Childcare for an Equitable Workforce

INTERNET FOR ALL

Eligible Entities can encourage childcare provisions and resources to reduce barriers to employment in telecommunications.

CHILDCARE AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The Internet For All programs offer an opportunity to attract, recruit, and retain historically underrepresented groups in the telecommunications workforce. For many people, particularly women, lack of access to childcare can inhibit workforce participation.[1] Furthermore, employee wellbeing and productivity suffer without access to affordable, quality childcare.[2]

STRATEGIES FOR ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

Engage Workforce Partners on Childcare Opportunities
Eligible Entities can incorporate their coordination with a variety of partners into their BEAD Workforce Plans. Partners from relevant state agencies such as the Department of Education or local, community-based organizations can help offer ideas and support on childcare and other wraparound services.

Prioritize Childcare & Wraparound Services Among Subgrantees
In the subgrantee selection process, Eligible Entities can develop additional prioritization factors, such as equitable workforce development and training.[3] Eligible Entities can score subgrantees higher for offering direct childcare or childcare-related employee benefits like vouchers, resources, and childcare access information.

In addition, **Eligible Entities can share resources directly with subgrantees**, such as:

- The Administration for Children & Families (HHS) created a database of childcare resources that is searchable by state.

- The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation published an Employer Toolkit for Childcare.

- The Administration for Children and Families (HHS) offered guidance on understanding childcare quality ratings across the country.

Eligible Entities can engage in activities that support childcare access without requiring set-aside funds from the BEAD Program by leveraging existing infrastructure, resources, and programs.

Note: This guidance does not and is not intended to supersede, modify, or otherwise alter applicable statutory or regulatory requirements, or the specific application requirements set forth in the NOFO. In all cases, statutory and regulatory mandates, and the requirements set forth in the NOFO, shall prevail over any inconsistencies in this document.

[1] Ferguson, Stephanie, Isabella Lucy. 2022. "Data Deep Dive: A Decline of Women in the Workforce." U.S. Chamber of Commerce. April 27, 2022. https://www.uschamber.com/workforce/data-deep-dive-a-decline-of-women-in-the-workforce
[2] US Chamber of Commerce Foundation. 2021. "The Bedrock of American Business: High-Quality Early Childhood Education." U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. February 29, 2021. https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/early-childhood-education/the-business-case.
[3] See BEAD NOFO Sec. IV.B.7 (pp.44-45) for more information.

Childcare for an Equitable Workforce

Eligible Entities and subgrantees can incorporate childcare into BEAD projects using a range of approaches to build a more equitable workforce.

> *"At the end of the day, **care investments aren't just good for American families. They're vital for American businesses and critical to the recovery of the U.S. economy**." — Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo[4]*

EXAMPLES

On-Site Childcare | Micron Technology, Inc. and the State of Idaho
In partnership with state and local leaders, Micron Technology, Inc. broke ground on a new childcare facility for their employees in Boise, Idaho in 2023. The center will be built beside the company's corporate headquarters and a new semiconductor fabrication plant.

All Hours Childcare | Toyota On-Site Care in Kentucky and Indiana
Toyota has operated subsidized childcare centers near the company's Kentucky and Indiana factories since 1993 and 2003, respectively. Bright Horizons Family Solutions, Inc. staffs the facilities, and they remain open 24-7 to accommodate parent schedules. Toyota consistently adapts to offer new services at the centers as needed, including meals and homework help.

Grant Program | Future Ready Iowa Childcare Grant Programs
Under the Future Ready Iowa initiative, the state of Iowa created both the Childcare Business Incentive Grant and the Childcare Challenge Fund to expand new and existing childcare options in partnership with employers and childcare providers. Much of the nearly $37 million in funding has been delivered to community development organizations and nonprofits.

Public-Private Partnership | Michigan Tri-Share Childcare Program
Michigan's Tri-Share Childcare Program allows eligible families earning between 200% and 325% of the federal poverty level to share the costs of childcare with their employer and the state of Michigan. In addition to assisting families, this arrangement greatly de-risks private sector support for childcare.

Family Resources | Arkansas Better Beginnings Family Resource Library
Developed by the Arkansas Department of Education in 2010, the Better Beginnings Family Resource Library serves as a comprehensive resource hub. Families can better monitor developmental milestones, understand the state's childcare certifications, and learn how to select the right care for their child.

Subsidy | Chickahominy Tribe Child Care and Development Program
The Chickahominy Tribe of Virginia created the Child Care and Development Program to provide funds for Native American children to attend quality childcare programs. Similar programs across the country use the federal poverty level to create eligibility thresholds, but this program uses the Virginia state median income as the standard for families.