

Planned Use of Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) Funds Report Discussion Paper

1 The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) posted information on our Child Care & Early Learning (CC&EL)
2 [Stakeholder Input webpage](#) about the \$1.1 billion in Child Care & Development Block Grant funds allotted to
3 Texas in Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSA) Funds, and
4 outlined several potential uses of the new funds. CC&EL also hosted a webinar on February to solicit
5 stakeholder feedback.

6 TWC has not yet finalized how the CRSSA Child Care and Development Block Grant funds will be expended.
7 The information in this Planned Use of CRRSA Funds Report outlines TWC's current planned use of funds;
8 final decisions on the use of funds are expected no later than May 31, 2021. TWC has not yet determined how
9 much to invest in each of these strategies. At this time, TWC expects to heavily invest in Grants to Stabilize
10 Child Care Providers, and we estimate that at least 50 percent of the funds will be used to support this strategy.
11 All final decisions on the use of funds will be considered by TWC's three Commission (Commission) at a
12 posted public-meeting; materials for all Commission Meetings are available prior to the meeting on TWC's
13 [website](#).

14 **Direct Child Care Services (Subsidies)**

15 **Low-Income Child Care Allocation to Local Workforce Boards**

16 TWC will increase funding for low-income child care in FY22 and FY23. As the COVID vaccine becomes
17 more readily available and the economy continues to rebound, more working families, including essential
18 workers, can receive financial aid to subsidize child care. While these are one-time funds, TWC can scale the
19 number of children served, and reduced the number based on available resources in future years.

20 **Implementation of Virus Mitigation Policies and Practices**

21 Texas does not have current plans to expend CRRSA funding on virus mitigation policies and practices.

22 The Texas Health and Human Services Administration's Child Care Regulation Division has enacted an
23 [emergency rule](#) for child care providers to protect the health, safety, and welfare of children in day care
24 operations and the public from the COVID-19 pandemic. The emergency creates specific requirements
25 relating to health and safety standards and how to comply with recommendations from health authorities that
26 have evolved since the pandemic began. And the Governor's Strikeforce to Open Texas issued several Open
27 Texas Checklists for various industries, including child care. The checklist for [Child Care Centers](#) and [Child](#)
28 [Care Families](#) provide recommended practices for child care providers. Additionally, the state previously
29 addressed the provision training and technical assistance through [Texas A&M University's Agri-Life](#)
30 [Extension child care training platform](#).

31 **Grants or Assistance (Other than Subsidies) to Stabilize Child Care Providers**

32 **Grants to All Providers**

33 TWC will implement a grant program for all Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) eligible regulated
34 providers to assist these businesses in addressing the higher costs they have experienced during COVID as a
35 result of lower enrollment and higher operating costs. TWC will administer grants to approximately 14,000
36 CCDF-eligible regulated providers (licensed child care centers, licensed child care homes, registered child
37 care homes). In order for providers to easily record how grant funds were used, TWC will direct funds to
38 support rent/mortgage, utility, personnel costs, or payroll/employment/property taxes, all of which have clear
39 documentation to support expenses. Personnel costs may include stipends and hazard pay; providers may also
40 use these funds to support the cost of paying staff salaries to attend required professional development that
41 occurs after regular working hours.

1 TWC will calculate grant amounts on provider size (based on licensed capacity) and the average cost of care
2 (based on the TWC 2020 Market Rate Survey) within the provider’s local workforce development area. TWC
3 may consider enhancing grant amounts based on Texas Rising Star certification and other national
4 accreditation status, and TWC will also consider how we might enhance our support for providers operating in
5 a child care desert.

6 **Outreach and Technical Assistance/Business Support Coaches**

7 TWC will contract with grantee(s) to fund Business Coaches who will provide assistance on TWC’s CRSSA
8 funded grants to all providers, as well as other federal supports such as the Paycheck Protection Program,
9 Economic Injury Disaster Loans, and other resources available from the Small Business Administration.
10 Business Coaches can also provide other assistance to help educate programs on general financial stability.

11 **Assistance to Providers Not Participating in the Subsidy System Prior to the Pandemic**

12 TWC’s grants to all CCDF-eligible regulated child care providers, previously outlined, will provide assistance
13 to non-subsidy providers.

14 **Other**

15 **Texas Rising Star Texas Rising Star**

16 TWC is currently examining opportunities to assist Texas Rising Star certified child care providers with
17 CRRSA funds. TWC may invest in the expansion of Texas Rising Star capacity through the use of Contracted
18 Slots for targeted populations, such as infants & toddlers, and pre-K partnerships. TWC is also considering a
19 parent outreach and education campaign on the importance of quality child care, noting Texas Rising Star
20 programs as Texas’ quality rated providers.

21 **Child Care Capacity Building**

22 TWC is considering several initiatives to build child care capacity. TWC may build on our previously support
23 for the development of Prekindergarten Partnerships between Texas Rising Star providers and public-school
24 programs. Through the development of formal partnerships, PreK instruction is provided within an early
25 learning center with children dually enrolled in both programs. Through informal partnerships, child care and
26 public-school programs can align curriculum/assessment, pursue joint professional develop, or establish
27 common goals around early childhood education

28 TWC will also consider how we can support the development of Employer Site-Based Child Care, increase
29 our support for Family Child Care, and support and expand registered early childhood apprenticeship
30 programs. TWC is also examining additional support for shared services alliances, and opportunities to
31 address rural child care challenges.

32 **Support for Early Childhood Professionals**

33 TWC currently supports professional development for early education professionals and may expand our
34 existing initiative to serve more educators. In addition, TWC is examining how to best support early
35 childhood educators to improve children’s social-emotional and behavioral health development, including the
36 strengthening of teacher-family relationships, the identification of children with or at-risk for behavioral,
37 developmental or mental health difficulties, and linkages to additional support services

38 **Studies/Evaluation/Planning**

39 TWC will also review several existing studies for potential updates, including the Texas Core Competencies
40 for Early Childhood Practitioners and Administrators, the ECE Core Competencies, the Texas Infant and
41 Toddler Early Learning Guidelines, the Texas Early Learning Statewide Needs Assessment, and the Texas
42 Early Learning Statewide Strategic Plan.