



North Dakota Child Care Facility Improvement Grants

Introduction

HHS is pleased to offer Child Care Facility Improvement Grants, a component of the ND child care initiative, as part of the State's ongoing effort to stabilize the child care sector.

Grants will be awarded to HHS licensed family and group child care providers, child care centers, licensed preschool and school age programs. The intent is to assist existing child care businesses with facility revitalization and support you in continuing to meet licensing requirements.

Purpose

HHS Child Care Facility Improvement Grants are for facility improvements, minor renovations, related equipment and services, and costs related to meeting health, safety, and licensing needs. This grant is not for learning materials such as toys or manipulatives, it may not be used to repay loans, and cannot be used as match to other state funds.

Eligibility

Facilities must be located within North Dakota and be licensed by HHS for six or more months before applying.

Facilities that received a Start Child Care or Grow Child Care Grant in the last two years are not eligible.

If you rent or lease your space, you are eligible to apply for this grant. We strongly recommend that you discuss any needs with your property owner/manager first to ensure that:

- 1) The property owner will allow changes made to the property
- 2) If you make improvements, that the terms of the lease will not change (such as a substantial increase in rent that would force you to move) and
- 3) The property owner has no plans to sell the property within 2 years after grant award.



Minimum and Maximum Grant Size by Provider Type

Providers may apply, and grants may be awarded, for amounts less than the highest grant award levels listed below.

\$500 - \$20,000 HHS Licensed Center (75 or more children)

\$500 - \$10,000 HHS Licensed Center (up to 74 children)

\$500 - \$5,000 HHS Licensed Family, Group, Preschool or School Age Program

*HHS reserves the right to award up to 25% more to programs as emergency relief for flood, fire or other natural disaster resulting in facility damage.

HHS has a total of \$1 Million available for these grants which will be processed on a first come first served basis; however, HHS intends to serve a wide range of program types across the state and is reserving approximately 30% for each tier.

Eligible Uses of Funds

All requests to replace items in the facility need to be for like items - upgrades cannot be made with these funds unless required by a licensor, fire marshal or other regulatory authority.

If your child care program is an HHS licensed Family Child Care or Group Child Care in a Home, you may request up to 50% of the estimated cost of specific item(s) in your funding proposal/worksheet. These categories are identified with this icon. 

You are required to list the estimated cost of any purchases and expected labor costs.

If you wish to have the cost of assembly and/or installation covered by a grant, the labor must be performed by a professional following applicable state and local laws. This should be included in your estimate. You are allowed to inkind "do-it-yourself" assembly or installation; however, these costs cannot be included in your grant.

Eligible Improvements

*For more detail on eligible improvements see the facility improvement grant worksheet

Abatement

Reducing or eliminating asbestos, lead, mold or radon

Asphalt/Concrete/Driveway/Parking Lot/Patio/Sidewalk

Fill of minor cracks and/or potholes, mudjacking or grinding tripping hazards

Decks/Porches/Patios

Add additional protective spindles/panels on deck if spaces too far apart, adding stairs where none exist if needed as a fire exit

Egress Windows

Convert existing window to egress window for easier escape; add stairs and rails to access fire escape or egress more easily

Appliances and HVAC

Purchase or repair of refrigerator, freezer, stove, dishwasher, microwave, water cooler, washer, dryer, humidifier, dehumidifier, air purifier, furnace, air conditioner, water heater, heat pump, gas boiler, bipolar ionization and reverse osmosis.

Bathrooms

Adding child sized toilets, sinks; vanity. Repair of damaged items in bathroom used by child care program

Doors

Repair/replace damaged internal door or external door and/or screen/storm door. Replacing door between house and garage to meet fire code.

Fences

Purchase or repair fence that is functionally designed for child safety in the child care play space and/or around pools/water sources

Ceilings and Internal Walls

Repair/replace drywall or ceiling tiles to repair damage in child care program space; including paint, and paint supplies

Drain Tile/External Drainage

Install drain tile and/or sump pump for health/safety of child care program area.

Eligible Improvements

Fire Escape and Exits

Adding or replacing damaged fire escape ladder, adding or minor repair of wood steps for fire exit, adding handrails on steps where none previously existed and enclosing stair risers if more than three steps are required.



Fire Suppression/ Hazard Detection Alarms

Adding or replacing lead content detector, fire, radon, carbon monoxide or sump pump alarms and fire extinguishers; repairing/installing an indoor sprinkler/fire suppression system within the child care program area when required by Fire Marshall

Fireplaces/Heat Sources

Installing screens/covers or partitions to protect children from fireplaces, heaters and/or wood burning stoves

Flooring

Adding or replacing permanent floor covering due to damage in areas where children are regularly present, interior concrete sealing in licensed space

Furniture/furnishings

Child care program furniture (cribs, crib mattresses, pack-n-plays, cots, changing tables, child sized tables and chairs, shelves/cabinets, cubbies, high chairs, portable sinks, etc.)



Eligible Improvements

Natural Playscapes

Enhancing the natural landscape and vegetation to bring nature to children's daily outdoor play and learning environment.

For ideas, visit:

<https://rustykeeler.com/inspiration/>



Outdoor Shade

Adding or replacing outdoor shade canopy in the playground area

Panels

Adding or replacing permanent separation panels; sound-proofing acoustic panels

Plumbing

Repair or replace leaking pipes or drainage issues

Roofing

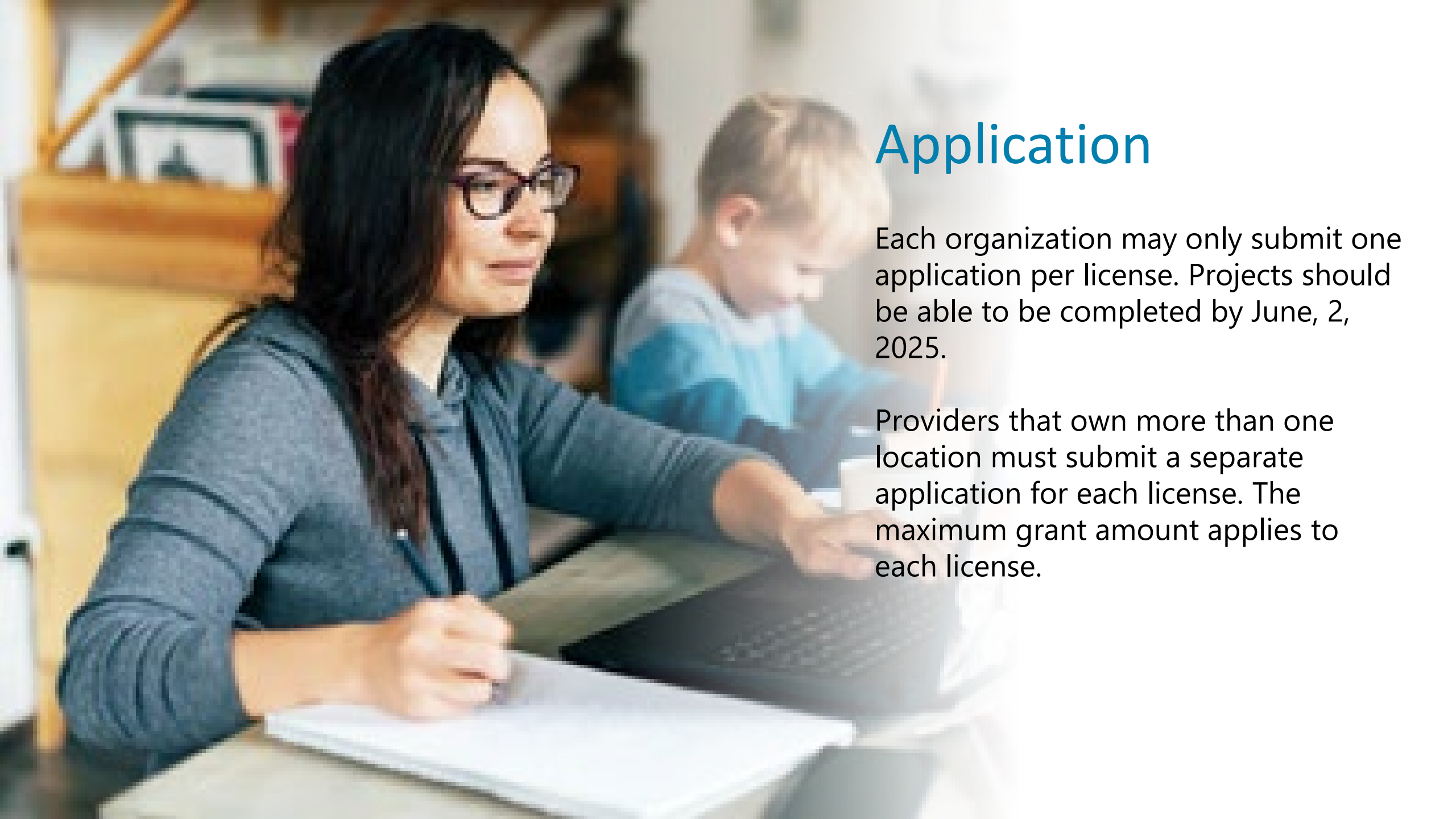
Repair roof to address leaking and mold. Repair of gutters and downspouts

Security/Camera Systems

Adding or replacing building security systems; does not include monthly subscription

Storage Sheds

Purchase small prefabricated storage sheds or resin shed kits that do not require tools for assemble, dedicated to child care program for outdoor equipment, no larger than 120 square feet (10x12)



Application

Each organization may only submit one application per license. Projects should be able to be completed by June, 2, 2025.

Providers that own more than one location must submit a separate application for each license. The maximum grant amount applies to each license.

Application Process

The Facility Improvement Grant application can be found in your Registry Organization (Growing Futures)- Quality Dashboard. You will need to complete and upload required documents and photos into the application.

- Facility Improvement Grant Worksheet
- Facility Improvement Grant Acknowledgement Form
- Before pictures of items you intend to repair or replace, if adding new items, pictures of where these items will be added.

Grant information and forms can be found at <https://www.hhs.nd.gov/cfs/early-childhood-services/child-care-program-grants>

FACILITY IMPROVEMENT GRANT – Acknowledgement Form
 NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
 EARLY CHILDHOOD SECTION

Clear Fields

Contact Name
Growing Futures Organization Name
Organization ID

FACILITY IMPROVEMENT GRANT WORKSHEET
 NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
 EARLY CHILDHOOD SECTION

Clear Fields

Facility Improver
All projects must

Portion of Expense
If your organization is requesting 50% or more of the total project cost, you must use the following criteria:

My program
 My program

Contact Name
Growing Futures Organization Name
Organization ID

Minimum and Maximum Grant Size by Provider Type:
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Pairing Facility:
You cannot use grant funds to repay a loan.

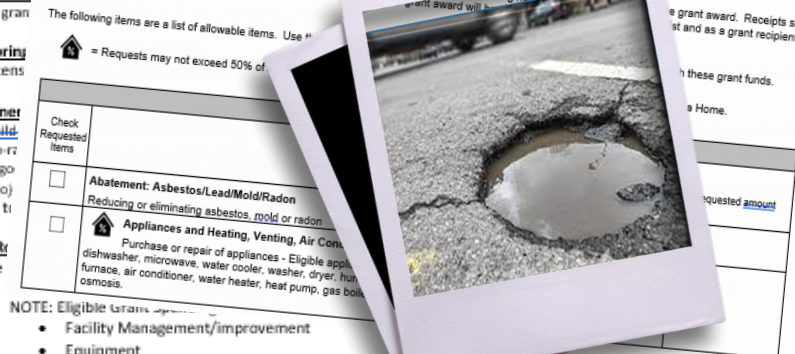
Flex Spending:
It is permissible to use grant funds for other purposes if approved by the grant administrator.

Spend ONLY!
Unused grant funds will be returned to the grantor.

Monitoring:
Your license is required to receive grant funds.

Repayment:
If the child care provider is the grant recipient, you must repay the grant within 90 days of the grant award.

Grant Reporting:
You are required to submit a final report to the grant administrator within 90 days of the grant award.



- NOTE:** Eligible items are:
- Facility Management/Improvement
 - Equipment
 - Health and Safety Products and Services
- Actual dollar amounts spent are entered for each applicable category. Grant Spending Categories are available in your organization account approximately 90 days after your grant has been approved.
- Complete a final report available on the HHS website and upload the document into your Growing Futures Organization Account Document Vault.
 - Upload into your Growing Futures Organization Account Document Vault receipts that show the items and/or services purchased are paid in full, with photo documentation showing before and after pictures of your project.

Expending Your Grant Funds

Flex spending of grant funds

It is permissible to flex spend among approved items within a grant award when one portion of a project costs less than projected and another portion of your grant award costs more. Additional grant funds will not be awarded for price increases.

Spend ONLY as approved

Unused grant funds may NOT be redirected to any item or service not approved in the grant award.

Monitoring of Facility Improvement Grant Implementation

Your licensing specialist will be monitoring for implementation of facility improvements specified in your grant application.

A note about Final Report Receipt Documentation

Receipts must demonstrate that the project has been paid in full and must be itemized. (For example, an Amazon screen shot showing the total cost of an order is not acceptable. Providers must download the invoice from their Amazon account once the order is complete.)

Receipts and paid invoices from a contractor must include the name of the vendor/business, address and phone number. The entire receipt and/or document must be submitted, photos of partial receipts will not be accepted.

Receipts/statements must show the date of ALL payments made, including any down payments.

If possible, receipts should **ONLY** include items that were approved in the award. If you submit a receipt that includes items unrelated to this grant award it may be returned to you and you may be required to submit a new receipt that includes ONLY grant award items.

⚠ Note: hand-written receipts will require additional documentation in the final report such as front/back of canceled checks. We recommend, therefore, that you do not pay in cash.

Reporting Your Grant Funds

You will receive an email 90 days after your award date requesting you to report back about how your grant dollars have been spent. You will also need to upload into your Organization Account Document Vault, a final grant report including receipts that show the items and/or services purchased are paid in full, along with pictures that show completion of your project and purchases.

Final Report elements will include:

- a. Result of funded project/items; barriers encountered in implementing grant and/or additional facility improvement needs, if any
- b. Narrative description of impact of your facility improvement grant on your child care business
- c. Itemized receipts of expenditures matching the budget submitted in application.
- d. Photo documentation

Failure to submit the final report will result in awardee being ineligible to apply for future grants. This may also impact the other payments of public funds, and/or may be investigated for fraud.

Returning Grant Funds

If the project is completed under budget you must repay any unused funds.

If your program closes within one year of project completion, grant dollars may need to be returned on a pro-rated basis.

To begin the return of funds process, please contact the Grant Admin Team at dhsecpd@nd.gov or call 701-328-2115, press 2.

Is this grant taxable?

Grant dollars are considered taxable income. Where required by IRS regulations, HHS will issue a 1099g for the grant award. Grantees should work with their tax advisors on how to calculate eligible business expense deductions when reporting the grant to the IRS for tax purposes.

Confidentiality and data privacy

When a grant application is submitted, the following is public information: name, address, license, number and ages of children served, and award amount. Individual provider information will be reported to authorities, if grant agreements are not honored and may impact your eligibility for future funding from HHS.

Records retention

All records, regardless of physical form, and the accounting practices and procedures of Awardee are subject to examination by the North Dakota State Auditor or the Auditor's designee. Awardee shall maintain all records for at least six years following completion of this grant and be able to provide them at any reasonable time. State, State Auditor, or Auditor's designee shall provide reasonable notice.

Still have questions?

We are here to help.

Call: 701-328-2115, press 2

Email: dhsecpd@nd.gov

<https://www.hhs.nd.gov/cfs/early-childhood-services>

