2025 Child Care Complex Needs Fund Summary

Fast Facts

- The 2025 CCCNF application opened on January 22, 2025, and closed March 19, 2025.
- DCYF's budget was $9.8 million.
- DCYF received 1,268 applications requesting more than $40 million in funding.
- DCYF scored eligible applications using the Child Care Complex Needs Fund scoring rubric.
- DCYF created a review panel of subject matter experts to prioritize finalist applications to make funding determinations.
- The final funding determinations prioritized:
    - Applications that had the highest total scores.
    - Applications that fulfilled the intent of the fund while producing the best impact for children with complex needs.
- 2025 CCCNF awards will fund 304 applications (156 child care centers, 141 licensed family homes, 5 Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) providers, and 2 tribal programs) for a total of $9.9 million.

Background

The purpose of the Child Care Complex Needs Fund (CCCNF) is to promote inclusive and least-restrictive environments by supporting providers serving children with developmental delays, disabilities, behavioral needs, or other unique needs.

DCYF opened the Child Care Complex Needs Fund application on January 22, 2025. The application asked providers to explain any unique needs or behaviors of children in their care and describe their plan to support children with complex needs. Providers requested funding in the spend category that best suited their plan for children's needs.

Over the eight-week application period, DCYF received an overwhelming response. Providers across the state submitted 1,268 applications requesting more than $40 million. The need for support for children with complex needs remains clear.

Processing Applications

DCYF used a multi-step process to review applications. First, applications were screened for eligibility and completeness. Next, they were scored based on the scoring rubric. DCYF prioritized applications based on the factors described below and the review panel evaluated prioritized finalist applications to determine funding.

Screening Applications

DCYF screened all submitted applications for eligibility and completeness. A contractor translated applications submitted in languages other than English.

Providers had to meet the following criteria to move to the next step:

- Have an open license or certification

2025 Child Care Complex Needs Fund Summary

- Currently serve children with behavioral needs, developmental delays, disabilities, or other unique needs.
- License-exempt Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) providers must have served at least one child on subsidy in four of the last six months or two of the last three months and claim for subsidy through the Social Service Payment System (SSPS) at time of application.

Reasons ineligible applications did not move forward included:

- Application was incomplete (missing information).
- Application total requested funding outside the minimum/maximum range by facility type.
    - Child care centers and licensed family homes could request between $5,000 and $50,000.
    - FFN providers could request between $100 and $2,000.
- FFN Application did not meet the subsidy requirement listed in the eligibility criteria.
- Application stated no children with complex needs currently enrolled.
- Application for a provider whose license was closed at the time of application review.
- Application included requests for items or services that are not allowed. To review the guidelines for the spend categories, please visit the Child Care Complex Needs Fund manual here.
- Application requested a funding amount that did not equal the itemized budget/spend plan.

The remaining eligible applications moved on to the next step of scoring.

Scoring Applications

A team of six DCYF staff scored applications based solely on content and criteria in the scoring rubric. DCYF published the scoring rubric with the application so providers would know exactly how their application was going to be scored.

Applications had to receive **nine points or higher** to move on to the prioritization phase.

Prioritization

DCYF received over $40 million in funding requests. With $9.9 million available, DCYF prioritized eligible applications that received the highest total number of points. Additionally, DCYF ensured that the list of finalists included eligible applications from each provider type.

The total numbers of points was calculated by averaging the applicant's score for each spend category using the rubric criteria.

These finalists were presented to the review panel for funding determinations.

Panel Review

DCYF created a review panel of subject matter experts to evaluate the finalist applications in order to make funding decisions.

The panel included experts from the following:

- Child Care Licensing
- Tribal Early Learning
- Child Care Subsidy Program

2025 Child Care Complex Needs Fund Summary

- Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)
- Infant-Early Childhood Mental Health Program

The panel performed individual evaluations of each finalist application and prioritized applications to be awarded funding.

The panel reviewed and scored each finalist application based upon:

A) Does the application fulfill the intent of the Child Care Complex Needs Fund?
B) Out of these finalists, will this specific application produce the best impact for children with complex needs?

Applications that received the highest score from the panel's prioritization were granted an award.

Funding Decisions

DCYF was able to fund 304 applications! DCYF awarded $9,844,173 to 156 child care centers, 141 licensed family homes, 5 FFN, and 2 tribal programs.

This award resulted in $6.16 million for Adding Staff or Increasing Staff hours, $786,994 for Therapeutic Services, $695,396 for Facility Improvements to comply with ADA accessibility or Behavioral Needs and $2.2 million for Supportive and Adaptive Materials and Equipment.

Summary on Subsidy

Subsidy Status	Total Count	Total Amount
Subsidy Child Care Centers	138	$4,446,768
Subsidy Licensed Family Homes	138	$4,714,466
Subsidy FFN	5	$7,133
Total Subsidy	281	$9,168,367
Private Pay Child Care Centers	19	$565,316
Private Pay Licensed Family Homes	4	$110,490
Private Pay FFN	0	$0
Total Private Pay	23	$675,806

Staffing remains the most-requested funding category.

DCYF will open a new round of the Child Care Complex Needs Fund in late 2025.