

## PRESS RELEASE

May 11, 2022

3 minute read [SHARE](#)**NJEDA TO CREATE \$54.5 MILLION CHILD CARE FACILITIES IMPROVEMENT PILOT PROGRAM TO STRENGTHEN VITAL SECTOR AND SUPPORT WORKING FAMILIES***Phase 1 to Launch Summer 2022 with \$15 Million in Grants to Licensed Child Care Centers Statewide*

TRENTON, N.J. (May 11, 2022) – Building on the Murphy Administration’s comprehensive strategy to support the state’s vital child care sector and the crucial role of child care to the state’s long-term economic recovery, the [New Jersey Economic Development Authority \(NJEDA\)](#) today approved the creation of the \$54.5 million [Child Care Facilities Improvement Pilot Program](#) for child care centers and family child care homes. Through Phase 1 of the program, the NJEDA will provide nearly \$15 million in grants of up to \$200,000 to licensed child care centers in New Jersey to cover the costs of facility improvements.

“An investment in the child care sector is an investment in our state’s economic future,” said **Governor Phil Murphy**. “Working families need reliable, safe, affordable, accessible, and high-quality child care. The program announced today will help us ensure that child care centers statewide can meet these needs while simultaneously securing their long-term financial resiliency.”

Child care providers generally face razor-thin profit margins, often forcing them to forego necessary facilities upgrades, repairs, and maintenance. Phase 1 of the Child Care Facilities Improvement Pilot Program will launch this summer and will make grants between \$50,000 to \$200,000 to pay for improvements that foster high-quality early childhood learning environments. These interior and exterior improvements could include, but are not limited to, installing energy efficient windows, creating additional classroom space, purchasing new playground equipment, replacing flooring, remediating environmental hazards such as lead or mold, or putting in child-height sinks or toilets. A complete list of eligible uses can be found at <https://www.njeda.com/child-care-improvement-program/>.

Applicants may own or lease the space that will be improved and they must currently enroll, or have enrolled in the 12 months prior to the date of application, at least one child receiving support through the New Jersey Department of Human Services (NJ DHS) Child Care Assistance Program. That program provides subsidies to offset the cost of child care for families at 200 percent or below the federal poverty line. Child care providers must also commit to enroll in NJ DHS’ quality rating improvement system, Grow NJ Kids. While the NJEDA plans to expand the Child Care Facilities Improvement Pilot Program to home-based child care providers registered with NJ DHS in subsequent program phases, this inaugural phase will only be open to child care centers licensed by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (NJDCF). Full eligibility criteria can be found at <https://www.njeda.com/child-care-improvement-program/>.

“Reliable and quality child care services are vital to New Jersey’s economic infrastructure, and during COVID-19, parents and caregivers across our state and nation bore the brunt of service disruptions due to the global pandemic,” said **NJEDA Chief Executive Officer Tim Sullivan**. “Under Governor Murphy’s leadership, New Jersey is making significant strides to bolster and invest in this indispensable sector, simultaneously helping parents re-enter the workforce and supporting the employment of thousands of individuals, including many women of color.”

Sullivan noted that child care providers serving low-income children through the NJ DHS Child Care Assistance Program were significantly impacted by COVID. To ensure that these centers receive the funding they need to survive and thrive, 40 percent of the Phase 1 funding will be set aside for child care providers in Opportunity Zone-eligible census tracts.

As part of New Jersey’s whole-of-government approach to supporting the child care sector, Governor Murphy signed legislation in June 2021 appropriating \$100 million in American Rescue Plan (ARP) Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, including \$54.5 million for NJEDA to provide facility improvement grants and technical assistance to child care providers. Funding for

Phase 1 of the Child Care Facilities Improvement Pilot Program will be supported through the ARP funding, as well as an additional \$4.45 million in state funding.

“Child care providers enrich our children’s learning experience from the earliest ages and it is incumbent upon us to begin their educational journeys off right,” said **NJDHS Commissioner Sarah Adelman**. “The Child Care Facilities Improvement Pilot Program will be a crucial complement to our existing grants for child care providers as we seek to enhance the places where the youngest New Jerseyans get their starts.”

**NJEDA Executive Vice President of Economic Security Tara Colton** underscored the important role this program will play in propelling New Jersey’s economy forward.

“We know that the COVID-19 hit child care centers particularly hard, both with respect to their enrollment perspective and the effect it had on its workers as they juggled their own families’ needs,” Colton said. “By supporting enhancements to child care facilities statewide, the program announced today will strengthen this important sector and accelerate the state’s economic recovery.”

#### **About the NJEDA**

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) serves as the State’s principal agency for driving economic growth. The NJEDA is committed to making New Jersey a national model for inclusive and sustainable economic development by focusing on key strategies to help build strong and dynamic communities, create good jobs for New Jersey residents, and provide pathways to a stronger and fairer economy. Through partnerships with a diverse range of stakeholders, the NJEDA creates and implements initiatives to enhance the economic vitality and quality of life in the State and strengthen New Jersey’s long-term economic competitiveness.

To learn more about state resources available to New Jersey entrepreneurs and early-stage companies, visit <https://www.njeda.com> and follow @NewJerseyEDA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

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