



OKLAHOMA
Human Services

Vol.17

CHILD CARE SERVICES

December 2022



The Stars Program

The QRIS (Quality Rating Improvement System) relaunched on June 1, 2022 and we have processed close to 2,500 Stars applications with over 400 programs who are new to QRIS! It is exciting to know so many have made the commitment to provide high quality child care to Oklahoma's children!

Because we want to ensure all programs are successful, the Star monitoring reviews throughout 2023 will be discussion visits only, any criteria violations will not be documented. Numerous, repeated or serious non-compliances with minimum licensing requirements will be documented for the last 24 months. This will allow you time to learn and properly implement the Stars criteria. Full monitoring is expected to resume on January 2024.

If you did not get your Stars application or request for certification submitted during the re-application period, you can still submit a request for a higher Star level at any time. Please note your request may not be processed or reviewed until March 1, 2023. This will allow us time to finish processing all requests received during the re-application period.

Here is the link to apply and submit your request:
<https://bit.ly/OKDHSChildCareServicesQRISApplicationPortal>



All things **GRANTS!**

Please look through the below information regarding the Child Care Services grants. There is additional information listed regarding each grant.



Call the hotline: (405) 521-6177

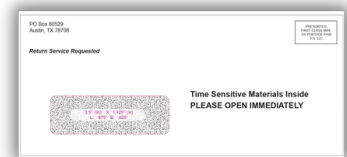
Monday -Friday

9:00 am-4:00 pm

Send an e-mail:

ChildCareGrantsHelp@okdhs.org

The Workforce checks will be mailed directly to the child care employee in envelopes like this



The Workforce Support Grant

WHAT: Cycle 3 Bonus Payment for Child Care Staff

WHEN: Cycle 3 January 1, 2023 & Cycle 4 March 1, 2023 **(Last Cycle)**

WHY: Child Care Staff Retention & Recruitment Support

WHO: Child care employees working in a permitted or licensed program

Additional Information

This grant will be open for four cycles so programs are able to include all staff working in their facility. **Please remember that staff only qualify for one \$1,000 bonus.**

All staff **MUST** have a registry ID to receive the bonus payment. OKDHS will be working with the CECPD to make sure payments go directly to the child care staff. All the required qualifications and information will be listed on the OKDHS grants website.

CECPD will email easy-to-follow instructions to each Child Care Center and FCCH that qualifies for the Workforce Support Grant incentive to collect additional information on your staff. Please follow the instructions that will be included in the email. This is a 2-step process, programs must also complete the workforce grant application.

Exceptional Needs Grants



WHAT: Exceptional Needs Grants

WHEN: Launched August 10, 2022 - open through July 2024 **(or when funds deplete)**

WHY: Promote the economic and social well-being of special needs children and families

WHO: For providers who currently serve or are looking to expand and serve exceptional needs children.

Additional Information

The exceptional needs grant is specifically designed for providers who are looking to expand their services to be able to serve exceptional needs children, as well as for providers who currently serve this population who are looking to expand their programs.

It will consist of a single facility application and an open window to submit proposals for approval. Once approved and purchases are made, they will be able to upload receipts to their approved plans in order to seek reimbursement.

Exceptional Needs Grants Application Video: <https://youtu.be/DEjowjU-hU>

Child Care Desert Grants



WHAT: Desert Grants

WHEN: Launched August 10, 2022 - open through July 2023 **(or when funds deplete)**

WHY: Increase accessibility to quality child care in identified child care desert counties.

WHO: New programs and existing programs in identified desert counties.

Additional Information

There are two options:

- 1) New programs wishing to start a CCC or FCCH/LFCCH in desert areas or
- 2) Existing programs currently serving children that would like to expand their capacity in the identified counties.

An example of this would be a FCCH provider that meets LFCCH qualifications or a child care center that has the space to increase their capacity. Per federal guidelines, funding may not be used for purchase of land, structures or major renovations.

- To learn more about the specifications such as what is consider 'major renovations' please visit: <https://bit.ly/ChildCareDesertFAQs>

Increased Stabilization Grant Awards!!

WHAT: Cycles 7-9 Quality & Stabilization Grants

WHEN: Cycle 7 opens January 1, 2023

WHY: Quality & Stabilization Support

WHO: ALL PROVIDERS!

Cycles 7-9 offers a doubled payment amount + an additional percentage increase as shown below based on the program's new star rating on January 1, 2023. Not only will this provide continued stabilization support, it will promote quality programming for Oklahoma children.

New Star Level Percentage Increase

One Star 0%

Two Star 100%

Three Star 125%

Four Star 150%

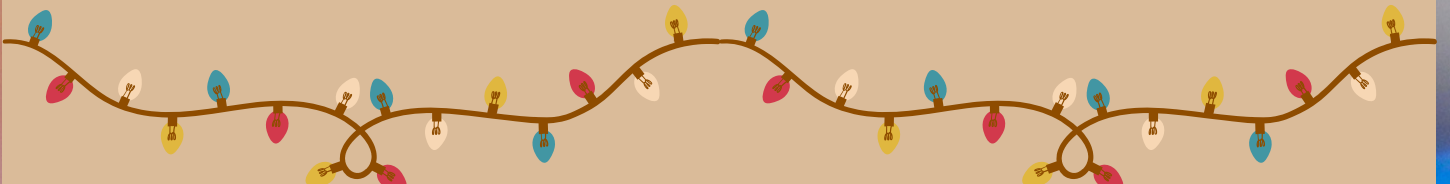
Five Star 175%

Here are a couple of examples:

- A Five Star Home with a capacity of 7 will receive the doubled base amount of \$6,000 + 175% increase = \$16,500.
- A Five Star Center with a capacity of 50 will receive the doubled base amount of \$22,000 + 175% increase = \$60,500.

As our finance department works to process the payments, be sure to check your emails (and spam folder) for communication from the Oklahoma Human Services Child Care Services Team. You may also check the status of your application here:

<https://www.okchildcaregrants.com>



Allowable Uses of Stabilization Funds

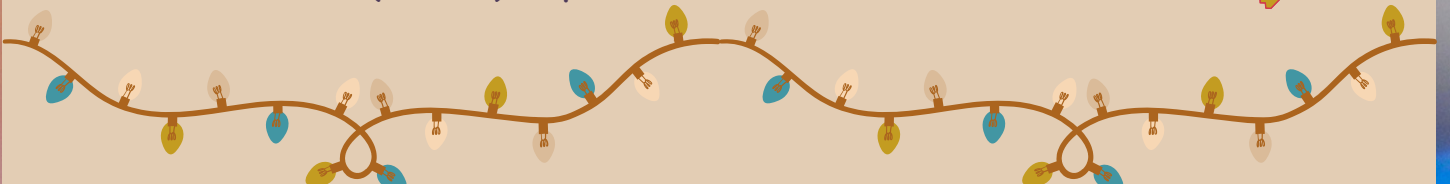
Please remember that stabilization funds can only be used on the following:

- Personnel costs, benefits, premium pay, and employee recruitment and retention for an employee (someone who owns their own business, like a sole proprietor or an independent contractor, can count themselves as an employee)
- Rent or mortgage payments, utilities, facilities maintenance and improvements, or insurance
- Personal protective equipment, cleaning and sanitation supplies and services, or training
- Professional development related to health and safety practices
- Purchases of or updates to equipment and supplies to respond to COVID-19
- Goods and services necessary to maintain or resume child care services
- Mental health supports for children and employees
- Reimbursement for any of the uses above, paid between March 2020, and the date of application, to address losses incurred during the COVID-19 pandemic

If you have any questions about allowable uses of the stabilization funds, please email ChildCareGrantsHelp@okdhs.org.

KEEP A RECORD OF HOW YOU ARE SPENDING AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN FUNDS!

Please remember that programs are required to maintain records of how the stabilization funds were spent and be prepared to share those records should the Oklahoma Human Services (OKDHS) request them.



Did you know?



Child care providers receive \$5 more per day in child care subsidy payments for foster children! All ages of youth are represented in the foster care system including newborns, toddlers, school-aged children and teenagers. In Oklahoma, most children and teens come into care due to neglect, often related to parental substance abuse. However, there are many other situations that could lead to a youth entering foster care.

Foster parents provide a safe home and understand the trauma children experience and meet the children and their family right where they are. Child care providers are just as important and can provide a safe space for children to heal and grow.

Currently Oklahoma has more than 6500 children in OKDHS custody and is in great need of child care providers who will care for foster children in their home or facility.

For more information about how you can apply for a subsidy contract and receive the additional \$5 per day please email Childcarecontracts@okdhs.org. If you or someone you know would like more information on becoming a foster parent in Oklahoma go to <https://okfosters.org/>.



Subsidy Spotlight

Interested in a Contract with Child Care Subsidy?



The Stars status for submitting a request for a Subsidy contract has changed. Beginning Jan 1, 2023, before a contract can be submitted for evaluation, providers must have an OKDHS license or permit and a Star status as shown below:

Child Care Centers:

- Must be a 2 Star program or higher

Child Care Homes:

- If licensed, must be a 1 Star program or higher; or
- If permitted, must be a 2 Star program or higher



If your program meets the criteria, just send an email to CCProviderContracts@okdhs.org with your license K8#. We will be happy to help you.



A special message to our providers

Happy Holidays

We are so grateful for all you do for the children of Oklahoma. We wish you peace and prosperity this holiday season and the upcoming New Year!

From OKDHS Child Care Services

