



Early Childhood Affordability Grant Program

The City of Ashland is accepting grant applications for the Early Childhood Affordability Grant Program for the 2025/2026 fiscal year (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026).

Purpose

Ashland is an early learning and childcare desert, and the City Council has developed this program with the express purpose of increasing affordability and access to quality early learning and childcare programs for the benefit of working families.

The Grant Program's Goals Are to:

- Address Ashland's need for expanded early childhood care services
- Respond to households seeking affordability & financial stability
- Attract and retain a local workforce through enhanced quality of life and affordability
- Reinforce & propel kindergarten readiness in collaboration with partners
- Support economic development in Ashland

Program Funding:

Up to \$135,000 will be available for distribution under the Early Childhood Affordability Grant Program.

Additionally, the Ashland City Council has authorized funding only through the 2025/27 Biennium.

Funding in future years is not guaranteed.

Program Structure:

1. Program providers may apply for the Early Childhood Affordability Grant Program funding in any of the following categories:
 - a. Sliding Scale Scholarships
 - b. Infrastructure Investment
 - c. Staffing Support, Special Needs Integrated Programming, and/or Behavioral Support.
2. Applications are received and reviewed by the Affordable Childcare and Early Learning Ad Hoc Committee and the City of Ashland Finance Department.
3. Upon completion of its review, the committee makes award recommendations.
4. Recommendations are presented to the City Manager for final approval of grant awards.
5. Each provider/grant recipient reports quarterly on the progress toward grant award goals as outlined under "Reporting" below.

Eligibility:

To be eligible for Early Childhood Affordability Grant Funding, childcare providers must meet the following criteria:

1. Have an active childcare license IN GOOD STANDING with the Child Care Licensing Division (CCLD) of the State of Oregon's Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC).
2. Be a legal entity currently registered to do business in the State of Oregon.
3. Be located within Ashland City limits and provide programming within the City of Ashland.
4. Carry liability insurance as follows:
 - a. Commercial General Liability, Amount \$2M Per Occurrence / Aggregate \$3M with the City listed as an additional insured.
 - b. For those transporting children: Commercial Auto Liability, Amount \$2M Per Occurrence.
 - c. Sexual Abuse/Molestation Liability Insurance, Amount \$1M Per Occurrence / Aggregate \$2M.
 - d. An applicant may submit a letter from an insurance provider stating that, if awarded the grant, the childcare provider will obtain the necessary insurance levels.
5. Preference will be given to programs striving to provide full-time, 5-day-a-week care and those serving infants and/or toddlers.
6. Providers awarded the grant will be required to provide Abuse Prevention Training for all childcare provider staff. If the provider does not already have training in place, the City will provide a reference to an approved training course.

Instructions for Completing All Grant Applications

A Complete Application Includes:

1. The "City of Ashland Early Childhood Affordability Grant Application," which includes a description of the program's purpose, rationale for the funding request, complete explanation of procedures to be followed in carrying out the proposed project, and line-item budget with explanation for all major budget items.
2. Documentation of an active childcare license with the State of Oregon Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC), Child Care Licensing Division (CCLD).
3. Proof of insurance commensurate with the coverage levels above.
4. Documentation of the organization's financial viability (990 tax form, recent income tax filings, liability insurance coverage, etc.).
5. Pricing and rate information.
 - a. Note – if awarded grant funding, a provider may not increase their agreed rates to the households participating in the scholarship program for the duration of the award period.

6. Documentation of non-profit status, if applicable.

Additional Instructions the Grant Application

A. Grant Funds for Sliding Scale Scholarships

1. Fully describe your project, including the need you are addressing and how this investment will solve the need.
2. Describe how you will work with families in your program, and applying to your program to assess need and award scholarships to qualified households.
 - a. The city will not assess individual households. This is the responsibility of the program provider.
 - b. Households receive affordability scholarships through June 2026.
 - i. The Early Childhood Affordability Grant Program serves households at or below 200% of the Jackson County Median Income.

Household Size	200% of Jackson County Median Income
2	\$158,526
3	\$192,344
4	\$199,416
5	\$168,758
6	\$209,862
7 or more	\$295,800

3. Scholarships must be awarded according to the following criteria:
 - a. Scholarship recipient is an Ashland resident, or an employee of an Ashland based business.
 - b. Scholarship recipients are between the ages of 0 and 5 years, excluding children enrolled in kindergarten.
 - c. Scholarship recipients demonstrate a financial need.
 - i. Financial need is defined as a household earning at or below 200% of the Jackson County Median Income.
 - d. Financial needs must be established by the household's most recent W-2, or pay stub, and verified by the early learning service provider.
4. Reporting requirements:

- a. All Early Childhood Affordability Grant recipients must provide quarterly reporting to the City of Ashland. Reporting requirements are necessary to ensure appropriate use of funds, evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot program, and assess results for future planning.
- b. Provide a summary narrative of scholarship work completed, including:
 - i. Total number of scholarships awarded, and number of families served.
 - ii. Attendance of scholarship recipients (number attending 90% of the time, 75% of the time, less than 50% of program time).
 - iii. Average scholarship award value, and scholarship award value range (smallest vs. largest scholarship).
 - iv. Total enrollment without the Early Childhood Affordability Grant dollars versus total enrollment with the grant dollars.
 - v. Current waitlist count, if any.
- c. Provide a revenue and expenditure statement, or profit and loss statement, demonstrating the cashflow of grant dollars.
- d. If applicable, indicate if the Early Childhood Affordability Grant dollars supporting scholarships enabled your program to use other monies for investment in quality of service, curriculum, educators, and/or infrastructure.

B. Grant Funds for Infrastructure Projects:

1. Fully describe your project, including the need you are addressing and how this investment will solve the need.
2. For projects between \$0 and \$24,999 Include two quotes. If the project is between \$25,000 and \$150,000, then provide three quotes. If three quotes are not reasonably available, fewer will suffice, but the applicant shall make a written record of the effort made to obtain those quotes or proposals.
3. Provide proof of site control – for example deed, property tax statement, lease agreement or a long-term rental agreement.
4. If renting or leasing, provide documentation of approval of the property owner.
5. Give your complete schedule for installation and performance to schedule milestones.
6. Reporting requirements:
 - a. All Early Childhood Affordability Grant recipients must provide quarterly reporting to the City of Ashland. Reporting requirements are necessary to ensure appropriate use of funds, evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot program, and assess results for future planning.
 - b. Provide a summary narrative of infrastructure work completed, including:
 - i. Copies of permits required for installation, if required (example, fencing for a play area)

- ii. Provide a revenue and expenditure statement, or profit and loss statement, demonstrating the cashflow of grant dollars.
- c. Upon completion, provide an inspection report if appropriate, or photo of the completed installation.

C. Grant Funds for Staffing, Special Needs Inclusive Programming, and/or Behavioral Support Programming:

1. Fully describe your project, including the need you are addressing and how this investment will solve the need. Include the following:
 - a. Number of staff to be hired.
 - b. Indicate the number expected to be part-time and full-time, part-year and full-year.
 - c. Indicate the number of children to be supported by the grant funds.
2. Reporting requirements:
 - a. All Early Childhood Affordability Grant recipients must provide quarterly reporting to the City of Ashland. Reporting requirements are necessary to ensure appropriate use of funds, evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot program, and assess results for future planning.
 - b. Provide a summary narrative of what work was completed, including information about your program capacity and/or service impact of additional staff on programming offered.
 - c. Provide a revenue and expenditure statement, or profit and loss statement, demonstrating the cashflow of grant dollars.

Final Note: Underused funding shall be subject to recapture by the City of Ashland and may be re-awarded to other programs or held in the General Fund for investment, as recommended by the Affordable Childcare and Early Learning Ad Hoc Committee.

Providers may be required to comply with Ashland's living wage requirement. According to Ashland Municipal Code, if the amount of the grant is \$24,050.68 or more, Consultant is required to comply with Chapter 3.12 of the Ashland Municipal Code by paying a living wage, as defined in that chapter, to all employees performing Work under the grant agreement and to any Subcontractor who performs 50% or more of the Work under the grant agreement.