

**2021 COVID-19 Community Recovery Grant
Request for Applications
Due: May 26, 2021**

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the child care sector are significant. A survey conducted by the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children (LPIC) found that from March 2020 to January 2021, the child care sector experienced an estimated \$245 million loss (nearly \$200,000 per center). Without immediate stabilization, child care providers are still at risk of closing their doors permanently. Early childhood communities must be equipped to continue to offer child care providers strategic and targeted support to recover. Additionally, in response to facility closures or modified school and center operations in the past year, early childhood communities and providers should continue to make plans to ensure children have the experiences and support they need to develop and grow, regardless of setting.

Louisiana has made considerable progress in unifying and strengthening its early childhood system and has been focused on three key priorities for early childhood: increasing early childhood classroom quality, expanding access for economically disadvantaged families, and supporting local governance. To sustain the progress Louisiana has made as a state, and to ensure that progress is maintained for the 2021-2022 school year, it is critical that early childhood communities take steps to support the child care sector in the immediate and ongoing effects of COVID-19 and to ensure children continue to learn and thrive.

The 2021 COVID-19 Community Child Care Recovery Grant Request for Applications (RFA) will provide communities with an opportunity to request funding to support the recovery of the child care sector and to ensure children continue to have access to high-quality early learning options across Louisiana.

Believe! 2021-2022 Guidance

The Department released the [Believe! Early Childhood Planning Guide](#), which outlines activities and funding opportunities for early childhood community networks to develop plans and partnerships to ensure:

- **Child care is stabilized immediately**, with a focus on providers and the early childhood workforce.
- **Communities increase access** to opportunities for high-quality early childhood care and education this year.
- **Teachers are prepared to lead classrooms and provide high-quality interactions** for children every day.
- **Young children who experienced disruptions in learning this year are given opportunities** to prepare for school.

This particular funding opportunity is supported by the [Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations \(CRRSA\) Act](#) and the [American Rescue Plan Act \(ARPA\)](#). In order to carry out the categories outlined in *Believe!*, community networks might choose to use a variety of funding sources in addition to this grant, including but not limited to lead agency allocations, Ready Start allocations, and available ESSER Funding. In order to understand the full scope of funding available, lead agencies should communicate with their local school system.

On behalf of early childhood community networks, lead agencies are eligible to apply for COVID-19 Community Child Care Recovery Grants to support activities aligned to the *Believe! 2021-2022* Guidance. These grants will be awarded to and administered by lead agencies.

The below table provides guidelines for COVID-19 Community Child Care Recovery Grant Year 2 application amounts. Lead agencies should use these amounts for guidance as they determine their funding request for this grant. Lead agencies should base their total requested funding amount on the number of current CCAP providers in the network and other unique impacts COVID-19 has had on the community.

Size of Network	Suggested range of funding request, depending on the recovery needs of each community*
Fewer than 5 CCAP providers	\$25,000 - \$50,000
5 to 10 CCAP providers	\$50,000 - \$100,000
11 to 20 CCAP providers	\$100,000 - \$150,000
21 to 40 CCAP providers	\$150,000 - \$200,000
41 to 50 CCAP providers	\$200,000 - \$300,000
More than 50 CCAP providers	\$300,000 - \$400,000

*Note: Community networks can apply for amounts that fall outside of these suggested ranges if they provide justification in their application.

APPLICATION

All lead agencies are invited to submit an application. The Word version of the RFA and application will be sent to lead agency contacts on April 1, 2021. Those intending to apply need to complete the [Intent to Apply Survey](#) by 5pm on April 28th. **In your Intent to Apply survey, you will be asked to include your anticipated total funding request.**

Complete the application below. **Please save the document as a PDF file** and name the document:

'NETWORK_COVIDCommunityGrant_Application_2021.pdf.' Submit completed application as an attachment in [Google Forms](#) by May 26, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

TIMELINE

March 30	The Department releases the Request for Applications for the 2021 COVID-19 Community Recovery Grant.
April 1	The Word version of the application will be sent to all lead agency contacts.
April 28	Applicants submit an Intent to Apply via Google Form by 5 p.m.
May 26	Applicants submit a final application via Google Form by 5 p.m.
Week of May 31	The Department notifies recipients of the grant.

ALLOWABLE USES FOR THE COVID-19 COMMUNITY RECOVERY GRANT

The COVID-19 Community Child Care Recovery Grant IS designed to support the recovery of Type III child care providers in each community. Thus, this funding can be used for a wide range of activities. The Department recommends the following allowable uses as best practices for this grant:

- Providing financial supports (e.g. bonuses, incentive pay, etc.) to encourage and incentivize the early childhood workforce to return to work or continue working in this sector
- Purchasing and distributing additional PPE/sanitation supplies
- Providing direct financial support to providers to support them to stay open or re-open, which may include costs associated with rent, utilities, payroll, etc.

- Promoting enrollment through additional informational campaigns or other outreach to families, especially to families of special populations including experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and children with disabilities
- Supporting quality of child care centers, through means such as professional development, coaching and training, and observations
- Supporting families with continuous learning at home, as a result of temporary facility closures
- Purchasing and implementing curricula or programs focusing on social-emotional development and/or trauma informed instruction
- Providing supports to families who are not currently enrolled in early childhood care

(Note: The 2021 COVID-19 Community Recovery Grant cannot be used to purchase or improve land, or for the purchase, construction, or permanent improvement of any building or facility. However, funds may be expended for upgrading child care facilities to ensure that providers meet state and local child care standards, including applicable health and safety requirements.)

Lead agencies may consider and propose other activities that support high-quality early childhood in your community that do not fall into the four aforementioned categories. If that is the case, they should be prepared to justify the need for any activities outside the scope of the Believe! guidance.

2021-2022

Please submit a complete version of the following application and upload via [Google Form](#) by 5 p.m. on May 26, 2021. Please save this document as a PDF file and use the following naming convention prior to submission: 'NETWORK_COVIDCommunityGrant_Application.2021.pdf'

Community Network: *[Insert response here]*
Lead Agency Contact Name: *[Insert response here]*
Contact Email and Phone Number: *[Insert response here]*

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

I. Community Needs:

How has COVID-19 impacted early childhood and the child care industry in your community? What have you learned over the past year? At a minimum, you should include answers to the following questions:

- What are the greatest challenges facing the early childhood workforce in your community?
- Of the type III centers or home-based CCAP providers that existed prior to COVID-19, how many were closed permanently, closed temporarily and still have not reopened, closed temporarily and reopened, and remained open throughout the entire 2020 year?
- What barriers are your child care centers and families still facing due to COVID-19?
- Are the challenges for child care providers and workforce universally experienced in your community, or are there particular providers that may need more targeted support?

[Insert response here]

Considering your community's recovery needs and the supports the lead agency has provided in the past year, what are your top 3 priorities to continue to support early childhood recovery efforts?

1. *[Insert response here]*
- 2.
- 3.

II. Believe! Planning Guidance:

What is your community's proposal to achieve the priorities detailed in the [Believe! Early Childhood Planning Guide](#)? At a minimum, describe how your network is addressing your top 3 priorities described above, and consider including how you intend to ensure the following statements are true for your network:

- **Child care is stabilized immediately**, with a focus on providers and the early childhood workforce.
- **Communities increase access** to opportunities for high-quality early childhood care and education this year.
- **Teachers are prepared to lead classrooms and provide high-quality interactions** for children every day.
- **Young children who experienced disruptions in learning this year are given opportunities** to prepare for school.*

**This could include supporting families in getting their children developmental screenings, supporting families by providing at-home learning options, and other family-specific supports.*

[Insert response here]

III. Request for Funding

Lead agencies should request funding to support activities in alignment with [Believe! Early Childhood Planning Guide](#). Consider funding:

- **Direct Supports for Child Care:** Ensuring child care centers have the direct supports they need should be lead agencies' first priority with this funding. Consider requesting funding to implement the following activities to directly benefit and support the child care centers in your community:
 - **Workforce incentive grants:** Providing workforce incentive grants to child care centers who can, in turn, offer bonus payments to returning workforce
 - **Subgrants to child care centers:** Awarding child care centers or home-based providers in your community subgrants to support staying open
 - **Purchase of additional PPE and supplies:** Purchasing necessary PPE and supplies to ensure a safe environment for children and staff
- **Other Community-Level Supports:** In addition to providing direct supports to child care, lead agencies might also consider funding additional activities:
 - **Workforce training:** Training new or returning staff to ensure children are still receiving high-quality care in a safe environment
 - **Family engagement & coordinated enrollment:** Aiding in the communication and engagement with families to support enrollment
 - **Reaching all families and children:** Ensuring all families and children have access to developmental screeners and purchasing curricula or training on child social-emotional development

TOTAL FUNDING REQUESTED

[Insert amount here]

Please provide a description of the activities you intend to fund through this grant award. Please note that final budgets may be adjusted in eGMS after awarded and as needs evolve.

[Insert response here]

IV. Program Partner Feedback

Briefly describe how you engaged your program partners and solicited feedback for this application.

[Insert response here]