



# Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

**8A**  
Agenda Item #

**Requested Meeting Date:** February 14, 2023

**Title of Item:** Childcare Acceleration Grant document approval

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION ONLY	<b>Action Requested:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft) <i>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item <input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing*
<b>Submitted by:</b> Mark Jeffers		<b>Department:</b> Administration
<b>Presenter (Name and Title):</b> Mark Jeffers, Economic Development Coordinator		<b>Estimated Time Needed:</b> 10 minutes
<b>Summary of Issue:</b> <p>Aitkin County has been awarded a grant from the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners, have approved this grant funding to be used to directly impact the Community of Aitkin County by establishing the AITKIN COUNTY CHILDCARE ACCELERATION GRANT Program.</p> <p>The purpose of this grant fund is to help support community members who aspire start their career in childcare and become childcare providers in Aitkin County in an effort to drive economic growth. The main purpose of this grant is to increase childcare slot availability and consideration will be given to new Childcare providers increasing the slot availability. The funding will help support fees associated with new licensing and training needed to open a childcare center or at home facility, general remodeling costs to meet licensing standards and/or funding support to add additional employees to new and existing childcare businesses.</p> <p>Economic Development staff, with collaboration and recommendation by the Economic Development Committee, has developed a Childcare Acceleration Grant Program.</p> <p>The Economic Development Committee recommends approval to execute this program. The County Attorney has reviewed the document and finds it complete and proper as to form.</p>		
<b>Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments:</b>		
<b>Recommended Action/Motion:</b> Economic Development requests a motion to approve execution of the Childcare Acceleration Grant Program.		
<b>Financial Impact:</b> Is there a cost associated with this request? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$ Is this budgeted? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <i>Please Explain:</i>		

Legally binding agreements must have County Attorney approval prior to submission.



## **AITKIN COUNTY CHILDCARE ACCELERATION GRANT PROGRAM**

### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

Aitkin County has been awarded a grant from the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners, have approved this grant funding to be used to directly impact the Community of Aitkin County by establishing the AITKIN COUNTY CHILDCARE ACCELERATION GRANT Program.

The purpose of this grant fund is to help support community members who aspire start their career in childcare and become childcare providers in Aitkin County in an effort to drive economic growth. The main purpose of this grant is to increase childcare slot availability and consideration will be given to new Childcare providers increasing the slot availability. The funding will help support fees associated with new licensing and training needed to open a childcare center or at home facility, general remodeling costs to meet licensing standards and/or funding support to add additional employees to new and existing childcare businesses.

**Grant Guidelines:** Guidelines for application and awarding of AITKIN COUNTY CHILDCARE ACCELERATION GRANTS are as follows:

1. Acceleration Grant funds will be awarded in two categories:
  - Licensing and Training Fees. Childcare professionals can be awarded a maximum of \$500 annually, for up to three (3) years, to be used directly for licensing and training purposes. Proof of expense must be submitted to Aitkin County prior to reimbursement of the funds. \*\*\*Currently established/existing childcare professionals must commit to increasing childcare slots to the maximum allotted by standard regulations. No match will be necessary for this award.
  - Remodel costs/supplies to meet licensing standards and regulations. Childcare professionals can be awarded a maximum of \$5000 to be used directly for new facility upgrades to meet licensing standards and regulations. Applicants are required to provide a 1:1 match of all funds awarded. This funding may also be used for supplies needed for child occupancy. Examples are cribs, toys, cots, educational material, etc. The supplies are intended to directly contribute to the capacity of children and increase the child care slot availability. Applicants are required to provide a 1:1 match of all funds awarded.
2. The Economic Development Committee may recommend to the Board of Commissioners to increase or decrease the amount awarded at their discretion. The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners grants the final approval for funding.
3. County-Wide Distribution: The intent of this program is to provide assistance throughout Aitkin County. Consideration shall be given to amounts awarded and number of grants approved for any particular region of the county to ensure that an equitable level of funding is available throughout the county.
4. AITKIN COUNTY CHILDCARE ACCELERATION GRANT funds may not be used to reimburse expenses that occurred prior to grant approval by Aitkin County.
5. The Aitkin County Economic Development Committee will rank applications based on immediate need and actionable project completion. Priority will be given to those applicants who commit to increase childcare slot availability.
6. Eligible Project Examples:



- Annual licensing and training fees
- General remodeling costs to meet licensing standards
- Start-up supplies, cribs, educational material, toys, etc.

7. Eligible organizations:

- Community members aspiring to become childcare providers in Aitkin County
- Existing childcare providers in Aitkin County with a commitment to increase childcare slot availability.

**Application Procedure:** Guidelines for applications are as follows:

1. Grant requests should be submitted by EMAIL to:  
[mark.jeffers@co.aitkin.mn.us](mailto:mark.jeffers@co.aitkin.mn.us), subject line: Childcare Acceleration Grant 2023 or by mail to:

Mark Jeffers  
Aitkin County Government Center,  
307 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NW, Room 316,  
Aitkin, MN 56431.

2. Funding recommendations will be considered at the regularly scheduled monthly meetings of the Aitkin County Economic Development Committee in 2023. Application deadline is **ongoing until all available funds are awarded**.
3. Committee recommendations will be submitted to the Aitkin County Board of Commissioners for final approval.

**Reporting Requirements**

1. Applicants that are awarded a Childcare Acceleration Grant are required to submit proof of fund use no more than 18 months after the grant is approved and awarded by the Board of Commissioners. Reporting information documents and deadlines will be included in the award letter.
2. Economic Development staff will collaborate with grant award winners to verify qualified grant use.
3. Unused funds at the conclusion of the 18 month grant period must be returned to Aitkin County.
4. In the event that a childcare business accepts funds and the business is not opened or child care slot availability is not increased (existing childcare businesses) within 18 months of funding award, all funding must be paid back to Aitkin County.
5. Applicants agree to use funds only for the designated purposes as described in the grant application and to notify Aitkin County Childcare Acceleration Grant Program Administration and receive consent to any substantial deviation from the grant application.



6. Applicants agree to complete an onsite evaluation no later than 60 days following the event/project completion. This evaluation will be completed by the Economic Development Coordinator of Aitkin County.
7. That the total amount of the grant may be discontinued, modified or withheld at any time, when, in the judgement of the County, such action is necessary to comply with requirements of the law or when, compliance to all of the rules stated on the recipient agreement form are not met.
8. Businesses eligible for the Aitkin County Childcare Acceleration Grant, must have a physical location in Aitkin County.
9. All applicants must be current on their property taxes through 2022 or any other obligations to Aitkin County.
10. All applicants agree that by signing and submitting the Aitkin County Childcare Acceleration Grant application they will be subject to a random audit by Aitkin County for accuracy in expenses, demonstration of business loss or any other statements or information requested. If it is determined that false or misleading information is provided on the Aitkin County Childcare Acceleration Grant Application, the applicant will be required to repay Aitkin County the entire grant amount.
11. All materials and promotion of the program must indicate/acknowledge Aitkin County Economic Development as a supporter of the event/project.
12. All applicants will be required to submit a Form W-9, for payment processing.
13. No interest shall be earned on the grant money provided through the program.
14. No reimbursement grants will be awarded.

Further information and additional forms and materials may be obtained by contacting:

Mark Jeffers  
Aitkin County Economic Development Coordinator  
218-531-6188  
[mark.jeffers@co.aitkin.mn.us](mailto:mark.jeffers@co.aitkin.mn.us)



## Application for Aitkin County CHILDCARE ACCELERATION Grant Program 2023

1. Grant requests should be submitted by EMAIL to:  
[mark.jeffers@co.aitkin.mn.us](mailto:mark.jeffers@co.aitkin.mn.us), subject line: CHILDCARE ACCELERATION GRANT 2023  
Or by mail to:  
Mark Jeffers  
Aitkin County Government Center,  
307 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NW, Room 316,  
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### APPLICANT INFORMATION

#### PROGRAM INFORMATION

**Business Name:**

**Address:**

**Person in Charge of Project:**

**Organization Mailing Address (Street Name or P.O. Box or Route and Box # and City and Zip Code):**

**Contact Person's Phone #:**

**Contact Person's Email:**

**Description of your childcare business:**

**How many children are enrolled?**

**How many childcare slots will you increase if awarded?**



**FUNDING:**

Category for funding (circle or highlight):

Licensing & training

Remodel to meet licensing standards

Supplies to meet licensing standards

Amount requested from Aitkin County \$

Amount of the business' match \$

Total projected budget \$

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Be concise and complete; attach supporting information if needed.**



**PROJECT BUDGET:** in the space below, provide a budget for the entire project.

Category	Grant Funds	Applicant Funds	Total
<b>TOTALS</b>			

**Will your organization accept a grant if it is partially funded?**

Along with your application, please attach all documents that will assist the committee in their decision. Examples should include detailed quotes of work to be accomplished (if available), timeline of potential opening.

Applicant Signature:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_