



DCY GUIDANCE LETTER 24-011
DIVISION OF TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

TO: County Department of Job and Family Services

FROM: Diane Fox, Division Director

DATE: April 19, 2024

SUBJECT: Child Care Choice Voucher Program Eligibility Determination

Background

During the State of the State on April 10, Governor Mike DeWine announced the creation of the Child Care Choice Voucher Program. This program is being created to support an estimated 8,000 more children, or as many as funding allows, to ensure parents can go to school or work.

Program

Eligibility: Below is additional information on the program:

- Families are eligible to participate who have been denied publicly funded child care because they are over income but have a qualifying activity (i.e., work or school).
- **There is not a new application for this program. Eligibility will be based on a denied publicly funded child care application for being over income.**

Families participating in this program will still be responsible for any balance above the state's payment to the licensed early care and education provider. This payment will be determined between the early care and education provider and family.

Note: The state is recommending a family payment of 9% of the family's income to align with the publicly funded child care program.

Effective Date: This program will be effective April 29, 2024, with an eligibility lookback for *pending* applications dated April 1, 2024 or after. This means families that applied on or after April 1, 2024, whose applications have not yet been determined, do not have to reapply for eligibility for the Child Care Choice Voucher Program to be considered.



County Support

The County Departments of Job and Family Services (CDJFS) will be eligible for funding by supporting the new program. There are two opportunities in which a CDJFS may receive funding:

- 1. Training:** The CDJFS will be responsible for determining program eligibility based off of the publicly funded child care application in Ohio Benefits. Training for this additional eligibility process will be held on **Wednesday, April 24, 2024**, from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm, the regularly scheduled monthly county child care meeting. All counties are urged to take part in this training. Your county representative for the training does not need to be an agency director but will need to check in online to receive the training stipend. Due to the tight timeframes there will not be an additional training option for this program and no payments can be provided to agencies that do not take part in this training.

To join the meeting on April 24, please click [Join Event](#).

CDJFSs that complete the training on April 24, 2024, will receive a one-time payment based on the Category assigned below:

Category	Amount	Total	Counties
X Large	\$100,000.00	\$300,000.00	Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton
Large	\$75,000.00	\$450,000.00	Butler, Lake, Lorain, Lucas, Mahoning Montgomery, Stark, Summit, Warren
Medium	\$50,000.00	\$900,000.00	Allen, Clark, Clermont, Columbiana, Delaware, Fairfield, Greene, Licking, Medina, Miami, Portage, Richland, Trumbull, Wood, Wayne
Small	\$25,000.00	\$1,525,000.00	All Other Counties
Total		\$3,175,000.00	

- 2. Incentive Payment:** Additionally, to encourage agencies to process applications as quickly as possible an application timeliness incentive payment will be issued and determined at the end of October. There will be two type of incentive awards:

- 1. Most Improved:**

In each category (X-large/Large, Medium and Small), the most improved CDJFS will be determined. We will review applications received from April 2024 to October 2024 for



timeliness compared to the prior six months. The CDJFS achieving at least 90% application timeliness with the most improvement will earn the incentive as outlined below. If a tie occurs the payment will be split.

- 2. Best Application Timeliness:** In each category (X-large/Large, Medium and Small), the CDJFS with the highest overall application timeliness rate between April 2024 and October 2024 will earn, or share if multiple CDJFS tie, the incentive as outlined below.

Please note that in table 2 below, for the incentive payments the X-Large and Large CDJFS will be combined:

Categories	Amounts	Total
XL/L	\$200,000	\$400,000
M	\$100,000	\$200,000
S	\$50,000	\$100,000
Grand Total		\$700,000

All payments will be issued through the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services County Finance Allocation process.

Both training and incentives payments are available as cash and considered earned at the time of receipt. There are no further restrictions on the use of the funding and will not be considered federal funds but “local dollars.”

Additional payment guidance and information will also be included in an upcoming Fiscal Administrative Procedure Letter issued by ODJFS County Finance

Contact

If you have any questions or concerns, contact

child_care_county_technical_assistance@childrenandyouth.ohio.gov.