



# Maryland State Department of Education Office of Child Care

Child Care Quality Incentive Grant Program

## PROGRAM GUIDE



**Division of Early Childhood**  
**Office of Child Care - Credentialing Branch**  
200 West Baltimore Street, 10<sup>TH</sup> floor  
Baltimore, MD 21201

**REVISED GUIDELINES EFFECTIVE FOR ALL APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER OCTOBER 2019.**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Through the authority of the Family Law Article, Part X, Sections 5-594 through 5-594.8, effective October 1, 2002, the Maryland State Department of Education's (The Department) Office of Child Care has been authorized to establish a Child Care Quality Incentive Grant Program.

**Purpose:** To award grants as an incentive for Child Care Providers to enhance the quality of care provided to the children of Maryland. The Department encourages Child Care Providers, through the Credentialing Program, to acquire additional training and education to enhance their knowledge of Early Childhood development and the role Providers play in helping children to enter school, ready to learn. As providers gain new knowledge about age-appropriate activities and experiences that help children develop physically, socially, emotionally, and cognitively, Incentive Grants will help them acquire supplies, material and equipment to create stimulating learning environments.

**Objective:** Except as provided by code, The Department may set the terms and conditions for Child Care Quality Incentive Grants. Although the intent is to be innovative, applicants must be able to show how materials approved for funding will be used **to implement knowledge gained through participation in training and to enhance the quality of child care.**

## **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

**Who Can Apply:** **Quality Incentive Grant applicants must meet the following criteria to be ELIGIBLE:**

- Possess a current license or letter of compliance; and
- Currently operate a child care center or family child care home; and
- Implement a curriculum which aligns with the standards established by the Kindergarten Readiness and Early Learning Assessment (ELA) guidelines.
- A child care facility
  1. Located in a Title I Community; or
  2. In which at least 25% of children enrolled are from families that receive subsidy;
- AND**
  1. Accredited by MSDE or a recognized organization; or
  2. At least 50% of program staff are participating in the Credentialing Program at Level 2 or higher.
- A family child care home
  - That serve one (1) or more children who receive child care subsidies; and
  - Where the owner participates in the Credentialing Program at Level 2 or higher.

*Note: Income is not a basis for eligibility.*

**Quality Incentive Grant applicants may be INELIGIBLE if:**

- Applicants are subject to any ongoing regulatory action, including suspension, revocation, or a pending compliance agreement involving the health, safety or welfare of children receiving care;
- Monies are owed to the State of Maryland.
- Applicant was "previously" awarded the Child Care Quality Incentive Grant within three (3) years.

**How Much Funding Is Available?** Grants may be awarded to qualified applicants assessed upon the number of children in care at the time the application is submitted.

- Child Care Centers that serve:
  - 29 or fewer children may receive up to \$1,500.
  - 30 or more children may receive up to \$2,500.
- Family Child Providers that serve 10 or fewer children may receive up to \$1,000.

**How may the funds be used?** Grant funds may be spent only for the purchase of approved supplies, materials and equipment to improve the quality of care provided to children. Emphasis will be placed on educational curricula and activities in the areas of literacy, math, science, social studies, and physical development. Some appropriate areas of study include activities that help children 0 to 4 years old. Preference for grant awards will be given to proposals that focus on the following areas:

### **Literacy**

- Gain meaning by listening.
- Demonstrate beginning phonemic awareness.
- Show some understanding of concepts about print.
- Comprehend and respond to fiction and non-fiction text.
- Speak clearly and convey ideas effectively.
- Use letter-like shapes, symbols, letters, and words to convey meaning.

### **Mathematics**

- Begin to use and explain strategies to solve mathematical problems.
- Show understanding of number and quantity.
- Recognize duplicates and extend patterns.
- Recognize and describe some attributes of shapes.

### **Science**

- Seek information through observation, exploration, and descriptive investigations.
- Identify, describe, and compare properties of objects.
- Use simple tools and equipment to extend the senses and gather data.
- Begin to be aware of technology and how it affects life.

### **Social Studies**

- Identify similarities/ differences in people's characteristics, habits, and living patterns.
- Describe some people's jobs and what is required to perform them.
- Demonstrate awareness of the reasons for rules.

**How do I apply?** You may obtain grant information and applications from the website, <https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/credentialing>.

- Fill out the grant application form completely. This means respond to every statement of the application form.
- Answer either Yes, No or Does Not Apply (N/A). **An incomplete application will be returned.**
- One Application must be provided for each child care facility when provider(s) operate/own multiple sites.

- FEIN/SSN identification must be provided per site to qualify for multiple awards.
- List all supplies, materials, and equipment, which you propose purchasing. Include the cost of each. (Use additional sheets of paper, if necessary.)
- Provide a description of how you will use each item to improve/enhance the quality of care being given to the children served.
- Forward completed application(s) to the Office of Child Care - Credentialing Branch at 200 West Baltimore Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor Baltimore, MD 21201 or fax to 410.333.6226. For questions email [credentialingocc.msde@maryland.gov](mailto:credentialingocc.msde@maryland.gov).

Grants will be dispersed quarterly (January, April, July, and October) as long as the funding is available. Applicants will be notified in writing whether their application has been approved or disapproved. **Child Care Providers are eligible for a Grant Award once every three (3) years.** Also, the Applicant(s)/Provider shall agree to **continue providing child care services for two or more (2+) years after receiving a grant award.**

Inquiries may be directed to the Office of Child Care's Credentialing Branch.

The Quality Incentive Grant is regulated by State statute in the Code of Maryland (COMAR 13A.14.11).



## Child Care Quality Incentive Grant

### Eligible Items:

**Eligible items** are limited to those supplies, materials and equipment that enhance the quality of child care by improving children's developmental skills. All materials must be age appropriate. Some examples of eligible expenses are described below; other age appropriate material may be considered:

#### Active Play

- Balls, various sizes;
- Parachutes;
- Kites;
- Playhouse;
- Riding Toys, but not bicycles;
- Ring toss and bean bag games;
- Safety helmets;
- Sports equipment;
- Tumbling mats;
- Tunnels; and
- Wagons.

#### Arts and Crafts

- Art stamps and ink pads;
- Collage materials;
- Crayons, markers, glue;
- Model kits;
- Paint sets and accessories;
- Paper (various);
- Sculpting materials/accessories; and,
- Smocks.

#### Dramatic Play/Social Studies

- Beads (not recommended for infants/toddlers) and jewelry kits;
- Child's workbench and tool sets;
- Dollhouse, figures & furniture sets;
- Dolls & doll clothes;
- Easels/drying rack, bulletin boards;
- Play telephones; cash register, shopping cart, washer, dryer, vacuum cleaner,
- Play kitchen, foods, utensils, pots/pans;
- Lawn mower, etc.
- Child Medical kits; and,
- Puppets and puppet theaters.

#### Literacy

- Flannel, chalk and erase boards;
- Flash cards;
- Musical Instrument sets;
- Story books; include titles, authors and publishers; and,
- Tactile letters, shapes and patterns.

#### Manipulative

- Block sets: wood, stacking LEGOs;
- Gears, bristle bricks, snap together cubes, Tinker Toys, etc.
- Farm, space and jungle sets;
- Lacing spools, buttons, and beads;
- People/animals;
- Play mats;
- Play vehicles (cars, trucks, construction equipment, etc.);
- Puzzles and games (varying difficulty);
- Train sets; and
- Tunnel/bridge sets.

#### Math

- Counting objects;
- Math games;
- Sorting kit, pattern cards;
- Number pegboards;
- Measurement tools;
- Balancing scales; and,
- Calculators.

#### Program Planning and Resource Material

- MSDE approved Curriculum guides only (include title, author and publisher);
- Stationary (desktop) Computers that must be used for child care services;
- Educational and resource books; (include title, author and publisher);
- Educational software (tapes, DVD/ CDs USBs) (include title, author, manufacturer); and
- Portable CD/DVD cassette player/recorder.



### **Science and Nature**

- Animal sets: zoo, farm, wildlife, aquatic, etc.;
- Animals, plants, fish, invertebrates; etc, but not dogs and cats;
- Aquariums and terrariums;
- Bird Feeders and baths;
- Chemistry sets;
- Collections: rocks, shells, leaves, insects, etc.;
- Compass, maps, globes;
- Magnets;

- Magnifying glasses;
- Nature books; include title, author, and publisher;
- Science and nature Games;
- Seeds and garden tools;
- Water/sand tables, and accessories.

### **Special Needs Equipment**

- Adult changing tables;
- Fire alarms with flashing lights;
- Protective gear; and,
- Wheel chairs.

**Within 60 days of receiving an award centers and providers must submit receipts for all equipment, supplies and materials purchased with the award funds to the Office of Child Care-Credentialing Branch.**



Source: Maryland Committee for Children (MCC), copyright 2001. Editing and additions by OCC Staff, spring 2002 and 2006.

## Child Care Quality Incentive Grant

### Ineligible Items:

**Ineligible items** include, but are not limited to, any item required as part of the licensing process, and any item eligible for funding under the Family Day Care Provider Direct Grant Award program. Some examples are:

#### Business expenses

- Criminal background checks;
- Insurance;
- Advertising, signs, office furniture & supplies;
- Shipping charges, money order or check fees, postage, etc.; and
- Training, all kinds.

#### Furniture and Equipment

- Air cleaners, filters;
- Appliances, all kinds;
- Business cards, folders, stationery;
- Cameras;
- Carbon monoxide detectors;
- Consumer electronics: TV's, printers, scanners, monitors, motion detectors, stereos, karaoke machines, etc.;
- Desks, file cabinets;
- Fire extinguishers;
- Furniture, including cribs and playpens;
- Lamps, lights, Venetian blinds, curtains, draperies and their fixtures;
- Linens, sheets, towels, wash cloths, pillows, etc.;
- Rugs & carpeting;
- Strollers; and
- Sleeping bags, mats, cots, etc.

#### Maintenance

- All repairs, renovations or other improvements to the physical property;
- Inspections, all kinds; and
- Yard & Garden material: mulch, wood chips, landscaping, repairs to the lawn, etc.

#### Other

- Clothing, jewelry;
- Dinnerware, food items of any kind;
- Live entertainment, Field trips; and
- Toy weapons.

#### Supplies

- Baby walkers;
- Cleaning supplies and services;
- Diapers and baby wipes;
- First aid supplies;
- Medical/physicals;
- Paper towels, toilet paper, soap;
- Play stations;
- Shoe Stackers; and
- Smoke detectors.

Source: Maryland Committee for Children (MCC), copyright 2001. Editing and additions by OCC Staff, spring 2002 and 2006.

# Child Care Quality Incentive Grant Checklist

**Before mailing your application, check to make sure you have included all required information and copied for your records. Incomplete applications will not be processed.**

**DO not** send original License, etc.

**Do** send clear, legible copies of these documents.

**Do** send one application for each child care facility when provider(s) operate / own multiple sites.

**Do** keep a copy of all items sent into the credentialing branch.

**Applications are due by January 1st, April 1st, July 1st or October 1st.**

## Application – Completed, signed and dated

### Section 1

- Child Care Licenses # or Family Child Care Registration #
- SSN or FEIN
- Name and address
- Contact number / email address

### Section 2 - Child Care Center.

Check either Yes or No for each one of the statements (attachment (s) required).

- Located in a Title I Community; **or**
- Where at least 25% of children enrolled are from families that receive subsidy;

#### **AND**

- Accredited by MSDE or a recognized organization; **or**
- At least 50% of program staff are participating in the Credentialing Program at Level 2 or higher;

#### **AND**

- Possess a current license or letter of compliance; **and**
- Currently operate a child care center; **and**
- Implement a curriculum which aligns with the standards established by the Kindergarten Readiness and Early Learning Assessment (ELA) guidelines.

### Section 2 - Family Child Care Provider.

Check either Yes or No for each one of the statements (attachment (s) required).

- That serves one (1) or more children who receive child care subsidies; **and**
- Where the owner participates in the Credentialing Program at Level 2 or higher; **and**
- Possess a current license or letter of compliance; **and**
- Currently operate a family child care home; **and**
- Implement a curriculum which aligns with the standards established by the Kindergarten Readiness and Early Learning Assessment (ELA) guidelines.

**Section 3 - Give Total Number(s) pertaining to your center/program on the date you submit this application.**



- Total Number of:
  - Infants in Care
  - Toddlers in care
  - Preschool children in care
  - Children with child care subsidy
  - All children in care

#### **Section 4 - Affirmation / Agreement.**

- Review affirmation / agreement.
- Sign and Date.

#### **Section 5**

- List all supplies, materials, and equipment** – which you propose purchasing.
- Brand, model/serial # and cost** of all supplies, materials, and equipment listed.
- Category** of item to enhance the quality of childcare.
  - Active Play
  - Arts and Crafts
  - Dramatic Play/Social Studies
  - Literacy
  - Manipulative
  - Math
  - Program Planning and Resource Material
  - Science and Nature
  - Special Needs
- Description** - Describe how you plan to use each item to improve / enhance the quality of care being given to the children served.
- Total Cost** - Total of all supplies, materials, and equipment which you propose purchasing.