The Meeker County Child Care Provider Grant was created to support the growth of new child care providers and to assist current providers with critical needs in order to address child care shortages in Meeker County. The program will

assist child care providers and programs who are soon-to-be licensed with purchasing items or making improvements that are required by licensing or are critical to the start-up of the business. The Meeker County Child Care Provider Grant can also assist existing licensed providers with needs that are critical for the continued operation of the business.

**Eligible Applicants**

Any licensed or soon to be licensed child care provider located in Meeker County serving children ranging in age from 6 weeks to 11 years old. Funds will be prioritized for requests that will be adding new slots.

If currently licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services, a program must have a license in good standing.

Eligible Activities

Programs may apply for funds to support the start-up or upgrade of child care services through the categories listed on page 3.

These grants can be used to cover the cost of materials for outdoor play area fencing or other minor construction projects as required by licensing to ensure child safety or meet other program standards. All materials must be new and must be purchased from a retail store, not a private party. The grant will cover material and labor costs.

These grants can be used for technology and software to create, enhance, and maintain business management systems. This includes costs associated with accessing the internet, such as installation or equipment, and website costs for start-up. Ongoing subscription fees, monthly payments, and maintenance are not eligible.

In addition, grants are not allowed to be spent on items considered to be part of the cost of doing business, including but not limited to:

* Accounting and legal fees
* Advertising
* Monthly/annual subscription fees for websites, internet, software, etc. Only startup costs are eligible.
* Banking service charges
* Cleaning
* Food
* Insurance
* Licenses
* Taxes
* Rent or mortgage
* Salaries
* Transportation
* Utilities

Grant Guidelines

New providers can apply for a Start-Up Grant. Funds for new providers will be setup as a deferred loan that will be forgiven once the provider is fully licensed and operational for 30 months for a family child care program and 50 months for a child care center. If a provider fails to get licensed or operate, the funds will be repayable to the program. If for any reason your program ceases to provide active child care services within the required timeframe, you will be required to repay grant dollars on a prorated basis.

Providers eligible for the Start-Up Grant may receive only one grant award. The limit for Start-Up Grants is $3,000 for Family Child Care programs and $5,000 for Child Care Centers.

The Child Care Upgrade Grant is available to existing providers who need to make upgrades to equipment, technology or other critical needs. The limit for Upgrade Grants is $1,500 for Family Child Care programs and $2,500 for Child Care Centers.

A program cannot receive both a Start-Up Grant and a Child Care Upgrade Grant in the same calendar year.

All funds are paid on a reimbursement basis after the provider provides receipts/documentation of expenses. Funding is available on an ongoing basis, subject to availability of funds. Priority will be given to providers that serve all age groups and those that serve high need areas such as infant care or evening care.

All new and existing providers must apply for other program funding prior to coming to the Meeker County Child Care Provider Grant. Providers cannot request funds for projects that are already being paid by another grant program.

**Grant Application Review Process.** Once the application is submitted, it will be reviewed by a review committee. Each application will be reviewed by three review committee members and a scorecard will be used to rate the applications. Funding is awarded to the highest scoring applications. A denial or award letter will be sent to you via email or U.S mail. The Meeker County Development Corporation reserves the right to deny any application.

**Submitting Your Application**

Fill out the application form completely in ink. The application should be neat and easy to read and stapled together in order.

1. Send in one complete packet, including the application with all required attachments stapled to it.
2. Keep one copy of the completed application form and all required attachments for your records. You will need to refer back to your application if you are awarded a grant.
3. Mail or email the original completed application packet to:

Meeker County Development Corporation

422 S Johnson Drive

Litchfield, MN. 55355

[lisa@dsi-services.com](mailto:lisa@dsi-services.com)

**Checklist**

Your application packet must include:

☐ The application form with all questions completed.

☐ Copy of your current child care license, if applicable. Also include any documentation from your licensor if the items in your grant application are needed to meet licensing requirements.

☐ Building permit (*if applicable*). If your project requires a building permit please attach.

☐ Estimate or bid (*if applicable*). This is required for the installation of fences, windows, or construction, as required by licensing, or equipment assembly projects. This bid must be from a licensed and bonded contractor.

☐ Pictures (*if applicable*). A picture from a catalog or online is recommended.

☐ W-9 Form.

**Eligible Expenses**

This is not an exhaustive list of eligible items, but provides some guidance to providers on the type of expenses typically eligible for the grant funds.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Household alarms and detectors | | Transportation safety | |
| * Smoke alarms * Carbon monoxide alarms * Radon detectors * Lead content detectors (for toys and other child items which could be put in the mouth) * Items required by Fire Marshal or Licensing regulations | | * Appropriate child restraint systems for the ages of the children in care * Safety helmets for children riding bicycles or tricycles * Strollers that meet safety specifications * Double/multiple kid strollers | |
| Household Safety | | Child safety | |
| * Fire extinguishers * Choke tubes (for gauging choking potential of small objects) * Disaster kits * Fireplace, heater and wood-burning stove screen covers * Safety latches or locks for doors and cabinets * Safety gates * Appliance locks * First aid items | * Electrical outlet covers * Refrigerator thermometer * Hot liquids thermometer * Window blind and curtain cord tension or tie-down devices * Air purifiers, humidifiers, dehumidifiers * Light fixtures containing shielded or shatterproof bulb | * Cribs, mattresses that meet safety standards * Cots, mats and linens for sleeping * Highchairs that meet safety standards * Changing tables * Shock-absorbent or loose material such as sand under outdoor climbing equipment * Outdoor play equipment that meets safety standards * Audio/visual monitoring equipment | * Playground safety surfacing * Large outdoor umbrella * Sandbox covers * Infant bucket swings for outdoor playground swing sets * Swings with soft or flexible seats * Fencing * Replacement of wooden barriers that contain creosote or arsenic * Guardrails on stairs |
| Facilities and operations | |  | |
| * Egress windows * Lead-free environment * Facility improvements such as repairing steps, installing railing if flagged by licensing * Gates * Training costs | | * Antibacterial wall dispensers * Secured garbage cans and wastebaskets, hands-free covered waste disposal cans * Computer and software for financial management and other necessary functions of business. * Printer | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Room equipment and furniture | | Active Play | |
| * Tables * Chairs * Coat, cubby units * Storage units * Centers (book, listening, writing) * Computer table | * Cots or mats * Classroom activity carpets * Activity mats and gyms * Classroom displays | * Bicycles, Tricycles, * Wagons * Scooters, scooter boards * Balance beams * Tumbling mats * Play tunnels or hoops * Basketball hoops, balls * Sensory items | * Playground equipment (climbers, swing sets, slides) * Large unit blocks * Rocking boats * Parachutes * Large motor games (such as bean bag, ring toss) * STEM materials |

**Grant Application**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Provider Name |  |
| Mailing Address |  |
| Phone |  |
| Email |  |
| Please indicate if you are a new or existing provider and type of provider (family or center) |  |
| If you are a new provider, please provide an estimate for licensure and opening? |  |
| Please describe why you need grant funds? |  |
| Please include other grants and loans already received or grant and loan applications submitted. |  |
| Please include a detailed list of improvements or items you wish to purchase with grant with a cost estimate for each item. |  |

By signing below, I certify that the information provided in this application is true and accurate:

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