

Message from La Crosse County:

County Launches \$500k Child Care Grant Program

Grants of up to \$25,000 per provider available

La Crosse County is inviting current and potential child care providers to apply to a new \$500,000 grant program. The goal is to increase the availability and quality of child care for families across La Crosse County. Grants of up to \$25,000 will be available through the program, which is funded through the county's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) allocation.

Applications open at 8 a.m. on Monday, Aug. 28 and close at 5 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 29. Grants will be awarded for projects that allow child care providers in La Crosse County to increase capacity and improve their business model. This could include funding to cover the purchase of learning materials, outdoor equipment and landscaping, fencing, computer hardware, office equipment, business software, food preparation and storage materials, one year of liability insurance, or training expenses.

Applications for assistance starting new child care businesses in La Crosse County are welcome. If the total dollar amount of applications exceeds the \$500,000 grant pool, applicants from outside the City of La Crosse will receive preference, as rural areas of the county currently have fewer child care options.

A drop-in clinic on the grant program will be held Sunday, Sept. 10, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Room 1107 of the La Crosse County Administrative Center, 212 6th St. N., La Crosse.

Participants can drop in at any time during those hours to get questions on the program answered.

An application form for the grant program can be found by [clicking here](#). Questions can also be sent to Sam Bachmeier, Community Development Specialist, at sbachmeier@lacrossecounty.org, or Charlotte Peters, Community Development Extension Educator, at ckpeters2@wisc.edu. The La Crosse County Economic Development Fund Board will have [final approval over the grants](#) and awardees are expected to be notified on Oct. 6. The \$500,000 in ARPA funding for the program was approved by the La Crosse County board on Thursday, Aug. 17. To date, the county has awarded about \$12.5 million in ARPA funding out of its \$22.9 million allocation. Other projects that have received funding include \$2 million to towns for stormwater infrastructure, \$1.5 million for solar panels on county buildings, \$3 million for family bridge housing, \$1 million for neighborhood revitalization grants, and \$2 million to the Boys and Girls Club of Greater La Crosse for a skilled trades training program.