



Tracking Costs for Disasters – Infrastructure Mini-grants for Early Learning 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 Block Grant Act \(CCDF\)](#)

Section 658E(c)(U)(i) Disaster Preparedness

Section 658G(b)(10) Activities to Improve the Quality of Child Care

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

Reference: Section [1002.89\(6\)\(b\), F.S.](#), [45 CFR § 98.53](#), [ACYF-PI-CC-99-05](#), 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 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 min-grants to eligible early learning providers using the process and requirements described as follows.

GUIDANCE

Eligibility requirements for Early Learning Providers (SR and VPK)

Eligible early learning providers/centers will meet the following requirements.

- Provider/center has an active SR VPK contract with at least one early learning coalition or Redlands Christian Migrant Association, Inc. (RCMA); and
- Provider/center does not have a pending/open provider improvement plan (PIP) in effect; and

- Provider/center does not have pending/open Department of Children and Families (DCF) violations in effect; and
- Provider/center is currently providing early learning services (i.e. open for business), OR
- Provider/center is currently preparing to resume operations to provide early learning services.

Maximum allowable payments – Provider infrastructure mini-grants

Each eligible early learning/child care provider/center may be awarded up to \$1,000 per location as a one-time grant per declared disaster/emergency event.

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.

- Each eligible learning center/location is identified by the ELC or RCMA;
- Early learning center/location submits application to attest each eligibility factor;
- ELC/RCMA approves applications and maintains documentation; and
- For each accepted application, ELC or RCMA will submit reimbursement request as part of their monthly invoice to OEL.

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

Reimbursement requests should be charged to OCA code 97Q00 – *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 an 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 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.

Please direct questions and comments to the Office of Early Learning at
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