



Economic Development
800 4th Avenue East
West Fargo, ND 58078
701-373-5666

Child Care Facility Improvement Grant for Workforce Development Program Overview

Program Purpose and Benefits

The Child Care Facility Improvement Grant for Workforce Development utilizes the Economic Development Sales Tax fund to support child care businesses in the City of West Fargo. This program will help child care providers increase capacity, meet requirements to remain operational, and provide opportunities for new child care businesses to open. The overall goal of this program is to help meet the workforce needs of businesses in West Fargo by improving the capacity of child care in our city to ensure no resident needs to leave the workforce because care is not available.

The Child Care Facility Improvement Grant Program will support specific safety, licensure, and best practice standards to support new, expanding, and existing child care centers and in-home programs.

Program Goals

- Support the child care sector to incentivize capacity growth within the city in effort to support additional opportunities for individuals to return or enter the workforce.
- Foster the retention of child care sector to ensure the existing facilities remain an option for our workforce.
- Support a significant improvement in facility that increases quality, safety, supports the potential for capacity of endurance of operations or capacity for more children.
- Five priorities in order have been identified to assist in reaching our goal for this program (See application section).

Program Availability

- Up to \$1,000,000 may be awarded through this program. If all funds are used, the West Fargo City Commission may opt to allocate additional funds.
- A location may apply for a grant within each application period. The total award will not exceed the maximum award amount. The three application time periods are:
 - Feb. 24, 2023 (Open) – March 15, 2023 (Closed)
Application review March 15 - 21
 - May 29, 2023 (Open) – June 19, 2023 (Closed)
Application review June 19 - 26
 - Aug. 14, 2023 (Open) – Sept. 18, 2023 (Closed)
Application review Sept. 18 – 22

Eligibility

This program is offered through and administered by the City of West Fargo's Economic Development division. To qualify for the grant the applicant must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Business must be located in West Fargo city limits.
 - Businesses in West Fargo Public School District, but not in West Fargo city limits are not eligible.
- Business must be a licensed child care provider with the state of North Dakota and must provide proof of current license.
- Business must be up to date of all payments of taxes and special assessments.
- Improvements must comply with all City of West Fargo zoning and building code requirements.
- Business must be owned by a U.S. citizen or permanent U.S. resident.

Grants are awarded based on the type of provider and potential capacity as listed in the table below. An additional award is available to child care centers for improvements that will increase capacity for infants by one room or eight infants.

Provider Type	Potential Capacity	Maximum Award Amount
In-Home Child Care	7 Children	\$7,500
Group Home Child Care	20+ Children	\$10,000
School Age Center	20 + Children	\$20,000
Early Learning Centers	20+ Children	\$50,000
Infant Room*	8 infants	\$15,000

*Only child care centers are eligible for Infant Room Improvement Award.

*Infant Room Improvement can be awarded in addition to a center's maximum award amount.

Eligible Improvements

- See eligible items worksheet for full list of eligible items for each provider type.
- Worksheet must be completed as part of the grant application process.

Non-Eligible Improvements

- Building permits, title reports, and related fees
- Acquisition of land or buildings, sales taxes, income or property taxes
- Refinancing of existing debt
- Consumables (e.g. food, diapers, cleaning supplies)
- General repair or maintenance work not contributing to the overall interior or exterior impact of the building
- Operating capital or staffing

Funding

Grants are funded using West Fargo's Economic Development Sales Tax.

Process

1. Applicant must complete eligible items worksheet, online application, and provide supporting documents as noted throughout the application.
2. Applications will be reviewed by the Economic Development Manager and scored on a rubric based on the following ranked priorities:
 - a. Increase infant capacity
 - b. Increase capacity for children ages 1-4
 - c. Meet licensing requirements, health codes, and fire regulations
 - d. Increase capacity for children ages 5-12
 - e. Meet the standards of best practices
3. If applicant is deemed ineligible they will be notified by the Economic Development Manager.
4. If applicant is eligible the application will move forward based on the dollar amount requested.
 - a. If the overall dollar amount is less than \$20,000 the Economic Development Manager will bring the request to the West Fargo City Commission for consideration.
 - b. If the overall dollar amount is more than \$20,000 the Economic Development Manager will bring the request to the Economic Development Advisory Committee to make a recommendation to the West Fargo City Commission.
 - c. The West Fargo City Commission may approve or deny any request for any reason.
5. If approved by the West Fargo City Commission the Economic Development Manager works with applicant on a reimbursement process to document expenditures and grant funds.

Grant Award

Grant funding will be awarded upon completion of a project. Applicants must provide verification of all project costs including copies of all paid invoices before funds can be disbursed.

Terms of Default

*Should the business be sold, the incentive may be assumed by the buyer, provided they meet all of the requirements and agree to terms of the Note.

*Should a home that includes an in-home child care be sold before 3 years of acceptance of an award from this grant the City may consider the grant in default and request the funds returned on a case-by-case basis.

*Upon review by the West Fargo City Commission, at the Commission's discretion an applicant may be given up to 60 days to become compliant with the terms of the agreement.

Waivers and Consent: To the extent not prohibited by law, applicant waives the right to protest and/or appeal the decision of the West Fargo City Commission as the grant program is a purely discretionary program with a limited budget.

Release of Funds

By executing this application and supporting documentation, you are indicating that you are personally responsible and liable for the terms of the Program and you understand and agree to be bound by the terms and conditions of the Program. The conditions of the Grant are subject to the West Fargo Childcare Grant specifications and the application packet you have provided and have been approved by the West Fargo City Commission.

Grant funding will be awarded upon a post completion basis only. Applicants must provide verification of all project costs including copies of all paid invoices before any funds may be disbursed.