

Key Early Start CT Acronyms and Definitions

Item	Definition	Website for more information
Early Start CT	Early Start CT (ESCT) is the new state-funded early care and education program that's launching in July 2025. It combines 3 existing programs — Child Day Care Contracts, School Readiness Grants, and State Head Start Supplement Grants — into 1 new program.	https://www.ctoec.org/early-start-ct/
General Policies	State funded early care and education programs are required to meet a number of requirements, which are laid out in the OEC General Policies (GPs). These requirements vary somewhat depending upon the funding source.	General Policies - Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
NAEYC	The National Association for the Education of Young Children is a professional membership organization that works to promote high-quality early learning for all young children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood practice, policy, and research.	https://www.naeyc.org/
NAFCC	National Association for Family Child Care is a nationally recognized accreditation system designed specifically for family child care providers. This system was designed by hundreds of providers, parents, and early care and education experts in an effort to create a quality indicator for family child care programs across the country.	https://nafcc.org/
Elevate	Office of Early Childhood's Quality Improvement System for licensed and license-exempt family child care, centers, and group homes. The Elevate system gives child care providers the tools and guidance they need to improve their programs over time at their own pace.	https://www.ctoec.org/elevate/
Head Start	Federally funded programs designed to promote school readiness for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers for families that meet income eligibility requirements.	https://www.ctoec.org/partnerships/connecticut-head-start-state-collaboration-office/#head-start
Consent Order	A Consent Order is a negotiated settlement between the provider and the OEC in which the provider agrees to take	Statutes and Regulations for Child Care Centers and Group

	certain steps above and beyond the regulations to retain the license.	Child Care Homes - Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
SVI	The Social Vulnerability Index is a tool developed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to identify communities experiencing social vulnerability based on various factors like poverty and lack of vehicle access. It uses U.S. Census data to assess social vulnerability across counties.	
Competitive Funding	Eligible programs in Connecticut can apply and compete for this funding. Funding decisions will be made based on how well applicants score on specific criteria in the application.	Early Start CT Request for Applications (B) - Connecticut Office of Early Childhood

Questions and Responses for Wednesday March 5 through Wednesday March 12.

RFA B QUESTIONS	RESPONSES
ACCREDITATION/REQUIREMENTS	
What are the accreditation requirements?	Programs approved for Early Start CT are given a 3-year window to achieve either NAEYC Accreditation, NAFCC Accreditation, or Head Start Approval. This requirement applies to all types of programs; center-based, group homes, family child care homes, and license-exempt.
Our center is working towards NAEYC accreditation, are we still eligible to apply even though we are not yet accredited?	Yes, all programs state-wide may apply.
Do school district programs and/or license exempt programs need to meet all requirements (example: accreditation and teacher requirements)?	All state funded programs, including license exempt school district programs, are required to achieve and maintain accreditation and meet all requirements detailed in OEC General Policies A-01 and A-03. https://www.ctoec.org/forms-documents/legislative-requirements-for-staff-qualifications-in-state-funded-programs.pdf https://www.ctoec.org/forms-documents/gp-a-03-data-submission-and-reporting-requirements.pdf
If we receive Early Start CT funding and have children that are already enrolled but would qualify to have one of those spots, can they switch over to one of those spots?	Yes, families that meet the eligibility requirements as outlined in the General Policies can be enrolled in state funded spaces.

Can the slots be offered to families from the surrounding area or just residents of the town we operate in?	Early Start CT spaces are open to all families, state-wide, as long as they meet the eligibility requirements detailed in the OEC General Policy.
Are there additional inspections for Early Start CT funded programs?	There is no additional licensing inspections required. Licensed programs will continue to receive annual licensing inspections as determined by OEC Licensing Division. Early Start CT programs are subject to monitoring, which may include on-site visits by either Local Governance Partner (LGP) representative or OEC staff, who will check for compliance with state-funding requirements (i.e. accreditation status, registry compliance, etc.).
What requirements do Early Start CT programs need to follow in order to retain funding?	OEC is working to revise the OEC General Policies for state-funded programs to align with Early Start CT. Programs interested in applying for RFA B should review the current OEC General Policies for state funded programs on the OEC website. https://www.ctoec.org/general-policies/ .
ELIGIBILITY	
What are eligible SVI scores for application, does that depend on the geographic area or is there a standard or maximum score for eligibility?	SVI data is available here: https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/64eddda420cb420aaf643b8dc3942358
Would programs in construction, set to open in the fall, be eligible to apply?	Yes, all programs state-wide may apply. Please note this is a competitive process.
If we have submitted a new licensing application to OEC, or to add an under 3 endorsement to our license, may we still apply?	Yes, all programs state-wide may apply. Please note, this is a competitive process.
Should currently funded programs apply for RFA-B if they did not get all their slots in RFA-A?	Current state-funded programs may apply for RFA-B for additional spaces as needed. Please note, this is a competitive process.
What are the requirements to apply for this funding?	Please review the requirements for RFA B on the OEC website: https://www.ctoec.org/early-start-ct-request-for-applications-b/
My program currently has state-funded spaces. Do I have to apply for them again in RFA-B?	If you are currently Child Day Care (CDC), State Head Start and/or School Readiness funded, you should have already applied for spaces in RFA A through your intermediary for Family Child Care providers, back in November 2024. Current Family Child Care providers who are funded through CDC must work with their intermediary to apply for RFA-B.
If we already receive other state funding, are we eligible to apply?	All programs state-wide are eligible to apply. Please note, this is a competitive process.

What families do we need to provide services to?	Sixty percent (60%) of all Early Start CT families enrolled in a program must be at or below seventy-five percent (75%) of the state median income (SMI). Programs should apply whose families served would be eligible for and benefit from Early Start CT spaces.
Our program is newly opened, and we do not have any children enrolled yet, can we apply for this funding?	Yes, you can apply for Early Start CT spaces while enrolling families. Please review General Policy B-03 for guidance on enrollment requirements. https://www.ctoec.org/forms-documents/gp-b-03-enrollment-and-attendance-in-state-funded-programs.pdf
If my program is expanding our licensed capacity, can I apply for additional spaces?	Yes, programs can apply for spaces that will be effective 7/1/25. Any changes to licensed capacity would need to be completed on or prior to this date.
APPLICATION	
Is the RFA B application designed for programs that have never had state-funded spaces before, or is this RFA Part B application for funding for all programs?	All programs state-wide may apply for RFA-B. Please note this is a competitive process.
Can liaisons complete the RFA B applications?	No, liaisons cannot complete the application. Applications shall be completed by the program applying to receive funding.
Is there an opportunity to apply for wrap around funding to extend the day for federally funded Early Head Start slots with RFA B?	There are several space types in RFA B for programs to choose that best meet their community needs.
Is there a PDF of the application available?	No, a PDF of the application is not available.
What is the Sum of Score on the application?	The application is scored based on the answers provided by each program. The sum of score is the total points an application is worth and is automatically calculated as responses are recorded.
Are we filling out the application for spaces that we have available and open or full?	The application is to request state funded spaces as part of Early Start CT. The number provided in the application is equal to the number of Early Start CT spaces the program is requesting.
Where do I send my completed application?	Once the application is completed by the provider, it is automatically uploaded to the OEC for review.
For the section on the application that asks for space types and funding capacities are these numbers based off of kids currently enrolled,	This is the number of state-funded spaces the program is requesting. Space types are based on hours of early care and education available to

<p>what we have available, or our overall capacity for each age group?</p>	<p>families. Please reference the space type table within the RFA application to select the space type that best meets the needs of your families and program licensed capacity. Spaces are not guaranteed and will be awarded based on the competitive criteria.</p>
<p>Can programs apply for slots for children who attend one program in the AM and then are transported by the AM program to another funded program in the afternoon?</p>	<p>Programs should apply for the type of spaces that will meet the needs of the family and children they serve. If a child attends a public school preschool they may attend and utilize a state-funded quarter time space in order to provide the equivalent of full-day services for the child.</p>
<p>Could one program apply for a full day slot and pay the other program?</p>	<p>No, children enrolled in Full-Time spaces at a program are to be served at that program.</p>
<p>Is there a maximum number of spaces I can apply for in RFA B?</p>	<p>The maximum spaces that can be requested in RFA B is 16 infant/toddler and 40 preschool spaces. Please note that this is a competitive process.</p>
<p>TECHNICAL QUESTIONS</p>	
<p>I am unable to save the application and continue/submit.</p>	<p>For technical issues with RFA B please request IT support via email: ocf.rfp.eceqi@ct.gov</p>
<p>I need help with my application.</p>	<p>For issues with RFA B please request IT support via email: ocf.rfp.eceqi@ct.gov</p>
<p>EARLY START CT – RFA-A</p>	
<p>When will currently state funded programs learn of their final Early Start CT RFA-A allocation?</p>	<p>Program notifications regarding RFA A were sent to programs Monday, March 10, 2025.</p>
<p>GENERAL OEC QUESTIONS</p>	
<p>If we receive funded slots, would we have to follow the proposed compensation scale, that seems to be following along side or will be upcoming soon? Or is the compensation scale going to be it's own separate law/regulation that no matter status (accredited, state funded, private, etc) of business they will have to incorporate?</p>	<p>The OEC cannot answer questions on proposed legislation.</p>