

Trauma-Informed Care Financial Awards Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Through the [Fair Start for Kids Act \(FSKA\)](#) (Senate Bill 5237), the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) distributes Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) Financial Awards to eligible providers for completing DCYF-recognized trauma-informed education and training.

Q. What is the application process for providers and coaches to receive a Trauma-Informed Care Financial Award?

A. There is no application process for this award. Individual providers do need to make sure eligible training is recorded in MERIT and that their employment is confirmed or verified in MERIT. Child Care Aware of Washington (CCA of WA) will contact providers so they may receive an award. Make sure to look in your email, even junk email, for communication from CCA of WA, which will ask you to provide information so you may receive payment.¹

Q. Where can I find training that is eligible for a Trauma-Informed Care Financial Award?

A. Use the “Find Training” search tool in MERIT for approved options. Ensure that the training listed states it is FSKA-Award eligible.

Q. What if I did part of a training but never finished? Can I go back and finish, or should I start a different training?

A. You must finish the training to qualify for an award.

Q. Can I take two training opportunities to receive an award for both?

A. Yes, you may receive a Trauma-Informed Care Financial Award for each eligible training, but please note that the maximum amount of Trauma-Informed Care Financial Awards received may not exceed \$1,200.

Q. Do I need a Statewide Vendor Number to receive a Trauma-Informed Care Financial Award?

A. A Statewide Vendor Number is only needed if a provider is eligible for an education award. You do not need a Statewide Vendor Number to receive any of the other Trauma-Informed Care awards.

Q. How did DCYF determine which trainings to be recognized with financial awards?

A. DCYF, a provider design team, and the FSKA Trauma-Informed Care Advisory Group, comprised of subject matter experts, identified training opportunities to be recognized with financial awards. These

¹ Early Achievers Coaches must have their training and education recorded in MERIT unless other verification is approved from DCYF, but they do not need to have an active role. DCYF will work with certified and ECEAP programs who are license-exempt, school districts or school day programs to verify records for eligible awards.



training opportunities were selected due to their ability to further essential trauma-informed concepts and principles.

Q. How will I know if a training is eligible for a Trauma-Informed Care Financial Award?

A. All approved training or education must be recorded in MERIT, DCYF's Workforce Registry, and delivered by a DCYF-contracted training organization and DCYF state-approved trainer.

Q. Can I receive awards for past training?

A. Individuals must claim their trauma-informed care education and training awards within one year of completing the eligible training. Awards for training completed prior to Jan. 1, 2023 must be claimed by June 30, 2024.

Q. Are the awards taxable income?

A. Yes, all Trauma-Informed Care Financial Awards are taxable. For questions and support on this topic, you may contact [your regional CCA of WA office](#).

Q. What if I already received an incentive award for taking training? Will this be in addition to that?

A. Trauma-Informed Care Financial Awards cannot exceed \$1,200.

Q. I work for a child care program that is open to children receiving subsidy (they've been enrolled in the past) but aren't currently serving a child on subsidy. Am I eligible to receive an award?

A. If your program has claimed a subsidy payment in at least one month of the past 12 months prior to the award date, you may be eligible for an award. For more information on how to claim a payment, please see: <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/ssps>.

Q. How much funding is available for the Trauma-Informed Care Financial Awards?

A. The state has provided \$3.2 million for Trauma-Informed Care Financial Awards this biennium, which means there is \$1.6 million each state fiscal year (July 1 – June 30).

Q. When will I receive my award?

A. DCYF and your training organization need time to finalize and process awards, so you can expect to receive your award within three months from the time you completed an eligible training.

Q. What do I do if I completed a trauma-informed care training, and I did not receive my Trauma-Informed Care Financial Award?

A. Contact MERIT at merit@dcyf.wa.gov to inquire about Trauma-Informed Care Financial Awards. For more information, visit [DCYF's Trauma-Informed Care](#) web page.