Infant Toddler Quality Improvement Grant FAQ's

Eligibility

Who is eligible to apply?

- Licensed child care centers
- Licensed family homes and group homes
- Licensed Tribal-based child care

Additional Requirements:

- Providers must currently have infants and/or toddlers (birth to 35 months) enrolled under their license.
- Providers must have actively billed for Child Development and Care Subsidy between 8/1/23 and 11/1/23.

Are license-exempt providers eligible?

- No, license-exempt providers are not eligible.

Will all qualifying programs be awarded the grant during the pilot?

- No. The ITQI grant is a pilot, funding a small number of programs. Factors such as It is a competitive grant, and the number is based on Infant/Toddler subsidy slots, not the number of providers.
- We will also be considering location, special needs, hours, and total subsidy numbers in selecting award recipients.

If a provider has a license, but had their subsidy revoked due to fraud or misrepresentation, or is under investigation for either, do they qualify for funding?

- No. A provider with a history of fraud or misrepresentation is not eligible.
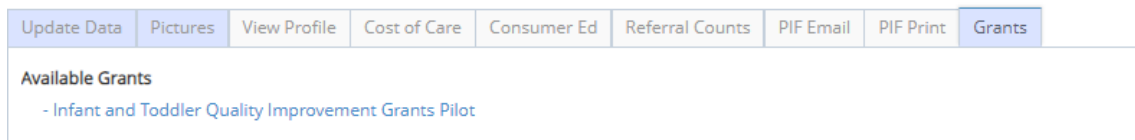
Application

When will the application be available?

- The Infant and Toddler Quality Improvement Grant application will be available beginning on November 6, 2023.
- The grant application will close on November 17, 2023.
- The application will be available through the [Great Start to Quality WLS system](#).

How will I know you received my application?

- You will receive confirmation from the system. You can also confirm that your application was submitted by logging in to the [Great Start to Quality](#) portal and checking your application status on the Grants tab.

Update Data	Pictures	View Profile	Cost of Care	Consumer Ed	Referral Counts	PIF Email	PIF Print	Grants

Available Grants

- Infant and Toddler Quality Improvement Grants Pilot

How do I apply?

- Programs must first have completed an interest form before 10/30/23.
- Eligible child care programs who meet the needs of the pilot will then receive a link to an application within the [Great Start to Quality](#) System via email.
- Programs must complete and submit an online application for each license that receives the link. The grant is License specific. Paper applications and late applications will not be accepted.
- If you did not complete an interest form and receive a link, you will not have access to the application.

What if the auto-populated information showing the grant application is incorrect? How do I change it?

- For information that you have the ability to edit, the boxes will be white when you click the Edit Application button at the top right of the screen.

Infant and Toddler Quality Improvement Grants Pilot

[Edit Application]

The Infant Toddler Quality Improvement Grants are an equity-centered strategy to increase the supply of high-quality infant-toddler child care in Michigan. These funds will be administered by the Early Childhood Investment Corporation and must be used to increase the number of subsidy-eligible infants and toddlers in your care or the wages of infant and toddler teachers caring for subsidy-eligible children. For a full list of allowable uses visit http://www.greatstarttoquality.org/grants.

If you need help completing the application, please contact Infant/Toddler Quality Grants at ITQIGrants@ecic4kids.org or 517.706.6353. If you leave a message, please make sure to include license number.

Thank you for everything you've done for children, families, and your community. Your work is essential and very much appreciated.
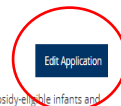
- For information that you cannot edit, such as license capacity, you should save your application and email the ITQI team at ITQIGrants@ecic4kids.org. Be sure to include your license number.

Can I save my application, ask a question, and return to it before I submit?

- Yes. Each section of the application has a "save" option. We strongly encourage you to save after completing each section of the application. Please note, the buttons at the end of each section are titled Save Only. These buttons DO NOT submit the application.

[Save Only]
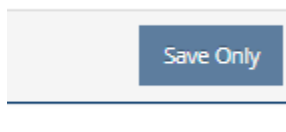
If I make a mistake in any part of my application, am I disqualified?

- Not necessarily. However, if the mistake is in CDC Subsidy billing or infant/toddler enrollment, it may.
- Mistakes in other areas might impact the amount of your award.

Therefore:

- We encourage all providers to read the FAQ or contact the ITQI team for assistance before submitting the grant. You will be able to save your grant application and come back later to complete your application before submission.
- Please also review your application to confirm all information is correct before clicking the submit button.
- Once the application is submitted, it **CANNOT BE EDITED.**
- Multiple application submissions <u>will not</u> be accepted. If you are aware of an error in your application, please contact the ITQI Team as soon as possible at <u>itqigrants@ecic4kids.org</u>. Be sure to include the license number.

How do I apply if I have more than one site?

- The interest form had a question asking you to indicate other licenses you own/direct. If you included the license numbers of those programs, you will receive a link for them as well.
- You should receive notification for each license.
- Infant Toddler Quality Improvement Grants are site-based (by license number) and each site/ location must apply separately. Grants awarded must also be spent at the license for which it was received.
- After you complete the application for your first site, log into the other licenses and complete those applications as well.

Can I mail an application?

- No, paper applications will not be accepted. The application can only be completed and submitted online through the link provided at <u>Great Start to Quality.</u>

Am I required to submit supporting documentation or records with my application?

- No. You are not required to submit supporting documentation with the online application.

However:

- If you indicate that you care for a child with special needs on your application and you are awarded this grant, you will be required to submit an IFSP or Early On document by 1/10/24 by loading it to the documents tab with your first grant report. Information on doing so will be included in the Reporting FAQ.
- If you indicate that you will be expanding slots with this funding, you will be required to show your sign in sheets verifying the new enrollments of subsidy receiving children age birth to 35 months by January 10, 2024 or as soon as they are enrolled to continue receiving the expansion funding. Information on doing so will be included in the Reporting FAQ.
- If you indicate that you have or are applying for GSRP, your participation will be verified through MDE in December.

You are required to maintain records that support your grant application and the use of funds for four years in the event that the records are requested for an audit or other purposes. To help with record keeping the best practice would be to upload your receipts and documentation into the system as the money is spent. <u>We strongly encourage you to utilize this option to help support any audits that may occur</u>.

What certifications are required to receive the grant?

By agreeing to these terms and conditions and applying for the Infant Toddler Quality Improvement Pilot Grant, I certify that all information provided as part of this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and agree to each of the following statements.

Required Certifications [*must be met for the duration of the grant*]:

- Child care providers receiving funds must be in compliance with all health and safety requirements, local health, fire safety, and zoning requirements, and, to the greatest extent possible implement policies in line with guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control (CDC)](#) and [Child Care Licensing Rules](#).
- I agree to use this funding for costs associated with infant and toddler care supported by CDC Subsidy only.
- I agree to spend grant funds on **allowable expenses**.
- All funds received from this Infant Toddler Quality Improvement Pilot Grant will be used for the following purposes:
  - Personnel costs, including payroll and salaries or similar compensation for employees who works directly with infants and toddlers that receive CDC Subsidy (including sole proprietor), and benefits; if selected for funding, you will receive sufficient funding to increase the compensation of your infant/toddler workforce (either in base wages or in bonus/supplements) to meet the wage levels in the Balancing the Scales statewide wage scale report, published October 2023. (ECIC will provide technical assistance to support grantees with this goal.)
  - Premium pay, or costs, for employee recruitment and retention, including but not limited to staff bonuses, wages, cost of insurance coverage, retirement, educational advancement, tuition reimbursement and child care costs for staff working directly with infants and/or toddlers receiving CDC Subsidy;
  - Tuition and/or copayment relief for families with infants and/or toddlers in care that receive CDC Subsidy;
  - Minor facility maintenance or improvements that would allow me to increase the number of infants and/or toddlers in my care who receive CDC Subsidy;
  - Furnishing, materials, and curriculum to increase the number of CDC Subsidy supported infant or toddler slots or to improve quality of programming for infants and/or toddlers receiving subsidy;
  - Administrative or management costs associated with participating in the pilot, including but not limited to submitting monthly reports, participating in the evaluation, etc.
- Taxability of funds. I understand this funding is subject to IRS and state tax rules. Regarding federal tax rules, please contact the Internal Revenue Service for guidance. In some cases, funds used to cover operating expenses may be exempt from taxation. Please consult your tax preparer as needed.
- Funds must be expended by **September 30, 2024**.
- I agree to **spend funds appropriately, be fiscally responsible, and retain accurate documentation**.

- o All child care programs/providers that receive funds may be subject to monitoring review and may be required to submit supporting documentation. I agree to provide information and supporting documentation as requested in a timely manner.
- o Please keep all receipts and documentation for spending. Supporting documentation for all expenses must be retained for a period of four years. ECIC and MDE reserve the right to investigate any suspicion of misuse of funds by requesting receipts and documentation of spending.

I agree to notify ECIC of a **permanent program closure**.

- o ECIC will be promptly notified of any changes to information provided in this application including the closure of the child care program or inability to serve children receiving CDC Subsidy within 3 months. Such notifications can be sent to ITQIGrants@ecic4kids.org.
- o Permanent closure of the program will disqualify the program from receiving additional funds. If the program has a license change but no lapse in care, please email ITQIGrants@ecic4kids.org as soon as possible so that we can assure no loss of funding.
- o I understand that I must complete the required reporting associated with the grant award reporting allowable expenses incurred for which I have documentation/receipts on file, spent between December 2023 and September 2024. I must submit a report for each grant payment received on or before the 10th of the following month in order to receive the next payment of my award. All reports will be required no later than September 30, 2024. Failure to do so may result in the need to return funds.
- o Reporting requirements will be posted at www.greatstarttoquality.org/grants and will be collected here in Great Start to Quality. Providers will be able to receive support with their reporting requirements by contacting the ITQI Grants team at ITQIGrants@ecic4kids.org

How do I check for updates about the status of my application?

- You can check the status of your application by logging into your Great Start to Quality public profile page.
- Here's what each status means:
  - o Pending for Submission: This means you have started your application but have not submitted your application.
  - o Pending for Review: This means you have submitted your application, and it is ready for review.
  - o Approved: Your application has been approved! You will receive a notice via email with instructions.
  - o Denied: Your application was not funded. This could be due to ineligibility based on subsidy or enrollment, or due to lack of available funding. Not all eligible applications will be funded. You will receive a notice via email.

Awards

How will my grant award be calculated?

Providers selected to participate in this pilot will be paid a grant award based on a funding formula. The formula includes the following:

- The number of full-time infants and toddlers in your care.
- The GSQ Quality Level of your program.
- Whether or not you care for an infant or a toddler on an IFSP.

- Whether or not you are participating in the expansion of GSRP.
- Whether you are able to add full-time infant/toddler slots that receive CDC Subsidy.

Additional Bonuses may be paid in the future based on the following (funding dependent):

- Whether the GSQ Quality Level of your program increases.
- Whether you or your staff increase their infant/toddler credentials (such as earning a CDA).

Does the Maximum Award per slot depend on license type?

- No. The grant is based on the I/T slots, not on program type. Programs can expect to receive between $8,500 and $18,000 per I/T slot over a ten-month period.

Funds

Eligible Expenses

This grant is intended to do three things. 1) Support pay equity for infant and toddler staff; 2) Increase the quality of infant/toddler programs; 3) increase availability of infant/toddler CDC Subsidy slots.

To that end, the following categories are allowable uses of these funds. Remember that all funds must be used for programs that benefit infants and toddlers receiving CDC Subsidy. Please note, this list is not exhaustive. Contact the ITQI team with questions at ITQIGrants@ecic4kids.org :
- Infant and Toddler Personnel costs including salaries, bonuses, payroll taxes, fringe. Personnel must be involved in the direct care of infants and toddlers that receive CDC Subsidy. **For the purposes of this grant, funds cannot be used to pay for contractors. Anyone supported must be a legal employee who receives a W-2 and has employment taxes withheld from their pay by the program.**
- Paying infant/toddler staff wages while they study for their CDA or other credentials. Eligible staff must care for infants/toddlers who receive CDC Subsidy.
- Facility maintenance and improvements that are minor renovations and would allow you to increase the number of infants/toddlers in your care who receive the CDC Subsidy (example: hand washing stations). Renovations and improvements that do NOT directly impact the number of infant/toddler slots are NOT eligible for this grant.
- Goods and services to increase the number of CDC Subsidy receiving infants/toddlers in your care (example: cribs, infant/toddler curriculum).

Is the Grant Award Considered Taxable Income at the State and Federal Level?

- Yes. The Infant and Toddler Quality Improvement Grant is considered income and is taxable. Programs that are awarded a grant will receive an IRS Tax Form 1099-NEC. This funding is subject to the same tax rules as regular CCDF funding. State tax rules apply.
- The first payment of the ITQI Grant will be sent to providers in December of 2023. That means that you will receive tax documentation for one payment in 2023 and nine in 2024.
- Regarding federal tax rules, please contact your tax preparer or the Internal Revenue Service for guidance. In some cases, funds used to cover operating expenses may be exempt from taxation.
- We strongly urge you to talk with your tax preparer to create a plan for how to estimate the tax implications for planning purposes.

- Beyond this, ECIC staff are not accountants and cannot offer further tax guidance.

Will programs be required to waive the state subsidies or parent payments for infants/toddlers if receiving the grants?

- No. This grant is meant to supplement your state subsidy. You may choose to use the funds to waive the family copay, but that is NOT an expectation.

What if I close after receiving the funds?

- All closed programs will be required to submit documentation of their fund use.
- Closure of the program will require the return of all unspent funds within 30 days after the closure. We encourage you to spend down all funds on allowable expenses before closing your program.
- Programs that close a license but open a new one with no lapse in care need to notify the ITQI Grant team at ITQIGrants@ecic4kids.org so that we can make adjustments in the payment of your award as soon as you know your license is changing.

Grant Award Questions

What does "caring for a child with special needs" mean?

- For the purposes of this grant application, the child with special needs must be birth to 35 months AND fall into one of the below categories:
  - A child with a disability, as defined in section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401);
  - A child who is eligible for early intervention services under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431 et seq);
  - A child who has received an IFSP.

What if my application is denied?

- You will receive notification if your application is denied. Not everyone will receive an award as part of this pilot. We have funding for a certain number of infant and toddler slots. Additionally, we have priority funding areas based on location, subsidy numbers, and quality ratings. If you have questions, please email the ITQI Team at ITQIGrants@ecic4kids.org and include your license number.

If I am awarded an ITQI Grant, when will I receive my grant award?

- If you are awarded a grant, you will receive your first monthly grant payment in early December.
- Beginning in January 2024, you will receive a payment on or before the 5th of the month as long as you are up to date in submitting your reports, due the 10th of each month.

Can these funds be used to help cover the costs of consulting with a tax preparer?

- Yes.

Can these funds be used to pay taxes?

- These funds can be used for payroll taxes. They cannot be used for income or property taxes.

Can I improve my space?

- Any major renovations are strictly prohibited by the funding source.
- "Major renovations" is defined as: (1) structural changes to the foundation, roof, floor, exterior or load-bearing walls of a facility, or the extension of a facility to increase its floor area; or (2) extensive alteration of a facility such as to significantly change its function and purpose, even if such renovation does not include any structural change. Major remodeling is not allowed for these funds.
- Any improvement or upgrade to a facility that is not specified under the definition of major renovation may be considered a minor renovation and may be allowed if it will increase the number of infant and/or toddlers receiving CDC Subsidy your program can enroll. Please contact the grant team at ITQIGrants@ecic4kids.org if you wish to make improvements to your space so we can determine if they are allowed before you spend funds on them.

When do I need to spend these funds?

- All ITQI Funds must be spent no later than September 30, 2024.

What if I can't spend all my grant award by September 2024?

- Please reach out to the ITQI team to determine if there are other eligible expenses you have not considered! You can always pay your staff bonuses with remaining funds, so long as you pay them before the end of the grant period.

Application Screenshots

Basic Program Information

- Provider Type, Business Name, Location Address, Email, Phone, and License Number should all prepopulate.
- Your name, a mailing address if different from your license address, and other phone numbers will need to be added by the provider.
- Please note, we need a Cell Phone number that can receive texts for this Pilot Grant.

Provider Type
Licensed Centers

Business Name

*First Name ⓘ

*Last Name ⓘ

Location Address

City
Kalamazoo

State
MI

Zip Code
49001

Mailing Address

Mailing City

Mailing State

Mailing Zip Code

*Email
lfuller@ecic4kids.org

Phone

*Cell Phone

Participation in this Pilot requires the ability to send and receive text messages. Please include a phone number where you can receive text messages.

Alternate Phone ⓘ

License Number

Back to Grants   Save Only

Demographics

- Providers will be asked to select their Race/Ethnicity and Gender.

DEMOGRAPHICS:

The federal government requires that states collect and report the following data to comply with American Rescue Plan requirements.

Operator/Director Race and Ethnicity (check all that apply):

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☑ Black or African American
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
☐ Asian or Asian American
☐ White or Caucasian
☐ Hispanic or Latino
☐ Multiracial
☐ Prefer Not to Say

Operator/Director Gender:
◉ Female
○ Male
○ Non-binary ⓘ
○ Prefer Not to Say

Back to Grants

Staffing Information

- Providers will be asked about their current staffing situation.
- If you do not have staff in a category, please enter 0.
- Please use numeric values only.
- For wage questions, please use $xx.xx format.

Please report staffing as of today's date. (All fields must be completed, please enter zero where applicable).

Question
As of today, how many full-time paid staff work at this license? Include the owner or director.
How many of these full-time staff care for infants? If the owner or director cares for infants, include them.
How many of these full-time staff care for toddlers? If the owner or director cares for toddlers, include them.
As of today, how many part-time paid staff work at this license?
How many of these part-time staff care for infants?
How many of these part-time staff care for toddlers?
As of today, how many full-time staff openings do you have?
How many of these full-time openings are for infant staff?
How many of these full-time openings are for toddler staff?
As of today, how many part-time staff openings do you have?
How many of these part-time openings are for infant staff?
How many of these part-time openings are for toddler staff?
How many of your infant and/or toddler staff have a credential in ECE ? (CDA, Associates, Bachelors, etc.)?
What is your hourly starting wage for a lead infant teacher?
What is your hourly average wage for a lead infant teacher?
What is your hourly starting wage for an assistant infant teacher?
What is your hourly average wage for an assistant infant teacher?
What is your hourly starting wage for a lead toddler teacher?
What is your hourly average wage for a lead toddler teacher?
What is your hourly starting wage for an assistant toddler teacher?
What is your hourly average wage for an assistant toddler teacher?
What is your hourly starting wage for a lead preschool teacher?
What is your hourly average wage for a lead preschool teacher?
What is your hourly starting wage for an assistant preschool teacher?
What is your hourly average wage for an assistant preschool teacher?

Establishing Grant Award Questions

- Verify your license capacity is correct.
- Verify that you participate in the Child Development and Care Subsidy Program.
- Select if you care for a child with Special Needs based on the legal criteria listed.
- Verify your current GSQ Quality Level.

If any of this information is inaccurate, please SAVE your application and contact the grant team at ITQIGrants@ecic4kids.org and be sure to include your license number.

ESTABLISHING YOUR BASE GRANT PAYMENT AMOUNT:

Please verify the following data about your program license.
Total Licensed Capacity: 60
○ I agree with the licensed capacity identified.
○ If you do not agree, contact the ITQI Team at ITQIGrants@ecic4kids.org to discuss your concern. The licensed capacity listed here is provided by child care licensing.

Child Development and Care Subsidy (CDC):
Records indicate that you HAVE billed Child Development and Care Subsidy in the last three months.
○ I agree.
○ I do not agree.
If you do not agree, contact the ITQI Team at ITQIGrants@ecic4kids.org to discuss your concern. Subsidy billing listed here is provided by MDE.

Special Needs:
Are you currently caring for an infant or toddler participating in Early On or Early On Home Visiting, a child with an IFSP or 504 plan?
- A child with a disability, as defined in section 602 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401);
- A child who is eligible for early intervention services under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431 et seq);
- A child who is less than 13 years of age and who is eligible for services under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794);

○ Yes   ○ No

This is your current Quality Level with Great Start to Quality: **Maintaining Health & Safety**. Do you agree?
○ Yes   ○ No
If you do not agree, please contact the ITQI Team at ITQIGrants@ecic4kids.org. Be sure to include license number in your communication.

Hours of Operation

- Please verify the hours that your program is open and offering care to the nearest 5-minute interval.
- Please note, there is NOT a bonus linked to hours of operation. Please make sure the data is accurate as it assists families in finding care that meets their needs.

HOURS OF OPERATION:

Please review your days and hours open and make any changes:

Open on Saturday?   Open on Sunday?
○ Yes ● No   ○ Yes ● No

Day	Open	Close
Monday	6:45am	11:00pm
Tuesday	6:45am	11:00pm
Wednesday	6:45am	11:00pm
Thursday	6:45am	11:00pm
Friday	6:45am	11:00pm

Based on the hours of operation noted above, your program does not offer care during non-traditional hours. ⓘ

Current Enrollment Information

- Enter your current enrollment information.
- If you do not have enrollment in a category, please enter a 0.
- The IFSP column will determine your special needs bonuses, but note you WILL BE REQUIRED to provide documentation of this enrollment by 1/10/24.
- This section will update your program profile in GSQ.

Please report enrollment and openings as of today's date. (All fields must be completed, please enter zero where applicable.)

Age of Children	Children Currently Enrolled Full-time	Children Currently Enrolled Part-time	Current Openings Full-time	Current Openings Part-time	Number of children enrolled with identified disability (w/IFSP)
Total Infant Enrollment (Birth-12 months)	0	0	0	0	0
Infants paid by Parent Tuition	0	0	0	0	0
Infants paid by CDC Subsidy	0	0	0	0	0
Infants paid by Head Start/EHS	0	0	0	0	0
Infants paid by other funding source	0	0	0	0	0
Total Toddler Enrollment (13m–36 months)	0	0	0	0	0
Toddlers paid by Parent Tuition	0	0	0	0	0
Toddlers paid by CDC Subsidy	0	0	0	0	0
Toddlers paid by Head Start/EHS	0	0	0	0	0
Toddlers paid by other funding source	0	0	0	0	0

- If you select YES for "With this funding, will you have the ability to create more openings for Infants and Toddlers" you will receive a follow up question of 'How Many'. Please note, the how many will generate a bonus for expanding slots. You will have until 1/10/24 to fill these slots with infants or toddlers receiving CDC Subsidy. Documentation will be required.
- GSRP participation will be verified in December.

> **With this funding, will you have the ability to create more openings for Infants and Toddlers?**
> ○ Yes   ○ No
>
> **The program currently has a wait list:**
> ○ Yes   ○ No
>
> **Do you currently have GSRP funding for preschool children enrolled?**
> ○ Yes   ○ No
>
> **Are you planning to apply for GSRP funding in 2024 for preschool children?**
> ○ Yes   ○ No

W-9 Creation/Banking

- In order to be paid for this grant, you will need to include information for tax documents and banking information.
- All payments will be sent through Direct Deposit and will show in your account as Bill.com.
- Programs awarded grants will need to respond to a verification email from Bill.com between 11/27/23 and 12/3/23, or payments will be late.
- Information will NOT be visible to grant reviewers.
- If you have problems or questions, please email the grants team at ITQIGrants@ecic4kids.org.

Information for W-9 Form   **Privacy Act Notice**

*Name (as shown on your income tax return).

*Address (number, street, and apt. or suite no.)

Business name/disregarded entity name, if different from the name above.

*City   *State   *Zip Code
          MI

*Select appropriate box for federal tax classification.   Social Security Number
⦿ Individual/sole proprietor or single-member LLC
○ C Corporation
○ S Corporation   OR
○ Partnership   Employer Identification Number
○ Trust/estate single-member LLC
○ Limited liability company
○ Other (please specify)   *Taxpayer Identification Number, must match Name.

Back to Grants   Save Only

Information for Direct Deposit

If awarded, I hereby authorize, **Child Care Aware® of Michigan**, to initiate credit entries into my bank account listed below.

*Name (as on bank account):

*Financial Institution Routing Number:

*Select type of account:

*Account Number: