



County of Onondaga
Office of the County Executive

J. Ryan McMahon II
County Executive

ongov.net

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release: 5.13.2024

Contact: Justin Sayles (315) 857-1773

**County Executive McMahon Announces Applications Now Being Accepted
for 2024 Child Care Enhancement Grant Program in Partnership with
Child Care Solutions**

\$500,000 fund to support improvements to child care facilities in Onondaga County

SYRACUSE, N.Y. – County Executive McMahon today announced that applications are now being accepted for the 2024 Child Care Enhancement Grant Program. This new initiative, first announced at the 2024 State of the County, is to support improvements in child care facilities throughout Onondaga County. This investment will address critical capital needs within the child care sector and bolster the capacity to serve children and families effectively. Five hundred thousand dollars has been allocated towards this effort.

With the child care industry facing significant challenges, including infrastructure limitations, these grants will be directed toward critical capital improvements aimed at upgrading child care facilities. These enhancements will enable child care providers to create nurturing environments that support the healthy development and well-being of young children including safer and more conducive learning environments while also improving operational efficiency.

County Executive McMahon said, “This investment underscores our commitment to support our local child care infrastructure and ensure access to high-quality child-care services for families. The need for safe and reliable child care has never been greater and that need is only growing.”

The funding will be used to address various capital improvement needs, including but not limited to, facility repairs, renovations, safety and security upgrades, playground enhancements, and equipment purchases and upgrades.

Onondaga County is contracting with Child Care Solutions to administer the grant program. Applications can be found at <https://www.childcaresyracuse.org/>.

For more information about the Child Care Enhancement Grant please contact Kathleen Gardiner, Business Advisor, at Child Care Solutions Inc. (315) 446-1220 ext. 332 or email at ccs@childcaresolutionscny.org.

###



Child Care Assistance 101

What is the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)?

- The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) is a publicly funded program that helps families pay for most or all of their child care costs.

Who qualifies for Child Care Assistance?

- *Many families do!* Families may qualify if they:
 - Are working and meet income guidelines:

Family Size	85% SMI for New York
1	\$51,610.13
2	\$67,490.17
3	\$83,370.21
4	\$99,250.25
5	\$115,130.29
6	\$131,010.33

- Are attending school full-time (high school, 2- and 4-year college degrees, vocational, ESL, or literacy programs)
 - Have an active Temporary Assistance case
 - Are experiencing homelessness
 - Are receiving Domestic Violence services
 - Have an open protective services case
 - Are participating in an approved substance abuse program
 - Are experiencing a short-term medical emergency
- Child Care Assistance pays for care for children under the age of 13 (unless your child has special needs)

What is the application process? How long does the application process take?

- Step 1: parent/family submits their application
 - Parent can use OCFS online quiz to see if they are eligible first
 - Parent can call DSS Daycare unit to discuss eligibility
- Step 2: DSS has 30 days (from the day application is submitted) to make an eligibility determination
 - During this time, your Daycare Unit worker might reach out to you (often via mail) for more information, to get paperwork that you forgot to include, etc. The family has 10 days to return information to Daycare Unit Worker.
- Step 3: DSS notifies family if they are eligible for Assistance

- In general, the process can take 1-2 months

I already have childcare. Can I keep my provider? Do I need to use a specific provider?

- No need to use a specific provider! Families using Child Care Assistance find their own provider that best meets their family's needs. Most providers in our community work with the Child Care Assistance Program.

I don't have a childcare provider yet. Where can I find one?

- Contact the Parent Services team at Child Care Solutions. They will be able to provide you with a list of licensed and registered providers in our community who might be able to meet your needs. Child Care Solutions. (315) 446-1220 ext. 303; parenthelp@childcaresolutions.org; www.childcaresolutionscny.org

My family member or friend watches my child(ren), I'm not sure I need this program...

- If your friend, family, or neighbor is watching your child(ren), they can be considered a legally exempt provider and can get paid through this program! Call (315) 435-5683 for more information.

My child has special needs. Can I still use this program?

- Yes! Be sure to talk to your provider and your Day Care Unit worker about your child's special needs. Not only can you use this program, but extra funding will be made available to your provider.

Do I need to be a US Citizen to use this program?

- No. Your child needs to be a US Citizen or have a satisfactory immigration status, but the parent does not.

Do I need to claim child support? What if I have an absentee parent?

- You do NOT need to pursue child support to use this program! In processing your application and determining your need for care, your Day Care Unit worker might inquire into the second parent to see if they can help provide care. They will discuss the situation with you but will never make you pursue child support or put your child in an unsafe care situation.

What are some reasons my application might be denied?

- Your application might be denied because you didn't submit all the necessary paperwork, your income is over the income eligibility guidelines, or your child is over the age of 13.

How long does the program last?

- Once accepted, you will be in the program for 12 months. After 12 months you will need to recertify that your family still qualifies for (and needs) child care assistance. If you do, you can stay in the program for another 12 months.

Family Size Examples:

These are examples of how family size is calculated – they are neither binding nor comprehensive. Each family is different and every family will need to work with their Day Care Unit worker to determine their family size/household income.

Both of the child's parents are living together: When adults live together and are either married or have a child in common, both adults count in the household.

I'm living with a partner that is not my child's legal parent: When adults live together and are not married and do not have a child in common, each adult and their children are considered their own "unit". Your partner would not count in the household.

I have other adults in the house: Adults other than the parent(s)/caretaker(s) of the children that need care generally don't count in the household and don't factor into eligibility.

I'm a single parent and the child's other parent is not involved: The household would consist of the single parent and their child. Child Care Assistance does not require pursual of Child Support, however we do ask for information about the absent parent.