Renovation, Repair, and Expansion FCC Grant Guidelines FY26 - Sonoma County Child Care Facilities Fund

Grant Awards

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis through May 1, 2027.

Grants up to $50,000 are available.

Purpose

This funding is provided through First 5 Sonoma County through Measure I, and is available to eligible family child care homes (FCCs). The Renovation, Repair, and Expansion Grant Program supports critical health and safety repairs, promotes high-quality physical environments, expands licensing capacity, and addresses other key facility-related challenges that impact the quality and sustainability of early learning programs.

Eligible Programs Must

- Be located in Sonoma County.
- Possess a valid child care license and maintain compliance with all regulations from the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Community Care Licensing Department, or be a license-exempt program with proof of active status and commitment to quality.
- Serve or plan to serve children birth to five (5) years of age.
- Provide evidence of site control of the designated child care facility for the three-year grant term (e.g., a lease or a deed of trust).
- Demonstrate financial and organizational viability for the three-year grant term (e.g., business is financially well-managed). Providers may be asked to work with financial coaches depending on LIIF determination.
- Demonstrate that the grant funds are necessary to undertake and complete the project; funds must be identified to meet all of the costs of the proposed project.

Note: If the grant is to finance renovations, the applicant must have obtained or applied for all necessary permits for the proposed project and must use licensed and insured contractors for the work. If the applicant leases the site, the renovation project must be approved by the property owner prior to grant funding.

Design Standards

LIIF and First 5 Sonoma have an obligation to children, families, and staff, to ensure facilities across Sonoma County meet the highest quality standards. The design of sites should promote functionality while enabling children's creativity and learning. Therefore, LIIF and First 5 Sonoma County have higher standards than licensing.

LIIF provides ongoing technical assistance to help grantees align with our design standards and funding requirements. We stay closely involved during planning and implementation to ensure projects meet expectations and reflect shared goals.

With the technical assistance process provided by LIIF, programs will work to meet these standards to create high quality environments. All programs receiving LIIF funding will be required to meet quality standards, and grant amounts may be amended if programs are not able to meet the standards.

Funding Priorities

Higher priority given to:

- Facilities located in a Qualified Census Tract (QCT) or other First 5 Sonoma identified priority geographic area.
- Sites needing renovations or repairs that are affecting the operator's ability to maintain license.
- Sites needing renovations or repairs that are affecting the operator's ability to maintain homeowners' or facility insurance.
- Programs facing closure due to substandard facilities or code violations.
- Programs serving children receiving subsidized care.
- Programs serving infants and toddlers or intending to enroll infants (less than 24 months old).
- Programs specializing in providing care for children with special needs or children experiencing homelessness or foster care.
- First-time facilities grantees. This means programs have not received a facilities grant in the past 3 years from First 5 Sonoma County, Sonoma CAN (previously CAP Sonoma), or CDSS Infrastructure Grant Program.

Eligible Uses

Grant funds may be used for one-time capital expenses associated with the maintenance to preserve or expand program. Examples of eligible uses of funds include:

- Repair and remediation for damage from emergencies such as but not limited to sewage, flooding, fire, or earthquake
- Physical renovations to increase or preserve number of child care spaces
- Repairs of facility and/or facility equipment
- City & State compliance
- Purchases of equipment to increase safety

Ineligible Uses of Funds

- Day-to-day operating costs such as salaries, rent, and food purchases
- Working capital to cover shortfalls or delays in payments from families, government agencies, or other funding sources
- Non-permanent supplies (e.g., art materials) and other consumable materials such as paint, cleaning supplies, etc.
- Professional development
- Purchase of unrelated equipment (e.g., televisions, DVD players/recorders)
- Vehicle or transportation expenses
- Repayment of loans
- Reimbursement of previously incurred expenses, except in the case of expenses incurred for an emergency in prior 1-2 months that necessitated faster action than review process allowed, such as sewage or plumbing emergencies
- Any expense that does not support increasing or preserving licensed child care spaces
- Indirect or administrative costs

Application Process

The Renovation, Repair, and Expansion Grant does not support reimbursement of previously incurred expenses related to the proposed project.

In an emergency, please contact a LIIF Program Officer immediately at ccff@liifund.org.

Applicants must complete an application form and submit all the required attachments to be considered for funding. Low Income Investment Fund staff may request additional information as needed. An incomplete application will not be considered and will be returned to the applicant. If assistance is needed in filling out the application, please contact LIIF at ccff@liifund.org.

Upon receipt, LIIF will evaluate each completed application. As part of the selection process, LIIF will conduct a site visit at a pre-arranged, mutually convenient time. Applicants will be notified by e-mail regarding acceptance or denial of their application for funding.

LIIF/First 5 Sonoma reserves the right, at any point in the process, to deny a grant award based on funding availability and/or changes to local, state, or federal policies. Applicants whose requests are not funded may contact LIIF to discuss the reason(s) for the denial. Applicants may reapply for funding in future rounds.

If a Facilities Grant is Awarded

The grantee must sign a grant agreement and must fulfill all the terms of that agreement, including but not limited to:

- Maintain a license in compliance with California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Community Care Licensing division
- Ensure grant expenditures are aligned with the approved budget from grant application and grant agreement
- Submit a Use of Funds Report on how the funds were used within 180 days of executed Grant Agreement, including receipts for purchases and proof of payment to designated contractors
- Submit an Annual Status Report each year on April 30th during the three-year term of the grant
- Other general provisions may be required by LIIF or First 5 Sonoma County

A follow-up visit will be conducted once the grant project is completed. If the grantee defaults on any of the terms of the grant agreement during the three-year term of the grant, grant funds must be repaid to LIIF in full. If services are provided for a portion of the term, only a prorated portion of the grant will be repayable.

Grant Terms

Grant Amount	Term
Less than or equal to $50,000	3 years