



MINI-GRANT INSTRUCTIONS

MISSION

THE MISSION OF FIRST 5 SONOMA COUNTY IS TO MAXIMIZE THE HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT OF ALL SONOMA COUNTY CHILDREN FROM THE PRENATAL STAGE TO AGE FIVE THROUGH SUPPORT, EDUCATION, AND ADVOCACY.

First 5 Sonoma County funds programs and services for Sonoma County children from the prenatal stage to age five and their families. First 5 is funded by the California Children and Families Act (Proposition 10). This Act was passed by California voters in November 1998.

MINI-GRANT PROGRAM

First 5 Sonoma County's Mini-Grant Program provides small grants up to \$5,000 (see Section F). There is no minimum request. If you receive a mini-grant, you will have one year to complete your mini-grant project. Your mini-grant project must help First 5 Sonoma County achieve one or more of its objectives.

A. COMMISSION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

All funds received from the Mini-Grant Program must be used to support the development and nurturing of Sonoma County children from the prenatal stage to age five. You may request funding for projects or programs that target one or more of the following goals and objectives. First 5 Sonoma County believes that making progress in these areas will result in our youngest children being better prepared when they enter kindergarten. Research shows that children who succeed in kindergarten are more likely to succeed in school.

GOAL 1: ENSURE THE HEALTH AND HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN

Objective 1A: Increase the availability of high quality, accessible health care for children

Objective 1B: Increase early detection of, and intervention for, developmental concerns

GOAL 2: ENSURE FAMILIES ARE SUPPORTED AND NURTURING

Objective 2A: Increase support for parents to strengthen their parenting capacity

Objective 2B: Increase support for parents to strengthen their family's literacy skills

GOAL 3: ENSURE THAT EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION (ECE) IS HIGH QUALITY

Objective 3A: Increase the availability of high quality early care and education

Objective 3B: Increase the capacity of early care and education providers to link their client families to appropriate health, mental health, substance abuse, and developmental services

GOAL 4: INCREASE INTEGRATION OF SYSTEMS AND EFFECT POLICY CHANGE TO FILL GAPS AND BETTER SERVE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Health Systems:

Objective 4A: Collaborate to identify successful strategies to reduce iron deficiency anemia

Objective 4B: Collaborate to increase the community's capacity to address children's oral health needs

Family Support Systems:

Objective 4C: Collaborate to identify, improve, and sustain high quality intervention and support for families with substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence issues in order to reduce child abuse and neglect

Objective 4D: Collaborate to increase family economic self-sufficiency and reduce the impacts of poverty on children 0-5

Early Care and Education Systems

- Objective 4E: Collaborate with the early care and education and K-3 systems to:
- Increase parents' engagement as partners in education and increase families' connection to related resources
 - Increase alignment and articulation between early care and education and K-3
 - Identify and increase institutionalization of successful school readiness strategies and programs
- Objective 4F: Collaborate to increase alignment of systems of academic advancement for early care and education providers in Sonoma County

Advocacy

- Objective 4G: Advocate for programs and policies that support children and families

GOAL 5: ENGAGE ENTIRE COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT ACHIEVEMENT OF FIRST 5 SONOMA COUNTY GOALS

- Objective 5A: Increase the awareness of parents and the community about:
- The needs of children 0-5 and their parents and caregivers
 - Activities to support the optimal development of children 0-5
 - First 5 Sonoma County and the nature and value of services/programs provided by its grantees and community partners
- Objective 5B: Conduct social marketing to increase behaviors that *support optimal child development*
- Objective 5C: Provide financial incentives for the community to implement projects that support First 5 Sonoma County goals
- Objective 5D: Inform and engage the private sector to understand and value the high return on investments in early childhood

B. ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

First 5 Mini-Grants fund projects that address the needs of children ages 0 to 5. Applications to support child care programs must be organized around one major theme or focus, for example outdoor play equipment to improve large motor skills, or shelving and books for a reading area. It is best to apply for several large, good quality items rather than many small items. Below are examples of eligible as well as excluded activities.

Eligible Activities	Excluded Activities
One-time events or pilot projects	Ongoing activities or regular staff positions
One time purchase of curriculum materials or equipment, such as indoor or outdoor play equipment, books or educational tools	Purchase of computer hardware, software or digital electronic devices
Development of training(s) and/or enrollment in appropriate training	Personal scholarships or to pay for regular academic coursework
Facility improvements primarily benefiting the child care program	Home improvements such as bike paths, sod or fencing
Technical assistance to enhance/improve services for 0-5	Consumable products such as paper and art supplies

C. ELIGIBILITY

Applications will be accepted from:

- Nonprofit or public organizations
- Community groups that are working with a non-profit, public institution, or private corporation that serves as their fiscal agent (manages the grant money and reporting activities)
- Private corporations or businesses
- Individuals who conduct activities that promote children's development
- All early education providers serving children 0-5 who have never received a mini-grant in the past, including current Quality Counts participants are eligible. Only direct survivors of the October, 2017 wildfires who lost family child care homes or preschool centers may apply for a mini grant a second time.

All early education providers receiving mini grants will be directed to the Quality Counts Program Director to learn more about future funding opportunities through the Quality Counts program. Quality Counts provides opportunities for Sonoma County early education providers to receive stipends for program quality improvement, access no-cost coaching, low/no cost professional development and trainings, and technical assistance to complete the QRIS rating process.

D. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Please submit **one (1) original and six (6) copies of your proposal** to First 5 Sonoma County at the address listed below.

Applications will not be reviewed if fewer than required are submitted. In order to be considered for funding, your proposal must include:

- A signed Application Cover Sheet with an original signature
- A completed narrative to the questions on the Application Form
- A completed Budget Form (Please supply the details requested on the budget form; your application will not be funded if your application is not complete.)
- Child Care Providers Only - A copy of current child care license

E. SUBMISSION DEADLINES

There are two application periods each year: **June 1 – July 15** and **December 1 – January 15**.

Applications must be submitted **by 5:00 p.m.** on the last day of each application period. If the 15th falls on a weekend or holiday, applications will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. on the next business day. **Late applications will not be accepted.**

Applications must be submitted by mail or hand delivered. **Faxed or e-mailed applications will not be accepted. Applications without an original signature on the cover sheet will not be accepted.**

Mail or deliver applications to: First 5 Sonoma County
490 Mendocino Avenue, Suite 203
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
Attention: Mini-Grant Program
(707) 565-6686

Notification letters will be mailed within 30 days following the Commission meeting at which mini-grant applications are approved — usually the meetings in October (for June/July applications) and April (for December/January applications).

F. FUNDING LIMITS AND PRIORITIES

1. Funding Limits

- Family child care providers licensed for 6 to 8 children may request up to \$2,000
- Family child care providers licensed for 9 to 14 children may request up to \$3,500
- Child care centers may request up to \$5,000
- Agencies and individuals may request up to \$5,000.

2. Special Consideration

Special consideration, at the sole discretion of the Commission, will be given to applications for that:

- Address the impacts of the North Bay Wildfires
- Child care projects that focus on one or more of the following areas:
 - Infant/toddler child care
 - Child care program “start up”
 - Child care for children with special needs (Children with special needs refers to those children whose behavior or development affects the family’s ability to find and maintain child care. Special needs may include developmental delays, serious emotional disturbances, speech impairments, deafness, blindness, etc.)
 - Child care for monolingual/bilingual children provided by Spanish-speakers

G. SELECTION PROCESS

Your application will be reviewed by First 5 Sonoma County staff and the Mini-Grant Review Committee. The committee’s recommendations will be presented to the Commission for final approval. Not all applications will be recommended for funding. Applications may be recommended for full or partial funding or no funding. More information or revisions may be requested.

H. RESPONSIBILITIES OF GRANTEES

In order to receive mini-grant funding, you will be required to sign a contract agreement with the County of Sonoma and comply with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

If you receive a mini-grant, all grantees must:

- Comply with the terms of the contract agreement
- Provide evidence of workers' compensation insurance if you have one or more child care employees
- Keep careful records to document authorized expenses
- Keep copies of receipts for each item purchased
- Submit a final expense report in a timely manner

Non-child care grantees must:

- Certify that funds received through the Sonoma County Children and Families Mini-Grant Program **will not be used to replace (or supplant) funding from other sources**
- Not allow the use of tobacco products at your workplace
- Agree not to accept any funds from the tobacco industry, including event sponsorship and in-kind contributions
- Agree to consult with an evaluation consultant designated by the Commission, if required

If you do not comply with these responsibilities, you may be required to return your grant money, and you will not be considered for future funding.

I. APPLICATION EVALUATION AND AWARD PROCESS

First 5 Sonoma County will be looking for project applications that:

- Are from programs not previously funded (unless impacted by the North Bay wildfires)
- Have a clear project description and focus
- Address First 5 Sonoma County's objectives
- Potential to achieve the most impact
- Are cost effective (such as how many children are affected in relation to the amount of funds requested)
- Show that the applicant is well-qualified to carry out the project
- Are from applicants who successfully completed all prior grants from First 5 Sonoma County
- Provide First 5 with opportunity to fund projects throughout all regions of the county
- Comply with all eligibility requirements (see section C)

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