

Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program

Cycle 16B

Instructions and Application for Persons Working in Family Child Care Homes

A project of the Los Angeles County Child Care Planning Committee
administered by the Office of Child Care
with funding from the California Department of Education

**Welcome
Family Child Care Providers
participating in Race to the Top – Early
Learning Challenge!**

**Permit Policy Change :
You may participate in three (3) cycles
while taking classes toward your Child
Development Permit.**

**For information on earning a permit,
contact the Commission on Teacher
Credentialing (CTC) at www.ctc.ca.gov,
the Child Development Training
Consortium at
www.childdevelopment.org or the Child
Development Department of your
Community College.**

INVESTING IN EARLY EDUCATORS STIPEND PROGRAM



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INVESTING IN EARLY EDUCATORS STIPEND PROGRAM – CYCLE 16 B

For Persons Working in Family Child Care Homes

FUNDING FOR CYCLE 16 IS DEPENDENT ON THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS FROM THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION/EARLY EDUCATION AND SUPPORT DIVISION (CDE/EESD).

Instructions

Schedule for Stipend Program – Cycle 16	
Stipend Program Cycle 16 applications posted on the website at www.childcare.lacounty.gov	August 2014
Applications with supporting documents due	Mail in: Thursday, October 16, 2014 (postmarked) Walk in: Thursday, October 23, 2014
Application Disqualification Letters mailed by:	Monday, January 5, 2015
Appeal Letters for Application Disqualification due:	Wednesday, January 14, 2015
Verification Forms mailed to eligible applicants by:	Monday, February 2, 2015
Verification Forms with supporting documents due:	Mail in: Thursday, March 5, 2015 (postmarked) Walk in: Thursday, March 12, 2015
Verification Disqualification Letters mailed by:	Friday, May 1, 2015
Appeal Letters for Verification Disqualification due:	Tuesday, May 12, 2015
Stipends sent to qualifying applicants:	July/August 2015

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

Overview

The *Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program* - funded by the California Department of Education/Early Education and Support Division (CDE/EESD), developed by the Los Angeles County Child Care Planning Committee and administered by the Office of Child Care - is designed to increase the retention and academic preparedness of early educators working in child development programs – centers and family child care homes – in which most of the children are subsidized by the CDE/EESD. In addition, the *Stipend Program* helps early educators work towards completing college coursework that informs their work with children and families, and contributes to a degree in child development or a closely related field. This cycle, with Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) funds, the opportunity to participate in the Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program is extended to early educators working in programs participating in the Office of Child Care administered RTT-ELC.

The instructions serve as your guide for completing your application to the *Stipend Program*. It is critically important that you **read the instructions** carefully and provide all information and documents as requested. Note that each cycle is separate; 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 stipends, including the appeal process and a detailed timeline.

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

1. **Application:** determines that you meet the employment eligibility criteria.
2. **Verification:** verifies that you have met the educational requirements, hold a Child Development Permit, and continue to meet the employment criteria. **See Step 2, item 2 under Eligible Coursework for information.**

Note: If you are not eligible for the *Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program*, you may be eligible for *ASPIRE (A Stipend Program in Support of ECE Excellence)*, a statewide First 5 CA professional development program for early childhood educators, also known as *CARES Plus*. *ASPIRE* is open to people currently working in the early childhood education field who are looking to do coursework and training to improve their practice. For more details on eligibility, visit www.laup.net/aspire.

STEP 1: Determining Eligibility¹ (see note below)

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

1. Work in a family child care home that participates in a California Department of Education/Early Education and Support Division (CDE/EESD)-contracted Family Child Care Home Education Network (FCCHEM) certified by the Network Program Coordinator/Administrator, **OR**

Work in a licensed family child care home in which the majority (51% or more) of the children receive a child care subsidy from the CDE/EESD-contracted agency at the time you submit your application; **OR**

Work in a family child care home that participates in the Office of Child Care administered Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC), **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 the County of Los Angeles from August 1, 2014 through March 12, 2015; **AND**
4. Hold a Child Development Permit issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to be submitted with the Verification Form (see Schedule). **You may participate in three (3) cycles while working toward your permit.** See Step 2, Item 2 under **Eligible Coursework** for more information on obtaining or upgrading a permit.

STEP 2: Meeting the Educational Requirements

To earn a stipend, you **must**:

1. Complete at least three (3) semester units (4.5 quarter units) or a maximum of six (6) semester units (9 quarter units) of eligible coursework at a community college, college, or university; **AND**

Attention Bachelor Degree candidates: *For applicants taking one final class required to graduate with a BA/BS degree in child development or a closely related field, you may qualify for an additional graduation stipend with the coursework stipend as long as the completed class is the equivalent of at least three (3) quarter units. The units and the degree must be earned during the Stipend Program cycle.*

2. Complete the class(es) **after** February 28, 2014 and **before** March 12, 2015; **AND**
3. Pass the class(es) with a grade of “C” or better; **AND**
4. Submit your transcript(s) and Child Development Permit when requested with your Verification Form.

Eligible Coursework

All coursework must be unit-bearing and fulfill the requirements for a degree in child development. Extension or continuing education courses are **not** eligible unless the applicant has a Bachelor Degree (BA/BS) or higher. If you have any questions regarding coursework eligible for the Stipend Program, you are encouraged to contact Renatta Cooper by telephone at (213) 974-9884 or by e-mail at rcooper@ceo.lacounty.gov.

¹ State law limits eligibility to the *Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program* to persons serving a majority of children receiving CDE/EESD subsidies. Staff working in Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) and Head Start Programs only are ineligible to apply. Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge funds are supporting RTT-ELC participants.

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 in child development.
2. If you do not have a child development permit issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), you should take required child development classes, such as child/human growth and development, child/family/community, or curriculum. **You will be eligible for a stipend for three (3) cycles while you complete the required courses for your permit.** If you already have a permit, you may take classes needed to upgrade or renew your permit.

Note: *If you do not have a permit, contact CTC by visiting their website at www.ctc.ca.gov. Click on “Credentialing”, then “Child Development Permits” and follow the instructions for obtaining or upgrading your permit. As an alternative, contact the child development department at your community college. Community colleges can often process permit applications more quickly than the CTC. In addition, the Child Development Training Consortium offers support to eligible persons applying for, renewing, or upgrading their permits; more information is available at www.childdevelopment.org.*

3. If you do not have an Associate Degree (AA/AS), you should take child development, English, math or general education classes; or prerequisites to classes that are transferable for a degree in child development at a four year college. 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 are taking classes at a community college with the goal of transferring to a CSU or UC school, your educational program should indicate the AA-T or AS-T degree, whichever the school offers. This degree will insure that the classes you take are transferrable and will give you preferred enrollment at some colleges. You should check with an academic advisor at your college to make sure you are enrolled in the correct program and that your classes fit the requirements for your degree. Acceptable degrees for the Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program include: Early Childhood Education, Early Special Education, Child Psychology and Child Development.
5. If you have a BA/BS or higher, you should take college or university classes that are directly related to your work with children and families in a child development program. 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

Be sure you have the correct application:

- If you work in a **child development center**, complete the application for **Cycle 16A** (see separate instructions and application for **Cycle 16A**).
- If you work in a **family child care home**, complete the application for **Cycle 16B**.

Section 1. Applicant Information

- Enter your full name in the appropriate box exactly as it appears on your social security card and on the top of each page of your application.
- Fill in every box; do not leave blanks. If the information is not applicable, then write in “N/A”.
- Enter your social security number (SSN) exactly as it appears on your card. SSNs are verified with the Internal Revenue Service so accuracy is critical.
- Enter **all** telephone numbers where we can reach you from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.
- Enter your personal e-mail address. If you do not have an e-mail address, enter “N/A”.
- Indicate if you have participated in the Stipend Program in previous cycles (Cycles 1 – 15) and whether your name and/or address have changed. If there has been a change in your name and/or address, you will need to submit certain documents as follows:
 - **Name change:** Submit a copy of the W-9 Form, Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification (available for download from the Internal Revenue Service website at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>).
 - **Address change:** Complete and submit an Address Change Notification Form (available for download from the Office of Child Care website at www.childcare.lacounty.gov or call (213) 974-4674 to request the form) and a W-9 Form, Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification (available for download from the Internal Revenue Service website at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>).
- Indicate if you have received a check from another Los Angeles County program (for example, child support payments, GAIN, Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), etc.).

Section 2. Applicant Education and Permit Levels

- Check the highest level of education that you have completed.
- Check the type of Child Development Permit you currently hold.

Section 3. Continuing Education Requirement

- Check all that apply; indicate major if you have checked that you are working to obtain an AA, BA/BS or MA/MS degree.

Section 4. Applicant Employment Information

- 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 Network Coordinator/Administrator in the appropriate boxes. **Be sure to attach the Network Coordinator/Administrator’s business card to your application.**

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

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

Family Child Care Home Education Networks

- California State University Northridge Children's Center
- Child Care Resource Center
- Child Development Consortium of Los Angeles
- 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 Learning Center/Eben-Ezer Children's Day Care
- Little Tokyo Service Center Community Development
- Los Angeles Mission College
- Mexican American Opportunity Foundation (MAOF)
- Options – A Child Care & Human Services Agency
- Pathways
- Plaza Community Services
- Venice Family Clinic
- Vista del Mar/Home Safe
- Westside Children's Center

Note: Certification by the Network Coordinator/Administrator for applicants participating in a FCCHEN is required. (See Section 7.)

- Licensee/owners and assistants applying for the *Stipend Program* **MUST** include a copy of the family child care home license with your application.
- Indicate if the family child care home in which you work serves as a Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) site in addition to participating in a FCCHEN or serving a majority of children subsidized by the CDE/EESD-contracted agency.
- Indicate if the family child care home is participating in the Office of Child Care administered Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC).

Section 5. Applicant Wage/Income Information

- Be sure to complete the appropriate box.

Section 6. Children with Whom Applicant is Currently Working

- Check all that apply.

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 **and attaches their business card**.
- There are four options to this section, depending on whether the family child care home is part of a FCCHEN, serving a majority of subsidized children, or is participating in the Office of Child Care administered Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC).
 - A. For applicants (license-owner) with FCCHENs, **or**
 - B. For applicants who are assistants in licensed family child care homes that are with a FCCHEN, **or**
 - C. For applicants (licensee or assistants) serving low-income children and who are not in a FCCHEN, **or**
 - D. For applicants (licensee or assistants) where the family child care home is participating in the Office of Child Care administered Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC).

Special instructions for FCCHENs:

- Enter the name of the FCCHEN on the line as requested (see Section 4 beginning on page 4 of the instructions).
- This section **must** be signed by the Network Coordinator/Administrator.

Special instructions for family child care homes that do not participate in a FCCHEN:

- 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 most current agency provided attendance form for each subsidized child enrolled in your program. The attendance form should have both the agency's name and the child's name on it. Write the Stipend applicant's name in the upper right hand corner of the document(s).
- The licensee-owner signs for their employees. Licensee-Owners applying for stipends may self-certify.

Special instructions for Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) participants

- Include the name of your RTT-ELC case manager.

Section 8. Applicant Certification and Signature

- Read and initial each of the eight 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 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 attached their business card.
4. If you operate or work in a family child care home that does not participate in a FCCHEN, be sure that you have attached a copy of the most current agency provided attendance form for each subsidized child enrolled in your program. The attendance form should have both the agency's name and the child's name on it. You will **not** be eligible for a stipend without these supporting documents.
5. Be sure to include a copy of the family child care home license.
6. **Make a copy of your completed application, with supporting documents, for your records.**
7. Submit your completed original application, with supporting documents, in person or by U.S. mail, certified mail or Domestic Return Receipt, to:

Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program – Cycle 16B
Office of Child Care, SIB/CEO
County of Los Angeles
222 South Hill Street, 5th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Application due dates:

Mail in: Thursday, October 16, 2014 (postmarked)

Walk in: Thursday, October 23, 2014

**DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE DEADLINE
TO APPLY!**

- Applicants are encouraged to **apply early**. If you walk your application into the Office of Child Care, you will receive a stamp-dated receipt with all documents noted on the receipt.
- Persons submitting applications in person on behalf of several colleagues should request individual receipts per applicant.
- **Do not mail groups of applications in same packets.**
- If you choose to mail your application, send certified mail or Domestic Return Receipt.
- Faxed, late, or incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Stipend Program staff will not call to remind you to send 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 not be reviewed.
2. Staff will review your complete 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 **Monday, February 2, 2015**. If you do not receive a Verification Form by **mid-February 2015**, contact the Office of Child Care at (213) 974-4674.
4. If your application is incomplete or you are not eligible, you will be notified with an Application Disqualification Letter by U.S. mail in early **January 2015**. 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. Please **do not** call to ask about your application. Your Verification Form or letter of disqualification will serve as notice 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 prove that your application was complete, included the required supporting documents, was submitted 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 appeal 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

Visit the *Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program* page on the Office of Child Care website at www.childcare.lacounty.gov to download sample letters of appeal. The sample letters of appeal are provided to help guide you as you create your own letter.

- Make a copy of your letter of appeal and supporting documents for your records.
- Letters of appeal with supporting documents are due by Wednesday, January 14, 2015 to:

Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program – Cycle 16B
Office of Child Care, SIB/CEO
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 weeks of receipt of the letter of appeal. The applicant will be notified by U.S. mail. **ALL DECISIONS ARE FINAL.**

For more information on the *Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program* and to download the instructions and application, visit www.childcare.lacounty.gov. Instructions and application forms are also available by contacting the Office of Child Care at (213) 974-4674.