

Frequently-Asked Questions for COVID-19 Child Care Operational Relief Grants

Updated 8/18/2020

***NEW QUESTIONS are in Brown**

ELIGIBILITY-RELATED QUESTIONS

1. Am I eligible if I run a summer camp and will not be providing child care in the fall?

You are eligible if:

- Your camp was open during the summer of 2020, and
- You are typically only open in the summer.

If this applies to you, you may apply for losses and expenses for the months you were open.

2. I usually provide year-round or school-year services but have closed and will not reopen by September 8th. Am I eligible to apply?

No. If you typically provide year-round or school-year services, you must be providing care by September 8th to be eligible.

3. My program is operated by a public school, are we eligible to apply?

Yes, but expenses must:

- Be specific to preschool or afterschool care, and
- Not be covered by another funding source.

4. I operate a dance program for children after school, am I eligible to apply?

You are eligible if you provide child care services, including preschool and school age care (i.e., afterschool care) on a regular, ongoing basis.

5. My program is located in New Hampshire, but it also serves Vermont children. Am I eligible to apply?

No. This grant is limited to child care, summer day camps and after school programs located in Vermont.

6. None of the families enrolled in my program are ready to come back to care. That is why I will not be open by September 8th? Can I still apply?

If you typically provide year-round or school-year care, you must be open by September 8th to

be eligible. If you have openings for children, call your local child care support agency so they can refer to families looking for care (<https://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/cccsa>).

7. What happens if I am not able to access my space until after September 8th?

Programs must open before or by September 8th to be eligible. If your program is regulated by the Child Development Division, it is important to contact the Licensor on Duty as soon as possible to explore the options to apply for a variance in an alternative location.

8. I am an art therapist in private practice in our state and had to close my direct service office that provided trauma informed assessment, evaluation and treatment for children and families. I have lost significant income and need Capitol funds as I am reinvesting in producing services virtually. Would I be eligible to apply for grant funds to continue to serve children and families?

No, these funds are available to programs that provide child care options to families.

9. The webinar is at a time that I am not available, is it required for me to apply for the grant?

The informational webinar on Tuesday, August 11th is an optional opportunity to find out information about the grant process. You are not required to attend or watch the recording. A recording will be available after the webinar and will be posted on our website <https://dcf.vermont.gov/covid19-relief-grants/cc-programs>

10. Are municipal summer camps and child care programs eligible for these grants?

Yes, summer camps and child care programs are eligible for these grants.

11. Why are unregulated child care programs eligible for this grant?

The state legislation was for all child care, summer camp and afterschool programs. Many programs that are not required to be regulated have experienced losses or additional expenses due to COVID-19.

12. Can I apply for this grant if I received PPP and stabilization support?

You may be eligible for this grant opportunity if you have any losses or expenses that are not covered by any other funding source, including but not limited to the PPP or stabilization program. It is important for programs/providers to self-assess the grant and loan opportunities and determine what applications make sense in their situation. We will not be able to assess that for you.

13.If a program received "re-opening" funds earlier this spring are they still eligible to submit a request through this program? If so, do programs that did not receive earlier re-opening money get priority in this program?

You may be eligible for this grant opportunity if you have any losses or expenses that are not covered by any other funding source, including but not limited to the stabilization program or Restart Stipends. It is important for programs/providers to self-assess the grant and loan opportunities and determine what applications make sense in their situation. We will not be able to assess that for you.

All programs will be determined for eligible losses and expenses, and determinations will be made based on all eligible application. One type of program does not have priority over another type of program.

14.Do we need to be open for in person to be eligible for this grant or can we providing remote programming only?

These grant funds are specific for programs that are or will be providing in-person child care options by September 8th. Programs that only provide remote programming are not eligible.

15.If I am opening ON September 8th, am I eligible?

Yes, if you have expenses or income losses that are:

- Related to COVID-19
- Incurred or anticipated — from March 1, 2020 to October 31, 2020.
- Not covered by another funding source.

16.Some providers are saying that if we received any other grants, we do not qualify for this grant. Is this true?

- No, you may use this grant application to apply for any expenses or losses related to COVID-19, as long as they are not covered by any other funding source.

17.Is there any entity that would not be eligible or would be considered less competitive?

Example: municipalities that provide summer camps and afterschool programs.

All programs applying must meet the eligibility requirements of:

- Be a child care provider/program, summer day camp, or afterschool program. You may be licensed or unlicensed. Overnight camps are not eligible.
- Be open now, for summer day camp, or by September 8, 2020.
- Be located in Vermont and serving Vermont children.
- Have eligible income losses and/or expenses.

All eligible programs will be equally considered for grant funds.

18.Are child care, summer camps, or afterschool programs operated by religious organization eligible?

Yes, if you had expenses or losses that are:

- Related to COVID-19.

- Incurred or anticipated — from March 1, 2020 to October 31, 2020.
- Not covered by another funding source.

19.If I received a grant earlier this year to reopen my camp, can I still apply for this grant? I will be restarting my afterschool program which will include school time options so working parents can work.

If your program is opening by September 8th, has expenses that are above normal expenses and the expenses are not covered by any other funds you may be eligible.

20.I am a legally exempt provider, the parent of the child I care for was laid off in March, and she just started working. Am I eligible for losses?

Individuals and programs that provide child care services, and lost income/served less children due to COVID-19 may be eligible for income losses in this grant. It is important to document the losses and how they are related to COVID-19. Some examples of how to do this are suggested in the application related questions in this document.

21.I am a registered family child care home provider, am I eligible to apply?

Yes, child care programs, summer camps and afterschool programs that provide regular child care services are eligible if they have expenses or income losses related to COVID-19 that are not covered by another fund.

22.After I open, do I need to operate every day?

Programs must be available for child care services to be eligible. However, if you need to operate a reduced schedule or hours for a short period of time you will still be eligible to apply. This funding is intended to be time limited and be a bridge for programs to become sustainable on their own. Programs are encouraged to build up to operate at the days and hours they operated prior to COVID-19 or some other schedule of operation that they can sustain as their business model without state or federal support, and actively advertise spaces to fill them with interested families.

APPLICATION-RELATED QUESTIONS

23.How do I apply?

The application is online at <https://appengine.egov.com/apps/vt/DCF/relief-grants>. If you do not have internet access, call (802) 241-0151 and leave us a message to let us know. You can also email us at AHS.DCFOperationalReliefGrant@vermont.gov.

24.Do I need receipts for all my expenses?

Yes you do. When you complete the application, you will have to provide documents that verify expenses incurred in March through July. For example: receipts/paid invoices that list the items purchased and payroll documents. The [Expenses Worksheet](#) can help you itemize these.

In early November, you will do the same for expenses incurred in August through October.

25. How do I document lost tuition income due to caring for fewer children?

There are several ways you could document lost income due to COVID-19. Some examples are:

- Provide copies of profit and loss statements for the current and past year showing monthly income received before COVID-19 and current monthly income. Profit and loss statements should show a comparison of similar time periods.
- Provide documents showing pre COVID-19 enrollment, current enrollment, and tuition rates.
- Complete the [Income Losses Worksheet](#).
- Use the [Calculating Income Losses worksheet](#) to calculate tuition losses. If you use this, [read these instructions](#).

These are only examples. You may use other ways to document your lost revenue. When you apply, you must upload a document that shows how you calculated your losses and any supporting documents.

26. Can I request money for other income losses?

Yes, any income lost related to COVID-19 may be requested but must be documented.

27. How is this grant opportunity different from the restart stipends and stabilization program?

This is a competitive grant process. You need to submit documentation of your losses and expenses related to COVID and not covered by other funding sources. Applications will be reviewed and determined after the deadline. Questions will be answered in writing and will be added to our Frequently Asked Questions document on the public website to ensure that information is available to all applicants. This document will be updated with new questions and answers daily.

28. What is a competitive grant process? Does that mean I am competing against my friend for the money?

A competitive grant is a name for a formal process that ensures it is a fair and equal opportunity for all applicants. Multiple applicants will receive awards under this grant application applicants are not competing against each other, and if there are not enough funds to cover [eligible](#) grants, a process will be used to determine how to apply funds equitably to approved grant applications.

29. Am I guaranteed to receive the funds I requested?

No. This is a competitive grant process. Not all requests will be awarded. It is your responsibility to make sure your application is complete, accurate, and received on time. Submitting early will not affect the outcome.

30. How much will my grant award be?

If you get a grant, the amount will depend on the:

- Documentation of eligible expenses and losses.
- Availability of funds.

31. When will I find out if I am getting a grant?

You will be notified by email by mid-September. If you are awarded a grant for:

Incurred expenses/losses	You will receive funds by early October. It might take a bit longer if you have not received a payment from us recently.
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Anticipated expenses/losses	You will be asked to send us an invoice and supporting documents for all approved expenses/losses in early November.
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32. How do I find the amount of funds I received from Child Care Financial Assistance?

Payments are made through the Bright Futures Information System (BFIS). You can log onto your BFIS program account to see the payments you received on behalf of families.

33. What do you mean by pre COVID-19 enrollment?

It means the number of children you typically cared for in February 2020. You may include slots that were actively open for enrollment. If you use the example [Income Losses Worksheet](#), you will use pre COVID-19 and current enrollment to calculate tuition lost if you have lower enrollment.

34. What happens if I forgot something when I submitted my application? Can I provide more information later?

It is important to submit a correct and complete application the first time. You will not be able to submit another application or modify your application later. Only one application will be accepted per program.

35. I own more than one licensed site. Can I submit one application for all my sites?

No. Please complete one application per license or site.

36. Who do I call for help with the application?

You can email AHS.DCFOperationalReliefGrant@vermont.gov with your question. Or you can call (802) 241-0151 and leave a message with your questions, name, and email address. You will get a response within one to two business days. Questions will be answered in writing and will be added to our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document on the public website to ensure that information is available to all applicants. This document will be updated with new questions and answers daily. Questions will be accepted through August 14, 2020.

37. What if I need technical assistance to set up an account or complete the application?

Email AHS.DCFOperationalReliefGrant@vermont.gov with your issue.

38.How will I know my application was received?

You will receive an automated email confirming that your application was received. You will also get a copy of what you submitted.

39.If I have applied for PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) funding and have not received approval or an award, how do I reflect this in my Operational Relief Grant application?

Include the PPP funding amount that you applied for in your grant application, along with documentation that the income is pending. The review team will consider this and will reach out with any questions.

40.Why can I only apply for expenses or losses through October 31, 2020?

The federal government requires that the state spends the money and submits the required reports by December 30th. The October 31st deadline ensure that programs have time to send receipts and documentation for reimbursement in November, and receive the funds awarded.

41.I own multiple licensed sites can I apply for each of the sites?

Yes. Complete one site application at a time. Once you have completed and submitted the application, you can click on the link from the website: <https://dcf.vermont.gov/covid19-relief-grants/cc-programs> and apply for another site.

42.If I only have losses or expenses in one classroom, do I need to apply for my entire program? Or can I just apply for that classroom?

When calculating your losses and expenses you need to consider your program in its entirety. You may only apply for the losses and/or expenses you have documented. Therefore, if your program is experiencing more income or less expenses in one area that compensates for the losses or expenses in another area it is important to only apply for the overall loss or expense for that site. Remember, only one application may be submitted per site.

43.Will the date requirements change for the grant program?

No. The deadline for questions and the application will remain the same. In addition, the date programs are required to open will remain September 8th.

44.From first glance, the application for the Grants seems that it will require a lot of work to provide the rigorous backup of funds needed. The application is not standardized, and I can see that there will be as many variations as there are applicants. How will CDD manage to effectively consider these applications in a timely manner and provide the funds by September 11?

The Department for Children and Families has developed a process to review documentation for grant applications. The application is a standard application; however, the Department has allowed for flexibility in the documentation types to allow for the variety of business models.

45. We run 7 sites, one of which is licensed. Do we use our license number on the application? Is there a place to explain that the number applies to only one site?

Please complete one application per license or site, the license number will be considered the information needed to demonstrate what license/site for the expenses/losses apply.

46. Can an agency apply for more than one COVID relief fund such as PCC operational relief and child care restart funds?

Yes. Child care programs, Parent Child Centers and CIS fiscal agents each has a separate application and you must complete a separate application for each type of program.

47. We operate licensed sites and unlicensed sites. Can we submit an application for each site?

Yes, please complete one application per site.

48. It seems like most of the application is budget and calculating figures, are there questions that require explanation (beyond the possible structure changes)?

Please respond to each question accordingly.

49. If I want to only apply for anticipated income losses and/or expenses do I need to complete the information for March through July in the application?

No, you are only required to complete the sections of the application related to your requests.

EXPENSE/LOSS-RELATED QUESTIONS

50. What is meant by “income losses”?

This could be that:

- You did not receive tuition payments from all families due to the closure, or
- Your income from another source went down.

Remember that you cannot claim a loss covered by another funding source. For example: if you participated in the Child Care Stabilization Program, you cannot ask for tuition that has been already paid by the state and/or co-pays paid by families.

51. What if I had to hire additional staff?

Additional staff hired due to COVID-19 may be covered by this grant.

52. Can I get the money before I purchase the materials/hire the staff?

This grant is only able to reimburse costs. There will be two payment periods:

- October - for expenses and losses incurred from March through July 2020.
- November - for expenses and losses incurred between August and October 2020.

53. My expenses have not changed from before COVID-19, can I apply for help with expenses?

No. This grant only covers expenses that are:

- Over and above what you would typically spend,
- Related to COVID-19, and
- Not covered by another funding source.

54. What are examples of expenses that might be eligible under this grant?

- Prevention (e.g., cleaning supplies, hand sanitizer, facial coverings & gloves for staff).
- Structural changes needed to meet health guidance (e.g., plexiglass partition or wall).
- Bulk materials to eliminate sharing (e.g., toys, books, crayons, markers, pens).
- Additional staff wages/contractor costs (e.g., cleaning staff, staff to help with outside drop off, staff needed because of smaller class sizes).

Remember that all expenses you claim must be over and above what you would normally pay for those items or services. For example, if you:

- Would normally pay \$1,000 a month for cleaning services, and
- Now pay \$1,500 a month because of COVID-19 related guidelines

You may claim \$500 a month in expenses if this expense is not/will not be covered by another funding source.

55. What if I over estimate my expenses or losses? Do I need to pay the funds back?

You will be required to submit documentation for all expenses and/or losses and will be only reimbursed for actual expenses.

56. Can I apply for funds to purchase iPads or other technology to support remote learning or telehealth for children in my program?

Materials or equipment that you require to provide services that are different because of COVID-19 may be eligible expenses. It is important to document the purpose for the equipment or materials and how the need is specific to COVID-19.

57. I received a PPP loan which covers most of my expenses, should I still apply?

It is important for programs/providers to self-assess the grant and loan opportunities and determine what applications make sense in their situation. We will not be able to assess that for you.

You may only apply using this grant opportunity for any losses or expenses that are not covered by any other funding source

58. Do we need to claim the incentive and supplemental, restart grant money that we received in the March-June payments as our income on this grant application? If we do claim that as income it would be impossible to show what we had lost in income from children leaving as the state was supplementing that at that time. (And continued for some families through July 3).

Yes, you must include all funds you received during the time you are claiming losses or expenses. The Child Care Stabilization and Essential Person program and the Restart Stipend are funds that should be included. Losses and expenses are only eligible if they were not covered by another funding source. If your loss was covered by the stabilization and essential person program, restart stipend and Child Care Financial Assistance, it is not eligible under this grant. You may apply for any anticipated losses that will not be covered by any other funds.

59. Would a program who was anticipating opening before or during COVID be eligible? If so, what types of documentation would be required? Would rent be covered?

The only requirement is that the program be open prior to or on September 8th. Programs that opened for the first time during the COVID-19 response period are eligible for the grant. Only expenses and losses related to COVID-19 are eligible for these funds. Rent would only be eligible if there was an additional rental cost specific to COVID-19, and only the portion that was specific to COVID-19 may be eligible.

60. If you submit the Income Losses Worksheet do you also have to submit a profit and loss statement?

Not necessarily. If the Income Losses Worksheet documents all your losses clearly, you do not need to submit another document. However, if you have additional losses beyond tuition, you may need to also submit profit and loss statements, or other documentation that demonstrates those losses.

61. Do I understand correctly that these funds can cover anticipated costs (based on estimate/quote) so long as the work is completed prior to 10/30. Meaning that we do not have to apply for a loan and use this as reimbursement.

Requests for anticipated expenses will receive an award letter for eligible expenses determined by the review team. Funds on anticipated expenses will be dispersed after a receipt for the

actual allowable expenses are submitted in November.

62. We have a 21CCLC grant, but the amount does not cover extra COVID-related costs. Do we include the amount we receive from 21CCLC?

Yes, you must include all income sources.

63. Are we requesting an amount? Or is the thought that the request is for all lost revenue and all increased costs?

You must determine the amount you are requesting for each month. All requests must be related to COVID-19, not be covered by another funding source, and be documented.

64. When figuring out "anticipated losses" specific to loss of income, what will the accountability piece look like at the end? When we anticipate losses, and share that number on the application, there is a chance that those spaces could be filled after receiving funding which would affect the projected figures, we shared with you originally.

Programs requesting anticipated losses and expenses will be required to submit documentation of actual losses/expenses in November. Only actual eligible expenses/losses that are documented will be reimbursed.

65. Why are ACT 166 funds and Child Care Financial Assistance as "funds we've received or anticipate receiving to help cover income losses and expenses related to COVID-19", when they are funds we would have received without COVID and are funds we require to simply pay our staff?

These funds were paid to cover tuition for families and would cover the potential income losses for families that are not able to attend. Any tuition covered by these funds is not eligible, because they are covered by other funds. We are asking for information on these funds as part of the review process.

66. Would the cost of health insurance, if it was not already provided by employers pre-COVID, be considered a COVID-related expense?

Typically increasing benefits to regular staff is not a COVID related expense and would not be eligible. However, if you have documentation that this is an expense that is directly related to COVID you may submit documentation for this expense.

67. Hiring and retaining staff is such a huge challenge for so many programs right now. Would this grant cover additional expenses to offer hiring bonuses for staff hired before 10/31, or for retention bonuses for employees who choose to stay with a program?

These grants are funded using the Coronavirus Relief Fund. Bonuses for staff are not an allowable expense under the Coronavirus Relief Fund Guidance for State, Territorial, Local, and Tribal Governments, updated June 30, 2020.

68. What if we do not know how our after school program will work for the fall as we are waiting for our district to come up with a plan. We have two After school programs, one at our center and one at the school. We are not sure that we will have access to the school and are waiting for guidance on this. How do we plan and apply for this with not knowing these details?

Programs may submit for anticipated expenses based on your plan. If that plan changes due to school changes, the reimbursement documentation that you submit in November for actual expenses will reflect this. It is important to open by September 8th to be eligible for this grant. If you are not able to open your program for child care services by September 8th, you will not be eligible.

69. Will we be able to claim the loss of our annual fundraiser that we were not able to hold? If so, what documentation would be required?

According to the Coronavirus Relief Fund Guidance for State, Territorial, Local, and Tribal Governments Updated June 30, 2020, for a cost to be considered to have been incurred, performance or delivery must occur during the covered period. A cancelled fundraising event was not performed or delivered, as it never happened, and is not eligible as an income loss.

70. Are there questions about the size of our program-- number of children and staff we have, to help understand payroll costs, additional staffing needs, tuition losses, etc.?

Programs that are requesting funds for tuition losses must document the tuition, including, for example, information about number of children served in the past and the number currently served. The same is true for any additional payroll costs or staffing needs.

71. We sustained losses over the summer, because COVID meant that we had half the number of kids each week. However, to run the school-year program, we are going to need to do some infrastructure work, which ultimately is more important. Should we not include the losses on the application?

Applicants must evaluate what funding requests to submit.

72. How do I report that my expenses/losses were not covered by the Restart Stipend?

This grant opportunity is for expenses and/or losses that are not covered by another other funding. If you received a Restart Stipend, you would not include the expenses or income loss that stipend covered in your request. The supporting documentation will need to show how the requested expenses/losses were not covered by other funds. Applicants will also attest that expenses/losses requested are not covered by other funds in the application.

73. I did lose income from the COVID-19, but I also stayed open, so I received essential person incentives which made up for some of my loss. Do I need to include the incentives I received as income?

Yes, you do need to include all incentive income in your application, and you are only eligible to apply for losses or expenses that were not covered by any other funds, including incentives.

74. How does a new child care program prove the need for operational support when you were in the growth stage prior to COVID19?

Programs that are new may be eligible for expenses that are increased due to COVID-19. For example, increased cost in supplies or materials that are not covered by other funds.

75. How do we document that PPP funds have not been forgiven and are a current liability?

If your PPP fund was not forgiven and is now a loan, you may provide that documentation in the expenses section.

76. I'm a new program and I received a MWFK's grant and a Building Bright Spaces grant for open a new program, now the expenses and impact of COVID have had an impact on my budget, especially staffing and enrollment, and opening on time. since that funding was not related to COVID, can I still apply?

Expenses and income losses must be related to COVID-19 and not covered by any other funding source, including those that are not related to COVID.

Capital Expenses

77. Can you please describe what capital expenses are eligible under this grant?

There are different types of capital costs. Capital costs could be for improvements to your building or space, for example structural changes, or they could be purchasing assets, such as furniture.

Capital costs for structural improvements: Capital improvement projects are generally not eligible expenses under this grant. Capital improvement projects that are necessary to comply with the VDH health care guidance for child care guidance, and cannot be met with other non-capital alternatives, such as alternating times on the playground, may be considered as a possible expense. It is important to document the necessity of any requested capital expenses to mitigate COVID-19 impacts compared to available noncapital alternatives; and document how this capital expense increased your programs capacity to respond to the COVID-related child care needs.

Capital costs for assets: Purchases of assets, such as cubbies, or furniture may be an eligible expense if:

- The asset is required to meet the Vermont Department of Health guidance for child care programs,
- The health guidance cannot be met in another way that does not require assets purchased; and
- Increases the program's capacity to respond to the COVID-related child care needs.

78.Can I apply for funds to make renovations to my building or house to comply with the COVID-19 Health Guidance?

Capital improvement projects, such as renovations, may be eligible expenses if they are necessary to comply with the Vermont Department of Health guidance for child care programs. You must include documentation that the project is necessary and cannot be accomplished with an alternative non capital approach. The project must be completed, and payment made on the project prior to the end of the grant period of October 31, 2020.

79.Can this grant be used for refinishing a damaged/cracked from this winter black top area of the playground and additional tire mulch to expand the climbing area for additional outside play time recommendations at a center based childcare/preschool program?

No, Capital improvement projects are generally not eligible expenses under this grant. Capital improvement projects that are necessary to comply with the VDH health care guidance for child care guidance, and cannot be met with other non-capital alternatives, such as alternating times on the playground, may be considered as a possible expense. It is important to document the necessity of any requested capital expenses to mitigate COVID-19 impacts compared to available noncapital alternatives; and document how this capital expense increased your programs capacity to respond to the COVID-related child care needs.

80.What is the definition of capital expenditure?

A capital expenditure is money spent acquiring or maintaining fixed assets, such as land, buildings, and equipment.

81.Can this grant be used to build a structure to protect children from weather since we are moving most of our activities outdoors to prevent the spread of COVID? Example we bought pop up tents for summer use to protect from rain and sun. Can we use the grant money to build a strong, permanent structure/cover such as a lean-to to protect us from the winter weather?

Capital improvement projects are generally not eligible expenses under this grant. Capital improvement projects that are necessary to comply with the VDH health care guidance for child care guidance, and cannot be met with other non-capital alternatives, such as alternating times on the playground, may be considered as a possible expense. It is important to document the necessity of any requested capital expenses to mitigate COVID-19 impacts compared to available noncapital alternatives; and document how this capital expense increased your programs capacity to respond to the COVID-related child care needs.

82.We have changed the way that children enter our building and store their personal belongings to limit exposure of groups. We want to build cubbies to ensure they do not have all materials for all children in one location. Is this a qualifying expense?

Purchases of assets, such as cubbies, or furniture may be an eligible expense if:

- The asset is required to meet the Vermont Department of Health guidance for child care programs,
- The health guidance cannot be met in another way that does not require assets purchased; and
- Increases the program’s capacity to respond to the COVID-related child care needs.

83. We are creating an outdoor classroom to stay outside as much as possible. Would materials or equipment to create outdoor spaces reimbursable?

Purchases of assets, such as cubbies, or furniture may be an eligible expense if:

- The asset is required to meet the Vermont Department of Health guidance for child care programs,
- The health guidance cannot be met in another way that does not require assets purchased; and
- Increases the program’s capacity to respond to the COVID-related child care needs.

84. If we painted all our space/ furniture during the time we were closed March - June would this be an eligible expense?

No, Capital improvement projects are generally not eligible expenses under this grant. Capital improvement projects that are necessary to comply with the VDH health care guidance for child care guidance, and cannot be met with other non-capital alternatives, such as alternating times on the playground, may be considered as a possible expense. It is important to document the necessity of any requested capital expenses to mitigate COVID-19 impacts compared to available noncapital alternatives; and document how this capital expense increased your programs capacity to respond to the COVID-related child care needs.

Enrollment and Tuition Loss Questions

85. Can you please explain what income losses for tuition may be eligible?

The following types of tuition losses may be eligible for income loss under this grant opportunity:

- Tuition losses during the closure period for infants - school age children are eligible income losses if they have not been previously covered by another funding source and to the extent that they were not mitigated (such as through staff layoff).
- Tuition losses from June 1, 2020 – September 7, 2020 may be eligible income losses if your program was open and/or available to provide care. This means you were either providing child care or were actively seeking to fill the space. Actively seeking to fill the space includes but is not limited to actively working with your community child care referral specialist to receive referrals.
- Tuition losses from June 1, 2020 through October 31st may be eligible income losses if the program was actively working to fill the space, even temporarily. This can be shown by seeking enrollment through your waitlist, actively advertising the space, and working with

their community child care referral specialist to receive referrals of families looking for child care.

86. I have decided to serve fewer children than before COVID-19 even though I could serve more according to the health guidelines. Can I request tuition lost for the spaces I am not filling at this time?

You cannot request tuition lost as a result of choosing to serve fewer children. You may request grant funds for additional expenses specific to the children you are serving.

87. Can I request tuition lost when I am restricted in the number of children, I can serve by the Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 Health Guidance for Child Care Programs?

Yes. Document the number of children that you served or were recruiting to serve prior to COVID-19, and the tuition lost due to the limited number of children served.

88. I am a registered family child care home provider, should I apply for the income losses I will experience if I cannot take my 4 school age children full time and families decide not to use my care?

If families choose not to use your care, and you served or were willing to serve 4 school age children prior to COVID19, you may be eligible for applying for any income losses you experience due to this loss. If you have openings for children, call your local child care support agency to so they can refer of families looking for care (<https://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/cccsa>). Please refer to the Governor's order for allowable children during remote learning: <https://governor.vermont.gov/content/addendum-4-amended-and-restated-executive-order-01-20>

89. I had a family of two pull from care on June 1 because mom has health issues and was concerned of exposure for her children while in care. I have not been able to fill as of today. Can this be claimed as a loss of income?

Yes, a loss of tuition due to a child withdrawing and inability to fill the slot may be an eligible income loss. Programs should be utilizing their waitlist and working with their child care referral specialists to actively fill empty slots (<https://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/cccsa>). Programs who have chosen to operate at a limited capacity, after September 8, due to COVID may not seek tuition losses for slots that they do not intend to fill.

90. I have a family whose child is currently enrolled, and mother is being induced next week. This family is contemplating pulling their currently enrolled child and not enrolling the baby in 6 weeks as planned. Is this considered a loss of income and claimable for the currently enrolled child and the expected enrolled child?

Yes, a loss of tuition due to a child withdrawing and inability to fill the slot may be an eligible income loss. Programs should be utilizing their waitlist and working with their child care referral specialists to actively fill empty slots (<https://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/cccsa>). Programs who have chosen to operate at a limited capacity, after September 8, due to COVID may not seek tuition losses for slots that they do not intend to fill.

91. I am a Registered Family Child Care Home provider, can I claim income losses for the school age children enrolled in my program during the COVID-19 closure?

Tuition losses during the closure period for infants - school age children are eligible income losses if they have not been previously covered by another funding source and to the extent that they were not mitigated (such as through staff layoff).

92. Would I be eligible for income losses for a family that indicated they wanted a space in my program, but now are unable or unwilling to come right now due to COVID-19? They would like to keep their space for their child.

No, tuition losses from June 1, 2020 through October 31st may be eligible income losses if the program was actively working to fill the space, even temporarily. This includes advertising the space, and working with their community child care referral specialist to receive referrals of families looking for child care.

93. I have decided to keep exposure to a minimum and am not taking my school kids until a vaccine comes out that is safe is this also eligible as loss of income.

No. Tuition losses from June 1, 2020 through October 31st may be eligible income losses if the program was actively working to fill the space, even temporarily. This includes advertising the space, and working with their community child care referral specialist to receive referrals of families looking for child care. You must be providing the child care, or willing to provide the child care, and actively seeking to fill empty slots to be considered for income losses for lost tuition.

94. I cut back the hours/days I provided care to accommodate my own or staff needs. Am I eligible to claim income losses for the days/hours for which I did not provide care and did not charge families?

No. Tuition losses from June 1, 2020 – September 7, 2020 may be eligible income losses if your program was open and/or available to provide care. This means you were either providing child care or were actively seeking to fill the space. Actively seeking to fill the space includes but is not limited to actively working with your community child care referral specialist to receive referrals.

Tuition losses from June 1, 2020 through October 31st may be eligible income losses if the program was actively working to fill the space, even temporarily. This includes advertising the

space, and working with their community child care referral specialist to receive referrals of families looking for child care.

95. Am I eligible to apply for the income losses my program had for school age children that did not attend, pay tuition, or unenrolled, even if I received the Child Care Stabilization Program payments?

Tuition losses during the closure period for infants - school age children are eligible income losses if they have not been previously covered by another funding source and to the extent that they were not mitigated (such as through staff layoff).

96. For pre-COVID enrollment numbers, can we use last year's (2019) enrollment for comparison? For our summer camps, we do not have pre-COVID numbers from February 2020 that are comparable.

The examples offered in the FAQ are examples. You may submit documentation that demonstrates your enrollment that fits your program.

97. If we have a licensed summer camp at one location which will also be the same site for an afterschool program in the fall, can we put this all in the same application? (both providing school-age care under same license - just different seasons)

If the care is being provided under one license, submit only one application per license. In this scenario submit one application that includes both summer care and school year care that falls under the same license.

98. I am operating a new program, because I do not have comparison data from a year ago for pre-COVID, can I take an average of my income from Sept. 2019 - April 2020 and use that figure for comparison purposes?

The examples offered question 54 are examples. You may submit documentation that demonstrates your income losses that fits your program.

99. Is there a minimum amount where a receipt is not needed? The example of a \$5.99 purchase from Walmart seems that this is not the case. With large programs spending COVID related costs in the hundreds or thousands during this period this will quickly become incredibly difficult both for the applicant and the reviewer.

Receipts and documentation are required for every expense a program is requesting grants funds to cover.

100. We are starting a new program as a response effort to provide childcare and outdoor education for students on the days when they are not in the building. We are an education non-profit already running summer camps and schools, but this will be a totally new (unlicensed) program in response to the need for childcare. Are we

eligible to apply for startup funding if we are open by Sept 8th?

All programs applying must meet the eligibility requirements of:

- Be a child care provider/program, summer day camp, or afterschool program. You may be licensed or unlicensed. Overnight camps are not eligible.
- Be open now, for summer day camp, or by September 8, 2020.
- Be located in Vermont and serving Vermont children.
- Have eligible income losses and/or expenses.

101. Does payroll for planning for a new program count as an expense?

Staff salaries and other payroll expenses are not an eligible expense unless they are required specifically due to COVID-19 response.

102. Can I apply for additional staff expenses to retain staff? For example, some of my staff have school age kids they will need to pay for care for during remote learning-if I provide stipends so they will continue employment rather than stay home with their children, would this expense be eligible?

These grants are funded using the Coronavirus Relief Fund. Bonuses for staff are not an allowable expense under the [Coronavirus Relief Fund Guidance for State, Territorial, Local, and Tribal Governments, updated June 30, 2020.](#)

103. Our business is considering opening a temporary learning space onsite for our employee's school age children to complement their hybrid or remote school arrangement. The learning space would allow the employee's children to have supervised learning, Monday - Friday between the hours of 8am - 3pm. The program would begin on September 8, 2020. If we are able to offer this program to our employees, would we qualify for the COVID-19 Child Care Operational Relief Grant?

All programs applying must meet the eligibility requirements of:

- Be a child care provider/program, summer day camp, or afterschool program. You may be licensed or unlicensed. Overnight camps are not eligible.
- Be open now, for summer day camp, or by September 8, 2020.
- Be located in Vermont and serving Vermont children.
- Have eligible income losses and/or expenses.

104. Will child care or afterschool programs be able to apply for expenses related to providing care to school age children attending more hours due to reduced school hours or remote learning?

Child care and afterschool programs are able to apply for expenses related to COVID-19. If they have additional expenses that are not covered by tuition or other funds, for serving school age children additional hours, that may be an eligible expense. It is important for the program to ensure the expense is not covered by tuition and is an additional expense.

OTHER QUESTIONS

105. How will I receive the money?

Payments will be issued either via a check or through direct deposit depending on if/how your program is set up with the State of Vermont to receive payments. For example, if you currently receive a direct deposit, these funds will also be direct deposited. If you have not received funds from the State of Vermont in the past you will be contacted from our office to set up an account. This contact will happen after awards determinations have been made.

106. Is this grant repayable? Does the grant need to be claimed as income for the year?

This is a grant, not a loan. All losses and expenses that are found eligible will be paid after receipts and documentation is received. Grants typically do not need to be paid back unless they were received in error or by submitting fraudulent information. Grants are typically considered income however it is important to talk to your tax preparer to understand how these funds will impact your business.

107. Does the other funding source include the Restart Grants for those of us operating this summer?

Yes, you must include all other funding sources including the Restart Stipends.

108. In the webinar one of presenters mentioned health care funds that have been released. Can you provide clarification on these funds?

The Health Care Provider Stabilization Program was used as an example of a fund stream that Children's Integrated Services providers might need to consider. More information about the program is available here <https://dvha.vermont.gov/health-care-provider-stabilization-grant-program>.

109. Can I apply for funds for my water bill that has doubled?

Additional, unbudgeted, expenses that are specific to COVID are eligible for this grant. For expenses that are typical for your home or business, you need to provide documentation that the expense is related to COVID and your business, and not due to regular summer use or family use.

110. We operate camps plus many other programs. We have received funding to support our non-camp programs. Do I need to report those?

You only need to report funding specific to your child care, summer camp or afterschool program.

111. If our program received funding (such as PPP) that covered expenses in April, May and June, do we claim losses during those months or just claim losses not covered by

other sources?

If your losses were fully covered by other funds in any month, you should not claim any losses for that month in the application.

112. What is the deadline for questions?

Questions can be submitted to AHS.DCFOperationalReliefGrant@vermont.gov by August 14th to be included in the Frequently Asked Questions document.

113. Do you anticipate if people have eligible needs will they be funded to some degree?

Yes. All grants will be determined for eligible expenses and income losses, and if eligible, it is anticipated that they will receive funds to some degree. The Commissioner reserves the right to adjust any award under this program based on availability of funding and any funds that are owed to the State for overpayments through prior COVID relief programs.

114. Will programs who are opening in August or September receive a restart stipend? Or is this grant the only funding opportunity for these programs?

This grant is currently the only funding opportunity offered by the Department for Children Families for any expenses or income losses related to COVID-19 to child care, summer camps and afterschool programs.

115. Is there a limit per location or does the review committee determine which funds that will be paid to programs?

There are no specific limitations on the amounts requested in this grant. However, only expenses and losses that are related to COVID-19 and not covered by other funds are eligible.

116. What will happen to the leftover money if it is not all asked for? A lot of providers who took on essential children will not qualify since they made extra money through that program.

At this point it is anticipated that the requests will be expend the full amount allocated to the program.

117. What if I disagree with the amount listed in my award?

Should you disagree with the amount you were awarded you have five (5) business days to submit a written request for a review by the DCF Commissioner's Office. Requests must include the reason why you believe the amount is not sufficient and what you think it should be. Information about where to send the request will be listed on the award letter. Successful appeals may result in a reduction to all awards under the Operational Relief Grant program. All Commissioner's decisions are final.

118. Why is this not a grant program that provides a standard grant payment for registered homes and centers to be fair?

This grant program reimburses for eligible expenses or income losses related to COVID for home programs and center based programs. The amount determined per program is based on the eligible expenses or losses.

119. Am I guaranteed to receive the funds I requested?

No. This is a competitive grant process. Not all requests will be awarded. It is your responsibility to make sure your application is complete, accurate, and received on time. Submitting early will not affect the outcome. The Commissioner reserves the right to adjust any award under this program based on availability of funding.

120. What if I have an outstanding balance with the State of Vermont due to overpayment of a previous COVID-19 Relief funding opportunity?

All grant awards under the ORG are subject to recoupment or corrective action if a balance is owed to the State of Vermont.

121. I applied to be a Registered Family Child Care Provider in January. I had not completed my application prior to the COVID-19 related closure and was not able to provide care to more than two families. I had families ready to enroll prior to the closure, can I claim income losses for the families I could not care for due to my license status?

No. Child care programs can claim lost income for the children they are able to care for at the time of the loss.