health Emergency Nationwide - COVID-19](#) and subsequent renewals

[American Rescue Plan \(ARP\) Act of 2021](#)

[CCDF ACF Info Memo 2017-02 CCDF Spending Flexibility during Federal or State Declared Emergency](#)

[Office of Child Care COVID-19 Resources](#)

[Child Care and Development Block Grant Act](#)

- Section 658E(c)(2)(I) Establishment of Health and Safety Requirements
- Section 658E(c)(2)(U) Disaster Preparedness

[45 CFR 98.56 Restriction on the Use of Funds](#)

- 45 CFR Part 98, Subpart E, § 98.41, Health and Safety Requirements
- 45 CFR Part 98, Subpart B, § 98.16, Plan Provisions

[CCDF-ACF-IM-2021-02](#), Child Care Stabilization Grants Appropriated in the ARP Act (Public Law 117-2)

#### Related Florida Statutes/Authority/Guidance

[DEM Order NO. 20-004, COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#)

[Florida Department of Education Emergency Order #2020-EO-01](#)

[Florida Department of Education Press Release March 17, 2020](#)

[Section 252.34, Florida Statutes](#)

[Child Care and Development Fund State Plan for FY 19/21 \(effective 10/1/2018\)](#)

- Section 1.8 – Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan

[Division of Early Learning Program Guidance 240.20, Tracking Costs for Disasters](#)

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.

**PROGRAM GUIDANCE**

The following guidelines should be used by coalitions, subrecipients, providers, and families in Florida during the COVID-19 state of emergency as declared by the President of the United States and the Governor of Florida for the ARP Act Initiatives.

**Provider Stabilization Subgrants – Round 1 (OCA: ASGR1)**

Coalitions/RCMA will receive additional funding to support private early learning/child care providers that were licensed/registered/certified/regulated by or before March 11, 2021 or that are Child Care and Development Fund eligible at the time of application and are providing early learning/child care services on the date of application, to assist them in remaining open during the COVID-19 crisis. Refer to Attachment 4, *ARPA Provider Eligibility*, for additional information on non-eligible and eligible program type. Provider must have remained open and operational, except for temporary closures due to public health, financial hardship, or other reasons related to the COVID-19 public health emergency. **Providers may qualify for Provider Stabilization Subgrants – Round I, in addition to any grant awarded in Phases I – VI.**

Early learning/child care providers will receive base subgrants based on their enrollment at time of application, with a minimum of \$12,000 per provider. Base subgrants will be calculated depending on the age of enrollments as indicated below –

- **Infants and Toddlers:** \$867 per child
- **Children 2 – Kindergarten Entry:** \$702 per child
- **School-Age:** \$540 per child

Providers will receive an additional award of \$70.20 per School Readiness child enrolled at the time of application. In addition, providers will receive supplemental bonuses calculated as percentages of their base subgrant according to the rates in Table 1.

**Table 1:**

Bonus Category	Criteria	Bonus Percentage
Quality Services	Gold Seal or CLASS Score of 5.00 and higher in an area with a child care infrastructure deficit (desert)	10%
	CLASS Score of 4.00 – 4.99 – <b>SR Contracted ONLY</b>	5%
	CLASS Score of 5.00 and higher – <b>SR Contracted ONLY</b>	15%
	Gold Seal	20%
Non-Traditional Hours	Includes Nights and/or Weekend Care	5%
Workforce Investment	Provider agrees to use at least 25% of <b>total</b> grant amount on staff above and beyond normal payroll and benefits at time of application (bonuses, wage increases, health care, retirement, educational advancements, or tuition reimbursement)	10%

These funds shall be paid to providers as soon as practicable (i.e., within 30 business days). Only one Provider Stabilization Subgrant – Round I grant may be awarded for each provider location.

***Base Subgrant Eligibility Requirements***

Early learning/child care providers must meet the following eligibility criteria for payment of the base subgrant:

- Early learning/child care provider was licensed/registered/certified/regulated by or before March 11, 2021, is providing early learning/child care services on the date of application, and remained open and operational, with the exception of temporary closures due to public health, financial hardship, or other reasons related to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Refer to Attachment 4, ARPA Provider Eligibility, for additional information on non-eligible and eligible program type.

*OR*

- Early learning/child care provider was Child Care and Development Fund eligible at the time of application and is providing early learning/child care services on the date of application, and remained open and operational, with the exception of temporary closures due to public health, financial hardship, or other reasons related to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Refer to Attachment 4, ARPA Provider Eligibility, for additional information on non-eligible and eligible program type.

**AND**

- Early learning/child care provider agrees to complete a current fiscal year Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) profile in the [Florida Early Learning Provider Services Portal](#), if not previously completed; and
- Early learning/child care provider did not have a contract terminated **and** eligibility revoked within the past five years and provider is in good standing with the early learning coalition; and
- Early learning/child care provider is not under investigation or has been convicted of child care fraud; and
- Early learning/child care provider is not included on the Florida Child Care Food Program (CCFP) USDA Disqualified List; and
- Early learning/child care provider submits an IRS Form W-9 for payment and direct deposit forms (as required by coalition), if not previously submitted; and
- Early learning/child care provider completes the *ARPA Stabilization Subgrant – Round I Application* (Attachment 1), which includes child counts, monthly operating expenses, and budget for funds use.

### ***Supplemental Bonus Eligibility Requirements***

Early learning/child care providers meeting the base subgrant eligibility requirements must also meet the following eligibility criteria on the date of application to qualify for payment of a supplemental bonus category:

#### **Contracted School Readiness (SR) providers only –**

- **CLASS Composite Score – 4.00 and higher bonus:** SR contracted providers with a CLASS composite score of 4.00 and higher are eligible to apply for a supplemental bonus of 5% of the base subgrant. SR contracted providers must use the most recent CLASS composite score received by its early learning coalition, or its designee. Non-SR contracted and SR Contracted – CLASS exempt providers are not eligible for this bonus.
- **CLASS Composite Score – 5.00 and higher bonus:** SR contracted providers with a CLASS composite score of 5.00 and higher are eligible to apply for a supplemental bonus of 15% of the base subgrant in addition to the supplemental bonus for a CLASS composite score of 4.00 and higher (total of 20%). SR contracted providers must use the most recent CLASS composite score received by its early learning coalition, or its designee. Non-SR contracted and SR Contracted – CLASS exempt providers are not eligible for this bonus.

#### **All Providers –**

- **Area with a child care infrastructure deficit (desert) bonus:** DEL identified zip codes which do not have adequate child care to meet current demand among families in Florida's School Readiness Program as infrastructure deficit areas (desert), using the Florida Index of Child Care Access. A list of eligible zip codes can be found in Attachment 2, *ARPA Infrastructure Deficit Areas Zip Code Listing*. SR contracted providers with a CLASS composite score of 5.00 and higher (see above) or any provider (including SR contracted) with Gold Seal accreditation, physically located in an infrastructure deficit zip code are eligible for the infrastructure deficit supplemental bonus award of 10% of the base subgrant.
- **Gold Seal Accreditation:** Providers with a valid Gold Seal accreditation are eligible for a supplemental bonus of 20% of the base subgrant. A Gold Seal certificate must be current on the date of application; expired or pending Gold Seal certificates do not qualify.
- **Non-Traditional Hours:** Providers offering non-traditional hours are eligible for a supplemental bonus of 5% of the base subgrant. Non-traditional hours encompass evening, night, or weekend care. Evening or night care means child care provided during the evening hours and may encompass the hours of 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. to accommodate parents who work evenings and late-night shifts. Weekend care means child care provided anytime on Saturday or Sunday. Providers must be recognized by DCF or its Local Licensing Agency (LLA) as meeting this requirement to qualify for the non-traditional hour bonus.
- **Workforce Investment:** Providers agreeing to spend at least 25% of their **TOTAL** award on staff are eligible for a supplemental bonus of 10% of the base subgrant. These expenses must go above and beyond regular payroll and benefits paid at time of application. Examples of allowable costs are available in Attachment 3, *ARPA Child Care Stabilization Subgrant Spending and Documentation Guide*.

### ***Payment Instructions – Round 1***

After coalitions/RCMA determine the total subgrant award for providers, the total must be paid in three (3) equal installments. The first installment of one-third of the total award should be made within 30 days of application. Upon submission and approval of the ARPA Child Care Stabilization Certification (Attachment 5) for each installment, the second installment (one-third) may be made 90 days after the first installment is paid and the third and final installment (one-third) may be made 90 days after the second installment.

### ***Deadlines***

The final day to apply for ARPA Child Care Stabilization Subgrant – Round 1 was June 30, 2022. Coalitions had until August 23, 2022, to process initial applications, unless otherwise advised in writing by DEL. Additional deadlines are as follows:

#### **Round 1, Second Installment Survey**

- Submission - December 15, 2022
- Approval in EFSM - December 30, 2022
- Payments - January 31, 2023

#### **Round 1, Third Installment Survey**

- Submission – April 3, 2023
- Approval in EFSM – April 17, 2023
- Payments – May 17, 2023

### **Provider Stabilization Subgrants – Round 2 (OCA: ASGR2)**

#### ***Initial Applications/Awards***

Coalitions/RCMA will receive a second round of additional funding to support private early learning/child care providers. The award amounts and eligibility requirements for Round 2 are the same as those for Round 1, although the application format has been changed. Refer to the [Base Subgrant Eligibility Requirements](#) on page 3 and the [Supplemental Bonus Eligibility Requirements](#) on page 4 for more information. Attachment 4, *ARPA Provider Eligibility*, provides additional information on non-eligible and eligible program type. Provider must have remained open and operational, except for temporary closures due to public health, financial hardship, or other reasons related to the COVID-19 public health or other emergency. **Providers may qualify for Provider Stabilization Subgrants – Round 2, in addition to any grant awarded in ARPA Stabilization Subgrants – Round 1 and CARES/CRRSA Phases I – VI.**

### ***Payment Instructions – Round 2***

#### ***Initial Awards***

After coalitions/RCMA determine the total subgrant award for providers, the total award will be paid in one payment and should be made within 30 days of final submission of the completed application. The deadlines for ARPA Child Care Stabilization Subgrants – Round 2 are as follows:

- Submission – February 28, 2023
- Approval in EFSM – April 5, 2023
- Payments – May 5, 2023

**Final Payments**

The amount of this final payment for approved Round 2 providers will be determined by DEL on a proportional share of remaining ARP Stabilization funding, less coalitions’/RCMA allowable administrative allocations (up to 5% of ARPA expenditures). Providers must complete a final survey (Attachment 7) to qualify for the final payment. The deadlines for the final payment survey are as follows, unless otherwise notified by DEL:

- Release in EFSM – April 27, 2023
- Submission – May 11, 2023
- Approval in EFSM – May 25, 2023
- Coalitions notified of final payment amount – June 15, 2023
- Payments – June 30, 2023

**Provider Reporting – Round 1 and 2**

Providers are required to continue reporting expenditures until all ARPA Child Care Stabilization Subgrant – Round 1 and 2 funds are spent. All funds must be spent no later than September 30, 2023, and final funds utilization reports are due October 31, 2023. Providers failing to submit expenditure surveys may be required to repay any unspent funds. Coalitions must make and document efforts to obtain close-out expenditure spending when a provider ceases operations with an outstanding balance.

**Build a World Class Workforce and Strengthen Adult-Child Interaction Initiatives**

Please refer to DEL Program Guidance 240.21, Appendix D for information specific to these initiatives.

**Invoicing/OCA Coding Instructions, ARP Act Funded**

ARP Act funded costs must be coded to the OCAs as described in the table below and included in the coalition/RCMA’s monthly early learning (EL) invoice. Please refer to DEL Program Guidance 250.01, Appendix C, COVID-19 Disaster Relief OCA Working Definitions for further OCA information or contact your grant manager with questions or requests for assistance. **Coalitions/RCMA must submit final invoices for ARPA Provider Stabilization Subgrants – Round 1 and Round 2, by July 16, 2023**, unless otherwise notified by DEL.

OCA	DESCRIPTION
ARP Act Funded OCAs <sup>1</sup>	
ARPAD	ARP Administrative Costs
APASS	ARP Admin Costs – Publicizing the Availability of Stabilization Subgrants
ARPDT	ARP Admin Costs – Data Collection and Technology Systems
ARPSB	ARP Admin Costs – Supply Building <sup>2</sup>
ATASA	ARP Admin Costs – Technical Assistance for Subgrant Applications
ATARS	ARP Admin Costs – Technical Assistance to Providers Receiving Stabilization Subgrants
ASGR1	ARP Stabilization Subgrants Round 1
ASGR2	ARP Stabilization Subgrants Round 2 (all payments)
ARADV	ARP Advance

<sup>1</sup> All ARP Administrative OCA Costs may not exceed 5% of the total ARP expenditures

<sup>2</sup> Additional ARP Supply Building Programmatic OCAs are included in Appendix D, ARP Build a World Class Workforce Initiatives

## **EFFECTIVE DATE**

Issuance of this guidance represents approval by DEL 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 February 23, 2022, Revised March 24, 2022, Revised May 26, 2022, Revised October 28, 2022, March 23, 2023.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment 1 – ARPA Child Care Stabilization Subgrant Application – Round 1
- Attachment 2 – ARPA Infrastructure Deficit Areas Zip Code Listing
- Attachment 3 – ARPA Child Care Stabilization Subgrant Spending and Documentation Guide
- Attachment 4 – ARPA Provider Eligibility
- Attachment 5 – ARPA Child Care Stabilization Subgrant – Installment Certification
- Attachment 6 – ARPA Child Care Stabilization Subgrant Application – Round 2
- Attachment 7 – ARPA Child Care Stabilization Subgrant – Round 2 Final Payment

If you have questions, contact [DEL.Questions@del.fldoe.org](mailto:DEL.Questions@del.fldoe.org).