



MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Authority

FROM: Tim Sullivan
Chief Executive Officer

DATE: February 7, 2024

SUBJECT: Child Care Facilities Improvement Pilot Program – Phase 2

Request:

The Members are asked to approve:

1. Creation of the Child Care Facilities Improvement Pilot Program – Phase 2, a grant program to provide grants between \$10,000 and \$20,000 for registered Family Child Care homes (FCCs) in New Jersey to make facility improvements that will contribute to high quality early childhood learning environments and improve the health and safety of the spaces where children are cared for, and the waiver of applicant fees due to the availability of other sources of funding for the Authority's administrative costs.
2. Utilization of up to \$5,000,000 of state funds appropriated to NJEDA for the Child Care Facilities Fund to fund the Child Care Facilities Improvement Pilot Program – Phase 2.
3. Delegation of authority to the Chief Executive Officer to approve individual applications for the Child Care Facilities Improvement Pilot Program – Phase 2 in accordance with the terms set forth in this memo and the attached program specifications.
4. Amendment of the Child Care Facilities Improvement Program – Phase 1 such that the deadlines for obligating and expending the ARP SLFRF funds will follow the federal deadlines, and any extension of those deadlines will be passed on to the grantees.

Background:

Ensuring that parents have access to quality child care options that meet their specific needs is vital to enabling economic productivity. Working families require reliable, safe, affordable, accessible, and quality child care. Investing in the child care sector promotes workforce participation, particularly among women, early childhood development, child safety, growth of small businesses, and parental well-being, contributing to a stronger and fairer economy for all.

Access to high-quality child care positively impacts children above all. Research has shown that quality care improves children’s language skills, reasoning abilities, test outcomes, and overall happiness. Parents can experience reduced stress with the ability to pursue educational and work opportunities, contributing to stable family incomes.

As part of the State’s commitment to supporting the child care sector, in June 2021 the New Jersey State Legislature passed and Governor Phil Murphy signed into law (P.L. 2021, c.144) a bill appropriating \$100 million of American Rescue Plan State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (ARP SLFRF) to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to support child care providers and the child care workforce through a number of initiatives, including making \$54.5 million available to the Authority for facilities improvements and technical assistance to licensed child care providers (i.e., child care centers serving 6 or more children) and registered family child care homes (i.e., home-based child care businesses registered with the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) serving 5 or fewer children)¹. Additionally, the Fiscal Year 2023 Appropriations Act, P.L. 2022, c. 49, (“FY23 Appropriations Act”) makes available an additional \$30 million in ARP SLFRF to the Authority for the “Child Care Facilities Fund” to further invest in facility improvements for the child care sector.

New Jersey has dedicated \$24.95 million in state funding to supporting facilities improvements for child care providers in addition to the federal funding. In 2022, EDA entered into an MOU with the New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS) to utilize \$4.45 million in state funding for Phase 1 of the Child Care Facilities Improvement Program. New Jersey then further reappropriated \$20.5 million in state funding to the Child Care Facilities Fund in the June 2023 State Fiscal Year 2024 supplemental appropriations bill, from two prior appropriations made to EDA in June 2022. One of these prior appropriations was originally for the Child Care Employer Innovation Pilot Program, for which \$12.5 million in state funding was appropriated to EDA. The second was Thriving by Three, for which \$8 million in state funding was appropriated to EDA to provide grants for child care facilities projects to increase capacity for infants and toddlers. Phase 1 was receiving strong demand from applicants, and its goals overlapped with those of the prior appropriations, so funding was shifted to support child care facilities more broadly to enable NJEDA to meet the demand.

Staff proposes utilizing up to \$5 million of the \$20.5 million of state funds in the Child Care Facilities Fund for the Child Care Facilities Improvement Pilot Program – Phase 2 (“Phase 2”), which will be open solely to eligible registered Family Child Care homes (FCCs or FCC providers).

In May 2022, the Board established the Child Care Facilities Improvement Pilot Program – Phase 1 (“Phase 1”) and approved the use of up to \$20 million of the \$54.5 million available to the Authority through P.L. 2021, c.144, as well as the additional \$4.45 million in state funds transferred to EDA from DHS, to capitalize the program. Phase 1 provides grants for total project costs between \$50,000 and \$200,000 to licensed child care providers (also referred to as “centers”) to make improvements

¹ On January 29, 2024, with coordination and support from EDA, the State Senate introduced legislation to remove the requirement to serve FCCs from P.L. 2021, c. 144. In Bill S2344 (<https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2024/S2344>). The legislation notes that “The Economic Development Authority is currently developing a facilities improvement grant program, to be funded with State resources that have already been appropriated to the authority, for family child care providers. Both the sponsor and the authority believe that a State-funded program will provide a less burdensome application, implementation, and compliance experience for family child care providers.”

to their child care facilities. In May 2023, in response to demand that far outpaced the amount of Phase 1 funding initially approved by the Board, the Board approved the use of an additional \$20 million of the funding appropriated through P.L. 2021, c. 144, as well as the use of \$30 million appropriated in the FY23 Appropriations Act, bringing the total amount allocated to support facility improvements at child care centers across the state to nearly \$75 million.

Applications for Phase 1 opened on November 15, 2022 and closed on October 20, 2023. In that time, NJEDA received 749 applications from child care centers across New Jersey that serve over 60,000 children and employ over 15,000 members of the vital early childhood workforce. As of January 17, the NJEDA has approved 123 of those applications for a combined \$24.86 million in funding and will continue to approve more applications in the coming weeks and months. The first 123 centers approved through the program are located in 19 counties, serve more than 11,000 children – including more than 5,200 infants and toddlers – and employ over 2,800 teachers and administrators.

Phase 1 of the Program has demonstrated the significant demand for grants for facilities improvements, and NJEDA staff will continue to review and approve Phase 1 applications in the coming months. However, eligibility for Phase 1 was limited to licensed child care centers (i.e., facilities licensed by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) to serve six or more children). The other significant component of New Jersey’s mixed delivery child care system is home-based child care, which is provided by FCCs.

At least nine other states have implemented grant programs for FCC providers, with programs in several states, including California, Colorado, and Indiana, specifically aimed at bolstering quality for FCC providers through facility improvements. Notably, New Jersey is one of only two states in the country that does not require home-based child care providers to be licensed. Instead, family child care homes (i.e. home-based child care providers serving five or fewer children at a time) may voluntarily register with New Jersey DCF through their county Child Care Resource & Referral Center (CCR&R). Only registered FCCs will be eligible for Phase 2.

As of October 2023, New Jersey was home to 1,313 registered FCCs, serving as many as 6,500 children across all 21 counties. More than 3,600 of the children in registered FCCs received funding through the federal Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), which is administered by DHS. FCCs are an essential component of the state’s mixed delivery system for child care, but FCC providers face challenges maintaining their facilities due to limited resources. FCCs help to meet the varied needs of New Jersey’s diverse population. FCCs are located in the same neighborhoods where families live, and many offer child care that is affordable and culturally and linguistically appropriate. In addition, FCCs are often the only resource that provides flexible hours of operation that can serve parents who work non-traditional hours. Investing in the quality of FCC facilities is essential to ensure that all families have access to these positive effects of quality child care. NJEDA aims to provide FCCs with support that promotes long-term stability and ensures that the child care environment that they provide is safe, healthy, accessible, and conducive to high-quality early learning.

Based on extensive research and review of government funding both in the state and across the country, the Authority has determined that FCCs do not typically have access to the capital they would need to fund facility improvements. Very few business-oriented grant programs are open to

home-based businesses. NJEDA offers the Small Business Improvement Grant (SBIG), which does provide funding to home-based businesses for furniture, fixtures, and equipment. However, SBIG funds are provided on a reimbursement basis and only cover 50% of the total project cost. As of January 2024, more than 2,000 applications have been submitted to the Authority for the SBIG. Of those 2,000, an extremely small number – potentially as small as just one (1) application – are from home-based child care providers, reinforcing the need to develop this specialized program. FCCs are typically microbusinesses with very low margins, and do not have the cash flow necessary to cover significant costs up-front and wait for a partial reimbursement. To address this challenge, this program covers the full cost of eligible furniture, fixtures, and equipment on a prospective basis, with 50% of the approved grant award provided up-front so the FCC provider can use the grant funds to purchase the eligible items.

Program Details:

Phase 2 of the Child Care Facilities Improvement Pilot Program will provide up to \$5 million in grants for total project costs between \$10,000 and \$20,000 to eligible registered FCCs to make improvements that will support the health, safety, accessibility, and quality of the spaces where children are cared for within the FCC.

These grants are provided as direct benefits to the FCC providers and are in line with the Murphy Administration's commitment to supporting the child care sector. The Program will also have broader economic benefits:

- Provide funding to businesses that otherwise may not have access to resources to fund facility improvements. According to a study of home-based child care ownership nationwide, many are minority- and women-owned businesses.
- Promote healthy childhood environments for children, families, and child care providers.
- Engage FCC providers to participate in New Jersey's child care quality improvement rating system, Grow NJ Kids.
- Target resources to communities of greater need due to historic disinvestment, through a set-aside for FCC providers located in Opportunity Zones and an eligibility requirement that applicants serve low-income children receiving Child Care Assistance subsidies.

Eligibility:

Eligibility for Phase 2 of the Program will be limited to FCCs registered with NJ DCF through their local New Jersey county Child Care Resource & Referral Center (CCR&R). Applicants will be required to provide proof of registration at time of application submission. Applicants may be for-profit businesses or nonprofit organizations. There will be a limit of one grant award per registered FCC.

Applicants may own or lease the home from which the FCC operates. Landlords are not eligible to apply directly for this program.

At the time of application, applicants must currently enroll or have enrolled in the 12 months prior to application, at least one child receiving support through the DHS Child Care Assistance Program

(CCAP). The Authority will confirm enrollment of children receiving CCAP at the FCC location with DHS.

Applicants must offer care for at least 6 hours per day, 5 days a week, 10 months of the year. In the application, applicants must certify that they will enroll in DHS' Grow NJ Kids Quality Rating Improvement System within one (1) year of the date of grant execution, if not already enrolled, and that they will maintain registration with DCF to provide child care for two (2) years following execution of the grant agreement, which the Authority will verify with DCF.

In addition to the eligibility parameters already stated above, the applicant must also be in substantial good standing with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOL), and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Applicants will also be responsible for providing a current Tax Clearance Certificate before approval to demonstrate that they are properly registered to do business in New Jersey and are in substantial good standing with the New Jersey Division of Taxation.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:

Up to 40% of total grant funding made available in Phase 2 of the Program will be reserved for eligible applicants in Opportunity Zone eligible census tracts. If the Authority does not receive sufficient eligible applications from applicants in Opportunity Zone eligible census tracts prior to the application deadline, the Authority may use funds for grants to eligible applicants not located in Opportunity Zone eligible census tracts.

In combination with the set-aside funds for Opportunity Zones, the Authority is further ensuring a focus on child care providers that serve low-income children by requiring that eligible applicants must currently enroll or have enrolled in the 12 months prior to application at least one child receiving support through CCAP. Families eligible for CCAP must fall below 200% of the federal poverty line (\$60,000 for a family of 4), far below the New Jersey median household income of more than \$96,000. This criterion ensures a targeted focus on providers more likely to serve low-income children that can significantly benefit from facilities improvements and high-quality early childhood learning environments.

In addition to the specific reservation of program funding for applicants in Opportunity Zone eligible census tracts, the program more broadly supports diversity and inclusion by allocating funding to the child care sector, in which a high percentage of businesses are owned and staffed by women, particularly women of color. While comprehensive demographic data on home-based child care providers is limited, according to the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment at the University of California – Berkeley, nearly one-third of FCCs nationally are owned and operated by Black and Latina women. Within Phase 1 of CCFIP, nearly 60% of applicants self-identified as women-owned and more than 41% self-identified as minority-owned.

Eligible Funding Uses:

Grants will be used for prospective costs of furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FFE). The aggregate amount of all quotes for eligible costs will be used to determine the base grant amount, with a

minimum eligible project cost of \$10,000 and a maximum eligible project cost of \$20,000. The Program will not provide reimbursement for costs already incurred prior to execution of a grant agreement.

Applicants will be required to submit a narrative describing how the requested FFE fits within the eligibility categories: Health, Safety, and Accessibility; and/or High-Quality Learning Environment. This will include a description of why the requested FFE is needed, where in the home it will be, and how it will improve health, safety, accessibility, or the quality of the learning environment. Applicants will also be asked to submit photos that support the FFE request, showing existing FFE that will be replaced and/or where new FFE will be located.

The table below provides illustrative examples of potential eligible FFE under each category. The listed examples include FCC requirements, standards, and recommendations gathered from the following sources:

- DCF’s Manual of Requirements for Family Child Care Registration,
- Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale, Third Edition (FCCERS-3, used by GNJK),
- DHS and DCF staff observation of most needed FCC facility improvements.

Applicants may propose FFE beyond this list, subject to the review and approval of NJEDA, but all FFE must fit within one of the eligible use categories.

Health, Safety, and Accessibility	High Quality Learning Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoke detectors • Child-proofing mechanisms • Safety barriers for stairs • Replacing broken/hazardous furniture, fixtures, or equipment • Replacing appliances used in food storage, food preparation, or laundry for child care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child-friendly furniture • Diaper-changing units • Sleeping cots/cribs • Stepstools for sink • Low shelving for play area • Soft/comfortable furniture • Rugs • Classroom materials • Playground equipment (not requiring installation)

Ineligible Uses:

NJEDA staff will determine whether requested FFE is eligible. Applicants will be allowed a cure period to substitute additional eligible FFE requests for any FFE deemed ineligible. Ineligible FFE requests will not be included in the grant award. Examples of ineligible requests include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Repairs, renovations, construction, or installation requiring a construction contract;
- FFE that is not directly related to the care of children (e.g. a computer for the FCC provider to use for professional development courses); and
- Proposed uses that do not improve health, safety, accessibility or quality of the learning environment.

Application Process:

The application process for the Program will determine whether the applicant entity is eligible (e.g., is a registered FCC that currently enrolls or has enrolled in the prior 12 months at least one child receiving support through CCAP, providing full-time care, and in good standing with all sister agencies) and whether the FFE the applicant proposes purchasing is eligible and fits within the eligible use categories.

In the application, the Authority will request information and certifications from the applicant including, but not limited to:

- Evidence of applicant's DCF Certificate of Registration
- Certification that the applicant currently enrolls, or enrolled in the 12 months prior to application, as least one child receiving assistance through the Child Care Assistance Program
- Certification that the applicant offers care for at least 6 hours per day, 5 days a week, 10 months of the year
- Certification that the applicant commits to enroll in DHS' Grow NJ Kids Quality Rating Improvement System within one (1) year of the date of grant execution, if not already enrolled
- Certification that the applicant commits to maintain registration with DCF to provide child care for two (2) years following execution of the grant agreement, which the Authority will verify with DCF.
- A detailed description of proposed FFE purchase(s) and how they fit within one of the two eligibility categories.
- Itemized quotes that detail the cost(s) of proposed FFE purchase(s). This can be a formal bid from a vendor and/or printouts/screenshots with prices from online retailer(s) for item(s) to be purchased and should include taxes and shipping costs.
- Photos and/or video of the space(s) where the proposed FFE will be located.

The certifications described above will be included as covenants in the grant agreement with the possibility for repayment by the FCC provider if the certifications are not adhered to, at the discretion of the Authority. The Authority understands that there may be circumstances that may impact the continuation of child care services. As such, the applicant shall notify the Authority in writing (email or letter) of those circumstances and the Authority shall review and determine whether a grantee shall return or repay the amount of grant funds they received.

Applications will be reviewed for completeness, applicant eligibility, and whether requested FFE fits the eligibility categories described above. Applications will enter the review process in the order in which they are received. Applications will proceed through the review process according to readiness. If there are questions about the application, or if an applicant does not submit all required materials, staff will follow up with the applicants and applicants will be allowed a cure period to respond, clarify, and/or resubmit any needed materials. If at the end of the cure period the applicant is non-responsive, the application will be deemed incomplete and will be withdrawn. If an applicant is responsive but does not provide sufficient information/documentation within the cure period, the application will be declined, providing a right of appeal. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until all funding is exhausted or until September 30, 2025, whichever is sooner.

Delegated Authority:

The Members are requested to approve delegated authority to approve individual applications to the Child Care Facilities Improvement Pilot Program – Phase 2 in accordance with the terms set forth in the attached product specifications. These approvals are appropriate for delegated authority because the maximum financial assistance under this program is comparable to financial assistance amounts approved under delegated authority in other programs. Additionally, this program is not competitive; each application will be reviewed on its own.

Post Approval:

Following a delegated authority approval, the applicant will be notified of the approved grant amount. After notification is issued, the FCC provider will execute a grant agreement with the EDA.

Grant funds will be provided to each grantee in two disbursements. Fifty percent (50%) of the approved grant amount will be disbursed to the FCC provider upon full execution of the grant agreement. After purchasing eligible FFE with the funds from the initial disbursement, the grantee must submit to EDA satisfactory evidence of completed purchase and payment totaling an amount equal to or higher than the initial disbursement. The remaining fifty percent (50%) of funds will be disbursed to the grantee upon EDA staff review and approval of this documentation submitted by the grantee. Following this second disbursement, the grantee will have three months to submit evidence of completed purchase and payment for eligible FFE purchased with the second disbursement.

EDA reserves the right to also conduct site visits, as deemed appropriate by the Authority, to confirm that funds are being used in accordance with eligible uses for the Program. If a grantee does not purchase approved items and/or does not submit proof of purchase within three months from their second disbursement, this would be considered an event of default and EDA may pursue recapture. In addition, the FCC provider's organization would be flagged in EDA's customer relationship management system, so that if they were to apply for future assistance, their default status would appear in a future Product Operations team review of good standing.

EDA intends to use a portion of administrative costs allocated to this program (not to exceed \$250,000) to issue a purchase order to Temporary Employment Services in accordance with State Blanket PO# 18-GNSV2-00348. The intent of the State's Blanket P.O. is to provide the State and its Cooperative Purchasing Program participants (the Authority is one of the State's Cooperative Purchasing Program participants) staffing for administrative support functions, which will be needed for this program due to limited staff capacity to review applications.

Program Funding

The Members are requested to approve the utilization of up to \$5,000,000 of state funds appropriated to NJEDA for the Child Care Facilities Fund to fund the Child Care Facilities Improvement Pilot Program – Phase 2. This includes an allocation of up to 5% for NJEDA's administrative costs associated with Phase 2. These funds were originally appropriated to NJEDA in 2022 as part of an

\$8 million appropriation to NJEDA for the Thriving by Three program and were shifted to the Child Care Facilities Fund in the supplemental appropriations bill for State Fiscal Year 2024.

Amendment to Child Care Facilities Improvement Program – Phase 1

In addition to requests related to creating and funding Phase 2, the members are requested to approve an amendment to Phase 1. In the event that Congress extends the deadlines for obligating and expending the ARP SLFRF funds, this change that will allow those extensions to flow through to Phase 1 grantees. Without this change, some Phase 1 grantees may needlessly remain tied to a project completion deadline of December 31, 2026 despite the federal extension.

Recommendation:

The Members are asked to approve:

1. Creation of the Child Care Facilities Improvement Pilot Program – Phase 2, a grant program to provide grants between \$10,000 and \$20,000 for registered Family Child Care homes (FCCs) in New Jersey to make facility improvements that will contribute to high quality early childhood learning environments and improve the health and safety of the spaces where children are cared for, and the waiver of applicant fees due to the availability of other sources of funding for the Authority’s administrative costs.
2. Utilization of up to \$5,000,000 of state funds appropriated to NJEDA for the Child Care Facilities Fund to fund the Child Care Facilities Improvement Pilot Program – Phase 2.
3. Delegation of authority to the Chief Executive Officer to approve individual applications for the Child Care Facilities Improvement Pilot Program – Phase 2 in accordance with the terms set forth in this memo and the attached program specifications.
4. Amendment of the Child Care Facilities Improvement Program – Phase 1 such that the deadlines for obligating and expending the ARP SLFRF funds will follow the federal deadlines, and any extension of those deadlines will be passed on to the grantees.

Tim Sullivan
Chief Executive Officer

Prepared by:

Riley Edwards – Team Lead, Economic Security Projects

Shireen Sathu – Intern, Economic Security

Attachment A
Child Care Facilities Improvement Program – Phase 2
Program Specifications
February 2024

Funding Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to \$5,000,000 in state funds appropriated to NJEDA for the Child Care Facilities Fund in the supplemental appropriations bill for State Fiscal Year 2024. • 40% of total grant funding made available in Phase 2 will be reserved for eligible applicants in Opportunity Zones.
Program Purpose	<p>A program that provides grant funding to registered Family Child Care homes in New Jersey for facilities improvements that will contribute to health, safety, accessibility, and high-quality early childhood learning environments.</p>
Eligible Applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family child care homes registered with the NJ Department of Children and Families through their county Child Care Resource & Referral agency at the time of application • At the time of application, applicants must currently enroll, or have enrolled in the 12 months prior to application, at least one child receiving support through the DHS Child Care Assistance Program • Applicants may be for-profit businesses or non-profit organizations • Can own or lease space; landlords not eligible to apply directly • Applicants must be in good standing with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOL) ○ NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) ○ NJ Division of Taxation, as evidenced by a Tax Clearance Certificate • Applicants who are not currently enrolled in DHS’ Grow NJ Kids (GNJK) quality rating system must commit to enroll within one (1) year of executing a grant agreement with the EDA. • Grantees must commit to maintaining their FCC registration for two (2) years following execution of the grant agreement at the location of the facility improvement project. • Applicants are limited to one application per FCC. • Total project costs must be between \$10,000 and \$20,000. • As part of the application, applicants must submit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A detailed project narrative describing how each FFE request will fit within the eligibility categories: Health, Safety, and Accessibility; and/or High-Quality Learning Environment, why it is needed, and where in the home it will be ○ Applicant’s DCF Certificate of Registration ○ Certification that the applicant enrolls, or has enrolled in the prior 12 months, at least one child receiving assistance through the Child Care Assistance Program

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Certification that the applicant offers care for at least 6 hours per day, 5 days a week, 10 months of the year ○ Certification that the applicant commits to enroll in DHS’ Grow NJ Kids Quality Rating Improvement System within one (1) year of the date of grant execution, if not already enrolled ○ Certification that the applicant commits to maintain registration with DCF at the location of the facility improvement to provide child care for two (2) years following execution of the grant agreement, which the Authority will verify with DCF. ○ Itemized quotes for the requested FFE purchases, which can be a formal bid from a vendor and/or printouts/screenshots with prices from online retailer(s) for item(s) to be purchased and should include taxes and shipping costs. ○ Photos and/or video of the space(s) where the requested FFE will be located.
<p>Eligible Uses</p>	<p>Grants can be used for prospective costs for furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FFE). The Program will not provide reimbursement for costs already incurred prior to award.</p> <p>Eligibility categories for proposed FFE purchases: Health, Safety, and Accessibility; and/or High-Quality Learning Environment. The list below provides illustrative examples of potential eligible FFE under each category.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Health, Safety, and Accessibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Smoke detectors ● Child-proofing mechanisms ● Safety barriers for stairs ● Replacing broken/hazardous furniture, fixtures, or equipment ● Replacing appliances used in food storage, food preparation, or laundry for child care ● High Quality Learning Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Child-friendly furniture ● Diaper-changing units ● Sleeping cots/cribs ● Stepstools for sink ● Low shelving for play area ● Soft/comfortable furniture ● Rugs ● Classroom materials ● Playground equipment (not requiring installation) <p>Applicants may propose FFE beyond these lists, subject to the review and approval of NJEDA, but all FFE must fit within one of the eligible use categories.</p>

Application Process and Board Approval/ Delegated Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until all funds are exhausted or until September 30, 2025, whichever is sooner. Applications will enter the review process in the order in which they are received and proceed through the review process according to readiness. • Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer to approve individual applications to Phase 2 of the Child Care Facilities Improvement Pilot Program that are consistent with the terms set forth in the memo and program specifications.
Grant Amounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The aggregate amount of all quotes for eligible FFE, including tax and shipping, will be used to determine the grant amount, with a minimum of \$10,000 and a maximum of \$20,000.
Funding Disbursement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDA will provide notification to approved applicants stating the approved grant amount. After notification is issued, the child care provider will execute an agreement with the EDA. • Fifty percent (50%) of the approved grant amount will be disbursed to the FCC provider upon full execution of the grant agreement. After purchasing eligible FFE with the funds from the initial disbursement, the grantee must submit to EDA satisfactory evidence of completed purchase and payment totaling an amount equal to or higher than the initial disbursement. • The remaining fifty percent (50%) of funds will be disbursed to the grantee upon EDA staff review and approval of this documentation submitted by the grantee. Following this second disbursement, the grantee will have three months to submit evidence of completed purchase and payment for eligible FFE purchased with the second disbursement.
Fees	<p>Due to the availability of other funds to cover EDA’s administrative expenses, there will be no fees for this program.</p>
Appeal Process	<p>Applicants whose applications are declined will have the right to appeal. Appeals must be filed within the timeframe set in the declination letter. For appeals based on non-discretionary declines, Director, Legal Affairs, will designate Hearing Officers who will review the applications, appeals, and any other relevant documents or information. The Hearing Officer will prepare a recommended decision, which must be approved, and a Final Administration Decision issued, by staff in accordance with delegated authority.</p> <p>For declines based on discretionary reasons, Director, Legal Affairs, will designate Hearing Officers who will review the applications, appeals, and any other relevant documents or information and prepare a Recommendation to the Board. The Board is the final decision-maker for discretionary appeals.</p>