

Questions and Responses for Wednesday March 12 through Friday March 14.

RFA B QUESTIONS	RESPONSES
APPLICATION	
Who is eligible to apply for Early Start CT?	All licensed Child Care Centers, Group Child Care Homes, and Family Child Care Homes are eligible to apply. Licensed-exempt programs, like public school preschools, are also eligible to apply.
In the Space Types and Funding Capacities tab, what number should we enter here?	The number and type of spaces provided in this tab of the application is equal to the number of Early Start CT spaces the program is requesting.
Our program is planning to move to a new location, should I apply using the current operator license and address? Or the new address?	Programs must apply based on their program's <u>current</u> information.
Can a program apply only for spaces for a preschool summer program to help with readiness for Kindergarten?	No, preschool spaces are only available to provide early care and education for either 10 months per year or 12 months per year.
Where do I enter my program name and license number?	Program name and license information is entered on the <i>Site Information</i> tab within the RFA B Application.
Can a program apply for school-day/school-year spaces?	Yes, programs should apply for the type of spaces that will best fit the needs of the children and families they serve.
How many points do School Day/School Year spaces receive?	Information on the evaluation process can be found on the Early Start RFA B website . There is additional information available in the recorded Pre-bid Conference held March 13, 2025 .
Does my program have to be working with Elevate in order to apply for the funding?	Elevate is OEC's quality improvement system. Programs are not required to be engaged with Elevate in order to apply.
I need help with my application, what should I do?	Technical assistance is available for IT support only. Programs who are experiencing issues with entering information, advancing through the application, or submitting the application should email oecc.rfp.eceqi@ct.gov and request IT support.
I am a family child care home and already submitted my application. I would like to join one of the existing state-funded FCC Intermediaries, what should I do?	Family Child Care Homes that already receive state-funding through an Intermediary, will have any additional spaces awarded through RFA B added to the Early Start CT Contract under their current intermediary.
Will the application be translated into Spanish?	No, the application is only available in English.

We are planning to consolidate program sites with construction taking approximately 9 months. Should I apply for the additional spaces now?	Programs in the process of opening may apply, but all requirements for Early Start CT are still required.
What reporting will be required of programs and how often?	Reporting requirements for state funded programs are outlined in General Policy A-03 . Please note, all General Policies will be updated in the coming months for Early Start CT and the current policies may change.
What is the deadline to submit RFA B?	RFA B applications are due by 5:00 pm on Friday, March 28, 2025.
When will I know if I have been approved or not?	Award letters will be sent to program contacts.
Can I make edits to my RFA B application before the application end date if I already submitted?	<p>Yes, programs can go in through the link for the RFA B application and need to use the same License Number to verify and it will give you the option to update and override the existing application.</p> <p>Programs who experience an issue with updating their information, advancing through the application, or re-submitting the application should email oecefp@ct.gov and request IT support.</p>
GENERAL EARLY START CT RULES & REQUIREMENTS	
What are the requirements for Early Start CT funding?	Programs interested in Early Start CT should review the current OEC General Policies for State-funded programs on the OEC website. OEC General Policies for State Funded Programs .
Who is responsible for enrolling families in Early Start CT spaces? The OEC or the program?	Programs are responsible for determining family eligibility and enrolling families in Early Start CT spaces within their program.
Who is eligible for Early Start CT spaces?	Eligibility information can be found in the OEC General Policy B-03 .
How are Early Start CT funds applied to a child's weekly tuition?	Early Start CT programs will receive based on utilization of state-funded spaces. Programs are responsible for determining and collecting the weekly family fee contributions based on the OEC Family Fee Schedule. More information on Family Fees can be found in the OEC General Policy B-01 and B-02 .
Can children enrolled in Early Start CT funded spaces also receive the Care4Kids subsidy?	<p>Yes, children enrolled in a state-funded space may also receive Care4Kids subsidy.</p> <p>Family fee determinations, as indicated on the active C4K certificate, shall be the family fee for any OEC-funded early care and education space.</p>
Are there any health screenings required for children in the program?	Programs should follow licensing and local health requirements. Please visit the OEC

	<p>Licensing page for additional information and requirements.</p> <p>Licensing - Connecticut Office of Early Childhood</p>
Is there a suspension/expulsion policy? If so, what support is offered to providers to support children with exceptional needs?	This does not relate to RFA B, but programs should follow their program, district and licensing guidance and/or policies.
Is transportation required to be offered by programs?	Transportation is not a requirement of Early Start CT.
Does the state send children who qualify for the funding to us? How do we determine child eligibility?	Programs are responsible for recruiting eligible families for Early Start CT spaces. More information on eligibility criteria can be found in General Policy B-03 :
What should I do if a family does not take a state funded space?	Programs shall enroll at least sixty (60) percent of families that must fall at or below seventy-five (75) percent of the state's median income level.
GENERAL	
After July 1, will Early Start CT be the umbrella term, with ongoing reference to individual programs like School Readiness, or will all subsidies be 'named' or known as Early Start CT?	Early Start CT (ESCT) is a new state-funded early care and education program that's launching in July 2025. It combines 3 existing programs Child Day Care Contracts (CDC), School Readiness Grants, and State Head Start Supplement Grants into 1 new program.
Is the Office of Early Childhood providing technical assistance to programs interested in applying?	Technical Assistance is not being offered but you are encouraged to discuss specific impacts and or situations with your liaison or contractor, as applicable.
What is the frequency and method by which programs are paid?	The OEC will be providing guidance on cadence of payments for programs in the future.
When will applicants be notified of award decisions?	Notifications will be sent to programs once the OEC has reviewed and approved the applications submitted.
Are there any teacher wage requirements?	More information will be forthcoming regarding wages for teaching staff.
Is there funding to act as an intermediary for incubator programs for Family child care providers? Where would FCC providers indicate this information and is it necessary?	Information regarding funding for FCC intermediaries will be forthcoming. New Family Child Care providers to the state funded system do not have to apply through an intermediary.
Will OEC adjust the number of spaces as needed if not all my spaces are granted?	This is a competitive process and the OEC will notify programs of space awards. Applications may not all be funded- funding is dependent on available appropriations.
If we have already completed enrollment through the middle of next school year and are fully enrolled, would we be better off waiting to apply for this at a later date?	The spaces awarded are for FY26 and FY 27 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027).

Will OEC be holding an informational session for Family Child Care providers and will it be the same deadline for application submission?	A Bidder's Conference was held on March 13, 2025, which included an overview of the RFA B application. Early Start CT Request for Applications (B) - Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
Will there be a percentage for administrative costs?	Programs will not receive administrative funds. Those funds (up to 10% but not to exceed \$150,000) will go to the Local Governance Partner.
We are a member of Elevate as a licensed childcare center. Do we still qualify for the funding?	Elevate status does not impact applying for state funded spaces under Early Start CT.
Are the funds dispersed as children enroll or are the funds dispersed for the total number of slots approved?	Programs are paid based on space utilization (children attending the program in a state funded space at least 1 day of the reporting period).
Is the Office of Early Childhood providing technical assistance to programs interested in applying?	There is no technical assistance being provided since this is a competitive process.
How will the qualifications of the "lead teacher" be evaluated for FCC?	The legislation requires that starting July 1, 2025, the DQSM for a licensed family child care home will have achieved an associate degree or higher in early childhood OR be working toward an associate degree or higher in early childhood education AND be supervised by someone who meets the bachelor's-level DQSM requirements coming from an off-site location. Additional information can be found in General Policy A-01
What is the reimbursement rate per child?	Please visit the funding chart located in RFA B for space types and funding amounts.
If I made a licensing complaint, but it did not involve my center, how should I respond to the substantiation question?	No, if there were no substantiations against the program.
If our fee is higher then what is covered by the state funding, are the parents responsible for the balance?	No family, regardless of income, shall be charged a fee more than the OEC-funded early care and education program's established cost of care. (General Policy B-02)
How do I determine what spaces are available? My program is open all year long so should I do the 12 months opposed to the 10 months	Space types are based on hours of early care and education available to families. Please reference the space type table within the RFA application to select the space type that best meets the needs of your families and program licensed capacity

Does the program OEC ID Registry number stay or move with the spots? does the ID stay with the program administrator or with the site location? I am trying to understand if the number stays with the program no matter where it may move to or if the number stays put and a new number is created for the new location?	The Registry ID is assigned to the program's location. Please contact your registry advisor with program registry related questions.
Will we receive our full funding for FY26 if we are at 85% enrollment or above?	Allocations for FY26 will be determined through this competitive process.
Are you adjusting (increasing) the sliding fee scale for families to know what each family's tuition should be for the Early Start CT state-funded slots?	The Fee Guidance will be updated and can be found in General Policy B-02 https://www.ctoec.org/forms-documents/fee-guidance.pdf
Our RFA-A funding did not include COLA funding, which we have always received. Will we be getting extra funding for COLAs going forward?	COLA will be calculated and included in the Contract. Going forward, COLA and Private Provider Payments will be rolled into one and referred to as Private Provider Payments.
Should we apply for extra Early Start CT slots to take the place of Head Start? Should we not have Head Start federal funding anymore, so children still get state-funded slots?	No, Early Start spaces do not replace Head Start spaces. Head Start funding is federal funding . Early Start CT funding is state funding .
Would the spaces continue being assigned per age?	Space types are separated by age, number of months of care needed and the hours of care. Programs should select the space that best meets the program and family needs.
The application asks whether there has been any type of complaint or investigation related to the program as of January 1, 2023. If a parent contacted the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) to file a complaint, and the investigation ultimately found the complaint to be non-substantiated, should I still indicate that a complaint was made, or should I not mark it since it was not substantiated? If I need to mark it due to a complaint, regardless of the outcome of the investigation, will this affect the overall application score?	No, the question is looking for programs to indicate if complaints have been substantiated by OEC licensing.
Is the 'Are you an Elevate + member' question asking if I have second tier membership and what if I am NAFCC accredited?	No, only if you are enrolled with Elevate which is the OEC's quality improvement system. More information on Elevate can be found here: https://www.ctoec.org/elevate/