

Supporting the Workforce through Strategic Child Care Initiatives

RFP for Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

Southwestern Child Development Commission Inc.

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Application Form

Question Group

Buncombe County requests proposals for projects to help the community recover from and respond to COVID-19 and its negative economic impacts.

Buncombe County has been awarded \$50,733,290 in Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (Recovery Funding), as part of the American Rescue Plan Act. To date, Buncombe County has awarded projects totaling \$23,093,499, leaving a balance of \$27,639,791 available to award.

Visit <http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding> for details.

This infusion of federal resources is intended to help turn the tide on the pandemic, address its economic fallout, and lay the foundation for a strong and equitable recovery.

Buncombe County is committed to investing these funds in projects that:

- Align to county strategic plan and community priorities
- Support equitable outcomes for most impacted populations
- Leverage and align with other governmental funding sources
- Make best use of this one-time infusion of resources
- Have a lasting impact

Proposals shall be submitted in accordance with the terms and conditions of this RFP and any addenda issued hereto.

[Click here for the full terms and conditions of the RFP](#)

Organization Type*

Nonprofit

Nonprofit documentation

If nonprofit, attach IRS Determination Letter or other proof of nonprofit status.

501(c)(3) Status Letter 2018.pdf

Name of Project.*

Supporting the Workforce through Strategic Child Care Initiatives

New/Updated Proposal*

Is this a new project proposal or an updated version of a proposal submitted during the earlier (July 2021) Recovery Funding RFP?

New project proposal

Amount of Funds Requested*

\$1,549,606.70

Category*

Please select one:

- Affordable Housing
- Aging/Older Adults
- Business Support/Economic Development
- Environmental/Climate
- Homelessness
- K-12 Education
- Infrastructure and/or Broadband
- Mental Health/Substance Use
- NC Pre-K Expansion
- Workforce

Workforce

Brief Project Description*

Provide a short summary of your proposed project.

The use of federal funds to assist in the recovery from the economic impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic is a much needed and welcomed opportunity for Buncombe County. A major economic impact is the loss of employment for workers who were displaced by business closings or business reductions. Child care is the “workforce which supports the workforce”. Without a strong and nimble child care system, workers cannot return to their jobs.

This project, supporting the Workforce through Strategic Child Care Initiatives, will address three components which will strengthen and return child care availability to workers in Buncombe County. The project includes three components: 1) Expansion of Child Care Assistance for working families 2) Incentives to expand and stabilize the Early Child Care Workforce 3) NC FAST training and technical assistance to stabilize the subsidized child care provider community which fundamentally supports the overall workforce.

Project Plan*

Explain how the project will be structured and implemented, including timeframe.

Supporting the Workforce through Strategic Child Care Initiatives, will offer temporary financial assistance to families who need child care in order to return to their jobs or continue in their employment, will offer financial assistance to child care workers who will return to employment in child care programs and will provide technical assistance and training to the owners and operators of local child care programs in order to stabilize and expand their programs.

Buncombe County currently receives federal child care funds to support low income working families. As wages have increased in Buncombe County, some working families have experienced a loss of income eligibility for child care financial support. With the cost of child care being high, this temporary expansion of eligibility will provide a transition time for families who need help with child care costs. Eligibility for the current financial assistance program is limited to families whose income is 85% of the State Median Income. This project will provide financial assistance with the cost of child care to working families whose income exceeds the state subsidy eligibility guidelines. The income guidelines will be expanded to 100% of the State Median Income.

Currently, Buncombe County child care programs have physical space available to offer child care, but a lack of child care workers means that many centers are not fully enrolled and children of working parents are on a waiting list for care. This project will include a specific incentive to the Early Child Care Workforce by providing temporary child care financial assistance, to these employees, regardless of income.

Families and child care workers will apply for this grant assistance through an already established application process. Eligible families will receive a monthly stipend that will be paid on their behalf, directly to a child care provider that participates in the North Carolina Subsidized Child Care Program. The monthly stipend award will be \$500 for each eligible child. The projected number of children to be served with this funding is 200 children, with 50 stipends set-aside for the children of child care workers.

In addition, this project will also develop and utilize a technical support position to offer training and technical assistance to local child care providers in becoming proficient and skilled in the navigation of NC FAST through the Subsidized Child Care Program which will provide much needed support. This support will further strengthen the child care foundation for Buncombe County to enable families to enter and/or return to the workforce.

The time frame for this project is 12 months or until funds are fully expended.

Statement of Need*

Describe the need that this project will address. Include data to demonstrate the need, and cite the source of the data.

As young working families are experiencing the very positive side of higher wages, some of these same families are no longer eligible for subsidized child care. This is an unintended consequence of these young families working toward self-sustainability. This project will offer a short-term transition period of assistance with child care fees as families return to the workforce or maintain employment.

Currently, for a family of four with two pre-school children, eligibility is at \$53,004 annually or under. With this expanded eligibility project, eligibility income would be increased to \$80,736 annually.

\$18.00 per hour x 40 hours per week x 4.33 weeks x 12 months - \$37,411.20

Two Parents working full-time at \$18.00 per hour = \$74,822.40

The family in this example would be eligible for a temporary stipend of \$500 per child to help offset the high cost of child care. For example, child care fees can easily average \$1,700 per month. Therefore, this family would pay \$700 per month, making child care more affordable for the family and allowing both parents to be in the workforce.

The Early Child Care Workforce is vital for the stability of child care programs. Many Early Child Care Educators need child care for their own children, but often struggle to pay their own child fees, due to the high costs of care and their low wages. This specific incentive will help expand and stabilize the child care workforce, by providing a temporary monthly stipend of \$500 per eligible child, regardless of income. This

idea of incentivizing child care workers is recognized nationally by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and is also offered as a local strategy for Covid-19 Recovery Funding by the federal Office of Child Care in the Administration of Children and Families, as noted below:

https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/blog/compensation_matters_most.pdf

Link to COVID-19*

Identify a health or economic harm resulting from or exacerbated by the public health emergency, describe the nature and extent of that harm, and explain how the use of this funding would address such harm.

Child care has been underfunded for decades resulting in an inadequate supply of high quality programs and the cost of child care has been unbearable for many families. The monthly cost of child care often exceeds the average mortgage payment and annual cost is higher than in-state college tuition. Child Care providers have only been able to charge what families can afford, which in turn has kept wages depressed for early educators. The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the past and present challenges. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the cost of child care has increased due to several factors, such as fewer children in the classroom and the need to purchase health and safety supplies. Many child care programs are also struggling with staffing shortages, thus impacting their ability to care for more children. Families will not have the ability to work and recover from job losses with limited options for affordable high quality child care. This project will provide working families a transition period to affordable child care through an expansion of child care assistance. It will also support the subsidized child care provider system to ensure families have many options of child care availability to be able to work.

Only 71% of the licensed child care providers in Buncombe County participate in the NC Subsidized Child Care Program, according to data obtained from the NC Division of Child Development and Early Education. As the number of subsidized child care options is low, preservation of our subsidized child care providers is crucial to our community. Child care providers in Buncombe County depend on the success of their Subsidized Child Care participation. Offering training and technical assistance to educate child care providers in becoming proficient and skilled in the Subsidized Child Care Program through NC FAST will provide needed support for a stronger child care foundation.

<https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/childcaresearch>

Population Served*

Define the population to be served by this project, including volume and demographic characteristics of those served.

This project will serve three populations in Buncombe County; 1) low-income working families, 2) workers who work in child care programs and 3) owners and operators of local child care programs.

Families whose income fall outside the current state subsidy guidelines and up to 100% of the State Median Income will be eligible for this temporary financial support for child care.

This project will support workers who work in child care programs, regardless of income. This temporary financial support is intended to be an incentive for child care workers to return or enter the child care workforce. The financial incentive will pay the child care fee for the child care worker's own children to enroll in child care. Currently there are programs being developed with anticipated future funding which will establish an improved wage for the child care worker.

For both of these parts of the program, the children served will range in ages birth through 12 years. The number of children to be served with this project is 200.

It is anticipated that approximately eighty Subsidized Child Providers in Buncombe County will receive training and technical assistance for their child care programs.

Results*

Describe the proposed impact of the project. List at least 3 performance measures that will be tracked and reported. If possible, include baselines and goals for each performance measure.

The proposed impact of this project is to provide expanded eligibility for families, financial incentives for recruitment of child care workers and training and technical assistance for local child care providers.

As families have improved access to child care options which means they can be self-sufficient and have the ability to work, this project supports economic recovery in Buncombe County. This will help promote a greater family economic stability and in turn, child and family well-being. Developing a nationally recognized incentive program for the recruitment of child care workers will stabilize and expand our local child care delivery system. Supporting our local subsidized child care providers is essential for our most vulnerable families. Families need access to high quality child care at low costs and placements in high quality programs will lead to improved economic security.

The performance measures that will be tracked:

1) Number of children served. 200 children are projected to be served by this project. This will result in 12 months of service for each child or 2,400 monthly units of service. The number of children could be higher, for example, one child is served for 7 months and an additional child is served for 5 months. The countable unit of service is number of months of service.

2) Number of child care workers whose own children are served. This number is projected at 50 children. As this is a set-aside for the number above, the countable measure is the number of child care workers that are able to return to work or are newly hired by local child care programs.

3) Number of Subsidized Child Care Providers that are offered training and technical assistance. Eighty providers, or 100% of the eligible providers will be offered training and technical assistance. A program goal of 70% of local providers will participate in some type of training and technical assistance.

Evaluation*

Describe the data collection, analysis, and quality assurance measures you will use to assure ongoing, effective tracking of contract requirements and outcomes.

Supporting the Workforce through Strategic Child Care Initiatives is closely aligned with the current administration of the NC Subsidized Child Care Program currently in place with the Buncombe County Health and Human Services. Data will be collected and analyzed by the same metrics so that we count families served, children served, new employees hired and returning employees for local child care centers and local providers who are trained and offered technical assistance by the project. Quality assurance measures will be provided in part by the NC Division of Child Development and Early Education in that, all child care centers must be able to participate in the NC Subsidized Child Care Program. This participation is monitored by NC DCDEE and the Star-rating process in Child Care Licensure.

Families will apply through an application process. A stipend voucher will be issued for each eligible child. A database will be created and used to capture the demographic information. A spreadsheet will be developed to track monthly payments that are paid to the child care providers. Provider evaluations will be used to measure the success of the training and technical assistance.

Equity Impact*

How will this effort help build toward a just, equitable, and sustainable COVID-19 recovery? How are the root causes and/or disproportionate impacts of inequities addressed?

The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted women, especially women of color. According to the National Women's Law Center February 2022 fact sheet, there are 1 million fewer women in the labor force since February 2020. Child care is key to reducing racial disparities. Reducing barriers to the economic participation of people of color is essential to maximizing employment outcomes. Child care providers need support to help an already fragile infrastructure to rebound from the effects of COVID and important support is participation in the subsidized child care program. Training and Technical Assistance in the subsidized child care program will help strengthen the child care provider and help build sustainability by ensuring providers are maximizing the benefits of the subsidized child care program. Sustainability of the child care community is vital to help boost the overall workforce. The information provided below describes the unequal impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic on families who need child care, workers in the child care system and the actual owners and operators of child care programs. Understanding this impact is the beginning step for the solution to bring equity to the early care and education system. Southwestern is continually involved in projects that support and create growth specifically addressing human differences. We understand the organization has room for growth specifically addressing diversity and we are committed to these efforts. As we continue to make great strides towards definite diversity, equitable and inclusive changes, we will continue to seek opportunities to elevate this momentum, as well as, build upon our existing relationships.

<https://www.americanprogress.org/article/coronavirus-will-make-child-care-deserts-worse-exacerbate-inequality/>

<https://www.americanprogress.org/article/covid-19-sent-womens-workforce-progress-backward/>

<https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/January-Jobs-Day-updated.pdf>

Project Partners*

Identify any subcontractors you intend to use for the proposed scope of work. For each subcontractor listed, indicate:

- 1.) What products and/or services are to be supplied by that subcontractor and;
- 2.) What percentage of the overall scope of work that subcontractor will perform.

Also, list non-funded key partners critical to project.

Although, there are no contracted partners with contract deliverables in this project, Southwestern has aligned activities currently in place by the Economic Services Unit of Buncombe County Health and Human Services and Buncombe County Partnership for Children. Historically, these three Early Childhood Education agencies have collaborated on ECE projects to avoid duplicative efforts and to offer strategic and supported efforts for ECE solutions that strengthen our local system.

Capacity*

Describe the background, experience, and capabilities of your organization or department as it relates to capacity for delivering the proposed project and managing federal funds.

Currently, Southwestern contracts with Buncombe County Department of Social Services to operate the county subsidized child care program. Southwestern has been delivering this service in Buncombe for the past twelve years. This service is monitored for compliance by the NC Division of Child Development and

Early Education. During this twelve year period, Southwestern has received compliance scores in excess of 98% accuracy at each monitoring visit.

Southwestern currently operates a multi-county program with a staff of approximately 150 employees and an annual budget of approximately \$12 Million. This administration is successful as determined by financial audits which contain no findings or recommendations and no pending legal issues. Contracts for funding are with long-standing government and philanthropic community partners. Administrative oversight and Governance of the agency is provided by the Board of Directors who are appointed by the County Commissioners in each of the seven counties of Region A, Haywood, Jackson, Clay, Cherokee, Swain, Macon and Graham Counties.

Southwestern's Executive Leadership for Subsidy Services has a long-standing history of stability and influence; for example, the Executive Director has been in that position since 1987 or for 34 years and Southwestern's Subsidy Policy Manager and Reimbursement Coordinator have both been in their positions for more than 25 years. During this time, all three staff members have been active members of the NC Division of Child Development's Subsidy Advisory Committee. This committee provides guidance to the NC DCDEE on statewide policy changes. Agency leadership participated in planning and implementation committees for the subsidized child care program's conversion to NC FAST. In addition to services to the seven counties of Region A, Southwestern has contracted and currently manages the child care subsidy program in McDowell and Rutherford Counties.

Budget*

Provide a detailed project budget including all proposed project revenues and expenditures, including explanations and methodology. For all revenue sources, list the funder and denote whether funds are confirmed or pending. For project expenses, denote all capital vs. operating costs, and reflect which specific expenses are proposed to be funded with one-time Buncombe County Recovery Funds.

Download a copy of the budget form [HERE](#). Complete the form, and upload it using the button below.

SWCDC Supporting The Workforce Through Strategic Child Care Initiatives FTE Detail and Line Item Budget RFP FY 2022-2023.xlsx

Special Considerations*

Provide any other information that might assist the County in its selection.

In addition to Southwestern's aforementioned expertise in the administration of the child care subsidized program, Southwestern also possesses expertise in other areas of early childhood education systems. The Executive Director participates in a variety of Early Childhood Education initiatives, state-wide, regionally and nationally. These initiatives impact both families who need child care services as well as the workforce for the child care field. For example, the Executive Director is a charter partner and leader for the NC Child Care Resource and Referral Council which is contract work with the NC DHHS as required in the Child Care and Development Fund state plan, which is the funding source for the subsidized child care program. In this position, the agency provides on-site technical assistance to any licensed child care program in the regional service area. Also, an Executive Board Member for the NC Early Education Coalition, a former Board Member for the Statewide Smart Start Program, a charter member for the Region A Partnership for Children Board, a former Policy Committee Member for the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies and a current State Network Member of Child Care Aware of America. This agency brings exceptional expertise to local child care providers and community initiatives. Specific to Buncombe County, the Executive Director is a founding member of the WNC Early Childhood Coalition which with funding from Community Foundation of WNC has worked on subsidized child care issues both regionally and state-wide for the past

twelve years. This work has also included advocacy activity which has produced many positive changes in subsidized child care policies which have been positive for Buncombe County families and child care providers.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- 501(c)(3) Status Letter 2018.pdf
- SWCDC Supporting The Workforce Through Strategic Child Care Initiatives FTE Detail and Line Item Budget RFP FY 2022-2023.xlsx

ATLANTA GA 39901-0001

In reply refer to: 0752853556
Aug. 16, 2018 LTR 4168C 0
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BODC: TE

SOUTHWESTERN CHILD DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION INC
PO BOX 250
WEBSTER NC 28788-0250

RECEIVED AUG 20 2018

006005

Employer ID number: 23-7181553
Form 990 required: YES

Dear Taxpayer:

We're responding to your request dated Aug. 07, 2018, about your tax-exempt status.

We issued you a determination letter in APRIL 1972, recognizing you as tax-exempt under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(03).

We also show you're not a private foundation as defined under IRC Section 509(a) because you're described in IRC Sections 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

Donors can deduct contributions they make to you as provided in IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts under IRC Sections 2055, 2106, and 2522.

In the heading of this letter, we indicated whether you must file an annual information return. If you're required to file a return, you must file one of the following by the 15th day of the 5th month after the end of your annual accounting period:

- Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax
- Form 990EZ, Short Form Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax
- Form 990-N, Electronic Notice (e-Postcard) for Tax-Exempt Organizations Not Required to File Form 990 or Form 990-EZ
- Form 990-PF, Return of Private Foundation or Section 4947(a)(1) Trust Treated as Private Foundation

According to IRC Section 6033(j), if you don't file a required annual information return or notice for 3 consecutive years, we'll revoke your tax-exempt status on the due date of the 3rd required return or notice.

You can get IRS forms or publications you need from our website at www.irs.gov/forms-pubs or by calling 800-TAX-FORM (800-829-3676).

If you have questions, call 877-829-5500 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.,

0752853556

Aug. 16, 2018 LTR 4168C 0
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SOUTHWESTERN CHILD DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION INC
PO BOX 250
WEBSTER NC 28788-0250

RECEIVED AUG 16 2018

local time, Monday through Friday (Alaska and Hawaii follow Pacific time).

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,



Teri M. Johnson
Operations Manager, AM Ops. 3

	Contract #:	TBD	
	Contractor:	Southwestern Child Development Commission, Inc.	
	Project:	Supporting The Workforce Through Strategic Child Care Initiatives	
Column A Category	Column B Line Item	Column C Amount	Column D Narrative
A. Human Resources			
	1. Salary/Wages	\$ 77,480.00	Salaries are requested to support 1.75 FTE positions, including the following: 1 Program Administrator at 100.00% to process eligibility applications, determine eligibility, prepare payment documentation for providers and submit to AP for payment, provide TA and information as needed, and data collection for pertinent information requested by all stakeholders; 1 Lead CC Reimbursement Specialist at 75.00% (0.75 FTE) to deliver NC FAST training and technical support for child care providers, assist child care providers with subsidy payment reconciliations, provide subsidy information to child care providers which do not currently accept subsidy, and data collection for pertinent information requested by all stakeholders.
	2. Fringe Benefits	\$ 23,149.00	See attached FTE sheet for calculations. Fringe benefits for each staff person are prorated based on the % of FTE requested in the budget. Fringe benefits for staff include health insurance at \$689.99 per month per employee for those who elect coverage, group life insurance at \$2.31 per month per employee, employer retirement contribution of 2.00% of current salary after two years of employment with SWCDC, Social Security match in the amount of 7.65% of current salary, worker's compensation insurance at \$43.58 per month per employee, unemployment insurance at a current rate of 0.00060 (0.06%) of \$28,000.00 for each employee.
	3. Other	\$ -	
	A . Total Human Resources	\$ 100,629.00	
B. Operational Expenses/Capital Outlays			
1. Supplies and Materials			
	a. Furniture	\$ -	
	b.Other: Office Supplies and Materials	\$ 1,260.00	Routine office supplies at an estimated \$60.00 per month x 12 months x 1.75 FTE's = \$1,260.00
2. Equipment			
	a. Communication	\$ -	
	b. Office	\$ 50.00	Desktop calculator for ease of and double checking eligibility calculations and provider payments.
	c. IT	\$ 2,500.00	New laptop for the Program Administrator with docking station and dual monitors, printer/scanner, all laptop accessories, case for laptop, and all other equipment needed for correct operation of computer at an estimated \$2,500.00
	d. Assistive Technology	\$ -	
	e. Other	\$ -	
3. Travel			
	a. Contractor Staff	\$ 2,200.00	Travel expenses are budgeted for travel related to Supporting The Workforce Through Strategic Child Care Initiatives, and are calculated as follows, based on agency approved rates, not to exceed State approved rates: Mileage at \$0.50 per mile (agency approved rate) x 366.67 miles per month x 12 months = \$2,200.02 (\$2,200.00 rounded)
	b. Board Members Expense	\$ -	
4. Utilities			
	a. Gas/Electric/Water	\$ -	
	b. Telephone, Internet, Postage, IT	\$ 4,746.00	Prorated share of telephone services, internet services, IT services, and postage based on an average cost of \$226.00 per month x 12 months x 1.75 FTE's = \$4,746.00
	c. Other	\$ -	
	5. Repair and Maintenance	\$ -	
	6. Staff Development	\$ 1,000.00	Training opportunities and/or continuing education opportunities for staff.
7. Media/Communications			
	a. Advertising	\$ 50.00	Estimated cost for advertising employment opportunities within the contract period.

	b. Audiovisual Presentations, Multimedia, etc.	\$ -	
	c. Logos	\$ -	
	d. Promotional Items	\$ -	
	e. Publications	\$ -	
	f. Public Service Announcement and Ads (TV, Radio Presentations)	\$ -	
	g. Reprints	\$ 1,050.00	Cost of photocopies at an average of \$50.00 per month x 12 months x 1.75 FTE's = \$1,050.00
	h. Text translation	\$ -	
	i. Websites and Web Materials	\$ -	
8. Rent			
	a. Office Space	\$ 2,160.00	Prorated cost of office rent based on cost allocation for employee in Jackson County at an estimated \$240.00 per month x 12 months x 0.75 FTE = \$2,160.00
	b. Equipment	\$ -	
	c. Furniture	\$ -	
	d. Vehicles	\$ -	
	e. Other	\$ -	
9. Professional Services			
	a. Legal	\$ -	
	b. IT	\$ -	
	c. Accounting	\$ -	
	d. Payroll	\$ -	
	e. Security	\$ -	
	10. Dues and Subscriptions	\$ 218.00	Zoom communications software which combines video conferencing, online meetings, chat, and mobile collaboration at \$18.17 per month x 12 months = \$218.04 (\$218.00 rounded)
11. Other			
	a. Audit Services	\$ -	
	b. Incentives and Participants	\$ 1,200,000.00	Monthly child care stipend awards at \$500.00 per child x 200 children x 12 months = \$1,200,000.00
	c. Insurance and Bonding	\$ -	
	d. Indirect Cost	\$ 131,115.00	Indirect Cost calculated at 10% x \$1,311,153.00 (direct service budget with the exception of office equipment line, IT equipment line, and office rent line) = \$131,115.30 (\$131,115.00 rounded)
	e. Not Otherwise Classified	\$ -	
B. Total Operational Expenses/Capital Outlays		\$ 1,346,349.00	
C. Subcontracting and Grants Direct Services		\$ -	
D. Total Budgeted Expenditures		\$ 1,446,978.00	

