

DSS has opened up an application for the fifth round of Child Care Operating Grants to help child care providers that have had to close or have lost revenue due to low enrollments during the last several months as a result of COVID-19. This grant opportunity is available to assist providers in paying for their child care facility expenses, including rent/mortgage payments, utility bills, cleaning or sanitation costs, and personnel costs which may include salary increases, retention bonuses, etc.

Grants will be issued to licensed or registered child care centers, group child care homes, and family child care homes. Head Start facilities, as well as 4K/preschool programs operated by public schools and other approved (licensed) facilities owned and operated by the school district, are not eligible for an Operating grant.

Note: Child care facilities that have permanently closed are NOT eligible to apply for this grant.

Providers who are currently in the ABC Quality program and set up for direct deposit will have their funds deposited into this same account. If a provider previously applied for and received an Emergency Operating Grant earlier this year, your bank account information remains on file and upon approval the COVID Support funds will be deposited into the same account as the previous grant. All other providers will receive grant funds via check.

Note: All eligible providers must apply for this grant opportunity.

Grant amounts will be determined based on the chart below:

Child Care Centers (Based on Licensed Capacity)	Grant Amount
Up to 49 children	\$30,000
50-99 children	\$40,000
100+ children	\$50,000
Family/Group Child Care Homes	\$12,000

The terms and conditions of the grant are as follows:

- Providers will use the grant funds to offset child care business expenses, including rent/mortgage payments, utility bills, cleaning or sanitation costs, and personnel costs.
- Providers will maintain documentation supporting the expenditure of grant funds which may include records of application approval, receipts, invoices, and/or any other supporting documentation indicating how funds were used. Documentation must remain on file at the facility for a period of three (3) years from the date the grant is completed as needed to satisfy a possible audit. Documentation may be requested at any time by DSS and, if requested, will need to be provided within fifteen (15) calendar days of the request.

For questions please email DECEGrants@dss.sc.gov or call 1-800-476-0199 if you are not able to contact via email.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I apply for a COVID Support grant?

Use this link to go into the online portal to apply:

<https://benefitsportal.dss.sc.gov/#/benefits/cceo/application>

Is the emergency grant only available if we are closed or if enrollment is low?

The grant is available for either scenario. The provider may have closed or may have low enrollment and are facing closure. These grants are meant to support child care programs that have lost revenue from their private pay families.

How long will it take to receive grant funding?

Payments will be received within 10 days of approval. Providers who are currently in the ABC Quality program and set up for direct deposit will have their funds deposited into this same account.

If I am a licensed or registered child care provider and NOT in the ABC Quality program, what will I need to provide to receive payment?

- If you operate under an Federal Tax Identification Number (FEIN), you must provide a signed, completed W-9 and a copy of your IRS letter (147-C or SS4). The name on these two documents must match.
- If you operate under a Social Security Number (SSN), you must provide a signed, completed W-9 and a copy of your Drivers' License and a copy of your SSN card. The name on these documents must match.

Please forward this information to: DECEGrants@dss.sc.gov.

If a provider has multiple sites does each site have to apply for the grant funding? Yes, each site must apply individually.

Will programs hear anything back once they submit the grant application?

Yes, programs will receive a system generated email from the SC Voucher System for the following events:

- Application has been received in the SC Voucher System.
- Application has been approved.
- Application has been processed for payment by SCEIS, SC State Government accounting system.

Additionally, a link will be provided so that child care providers may check on the status of their application.