



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES CHILD CARE PLANNING COMMITTEE
"INVESTING IN EARLY EDUCATORS" STIPEND PROGRAM
CYCLE 8B: For Persons Working in Family Child Care Homes



Instructions and Application for Cycle 8B

READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE AND WHILE COMPLETING THE APPLICATION AND PROVIDE ALL INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS REQUESTED, WHEN REQUESTED.

Overview

We are delighted that you are interested in applying for a stipend to encourage your educational goals and enhance your work with children and their families. The *"Investing in Early Educators" Stipend Program*, funded by the California Department of Education and developed by the County of Los Angeles Child Care Planning Committee, is designed to increase the retention of teachers working in child development programs - centers and family child care homes - in which most of the children are subsidized by the State. In addition, the *Stipend Program* helps teachers work towards completing college coursework that contributes towards a degree in child development or a closely related field.

These instructions serve as your guide for completing your application to the *Stipend Program*. It is critically important that you read the instructions carefully before and while filling out the application and provide all information and documents requested, when requested. Note that each cycle is a stand-alone unit, therefore you must submit all supporting documents requested for this cycle. **Applications that have missing information and/or missing documents will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed.**

The instructions also provide you with information on the process leading up to awarding the stipends, including the appeals process and a detailed timeline.

Applying to the *Stipend Program* is a two-part process:

1. **Application:** determines that you meet the eligibility criteria.
2. **Verification:** verifies that you have met the educational requirements and continue to meet the occupational criteria. Verification Forms will be sent to eligible applicants in mid-January 2007.

This packet includes the instructions and application for the first part of the process, determining your eligibility for the *Stipend Program*.

APPLICATIONS WITH SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS DUE:
BY MAIL: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2006 (POSTMARKED)
WALK IN: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2006

STEP 1: Determining Eligibility¹

To be eligible to apply for a stipend, you *must*:

1. Work in a California Department of Education (CDE)-contracted Family Child Care Home Education Network certified by the Network Program Director/Administrator,

OR

Work in a licensed family child care home in which the majority (50% plus 1) of the children receive a child care subsidy from the CDE at the time you submit your application;

AND

2. Work directly teaching children on a consistent and continual basis at least 15 hours per week;

AND

3. Have been licensed and operating for one year or employed in a family child care home in Los Angeles County from July 1, 2006 through April 30, 2007.

If you meet the eligibility criteria, then continue to Step 2.

STEP 2: Meeting the Educational Requirements

To earn a stipend, you *must*:

1. Complete three (3) semester units (4.5 quarter units) OR six (6) semester units (9 quarter units) of eligible coursework at a community college, college, or university; AND
2. Complete the class(es) between July 2006 and February 2007; AND
3. Pass the class(es) with a grade of "C" or better; AND
4. Submit your transcript(s) when requested with your Verification Form (do not send with this application).

Eligible Coursework

Eligible coursework is limited to the following five categories:

1. **If you are not proficient in English** as indicated on your application, you may take English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) classes at a community college if directed to do so by your college. This option is intended for applicants needing to improve their English language skills in order to enroll in college classes toward earning a degree. Extension or continuing education courses are not eligible.

¹ State law limits eligibility to the "Investing in Early Educators" Stipend Program to persons serving a majority of children receiving CDE subsidies. Staff working in Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) and Head Start Programs are ineligible to apply.

2. If you do NOT have a child development permit issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), you may take required child development classes, such as child/human growth and development, child/family/community, or curriculum (for associate teacher permit level or higher). If you already have a permit, you may take classes needed to upgrade or renew your permit.

Note: Future cycles will require applicants working in family child care homes to hold a child development associate teacher permit. If you do not have a permit, contact CTC by visiting their Web site at www.ctc.ca.gov. Click on "Credentialing", then "Child Development Permits" and follow the instructions for obtaining, upgrading, or renewing your permit. You will need a valid permit for future cycles; it takes approximately nine months for your permit to be issued

3. If you do NOT have an Associate Degree (AA/AS), you may take English, math or general education classes; OR prerequisites to classes that are transferable for degree credit, including child development. **Extension or continuing education courses are not eligible.** Check with an advisor at your college or university before enrolling in a class if you are not sure it is a prerequisite or transferable class.
4. If you have an AA/AS or are working towards a Bachelor Degree (BA/BS), you may take classes that are transferable and are counted as credit toward a four-year college or university degree; OR classes at a four-year college or university that count towards a degree. **ACCEPTABLE DEGREES** include Early Childhood Education, Early Special Education, Child Psychology, and Child Development. **Extension or continuing education courses are not eligible.**
5. If you have a BA/BS OR higher, you may take college or university classes that are directly related to your work with children and families. Sample topics include: special needs children, diversity, dual language learners, parent relations, adult supervision, program evaluation, and advanced child development. Unit bearing extension or continuing education courses can be counted as eligible only for individuals who already hold a BA/BS or higher.

If you meet the eligibility criteria and understand the educational requirements, then continue with your application.

STEP 3: Completing the Application

1. Be sure you have the correct application.
 - If you work in a **child development center**, complete the application for **Cycle 8A** (see separate instructions for Cycle 8A).
 - If you work in a **family child care home**, complete the application for **Cycle 8B**.
2. Read all instructions carefully before and while completing your application and follow them.
3. Review the eligibility rules and educational requirements carefully before and while completing the form.
4. Enter your full name in the appropriate box on the top of each page of your application.

Section 1. Applicant Information

- Fill in every box; do not leave blanks. If the information is not applicable, then write in "N/A".
- Enter **all** telephone numbers (work, home and cell) where we can reach you.

Special instructions:

- Enter your full name *exactly* as it appears on your social security card.
- Enter your social security number (SSN) *exactly* as it appears on your card.

Section 2. Applicant Education Level

- Read the instructions carefully and provide the requested information by checking the appropriate boxes and filling in the blank.

Note: Check the highest level of education that you have COMPLETED. If you are working toward a degree, DO NOT check that you have the degree.

Section 3: Continuing Education Requirement

- Check all that apply; indicate major, if applicable.

Section 4. Applicant Employment Information

- Read the instructions carefully and provide the requested information in the appropriate boxes.
- If your Family Child Care Home is part of a Family Child Care Home Education Network (FCCHEN), enter the name of the administering agency and the name of the FCCHEN Coordinator/Administrator in the appropriate boxes.
- Licensee/owners and assistants applying for the *Stipend Program* **MUST** include a copy of the Family Child Care Home license with your application.

Definition:

A licensed family child care home is part of a Family Child Care Home Education Network (FCCHEN) if:

- 1. The home has been evaluated and meets certain qualifications to participate in the Network (i.e. a Family Day Care Environment Rating Scale has been conducted)*
- 2. The provider is required to attend training scheduled by the administering agency.*
- 3. The provider is required to assist with development assessments for each child.*

Family Child Care Home Education Networks include:

- California State University Northridge Children's Center
- Center for Community & Family Services
- Child Development Consortium of Los Angeles
- Child Care Resource Center
- Children's Home Society of California
- Children's Institute, Inc
- City of Gardena Child Development
- City of Santa Fe Springs
- Claremont Unified School District
- Community Development Center
- Comprehensive Child Development, Inc.
- Estrada Courts
- Hope Street Family Center
- International Institute of Los Angeles
- Kids First
- Little Tokyo Service Center Community Development
- Mexican American Opportunity Foundation (MAOF)
- Mission College
- Options - A Child Care & Human Services Agency
- Pathways
- Venice Family Clinic
- Vista del Mar/Home Safe
- Westside Children's Center

Certification by the Network Coordinator/Administrator for applicants participating in a Family Child Care Home Education Network is required. (See Section 7)

Section 5 Applicant Wage/Income Information

- Read the instructions carefully and provide the requested information.

Section 6. Children with Whom Applicant is Currently Working

- Check all that apply.

Definitions - Children with Disabilities or Special Needs:

- Children protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); OR
- Children at risk of a developmental disability as defined by the Early Intervention Act; OR
- Children whose behavior and/or health affect the family's ability to find and maintain child care services.

Section 7. Employment and Eligibility Certification

- It is your responsibility as the applicant to make sure that your Network Coordinator/Administrator or Licensee-Owner completes this section, signs and dates it.
- There are three options to this section, depending whether the family child care home is part of a Family Child Care Home Education Network (FCCHEN) and, if part of a FCCHEN, whether the applicant is the licensee-owner or assistant. Be sure your Network Coordinator/Administrator or Licensee-Owner completes only one portion of this section:
 - For applicants (license-owner) with Family Child Care Home Education Networks, OR
 - For applicants who are assistants in licensed family child care homes that are with a Family Child Care Home Network, OR
 - For applicants serving low-income children and who are not in a Family Child Care Home Network.

Special instructions for Family Child Care Home Education Networks:

- *Enter the name of the Network on the line as requested. (See page 4 of the instructions.)*
- *This section must be signed by the Network Coordinator or Administrator.*
- *Providers participating in Family Child Care Home Education Networks do not need to provide proof that they are serving subsidized children.*

Special instructions for non-Network Family Child Care Homes:

- *Enter the total number of children currently enrolled and of those children, the total number of subsidized children.*
- *Check the boxes of the agencies providing subsidy funds for the children in your care.*
- *Attach to the application a copy of the invoice or contract documents listing all of the subsidized children. The documents should be a copy of the most current printout(s) you received from the funding agency(ies) with the agency's(ies)' name on it and list the children's names; however, the payment amounts may be blocked out. Write the Stipend applicant's name in the upper right hand corner of the document(s).*
- *The licensee-owner signs for their employees. Licensees-Owners applying for stipends may self-certify.*

Section 8. Applicant Certification and Signature

- Read and initial each of the seven statements of certification.
- Be sure to sign and date this section.

STEP 4: Submitting Your Application

1. Be sure that you have completed every section of the application and your name is entered at the top of each page. It is highly recommended that you have someone review your application for you before you submit it.
2. Be sure that you write your name and social security number exactly as it appears on your social security card when entering in Section 1 of your application, and that your name is included at the top of the supporting documents.
3. Check to make sure that your Network Administrator or Licensee-Owner has completed, signed, and dated Section 7 and, if a non-Network family child care home, provided you with a copy of the most current invoice/contract documents listing all of the subsidized children enrolled in your program. The invoice/contract(s) should be a copy of the printout(s) received from the funding agency(ies) with their name on it. You will **not** be eligible for a stipend without the invoice/contract documents.
4. Sign and date your application as requested in Section 8.
5. Make a copy of your completed application, including supporting documents, for your records.
6. Organize your application and supporting documents in the following order and **staple** in the upper left hand corner:
 - Cycle 8B Application (**do not** include the instructions with your application)
 - Copy of Family Child Care Home license
 - For **non-Family Child Care Home Education Networks**, a copy of the invoice or contract documents listing all of the subsidized children.
7. Submit your completed application, including supporting documents, in person or by U.S. mail, certified or Domestic Return Receipt, to:

Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program - Cycle 8B
Office of Child Care, SIB/CAO
County of Los Angeles
222 South Hill Street, 5th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Application due dates:

Mail in: Thursday, October 26, 2006 (postmarked)

Walk in: Tuesday, October 31, 2006

DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE DEADLINE TO APPLY!

- Applicants are encouraged to **apply early** and to **walk-in** their applications to receive a **stamp-dated receipt** with all documents noted on the receipt.
- Have a colleague or family member review your application prior to dropping it off or mailing it.
- If sending application by mail, send separately (do not mail groups of applications in same packets).
- Persons submitting applications in person on behalf of several colleagues should request individual receipts per applicant.
- If you choose to mail your application, send certified or Domestic Return Receipt.
- Faxed, late, or incomplete applications, including supporting documents, will not be considered.
- Stipend Program staff will not call you to remind you to send in any missing information. This is your responsibility.

STEP 5: Application Review

1. Upon receipt of your application, *Stipend Program* staff will screen your application for completeness. Only complete applications will be fully reviewed. Applications that have missing information and/or missing supporting documents will be considered incomplete and therefore will not be reviewed.
2. Staff will review your application to ensure that you meet the eligibility criteria to participate.
3. **IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE, YOUR INFORMATION IS ENTERED INTO THE STIPEND PROGRAM DATABASE AND A VERIFICATION FORM WITH INSTRUCTIONS WILL BE SENT TO YOU BY U.S. MAIL BY TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2007. IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE A VERIFICATION FORM BY EARLY FEBRUARY 2007, YOU MAY REQUEST ONE BY CONTACTING THE OFFICE OF CHILD CARE AT (213) 974-4674.**
4. If your application is incomplete or you are not eligible, you will be notified by U.S. mail in early January 2007. You may appeal this decision. Instructions for submitting a letter of appeal are outlined in Step 6 of these instructions.

Note: Due to the anticipated number of applications, the review process can take several weeks. **DO NOT** call to ask about your application. Your Verification Form or letter of disqualification will serve as status regarding your application.

STEP 6: Submitting a Letter of Appeal

- If you are **DISQUALIFIED**, you may submit a letter of appeal. **Appeals must be submitted in writing.**

An appeal is not the time to submit new information or supporting documents. Rather, it is an opportunity to submit proof that your application was complete and you included the required supporting documents by the due date, and you meet the eligibility criteria based on your original application.

- Your letter of appeal should include the following information:
 - The date your letter is written
 - Your full name and social security number (SSN) as written on your application
 - Reference to the reason you were disqualified as indicated in the letter you received from the Office of Child Care
 - A brief description of why you think the decision to disqualify your application is incorrect
 - A copy of your application and supporting documents **as submitted** by the due date
 - A copy of the receipt you were provided when you submitted your application in person or a copy of your certified mail receipt.
- Make a copy of your letter of appeal and supporting documents for your records.
- Send your **letter of appeal** with supporting documents by Tuesday, January 16, 2007 to:

Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program - Cycle 8B
Office of Child Care, SIB/CAO
County of Los Angeles
222 South Hill Street, 5th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012

- The Office of Child Care management team reviews appeals, including review of the original application. Decisions to grant or not grant the appeal, based on whether the applicant met the application requirements and deadlines, are made within two (2) weeks of receipt of the letter of appeal. The applicant will be notified by U.S. mail. **ALL DECISIONS ARE FINAL.**

Schedule for Stipend Program - Cycle 8	
Stipend Program Cycle 8 Applications Posted on the Web site at www.lacountychildcare.org	August 31, 2006
Applications with supporting documents due:	Mail in: Thursday, October 26, 2006 (postmarked) Walk in: Tuesday, October 31, 2006
Letters to applicants submitting incomplete applications or not meeting the eligibility criteria mailed by:	Tuesday, January 2, 2007
Letters of appeal due:	Tuesday, January 16, 2007
Verification Forms mailed to eligible applicants by:	Tuesday, January 16, 2007
Verification Forms with supporting documents due:	Thursday, March 8, 2007
Letters to applicants submitting insufficient verification materials or not meeting the educational requirements mailed by:	Thursday, April 5, 2007
Letters of appeal due:	Thursday, April 19, 2007
Stipends sent to qualifying applicants:	July/August 2007

For more information on the *"Investing in Early Educators" Stipend Program* and to download the Frequently Asked Questions and forms, visit www.lacountychildcare.org. Application forms are also available by contacting the Office of Child Care at (213) 974-4674.