



**Lucas County  
Family and Children First Council**  
Under the Administrative Agency of the  
Board of Lucas County Commissioners

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**  
For the selection of provider(s) for:  
**Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Services**

**Release Date:** Wednesday, October 20, 2021  
**Applications Due:** Monday, November 8, 2021

The Mission of Lucas County Family and Children First Council is to support strong, nurturing and healthy families by creating and sustaining a collaborative, accessible and effective system of services.

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## I. TIMETABLE

RFA Release Date **Wednesday, October 20, 2021**

Deadline for Submitting Applications: **Monday, November 8, 2021**

**Late applications will not be accepted**

**Submission:** Email to Lori Herrick, Early Childhood Program Assistant, at [lherrick@nwoca.net](mailto:lherrick@nwoca.net)

Notification of Awards **Monday, December 20, 2021 (contingent on approval by EHS Policy Committee and Lucas County Family and Children First Council)**

Start-Up Period **December 21, 2021 – January 14, 2022**

Program Implementation **January 14, 2022 – July 31, 2022**

## II. APPLICATION SUMMARY and GUIDANCE

**A. Application Name:** Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership

### **B. Purpose**

The Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) program supports low-income, working families through the provision of high-quality, full day, full year early care and education programming for infants and toddlers. Children and their families also receive the comprehensive education, health, development, and family support services that are required in Early Head Start (EHS). The program is delivered through collaboration between Early Head Start programs and child care centers to meet requirements of the federal Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) and the Head Start Act as well as requirements of federal and state child care licensing regulations, the state's Quality Rating Improvement System (SUTQ), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and state Early Learning and Development Standards. EHS-CCP services are delivered through a combination of Head Start funds, child care subsidies, SUTQ funds, and CACFP reimbursement.

### **C. Qualified Applicants**

Agencies operating in Lucas County, Ohio may apply to be an EHS Child Care Partner in Lucas County if they meet the following criteria:

- Location in Lucas County, Ohio

- Agency is licensed for and serving infants and toddlers from birth to 36 months of age
- Agency has capacity to add Early Head Start slots (1 or 2 classrooms of 8) or convert a current classroom to an EHS classroom (i.e., reduce group size to 8, add second teacher)
- Agency has been awarded a 1- or 2-star SUTQ rating and is working to increase its rating, or has been awarded and maintains a 3-, 4-, or 5-star rating
- Agency participates in the state's publicly funded child care (PFCC) program
- The majority of parents of enrolled children are eligible for at least part-week child care subsidy (parents work and/or attend school)
- Center receives Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) reimbursement to help fund nutritious food for infants and toddlers
- The majority of parents of enrolled children have incomes at or below 100% of poverty or are in one of these categories:
  - Child in foster care (Lucas County Children Services custody)
  - Parent receives TANF or SSI benefits
  - Family is homeless (federal McKinney-Vento definition)

**D. Target Population and Service Area**

The target population for the EHS-CCP program in Lucas County is children and families living in the following zip codes: 43613, 43614, 43615, and 43623. Although agencies are not required to be located in one of these zip codes, the agency must be able to demonstrate that it serves children who live in one or more of the targeted zip codes and is accessible to these families (e.g., by being located on or near a bus line).

**E. Number of Contracts and Funds Available**

Total funding of up to \$84,820 will be available during the program implementation period. Up to two awards will be made. Services will be provided to a total of 16 children. Lucas County Family Council (LCFC) reserves the right to determine the number and amount of awards.

**F. Due Date**

Applications including any required forms and required attachments must be received by 4:30 pm on Monday, November 8, 2021.

**G. Authorization**

Authorization of Federal funds for this program is contained in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number 93.600, Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships.

## H. Goals & Scope of Services

The goals of the EHS-CCP are to:

1. Expand high quality early learning and development opportunities for infants and toddlers;
2. Establish partnerships with child care providers who agree to meet high standards of quality;
3. Enhance and support early learning settings;
4. Provide new, full-day, comprehensive services that meet the needs of working families; and
5. Prepare children for the transition to preschool.

Agencies that are selected through this Request for Application and approved by Lucas County Family and Children First Council will contract with LCFC to provide the following services through partnership among LCFC's Early Head Start staff, center staff, families, and community partners:

1. Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Eligibility and Attendance:  
Upon selection, partner will begin actively recruiting potentially eligible children from within the child care program and from the target zip codes, assist families in applying for and maintaining child care subsidies, orient families who are selected for the program, and actively encourage daily attendance (goal of 85% average daily attendance) and parent participation. Partners are expected to reach full enrollment within 30 days of selection as an EHS site.
2. Staffing and Staff Qualifications:  
Teachers in EHS classrooms must have at least an infant/toddler CDA credential, be enrolled in an AA program in early childhood or a related degree with infant/toddler coursework, or be enrolled in an infant/toddler CDA credential program to be completed within 18 months once contract is awarded. In addition, infant and toddler teachers must have the training and experience necessary to develop consistent, stable, and supportive relationships with very young children.

The agencies selected for EHS-CCP contracts must ensure that all teachers working with EHS-enrolled children meet all required qualifications required by HSPPS, state licensing, and SUTQ. For new teaching positions, agencies must recruit both qualified staff and those who are culturally and linguistically representative of the families and community served.

Agencies must designate staff to provide supervision to teaching staff; serve as a communication liaison between the agency and LCFC's staff; monitor program

performance; ensure required data are entered into the ChildPlus and TS Gold data systems; and provide detailed reports to LCFC to meet reporting requirements of LCFC, the grantee (GLCAP), and the Office of Head Start.

3. Provide high quality early care and education for classrooms of eight children with two teachers per group, with mixed ages of infants and toddlers to help ensure continuity of care. Each group of children will be comprised of no more than 4 children who sleep in cribs.
4. Provide comprehensive services that support school readiness, including the components prescribed in the HSPPS. The federal performance standards (requirements) for EHS program operations can be found at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/45-cfr-chap-xiii/part-1302-program-operations>. These standards provide guidance in the following program areas:
  - a. Child health and development
  - b. Health and safety
  - c. Education and early childhood development
  - d. Family partnerships
  - e. Community partnerships
  - f. Management and fiscal systems and procedures; and
  - g. Disabilities services
5. Ensure child health and well-being, including screenings, health and safety, nutrition, oral health and mental health. Health, nutrition, and oral health practices must follow the guidelines set by the CDC for early care and education/child care programs: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/child-care-guidance.html>
6. Engage families in meaningful ways in the program, support families in setting goals for themselves and their child(ren), and experience smooth transitions into and out of the program.
7. Ensure full participation of teaching staff in all required LCFC Early Head Start training opportunities and coaching by LCFC staff, whether virtual or in-person. Monitor teaching staff for completion of 15 professional development hours per program year.

## **I. Technology Requirements**

EHS Child Care Partners will be required to use two data systems for reporting all aspects of service delivery described in Section H and for documenting and tracking

ongoing child assessments. Child assessment data are entered into Teaching Strategies Gold's online system (see the TS Gold Touring Guide at <https://go.teachingstrategies.com/National-Touring-Guide-Registration.html> for more information).

All other data is entered into ChildPlus, a software system designed for Head Start programs to support federal reporting, monitoring, and documentation of comprehensive services. For more information on Child Plus, see <http://childplus.com/>.

System Requirements: For the best experience, we suggest a device that can run ChildPlus directly. We would recommend any device running Microsoft Windows 7, 8, or 10 Professional for the Head Start professional. In addition to running ChildPlus, you'll have access to applications like Outlook, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. ChildPlus Mobile works best with iPad 3rd generation (released in 2012) model and higher. The iPad 2nd generation (released in 2011) model will work with ChildPlus Mobile, but it is not recommended.

TS Gold has an app that will operate on either Android or Apple devices. TS GOLD online works on any PC (Windows 7 or later) or Mac (OS X 10.9 or later) with a high-speed internet connection. Agencies will need a cellular data plan or access to Wi-Fi in order to use the TS Gold App or ChildPlus Mobile on mobile devices.

#### **J. Program Period and Budget Period**

Selected agencies will be given 30 days from notice of award to meet staffing and enrollment requirements. The initial contract period will be from December 21, 2021 through July 31, 2022. The program and budget period will be extended annually within the five year grant period through amendment of the service agreement, contingent on availability of funding and program and fiscal performance. The annual program and fiscal period is August 1 through July 31 beginning with August 1, 2022.

#### **K. Acknowledgment and Late Applications**

Email acknowledgment that the application was submitted by the due date will be provided upon submission. Applications submitted late will not be accepted.

#### **L. Successful Applicants**

The successful applicant will receive official notification in the form of a letter from the Associate Director of Early Childhood. The selected service provider(s) will be required to enter into an agreement outlining the purchase of services and specifying the terms under which funds will be reimbursed. A signed contract with the Board of Lucas County Commissioners as Administrative Agency to the LCFC allows for expenditure of contract funds.

## **M. Unsuccessful Applicants**

Applicants that will not be funded for the program period will receive written notification in the form of a letter from the Associate Director of Early Childhood. Final awards/agreements are at the sole discretion of LCFC. There will be no appeal of LCFC's decision.

## **N. Review Criteria and Selection Process**

Child care partners will be selected through a multiple phase process.

### **Phase 1: Application Review and Presentation**

The first phase of the process will be a review of the application by a panel of volunteer reviewers. The application review criteria are provided in Appendix B. Applications will be judged according to the extent to which the applicant agency demonstrates:

- Application format meets requirements of RFA
- Provision of quality early care and education services to low income infants, toddlers, and their families
- Strong plan for staffing and supervision, including plan for:
  - Meeting educational qualifications
  - Recruitment and retention of qualified staff
  - Providing sufficient staffing to provide continuity of caregiving and time for teaching staff to participate in professional development; observe, assess, plan, and document; and participate in educational home visits, parent teacher conferences, mental health consultations, IFSP and transition meetings;
- Adequate indoor and outdoor facilities, equipment, and materials
- Clear plan for meeting and maintaining EHS group size and ratio requirements and for the infant/toddler educational program (screening, assessment, curriculum, individualization, and other program requirements)
- Strong budget and fiscal model (adequate and stable revenues, fiscal monitoring)
- Ability to partner with community organizations to meet the needs of children and families

Applicants will also be invited to do a brief presentation about their child care program and services to the review panel. LCFC will inform applicants of the date, time, and location of the presentations.

### **Phase 2: Site Visit**

The second phase of partner selection will involve a site visit and fiscal/administrative interview. Agencies that receive the highest scores on the application will be contacted to schedule a site visit of the child care center and classroom where EHS-CCP services are proposed to be delivered, along with an

interview with the center administrative staff who are most familiar with the proposed services and fiscal operations. During this time, LCFC staff will further assess the center's ability to meet the requirements described in this RFA and the applicant agency will have an opportunity to share and obtain additional information that will assist in partner selection.

### **Phase 3: Agency Selection and Agreements**

In the final phase of partner selection, LCFC will select the agency(s) that will provide EHS-CCP services for 16 infants and toddlers and obtain approvals from the EHS Policy Committee and Family and Children First Council to issue service agreements with the selected agency(s). Upon executed agreement and invoicing, the contracted agency(s) will be reimbursed at a standard rate for operating expenses incurred in the delivery of EHS-CCP services to enrolled children and families.

### **O. Public Records**

All submitted applications are subject to open public records laws. Selected proposals may be reviewed at the LCFC office by appointment only by calling (419) 725-6177.

### **P. Submission of Application**

The following must be submitted to the email address below:

1. Cover Sheet with signature (form available on Lucas County website)
2. Program Narrative
3. SUTQ Self-Assessment or Continuous Improvement Plan (ODJFS)
4. EHS/Child Care Center Partnership Selection Guide

**Email to:** Lori Herrick, Early Childhood Program Assistant [lherrick@nwoca.net](mailto:lherrick@nwoca.net)

## **III. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND FORMAT**

### **A. Formatting Requirements**

The narrative response portion of the application must be produced using 8-1/2" x 11" page size, utilizing 12-point font, 1.5" line spacing and 1" margins. There is no page limit.

### **B. Cover Sheet**

Complete the Cover Sheet (**Attachment A**) to clearly identify Agency/organization by:

- a. Name (include dba's or aka's if they exist)
- b. Address
- c. Employer Identification Number (EIN)

- d. Tax exempt status (if applicable)
- e. Date of most recent Equal Opportunity Employment statement
- f. Audit status
- g. Must be signed by an individual who is authorized to contractually bind the applicant's organization. If submitting by email, cover sheet must be signed and scanned to email or signed with electronic signature software (e.g., DocuSign, Eversign, HelloSign).

### **C. Budget and Finance**

The Lucas County Family and Children First Council has budgeted up to \$84,820 for EHS-Child Care Partnership contracts for the initial contract period through July 31, 2022.

#### **a. Per diem rate and reimbursement**

All agencies selected through this Request for Applications (RFA) process will be paid a daily rate per contracted slot to provide Early Head Start services. LCFC has established a per diem reimbursement rate based on assumptions related to enrollment, attendance rate, other sources of income including quality improvement dollars and percent of children on childcare subsidy, lost subsidy days, staffing, salary and benefits. The rate is adjusted up or down based on the overall approved EHS budget, COLA funds made available by the Office of Head Start, and other supplemental funds. Selected providers will be reimbursed each month using the standard rate, number of days of service, and number of contracted slots.

The budget LCFC used to arrive at the per diem rate assumes a size of 8 children (mix of infants and toddlers) per classroom with two teachers and a floater, provision of diapers, wipes, and formula at no cost to the family, other operational expenses necessary to provide high quality infant and toddler care and education, and the use of other sources of revenue, including ODJFS Child Care Subsidy, Step Up to Quality funding, and Child and Adult Care Food Program reimbursement.

#### **b. Administrative Costs**

The Head Start Act in Section 644(b) and HSPPS 45 CFR 1303.5 limit the amount of funds that may be charged as development and administrative costs to 15% of the total costs of the program. According to the HSPPS, "development and administrative costs mean costs incurred in accordance with an approved Head Start budget which do not directly related to the provision of program component services, including services to children with disabilities." Agencies must have a system in place, including adequate procedures, to ensure that the 15% administrative costs limitation requirement is met to avoid non-compliance.

### **c. Non-Federal Match**

The Head Start Act (Sec. 640(b)) requires only 80% of approved program costs be covered by the federal grant, and 20% be covered by the program in the form of non-federal match. This match can be any combination of cash or in-kind contributions, but must be well documented by the program. There are also very specific requirements related to the valuation of in-kind contributions. One of the largest sources of in-kind contribution is parent's time with their children at home on curriculum related activities. If the agency is selected to be an EHS partner, LCFC staff will work with the agency to provide technical assistance and tools for tracking and reporting non-federal match.

### **D. Program Information and Narrative**

In order to obtain a comprehensive description of the agency's child care program and enable LCFC to select the agency(s) with the best fit for the EHS-CCP program, please complete the following:

#### **1. EHS-Child Care Center Partnership Selection Guide**

Review and complete the attached guide (**Attachment B**) and submit the guide with the agency's application.

#### **2. SUTQ Self-Assessment or Continuous Improvement Plan**

Provide a copy of the most recent self-assessment (1 star applicants only) or continuous improvement plan submitted to ODJFS.

#### **3. Program Narrative**

Provide a detailed narrative describing the agency's current child care program, the children and families who are currently served, and the agency's plan for meeting the requirements of the EHS-CCP program described in this Request for Applications. Make sure to address the following areas in the narrative:

##### **General Information**

- Organizational description
- Why the center is interested, willing and able to be considered as an EHS Child Care partner
- How the center's mission is supportive of comprehensive nature of EHS services
- Current/past history partnering with EHS or HS programs, if applicable
- Community partnerships for serving children and families

##### **Recruitment and enrollment**

- Current methods for recruitment and enrollment of infants and toddlers
- Describe current enrollment process into Infant and Toddler classrooms
- Capacity to serve additional infants and toddlers
- Center's current enrollment and waitlist status overall

- Steps center takes to help parents with subsidy application and redetermination
- Experience serving children categorically eligible for EHS: children/families who are homeless, children with disabilities, children in foster care, and parents receiving TANF or SSI

### **Quality Indicators**

- Educational and social emotional curricula used with infants and toddlers
- Screening and assessment tools used with infants and toddlers
- How information from screening and assessment is used
- Process for transitioning children from infant and toddler classrooms to preschool

### **Comprehensive Services**

- How the center assesses and supports families' needs
- Family engagement activities including engagement of men in children's lives
- Health, nutrition, and oral health practices
- Supports for children's mental health and social-emotional well-being
- Process when developmental or behavioral concerns are identified

### **Personnel and Professional Development**

- Plan for ensuring adequate staffing to meet the following requirements: (1) maintaining 2 teachers in the classroom at all times, (2) providing time during work day for screening, assessment, planning, documentation, and participating in coaching, mental health consultations, transition and IFSP meetings, (3) attending pre-service and ongoing professional development (minimum 15 hours annually), and (4) conducting two home visits and two parent-teacher conferences with each child's family at times convenient for families
- Support provided to staff for achieving and maintaining educational qualifications (infant/toddler CDA or equivalent)
- Process for orienting, providing ongoing training, supervising and supporting teachers, including who provides these activities
- Staffing plan for other required functions: (1) direct supervision of teaching staff (including observations, supportive/reflective supervision, performance reviews and professional development plans), (2) data entry in both Child Plus and TS Gold systems (see Technology section), (3) monitoring of program performance, and (4) submission of budgets and invoices, fiscal monitoring

### **Indoor and Outdoor Space and Facilities**

- What facility changes would be needed to accommodate at least 8 additional infants and toddlers? (To accommodate 35 square feet per child, usable space excluding common areas)

- What facility changes would be needed to accommodate an outdoor play area for infants and toddlers? (At least 75 square feet usable space per child)
- What facility changes would be needed to accommodate evacuation of children with disabilities and cribs?

### **E. Liability Coverage**

Prior to contracting, the agency/organization must demonstrate that it carries reasonable amounts of student accident insurance and liability insurance for accidents on their premises. Certificate of Insurance from the organization's insurance carrier must be submitted with the contract if selected. In addition, Lucas County must be identified as an additional insured for the period.

## **IV. ATTACHMENTS AND APPENDICES**

### **A. Attachments**

1. **Attachment A:** Cover Sheet
2. **Attachment B:** EHS-Child Care Center Partnership Selection Guide

### **B. Appendices**

1. **Appendix 1:** Application Review Form

**APPENDIX 1: Application Review Form  
Lucas County Family Council  
Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership**

Applicant Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Required Responses to Application</b>	<b>Maximum Score</b>	<b>Reviewer Comments</b>
1. Application meets requirements of RFA including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application</li> <li>• Attachment A: Cover Sheet</li> <li>• Attachment B: Partner Selection Guide</li> <li>• Supplemental materials</li> </ul>	10	
2. Provision of quality early care and education to low income infants, toddlers, and families	20	
3. Program personnel are well-qualified by training and/or experience for their roles in the program. Provides clear plan for recruiting and retaining staff, meeting staff qualifications, and supporting professional development.	20	
4. Applicant organization has adequate facilities (indoor and outdoor). Describes any equipment or facility deficiencies that will need to be addressed.	10	
5. Provides clear plan for meeting ratio, curriculum, assessment, program planning, and other program requirements	20	
6. Strong budget and fiscal model	10	
7. Evidence of ability to partner with community organizations to meet needs of children and families	10	
<b>Total Score (total possible=100)</b>		
• IRS letter approving non-tax exempt status (Non-Profit only)	YES NO	
• Copy of audit management letter	YES NO	