

Child Care Grant Program



Eligibility

Choice Child Care Grants are available to licensed childcare facilities located communities with a population of less than 10,000 that are Choice Bank customers OR located in the following counties: Burleigh, Cass, Cavalier, Dickey, Grand Forks, Kidder, LaMoure, Mercer, Pembina, Stark, Stutsman, and Walsh.

Grant Amounts

\$10,000 maximum per facility, per calendar year.

Application

Applications can be submitted online at: bankwithchoice.com/childcaregrant.

Application Deadlines

Round 1: May 31, 2024

Round 2: September 30, 2024

Purpose

According to data from Child Care Aware ND, if we added childcare programs to support an additional 3,882 children, we would meet only 50% of the childcare needs just in the markets we currently serve in ND. Some of the largest needs identified were higher wages and benefits for childcare providers; additional insurance needs as a daycare expands its capacity; help with finding buildings and staff; and assistance with special projects like adding an egress window.

The Choice Bank Child Care Grant Program is meant to support three primary areas of need:



Start-Up Costs

Establishing new child care facilities.



Replacement/Expansion Costs

Expanding new or existing facilities, purchasing new or replacing/repairing equipment, fixtures, etc.



One-Time Operating Expenses

Training for staff, one-time hiring bonuses, one-time contributions to employee HSA's, etc.

We want these small grants to be a stepping-stone for these facilities to continue to provide such a critical service to our communities. We recognize that access to childcare in many of our communities is vital to ongoing economic stability.

Eligibility

Applicants for Choice Bank Child Care Grants must:

- Be licensed by the state of North Dakota (or have a pending application for new facilities).
- For new facilities, must be prepared to open within the following 6 months.
- Facility is located in a community with a population of less than 10,000.
- Be based in and primarily serve families in the following counties: Burleigh, Cass, Cavalier, Dickey, Grand Forks, Kidder, LaMoure, Mercer, Pembina, Stark, Stutsman, and Walsh. Child care facilities not located in one of these counties but are Choice customers are also eligible for the grant.
- Demonstrate general fiscal responsibility and agree to use the grant funds to further the quality of care provided to its students and families. Facilities must be in good financial standing with no tax liens, judgements, etc.
- Funds may be used for reimbursement of a prior completed project (completed within the calendar year of your application) or can be used to pay for a planned project to take place no later than 12 months after your grant is awarded.
- Submit a complete and accurate application, providing all requested information, by the stated deadline.

Eligibility *(continued..)*

Eligible projects must be for the purpose of improving or expand the level of care to families in the communities it serves. Requests must fall into one of three categories – 1. Start-up expenses; 2. Replacement or Expansion Costs; or 3. One-time Operating Expenses.

Possible projects include, but are not limited to:

- Costs associated with starting a new child care facility
- New equipment, materials, purchase(s)
- Facility renovations
- Hiring bonuses
- Other hiring expenses

Ineligible activities include, but are not limited to:

- Activities that do not directly support the childcare facility or the services it provides
- Facilities NOT in or serving Burleigh, Cass, Cavalier, Dickey, Grand Forks, Kidder, LaMoure, Mercer, Pembina, Stark, Stutsman, or Walsh county.
- Facilities located in communities that exceed 10,000 in population.
- Rent and other operational expenses that are not one-time in nature
- Projects that were completed in a different calendar year than when you are submitting your application.

Grant Application Process

You may apply for grants in the amount of \$75 to \$10,000. (For larger project needs, 501c3 organizations may be eligible for additional low-rate financing through Choice Bank, with payment assistance provided through the Child Care Program. To inquire further about this option, please contact your local Choice Bank).

You will be asked to supply supporting documentation with your online application, including, but not limited to:

- Facility license information
- Receipts, bids, or other documentation for the requested project
- Proof of payment, if seeking reimbursement

Preference will be given to facilities that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Facility serves families that qualify for a Child Care Assistance Program
- Facilities that are on a Food Program
- Facilities that have tax-exempt status Tax-Exempt
- Facilities increasing their enrollment capacity
- Start-up/New Facilities

** If your facility does not meet any of the following, it does NOT prevent you from qualifying for a grant.*

Grant Award Information

- Awards will be announced and/or granted a month following each round deadline.
- Successful applicants will receive a Grant Agreement to execute.
- The grant period is for 12 months from the date of notification.
- Upon receipt of the executed Grant Agreement, Choice Bank will issue the grant award.
- Documentation of completion must be submitted within 30 days of project completion.
- If the project is not completed by the expected date, the grantee must request (and receive) an extension prior to the original completion date or return the funds.
- For grants in excess of \$2,500, the child care facility must remain in operation for no less than 12 months from the initial grant date.
- Receiving a Child Care Grant will not affect your taxes. Since the grant is under the \$15,000 IRS limit it is considered a gift rather than income, so you will not receive any tax documentation from Choice Bank.

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT THE APPLICATION FORM

You will be unable to save your work. Your application must be completed in one session. Please review the requirements ahead of time carefully, and ensure you have all necessary documentation prepared before you begin your application. We will be unable to accept incomplete applications.



Application Submission Details

How to Begin

Go to bankwithchoice.com/childcaregrant and click on the button to '**Begin Application**'.

Filling Out Your Application

We suggest having a copy of these guidelines to use as reference while working on the application and that you work offline, formulating your answers in a separate document and cutting-and-pasting it into the form when you are ready to submit your application. The application must be completed in one session.

Notification of Receipt

Applicants will receive an email confirmation of submission. If you have not received an email within 24 hours, contact marketing@bankwithchoice.com.

Questions?

We encourage you to contact us early in the application process with any questions regarding use of funds or eligibility. Applications are reviewed quarterly.

Contact Choice Bank at marketing@bankwithchoice.com with questions regarding your application.

