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## Workforce Retention Grant - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Staff

### General Grant Questions

What is the Workforce Retention Grant?

The New York State Workforce Retention Grant was announced by Governor Kathy Hochul as part of the FY 2024 Budget. The additional \$500 million investment will support caregivers statewide by providing funds towards staff retention, payroll tax relief and recruitment.

What is the application deadline?

The application portal will open on July 26, 2023 and remain open until September 15, 2023 at 11:59 PM. No applications will be accepted after the application portal closes.

How come I didn't get a bonus but other staff people in my program have?

To be eligible for a staff retention bonus, staff must meet **all** the following requirements:

- be employed at the physical location,
- have an active child care role (provide direct supervision to unrelated children),
- be paid through employer's payroll with state/federal taxes withheld from paycheck
- have worked an average of 15 hours per week at minimum (average of at least 10 hours for SACC) between 1/1/23 and 6/26/23, or from start of employment to June 26, 2023
- have been fingerprinted with complete information for at least provisional employment if applicable on or before 6/26/23

*Eligible staff must meet ALL requirements on day of program application and at the time of grant payment.*

How come I didn't receive the total bonus amount?

Providers must pay at least half of the bonus to all eligible staff in the first 45 days after receipt. Your provider has up to 90 days from receipt to pay eligible staff the remainder of their bonus amount.

I work for more than one program. Which one is my bonus coming from?

If you work at multiple programs under different ownership, the first program that applies for the Workforce Retention grant claims you as their staff member and will receive the funds for your workforce retention bonus. If you work at multiple programs under the same ownership, the organization will determine which program to apply for you under.

When will I receive my staff retention bonus?

You should receive at least 50% of your retention bonus within 45 days after your program receives their first grant payment, as long as you remain eligible. The remainder of the bonus, if you remain eligible, should be paid within 90 days after program receipt. For more information about receiving your bonus, please contact your employer.



I want to verify if my program applied. How do I do this?

First, talk to your employer to see if they are aware of the grant and have applied. You can also call the Workforce Retention Helpline and speak to one of the call center representatives by calling 1-833-791-2743. For additional information on Program and staff eligibility, visit the website at:

<https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/childcare/workforce-grant>

How do I apply?

Only eligible child care programs can apply for the grant; individual staff cannot apply. Your program needs to apply on your behalf by filling out the simple online application available on the website:

<https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/childcare/workforce-grant>

Is there a limit to the number of programs that will be funded?

No. Funds are in place so every eligible program can receive one grant per facility/site.

Is the Child Care Provider Workforce Retention Grant taxable?

Yes. OCFS recommends consulting with your tax preparer for tax-related concerns.

Do staff need to spend their funds by a certain date?

Staff are not under any obligation to spend the funds once the bonus has been paid to them.

Will I have to pay the funds back if my program closes after I receive any payments?

If a program closes during the grant payment period, payments will be stopped.

Will my staff retention bonus result in reduction of public assistance benefits that I receive or apply for?

No, receipt of a bonus will not result in a reduction of public assistance benefits that staff receive or apply for.

To assist in accomplishing the goal of this grant, the NYS 2023-2024 Enacted Budget included language stating that bonuses received through this *grant* “*shall be exempt and disregarded as income in determining the need for aid provided pursuant to the public assistance programs.*”

Can I receive more than one staff retention bonus if I work for more than one program site or multiple programs?

You will only receive one staff retention bonus even if you work for more multiple programs or program sites.

Is it possible for me to receive a bonus even if I do not meet all the Staff Retention bonus eligibility requirements?

If you do not meet all the Staff Retention bonus eligibility requirements, then you cannot receive a Staff Retention bonus. As a part of the grant, programs will also receive funds for Staff Recruitment. Eligible expenses for Staff Recruitment include, but are not limited to:

- sign-on bonuses for new staff who began after June 26, 2023 and are not eligible for the workforce retention grant payments
- bonus for staff in a non-caregiving role who are



- recruited to a caregiving role
- Pay a bonus for Part-Time staff who transition to a Full-Time role
- Bonuses for staff who are otherwise not eligible for the retention bonus
- Pay a longevity bonus to existing staff who have been with the program 6 months or more.

Please reach out to you program for more information regarding your eligibility for a bonus.

## Eligibility

Which programs are eligible for the Child Care Workforce Retention Grant?

The following modalities are eligible to apply for the grant:

- OCFS licensed programs
  - Day Care Centers (DCC)
  - Group Family Day Care (GFDC)
- OCFS registered programs
  - School Age Child Care (SACC)
  - Family Day Care (FDC)
  - Small Day Care Centers (SDCC)
- NYCDOHMH permitted programs
  - Article 47 programs only

The child care program must be open and operating\*, have a valid license/registration/permit, be in good standing (as defined in the Statement of Grant Opportunity) and programs must also have at least one child in care who is not related to the provider or their employees on the date of application and on dates of future disbursements to maintain eligibility.

*\*SACC will be eligible if not operating due to a planned school break as long as they anticipate serving at least one child on the first full week of school instruction or by 9/20/23 & have a current cleared staff list and at least one staff is expected to resume their position on the first full week of school instruction but no later than 9/20/23.*



## Grant Application Process

Where can my program go if they need help filling out the grant application?

Visit the Workforce Retention Help Center at <https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/childcare/workforce-grant/> or call the Workforce Retention Help Line at 1-833-791-2743. The list of CCR&Rs can also be found here:

<https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/childcare/referral-agencies.php>

Is the online application the only option for my program to apply for a grant?

Yes, the application is only available online and must be submitted electronically. It can be completed using a computer or a mobile device. The application works best in Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Safari, and Microsoft Edge. If your program prefers to use a mobile device, we recommend viewing the application in landscape mode.