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# Early Start CT – RFA B Info Session

*March 13, 2025*



Office of Early Childhood

# Agenda

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Topic	Speaker(s)
<b>Opening: Conference Logistics</b>	Jennifer Jones
<b>Welcome &amp; Introduction to OEC</b>	Rachel Tway-Grant
<b>Early Start CT Overview</b>	Christy Gademsky
<b>RFA B Application Overview</b>	Kyle Pilon
<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	Kyle Pilon
<b>Closing: Key Dates &amp; Reminders</b>	Kyle Pilon



# Disclaimer

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This presentation includes brief descriptions of the RFA specifications and requirements but does not fully elaborate on all required elements. As a result, this presentation does not supersede what is stated in the RFA or its appendices. Proposers are responsible for ensuring that their proposal is complete and accurate according to the information and requirements contained in the full RFA.

OEC will respond to submitted questions in writing after the conference. Proposers are responsible for ensuring that they read the official responses, even if their question was verbally answered during the conference.



# Logistics of RFA Conference

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*The OEC will post slides on our website and on the state contracting portal after this conference.*

- If you are having any technical issues, you may also email [oeq.frp.eceqi@ct.gov](mailto:oeq.frp.eceqi@ct.gov) with your questions instead.
- Please type all questions into the question box.
- All questions typed in the question box during this conference will be recorded, and **responses to questions will be posted in writing on the OEC's website and the State Contracting Portal after the conference.**



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# Welcome!



Office of Early Childhood

# Our Work

OEC is a state agency that oversees a network of programs and services that help young children and families thrive. OEC is made up of various divisions and programs which include:



## Early Care and Education (ECE)

Support more than **400** ECE programs serving over **40,000** children



## Care 4 Kids

Provide child care subsidies for lower income families who are working or are in approved education activities



## Home Visiting

Provide parenting and child development support to families of young children and pregnant women



## Birth to Three

Supports families when they have concerns about their children's development.



## Parent Cabinet

Advisory group that partners with OEC to elevate family voice and develop family-centered policies, programs, and practices



## Licensing

License and inspect more than **4,000** child care and youth camp programs to ensure health and safety



## Background Checks

Oversee comprehensive background checks for child care providers



## Quality Improvement

Provide early childhood professionals with supports to improve child care practices



## Agency Administrative Functions

Fiscal, Legal, Communications, Information Technology, Data & Research



## Government & Community Relations

Outreach and engagement with key stakeholders and partners



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# Early Start CT Overview



Office of Early Childhood

# What is Early Start CT?

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Early Start CT is the new state funding stream that goes into effect July 1, 2025. It combines the following funding streams:

- School Readiness grants
- Child Day Care Contracts
- State Head Start supplemental grants

Early Start CT was a key recommendation from Gov. Lamont's Blue Ribbon Panel and one step in a broader process of streamlining the early childhood system and increasing collaboration within the system to improve Connecticut's mixed delivery child care system for the children and families it serves.

More information can be found on the Early Start CT website: <https://www.ctoec.org/early-start-ct/>





# Early Start CT Goals

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**Empower families and amplify parent voice** to better meet the needs of Connecticut children.



**Strengthen system collaboration and a shared vision** to build lasting partnerships between community stakeholders.



**Improve equitable access** to affordable, high-quality care and early childhood services and supports that meet a range of family needs.



**Promote best practices** to enhance provider's ability to support children's learning and development.



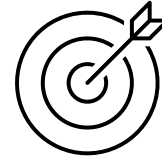
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# RFA B Application Overview



# Background & Goals

OEC created this RFA (B) to provide early childhood programs the opportunity to apply for Early Start CT funding. This RFA is part B of the Early Start CT funding process for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 (July 2025 – June 2027). This competitive RFA (B) allows OEC to award at a minimum ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) per year over a two-year period to support early care and education programs with Early Start CT (state funded) spaces for eligible families.



1. Improve equitable access for Connecticut families to affordable, high-quality care and education
2. Provide an opportunity for early childhood funding to be awarded to more communities and geographies across the state, including areas that have never received early childhood funding from OEC before.



# Accessing the Application

What We Do

Agency and Program Reports

Behavioral Health Initiative

Blue Ribbon Panel on Child Care

COVID-19 Response

Educational Campaigns

Legislation

News

Partnerships

Plans

Policies

Requests for Proposals (RFPs), Requests for Applications (RFAs), and Requests for Information (RFIs)

Research and Data

Contact Us

Requests for Proposals (RFPs), Requests for Applications (RFAs), and Requests for Information (RFIs)

About OEC

What We Do

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Requests for Proposals (RFPs),

## Requests for Proposals (RFPs), Requests for Applications (RFAs), and Requests for Information (RFIs)

OEC funds programs and initiatives that benefit young children and their families. We also fund special projects, like training and other supports for professionals working with young children.

### Open RFPs/RFAs/RFIs

- [Early Start CT Request for Applications \(B\)](#)
- [Local Governance Partner Intermediary RFP](#)



# Accessing the Application (cont'd)

[About OEC](#) ▾ [Programs and Services](#) ▾ [For Families](#) ▾ [For Providers](#) ▾ [For Programs](#) ▾ [Licensing](#) ▾ [Background Checks](#) ▾

[Home](#) > [Early Start CT Request for Applications \(B\)](#)

## About OEC

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[Agency and Program Reports](#)

[Behavioral Health Initiative](#) ▾

[Blue Ribbon Panel on Child Care](#) ▾

[COVID-19 Response](#) ▾

[Educational Campaigns](#) ▾

[Legislation](#) ▾

[News](#)

[Partnerships](#) ▾

[Plans](#)

[Policies](#) ▾

[Requests for Proposals \(RFPs\),  
Requests for Applications \(RFAs\),  
Requests for Information \(RFIs\)](#) ▲

[Overview](#)

[Early Start CT Request for Applications \(B\)](#)

[Birth to Three Central Billing Office RFP](#)

## Early Start CT Request for Applications (B)

OEC is pleased to announce an RFA for the opportunity to receive state funding for early care and education spaces.

### Description

OEC created this RFA (B) to provide early childhood programs the opportunity to apply for Early Start CT funding as part of OEC's larger goal of improving the equitable access to affordable, high-quality care and education for Connecticut families. This RFA is part B of the Early Start CT funding process for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 (July 2025 – June 2027). This competitive RFA (B) allows OEC to award at a minimum ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) per year over a two-year period to support early care and education programs with Early Start CT (state funded) spaces for eligible families. This RFA (B) provides an opportunity for early childhood funding to be awarded to more communities and geographies across the state, including areas that have never received early childhood funding from OEC before.

To achieve OEC's goal of improving equitable access for Connecticut families to affordable, high-quality care and education, this RFA (B) prioritizes applicants who:

- **Are currently accredited**



# Accessing the Application (cont'd)

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Please visit: <https://www.ctoec.org/early-start-ct-request-for-applications-b/>

RFA (B) Webpage contains:

- Description of the funding opportunity
- Evaluation Process
- Question and Answer Schedule
- Information on today's Pre-Bid Conference
- Key Dates
- **Application**
- Key Documents such as FAQs



# Site Information



Early Start Connecticut

Site Information

Space Types and Funding Capacities

Child Care Desert Location

Care 4 Kids

Attestation

## Early Start CT - Competitive Funding RFA (RFA B)

### Site Information

**Total sum of score: 0**

Organization Name

Enter Organization Name

Site Name

Enter Site Name

Site Address

Enter Site Address

Site Town/City

Enter Site Town/City

Site Zipcode

Enter Site Zip Code

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Office of Early Childhood

# Space Types and Funding Capacities



Early Start Connecticut

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## Early Start CT - Competitive Funding RFA (RFA B)

### Space Types and Funding Capacities

**Total sum of score: 0**

Please be advised:

The maximum number of spaces requested for infant/toddler cannot exceed 16.

The maximum number of spaces requested for Preschool cannot exceed 40.

Please fill out your preferred space type mix for each age group below:

**Scoring:**

If greater than 75% of spaces are Full-time+ =15 points

If greater than 50% of spaces are Full-time+ = 10 points

If greater than 51% of spaces are half-time +=5 points

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# Child Care Desert Location

Early Start Connecticut

Site Information   Space Types and Funding Capacities   **Child Care Desert Location**   Care 4 Kids   Attestation

**Early Start CT - Competitive Funding RFA (RFA B)**

**Social Vulnerability Index and Child Care Desert locations**

**Total sum of score: 0**

What town is the applicant child care site located in?     

Scoring for SVI

Scoring for Child Care Access (Child Care Desert)  

Please click [here](#) to view the map of points.

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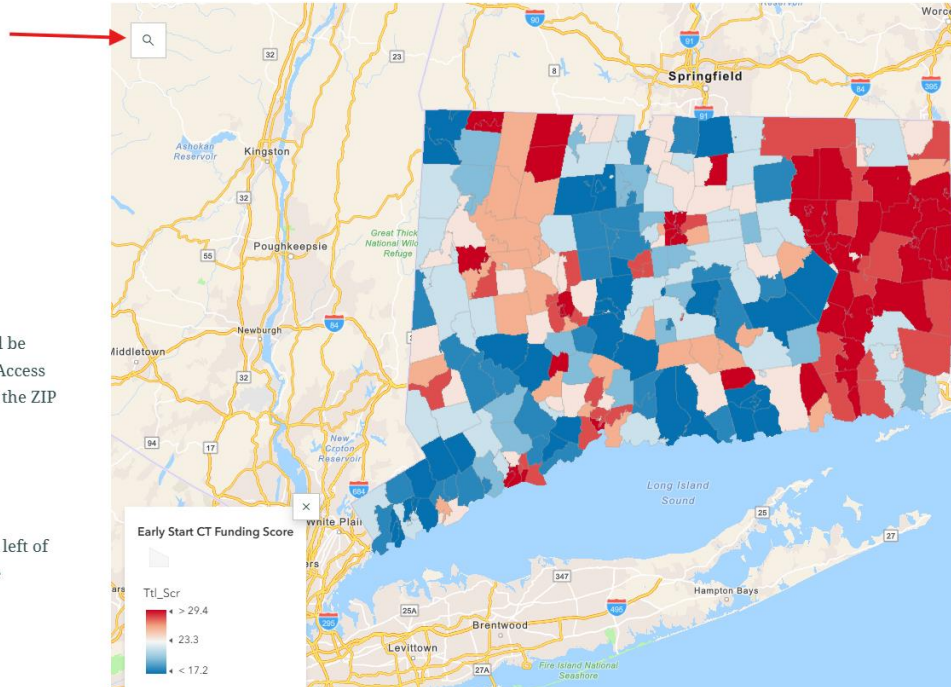
# Child Care Desert and SVI Look Up Tool

## Early Start CT Funding Points

The map to the right, shows the total points providers will be given based on the average estimated level of Child Care Access and the average Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) score for the ZIP code they are located within. The methodologies used to calculate Child Care Access and SVI can be found below.

## Directions

To find your location, use select the search icon at the top left of the map. Enter your location's address and then select the census tract your location is within.



# Care 4 Kids



Early Start Connecticut

Site Information

Space Types and Funding Capacities

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Care 4 Kids

Attestation

## Early Start CT - Competitive Funding RFA (RFA B)

### Care 4 Kids

**Total Sum of points: 0**

Questions: Please answer the following questions for the site for which you are applying. If you are representing an organization with multiple sites, you will need to complete a separate application for each site you are requesting spaces for.

**Please respond to the questions below by using your mouse and clicking on the box next to each question that is YES.**

- At least 10% of the children in your program are enrolled in Care 4 Kids?(10 points)
- Does the program accept Care 4 Kids

Save & continue

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# Attestation



Early Start Connecticut

Site Information

Space Types and Funding Capacities

Child Care Desert Location

Care 4 Kids

Attestation

## Early Start CT - Competitive Funding RFA (RFA B)

### Final Attestation

Submission of this application to the Office of Early Childhood is attestation by the applicant they will meet the enrollment requirements outlined in the [legislation](#) establishing Early Start CT (2024 P.A. 24-78 (S.B. 14, Sec. 24)): "At least sixty per cent of the eligible children enrolled in an early care and education program receiving financial assistance under Early Start CT shall be members of a family that is at or below seventy-five per cent of the state median income."

Submission of this application to the Office of Early Childhood is attestation by the Applicant they have reviewed the State of Connecticut Purchase of Service (POS) state contract , [Part II](#), and attest they will comply with the requirements as set forth in in the Connecticut POS contract Part II.

Disclaimer:

- The OEC reserves the right to require changes to the space types requested to meet the needs of children and families.

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# Evaluation Criteria

*How We'll be Scoring Applications*



# Evaluation Criteria

The OEC intends to conduct a comprehensive, fair, and impartial evaluation of applications received in response to this RFA and will award at a minimum ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) per year to child care programs and family child care homes through State of CT POS contracts. The OEC will evaluate Child Care Centers (DCCC), Group Child Care Homes (DCGH) and Child Care Center Exempt (DCEX) programs together. Family Child Care Homes (DCFH) will be evaluated separately and OEC will award a maximum of \$1,600,000 to Family Child Care Homes (DCFH).

Criteria	Possible Points Awarded
New provider to state funding	10
Accreditation (NAEYC, NAFCC) or Elevate	5,10, or 15
Full time spaces	10 or 15 (% based)
Part time spaces	5 (% based)
Lead Teacher Qualifications	5 or 15 (% based)
Registry enrollment	5
Social vulnerability index (SVI) <sup>1</sup>	4-20 (zip code of program)
Child Care Access <sup>1</sup>	2-20 (zip code of program)
Care4Kids Enrollment	10

<sup>1</sup>Find more information [here](#)



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# Key Dates and Reminders



# Timelines

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*For RFA B Submission:*

**March 28, 2025**

5:00 p.m. ET

*Applications due*

*For RFP B Questions:*

The OEC will collect and respond to questions weekly.

**Deadline for Questions**

Friday, March 7, 5:00 PM ET

Friday, March 14, 5:00 PM ET

**Answers to questions will be posted**

Wednesday, March 12

Wednesday, March 19





# Contact Information

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<b>Contact Information</b>	<b>RFA B Information</b>
<p data-bbox="208 424 815 464"><b>Early Care and Education Team</b></p> <p data-bbox="208 470 672 509">Office of Early Childhood</p> <p data-bbox="208 560 761 600">E-mail: <a href="mailto:oeo.rfp.eceqi@ct.gov">oeo.rfp.eceqi@ct.gov</a></p> <p data-bbox="208 650 842 732">Mail: 450 Columbus Boulevard Hartford, Connecticut 06103</p>	<p data-bbox="962 424 1595 464">Office of Early Childhood Website:</p> <p data-bbox="962 467 1661 541"><a href="#">Early Start CT Request for Applications (B) - Connecticut Office of Early Childhood</a></p>



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**THANK  
YOU!**



Office of Early Childhood