# Family Child Care Capital Grant Program

Administered by MassDevelopment
Funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Department of Early Education and Care

Program Guidelines

Round 2 Pilot

September 2025

## I. OVERVIEW

The Family Child Care Capital Grant Program ("FCC Capital Grant") provides grants to licensed Family Child Care Programs in Massachusetts, as defined in 606 CMR 7.00. Through this program Family Child Care providers can apply for up to $25,000 to support space improvements and build program capacity. This initiative is a part of the Healey-Driscoll Administration's goal to expand access to high quality child care for families and support hardworking educators and child care providers with the resources they need for success.

The Family Child Care Capital Grant Program is funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) and is administered by MassDevelopment. EEC aims to support the healthy growth and development of all children by providing high quality programs and resources for families and communities. MassDevelopment works with a variety of stakeholders including businesses, nonprofits, and communities to stimulate economic growth across the Commonwealth. EEC and MassDevelopment are partnering on this program to support Family Child Care programs that provide critical services to communities across the Commonwealth.

This is the second and final pilot round for the FCC Capital grant. Please note that this is a competitive grant program; pilot program funds are limited and there is no guarantee that every applicant will receive an award.

## II. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

FCC Capital Grants may be used for projects that meet one or more of the following key objectives:

- Increase enrollment up to the provider's current licensed capacity
- Enable providers to increase their current licensed capacity
- Meaningfully improve the quality of care and education that can be provided in the program's physical space

## III. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for an FCC Capital Grant, a child care provider must:

- Operate a Massachusetts-based, licensed in-home Family Child Care Program as defined in 606 CMR 7.00.
    - Non home-based child care centers, municipalities, public school districts, and public or private colleges or universities are not eligible for this program.
- Have an active license from EEC or actively be in the license renewal process with EEC
- Be in regulatory "good standing". Good standing is defined as having no investigations with serious findings, and no legal actions within the last five years.

- Have been actively providing licensed child care for a minimum of four years (continuously or non-continuously) prior to the application submission date.
- Operate a minimum of four days per week.
- Operate their child care program out of a home that they and/or their spouse own, outright or with a mortgage.
- Actively serving children at the time of application.

## IV. ELIGIBLE USES OF FUNDS

FCC Capital Grants can be used for projects that are "fixed and integrated" into the physical environment and are critical for helping the provider meet the objectives outlined in Section II.

*Awarded funds cannot be used for administrative overhead and costs, salaries, staff time or payroll, mortgage payments or rent, utility costs, insurance, or any other operating or working capital costs.* Program funds will not be used to reimburse previously completed work, or work that has begun prior to the execution of a grant agreement with MassDevelopment.

**There are two tiers of eligible projects under this grant:**

**Tier 1: Purchase of Durable Equipment**
Family Child Care providers can apply for funds to purchase and install equipment that is **both:**

- "Durable" defined as equipment that has a useful life of three or more years, and
- "Fixed and integrated" in its physical space. Furniture or other equipment that is easily movable is ineligible under this program.

Eligible uses of grant awards in Tier 1 include, but are not limited to, the installation and purchase of:

- Laundry equipment (washing or drying machines) to exclusively support program operations
- Food storage (refrigerators or freezers) to exclusively support program operations
- Non-portable, fixed interior or exterior play structures
- Security equipment such as cameras and access control systems
    - Information Technology upgrades or purchases are ineligible under this program

Applicants are encouraged to apply for energy efficient equipment to score highly during our review process, as well as take advantage of other energy-related incentives that may be available through www.MassSave.com or their municipal utilities.

**Tier 2: Capital Improvements**
Family Child Care providers can apply for funds to make improvements to the spaces where care is provided. To be eligible for this Tier, applicants must submit photos of the space they intend to utilize capital improvement funds on.

Eligible uses of grant awards in Tier 2 include, but are not limited to:

- Improvements to exterior spaces to enable the use of outdoor areas, including resurfacing of pavement, installation of fencing, addition of deck or patio area.
- Improvements to heating, air conditioning, and ventilation systems, including windows and Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) equipment, especially as it results in replacement of combustion heating systems in favor of high-efficiency heat pumps, and other energy efficiency measures for space improvements.
- Reconfiguration, renovation or expansion of indoor spaces, including learning environments, play areas, rest areas and gross motor rooms.

- Renovation, repair or addition of a bathroom that specifically serves the people in care.
- Replacement of flooring to promote greater health and safety for people in care.
- Emergency repairs and system upgrades that impact health and safety including roof replacement, upgraded electrical and life safety systems.
- Modifications to the licensed space to allow for greater accessibility or other improvements to support inclusion of children and adults with special needs or disabilities.
- Other projects that enhance the quantity and quality of the space to facilitate the enrollment of additional children and/or enhance the experience of people in the program.

Grant funds may be used to pay for materials, labor and equipment necessary to complete the proposed project. Applicants may not use more than 10% of awarded funds on "soft costs" such as design or architectural drawings, legal fees or permitting costs.

Applicants can apply for both Tier 1 and Tier 2 projects; however, the value of the combined awards may not exceed $25,000. Successful applicants may not receive an additional award in the same project Tier during future funding rounds of this grant.

Applications will be reviewed to determine whether proposed costs are within reasonable industry standards for pricing (materials and labor). Grantees may be required to adjust scopes of work or contractors prior to signing their grant award contracts with MassDevelopment.

## V. EVALUATION CRITERIA

MassDevelopment will select grant recipients through a competitive application process. The selection committee, consisting of representatives of MassDevelopment and EEC, will evaluate each submitted proposal using the following criteria:

- **Alignment with Program Objectives:** Applicants will need to clearly articulate how the proposed project will increase enrollment, capacity, and/or improve the quality of care provided by the Family Child Care program.
- **Project Feasibility:** Applicants must demonstrate that the proposed project is physically and financially feasible, aligned with industry cost standards.
- **Capacity for Execution:** Applicants will need to provide detailed information about the project, including scopes of work, costs estimates, and budgets from appropriately licensed, third-party vendors and contractors.
- **Timeline to Completion:** Applicants should outline the timeline to project completion, including any information related to required municipal permitting.
- **Diversity:** Awards will reflect the geographic and demographic diversity within the Commonwealth.

Preference will be given to applicants that:

- Enroll families who receive public child care vouchers and/or child care subsidies
- Serve individuals with special needs or disabilities
- Provide the greatest number of hours of care, above and beyond the minimum 4 days per week required for applying to this program

- Provide care during hours when it is most difficult for working families to find care (e.g. early mornings, evenings and weekends).
- Operate their program within an area with a very low Child Opportunity Index and/or a Gateway City.
- Are planning upgrades and equipment purchases that prioritize energy efficiency.

**Inquiry Period for Denied Awards**
Providers who have their applications denied may submit a request for review through the grants help desk. Providers will have 10 business days from the date of the denial notification to submit this request. Requests for review submitted after this period or outside of the helpdesk will not be considered.

## APPLICATION PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Applicants are invited to apply to the program through the LEAD Portal.

For applicants to receive consideration, their application must be complete, including:

- Current program description which includes business goals and services provided
- Description and objectives of proposed project or improvements
- Budget and timeline supporting the request
- Documentation to support budget estimates. For Tier 1 projects this can be a quote from a vendor or a screenshot of an e-commerce website demonstrating the cost of durable goods being purchased and installed. For Tier 2 projects, applicants are required to provide a project cost estimate from a licensed contractor.
- Providers must provide proof of homeownership in the form of a municipal property card, deed, or mortgage statements.

Award of a grant under this RFP will be subject to the approval of MassDevelopment's Board of Directors. The selection schedule is as follows:

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| Program overview videos posted online | September 15, 2025 |
| Deadline for all questions | September 30, 2025 |
| Guidelines and application available | October 1, 2025 |
| Application deadline | October 31st, 2025 (11:59pm) |
| Grant notifications | Anticipated for Spring 2026 |

Applications are available online will be due electronically by 11:59pm on October 31, 2025. MassDevelopment will not accept applications submitted via hand delivery, mail or courier service. Late submissions and incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

Questions regarding the application may be directed in writing by emailing the grants help desk eecgrantsupport@mtxb2b.com or 1-833-600-2074 and will be posted with answers on MassDevelopment's website on September 30, 2025.

Grant notifications will be provided via email in Spring of 2026.

## VII. GRANT TERMS

**Amount of Grant Award:** The maximum grant award is limited to $25,000 per applicant. Applications for projects exceeding the maximum grant amount will be considered if accompanied by evidence that the applicant has access to additional funds to complete the portion not covered by the grant.

**Timetable and Disbursement:** Seventy five percent of awarded grants will be distributed directly to successful applicants upon receipt of an executed grant agreement and evidence that they have or will secure products or services from a vendor. Twenty-five percent of the grant award will be held back pending MassDevelopment's final certification of project completion which will include either an on-site visit or submission of photos documenting work completion, as well as verification of final payments to vendors. Please note that receipt of grant funds may have tax implications for awardees. We recommend that providers consult with their tax professionals on this topic.

**Expectations of Grantees:** Grantees are required to remain in operation providing continuous service at the site stated in the grant application for at least two years after signing the grant agreement. Grantees who relocate or are unable to stay in the Family Child Care business may be required to repay all or a portion of the grant based on how long they provided care to children after their grant agreement with MassDevelopment was signed. Incomplete projects may also be subject to similar repayment schedules. The Department of Early Education and Care may exercise rights to withhold, recoup or intercept funds designated for a grantee through the Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) Grants or the Massachusetts Billing Accounts Receivable System if a project is not completed by the agreed upon date or if funds are used for a purpose other than what was listed in the grantee's application, without permission from MassDevelopment.

All Grantees will be required to submit an annual survey for two years post award to MassDevelopment quantifying impact and outcomes of the project improvements.

**Contractor Policy:** Grantees will be required to use licensed contractors for Tier 2 projects. Additionally, grantees are required to check and certify that they will not knowingly use vendors listed as debarred or suspended on any of the lists contained at the Commonwealth's Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance website. The grant agreement will contain a more detailed Contractor Policy as well as a Contractor Certification Form that must be signed by contractors that grantees hire for their projects.