



## NJ Child Care Facilities Improvement Program – Phase 1

### Eligible Facility Improvement Project Idea Board

The New Jersey Child Care Facilities Improvement Program provides grants to child care providers for facilities improvements that will contribute to high quality early childhood learning environments. Phase 1 of the grant program will cover projects between \$50,000 and \$200,000 for specific interior and exterior improvements to licensed child care centers. A list of eligible uses can be found [here](#).

The purpose of this “Idea Board” is to assist child care providers to make decisions about proposed facility improvement projects so they are aligned to the grant’s eligible uses, particularly those who are unsure of how to get started with your planning or are looking for help developing an improvement plan prior to speaking to a New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOLE) Public Works Registered Contractor. Use this resource to observe and document the needs of your facility by reviewing the **Project Prompt Questions** and use the **Notes** section to write down ideas and questions.

Some high-level questions to consider are:

- Were any violations identified during your last licensing inspection? Do you have any open or active violations?\*
- What needs or areas for improvement were identified in any formal assessments like your last licensing report, Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS-3, FCCERS-3 or ITERS-3) results, and/or Grow NJ Kids assessment? Use these to help guide your decision-making process.
- What ongoing health & safety issues does your facility face?
- What security issues does your facility face?
- What are the opportunities to upgrade systems and address energy efficiency?

\*\*You are strongly encouraged to prioritize and propose improvements that address any issues cited by the NJ Department of Children and Families (NJDCF) Office of Licensing (OOL), especially those that have been outstanding for more than 12 months. We recognize that funding for facility improvements is not typically available to child care providers, but access to the grant can help address those concerns and violations making your environment healthy and safe for the children in your care.

The questions below are not inclusive of all the different work or improvements that could be completed, so working with a New Jersey Registered Public Works Contractor will be a vital step in your planning process. You can consider using the information collected here to guide conversations with your Public Works Contractor to help make final decisions about your proposed project.

Remember that these contractors are not used to defining the scope of a project quotes – usually they are bidding on a project proposed by local or state government without any input on what the project is. Having some ideas for them as to what you’d like to accomplish will make it much easier to navigate the conversation.

**NEW CLASSROOM**

*Reminder: Expansion of the facility to build additional space is not an eligible project for this grant, but renovating an existing space is an eligible project.*

| Project Prompt   | Notes |
|--|-------|
| <p>Do you have unused space in your facility to create a new classroom? Do you have an empty classroom you’d like to renovate?</p>   |       |
| <p>Would this new classroom need any demolition?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breaking down walls?</li> <li>• Removing old built-ins or equipment?</li> <li>• Removing old bathroom fixtures?</li> <li>• Pulling up old carpet or flooring?</li> </ul> |       |

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| <p>Would the new classroom need any installation of things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Child sized sinks and/or toilets?</li><li>• A diaper changing area?</li><li>• Creating an ADA compliant doorway or other egresses (entrances/exits)?</li><li>• Partition installation or creating a wall?</li><li>• Painting?</li><li>• Lighting?</li><li>• Windows? Adding more natural light?</li><li>• Built in or mounted shelving?</li><li>• Flooring?</li></ul> |  |
| <p>Would the new classroom need things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shelving?</li><li>• Window Treatments?</li><li>• Bulletin Boards?</li><li>• Bookcases, shelves, child-sized tables and chairs, cubbies, high-chairs?</li><li>• Carpets or rugs?</li></ul>   |  |

**NEW INDOOR GROSS MOTOR AND/OR MULTI-PURPOSE SPACE**

| <b>Project Prompt</b>  | <b>Notes</b> |
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| Do you have unused space in your facility to create an indoor gross motor or multi-purpose area?   |              |
| Would this space need any demolition like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Breaking down walls?</li><li>• Removing old built-ins or equipment?</li><li>• Removing old lighting?</li><li>• Removing old bathroom fixtures?</li><li>• Pulling up old carpet?</li></ul> |              |

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| <p>Would the space need any installation of things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child sized sinks and/or toilets?</li> <li>• Creating an ADA compliant doorway or other egresses (entrances/exits)?</li> <li>• Soundproofing?</li> <li>• Painting?</li> <li>• Lighting?</li> <li>• Windows? Adding more natural light?</li> <li>• Shelving?</li> <li>• Storage?</li> <li>• Painting?</li> <li>• Flooring?</li> </ul> |  |
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**ACCESSIBILITY**

| <b>Project Prompt</b> | <b>Notes</b> |
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| <p>Is your facility accessible for people with disabilities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wheelchair accessible with ramps and doors wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs to all classrooms?</li> <li>• Wheelchair accessible with ramps and doors wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs to any outdoor space?</li> <li>• Do sinks have knee clearance for wheelchairs? Do you have wheelchair-accessible bathroom stalls?</li> </ul> |  |
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### EXISTING CLASSROOMS AND BATHROOMS

Reminder: Grant funding CAN NOT be used to supplant or replace existing space dedicated to infant and toddlers (in other words, you can't convert an infant or toddler classroom into a preschool classroom with these grant funds)

| Project Prompt  | Notes |
|---|-------|
| <p>Do any bathrooms used by children need updates and/or repairs like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Child height sinks and/or toilets with touchless features?</li><li>• Installing partitions and/or doors?</li><li>• Replace ceiling tiles or flooring?</li><li>• Replace lighting?</li><li>• Painting?</li><li>• Artwork?</li></ul> |       |
| <p>Is there any demolition or removal you'd like to do like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Breaking down walls?</li><li>• Removing old built-ins or equipment?</li><li>• Removing old lighting?</li><li>• Removing old bathroom fixtures?</li><li>• Pulling up old carpet or flooring?</li></ul>  |       |

Would the existing classroom need repair, replacement or installation of thing like:

- Child height sinks?
- A diaper changing area?
- ADA compliant doorway or other egresses (entrances/exits)?
- Partition installation or creating a wall?
- Painting?
- Lighting?
- Windows? Adding more natural light?
- Built in or mounted shelving?
- Flooring?
- Soundproofing?
- Leaking pipes or drainage issues?
- Window treatments like blinds or shades?
- Adding storage/closet space for materials, cots/nap mats?
- New children's furniture like cubbies, tables, chairs, free standing shelving, book cases, etc.?
- Creating a door to outdoor space?

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| <p>Would the existing classroom need things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Window Treatments?</li> <li>• Bulletin Boards?</li> <li>• Bookcases, shelves, child-sized tables and chairs, cubbies, high-chairs?</li> <li>• Carpets or rugs?</li> </ul>     |              |
| <b>KITCHEN AND FOOD PREP AREAS</b>   |              |
| <b>Prompt Questions</b>  | <b>Notes</b> |
| <p>Does your kitchen/food prep area need updates like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New equipment such as refrigerator, stove, dishwasher, etc.?</li> <li>• New cabinets or shelving?</li> <li>• New small appliances like blenders or microwave?</li> </ul> |              |



## HEALTH & SAFETY

| Prompt Questions  | Notes |
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| <p>Do you have a sick child or nurse area that needs updates like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New lighting?</li><li>• Painting?</li><li>• Cots or mats?</li><li>• Shelving?</li><li>• Child height sinks?</li></ul> <p>Do you have an unused space you'd like to turn into a sick child or nurse area?</p> |       |
| <p>Do your sprinkler, smoke detectors or other fire safety systems work properly?</p>   |       |
| <p>Do have a facility security system in place?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Doors and exits close securely?</li><li>• Doors have working locks?</li><li>• Keypad system at your front door?</li><li>• Security cameras?</li></ul>   |       |

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| <p>Do you want to improve air quality issues like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• HVAC system is old or needs maintenance?</li><li>• Add air purifiers?</li><li>• Controlling air temp in individual classrooms?</li></ul> |  |
| <p>Are there environmental issues in the facility?</p>  |  |
| <p>Are you in need of secure storage like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Locked wall cabinets?</li><li>• Storage for hazardous materials?</li></ul>   |  |

**PLAYGROUND**

| <b>Prompt Questions</b>   | <b>Notes</b> |
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| <p>Does the children’s play structure meet safety regulations?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are there broken elements?</li><li>• Rust?</li><li>• Do you have the right fall zones?</li><li>• Do you have appropriate cushioning?</li><li>• Do you have bollards?</li></ul> <p>Is it developmentally appropriate?</p> |              |
| <p>Does your playground provide shade like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A shade structure?</li><li>• Awning?</li></ul>  |              |
| <p>Does your playground have any or enough storage?</p>   |              |

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| <p>Are you interested in creating a new playground space for children like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A separate space for infants and/or toddlers?</li></ul> |  |
| <p>Does your fencing need repairs or replacement?</p>   |  |
| <p>Are there any drainage issues especially after rain or snow?</p>   |  |

## EXTERIOR IMPROVEMENTS

| Prompt Questions  | Notes |
|---|-------|
| <p>Would the facility need to add, repair, replace or improve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exterior fencing?</li><li>• Security gates?</li><li>• Roofing?</li><li>• Decking?</li><li>• Sidewalks to facility or connecting classrooms?</li><li>• Parking area, drop off area, including bollards?</li></ul> |       |
| <p>Are there any drainage issues around the facility?</p>   |       |

**PLANNING AND OTHER ALLOWABLE COSTS**

*Reminder: These costs are limited to 20% of your total project costs. The primary goal of the grant is to pay for facility improvements. Eligible costs are limited to the categories listed below.*

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| Will you need an architect to design any part of your project?                                   |  |
| Will there be any permit fees as part of your project?   |  |
| Will any construction management be necessary for this project?                                  |  |
| Will there be any freight and shipping delivery costs for materials for construction or for FFE? |  |
| Will an environmental assessment be needed on the facility?                                      |  |