



Office of Children and Family Services

Title: Solicitation of Interest, Essential Worker Scholarship

Agency: New York State Children and Family Services, Office of Bureau of Contract Management

Date of Issue: 6/23/2021

Due Date/Time: Rolling Acceptance beginning 6/23/21 with Final Deadline to be determined by OCFS based on availability of funds.

Location: Statewide

Counties: All NYS Regions

Background

Through this solicitation of interest, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) is accepting applications for an additional round of the essential worker scholarship program made available through federal funding relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

OCFS will make available \$25 million in the third installment of the essential worker scholarship.

Essential Workers are designated as those professions as designated in Executive Order 202.6 including education workers. For those individuals who are designated as essential, who work outside the home, and meet the income threshold this scholarship will pay up to the market rate for tuition for child care for children up to age 13 or be under age 19 and physically or mentally incapable of caring for himself or herself, or under court supervision. Essential workers will also be required to attest that there is not another adult available to care for the children.

Payments will be made directly to the child care provider on behalf of the parent. Eligible providers must be licensed/registered/permitted or enrolled legally exempt group child care programs, must be in good standing with OCFS, and must agree to follow all requirements from OCFS and DOH regarding the pandemic.

To streamline and simplify the application process, parents will apply through a single online application. Supporting documents required for each grant must be uploaded prior to application submission. See below for grant requirements.

Definitions for This Grant Opportunity

Essential Worker – means an individual who works in a profession identified in Executive Order 202.6 including education workers. The essential worker must be required to report to work outside the home and must attest that there is not another adult available to care for the children.

Eligible Provider – means a licensed/registered/permitted or enrolled legally exempt group child care provider who does not currently have a suspended or revoked status from OCFS or DOHMH.

Income Threshold – means the maximum annual income cannot exceed gross 300% of the federal poverty level based on the size of the family. (see table called 300% Federal Poverty Level 2021-2022).

Eligible Child – means a child or step-child (or otherwise the legal responsibility) of the essential worker, said child must be under the age of 13 or be under age 19 and physically or mentally incapable of caring for himself or herself, or under court supervision.

Market Rate – means the calculated weekly tuition rate for the child care subsidy program as calculated for the relevant modality and region. The applicable market rate is the maximum scholarship for the week. There are no applicable differential or enhanced rates. Please see appendix A for the relevant market rates.

Subsidy Co-Payment – means the amount calculated by the local social service district for families already enrolled in the child care subsidy program. Those families who already receive subsidy and are essential workers are eligible for the scholarship to pay for their weekly co-payment amount.

\$25M Essential Worker Scholarship

Under this grant, funding will be paid on behalf of the essential worker directly to the program of their choice. All licensed/registered/permitted or enrolled legally exempt group programs are eligible, provided the program is in good standing with OCFS.

Such funds will replace funds normally received by the parent. Programs are prohibited from receiving tuition payments from both the parent and the scholarship program and are required to refund or carry forward as a balance any payment duplication. Provided that, if the weekly tuition charged is more than the scholarship, the provider is authorized to charge the parent the difference.

For eligible parents who are already enrolled in the child care subsidy program, their scholarship amount will cover the subsidy co-payment, as applicable.

These funds will be paid on a weekly basis based on attendance certifications submitted by provider within application portal.

The weekly scholarship amount shall be the lesser of the applicable weekly market rate (see appendix A) per child or the actual tuition that is charged to the parent.

Approved Scholarships are eligible for payment processing the Monday after the application is received and attendance certified.

Advance

There is no advance available for these grant funds.

Child Care Providers as selected by parents for these grants will receive a registration email from the application. To participate in the EWS grant program, providers must register their program using the web link found in the registration email.

Emails for this grant opportunity will be sent from **nyocfs@public.govdelivery.com**

Funding Methodology for Grants for Essential Worker Scholarship

1. Awards will be made to programs that are identified as the program serving the child of an essential worker and who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements, submit a completed application, including attestations and required supporting documentation. Parents will be deemed eligible on a first-come, first-served basis based on eligibility attestations and supporting documents (income verification upload).

Eligibility Requirements:

1. To be eligible for the essential worker scholarship, an individual must:
 - a. be an essential worker, as designated by Executive Order 202.6 or an education worker;
 - b. be required to work outside the home;
 - c. be within the income threshold as set by the grant, 300% of the federal poverty level based on the size of the family, supported by income verification. have a child in need of care who is under the age of 13 or be under age 19 and physically or mentally incapable of caring for himself or herself, or under court supervision, and there are no other adults available to care for the child.
 - d. Agree to all attestations as required by the grant.

Application Submission Requirements: Essential Worker Scholarship

Parents must submit an electronic application to OCFS:

- The online application can be submitted beginning June 22, 2021. OCFS will determine and announce the application closing date based on availability of funds. Online applications are available here¹ Applications will be processed and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, so it is advisable to submit the application as early as possible for the best chance of receiving an award.
- Parents and Providers must first set up an account with NY.gov to access this application.

¹ <https://ocfs.ny.gov/childcarerelief>

Once applications are reviewed and approved by OCFS, parents will be notified of their award email from nyocfs@public.govdelivery.com and the subject will always reference Essential Worker Scholarship.

The program selected by the parent for child care must fill out a profile online to receive payments. If a parent chooses to change care providers, they must update their parent portal to ensure the correct program is paid.

Attestations for Parents:

- I understand that the ESSENTIAL WORKERS SCHOLARSHIP is available only to New York State residents, and by submitting this application, I affirm that I am a New York State resident. I understand that this scholarship can only pay for care provided by a licensed/registered/permitted or enrolled legally exempt group provider.
- I affirm that all of the children needing child care under the ESSENTIAL WORKERS SCHOLARSHIPS are United States citizens or nationals, or persons with satisfactory immigration status. I understand that this information will only be shared to make decisions about the ESSENTIAL WORKERS SCHOLARSHIPS, and that the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services may be contacted if more information is needed to verify the children's status.
- By submitting this application, I certify that my family assets do not exceed \$1,000,000. Assets include, but are not limited to, cash, bank accounts, real estate, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, IRAs, retirement accounts, 401(k) accounts, 529 accounts, life insurance, trust accounts, trust income, annuities, burial funds/spaces.
- I understand that at any time, I may be asked to produce records for verification purposes. This may include but is not limited to submission of documentation such as tax returns, additional paystubs of parents and/or guardians living in the household, other documents substantiating household income, as well as essential worker eligibility documentation and children's birth certificates. I agree I will provide such information upon request.
- I understand that, regardless of my eligibility, the ESSENTIAL WORKERS SCHOLARSHIP is distributed on a 'first come first served' basis and is only available if the federal funds to support it are available. I understand that there is no guarantee that funds will be available for the duration of the scholarship.
- I agree to immediately update the information in my application should any information provided today change, thus informing OCFS, through an update of my application, of any change in my needs, income, living arrangements, address, child care arrangements, including where child care is provided, who is providing care, and provider's fees. I understand failure to do so could be fraud and may be pursued as such.
- If I can work from home in my current job position, I understand that I am not eligible for the ESSENTIAL WORKERS SCHOLARSHIP.
- I understand that payments will be paid directly to the child care program on my behalf, and I will not receive any money directly from OCFS. I understand that, as the parent, I am responsible for any tuition amount greater than the market rate.
- I understand that decisions regarding eligibility and award amounts are final and there is no appeals process with this grant.
- I certify that the information provided in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and that I have not withheld information.

Attestations for Programs

By signing this document, I agree to the following:

- I understand that the ESSENTIAL WORKER SCHOLARSHIP funds are granted to a specific parent/guardian for care of a specific child and when that child is no longer attending my program, I will not accept any further funds intended for that child's care and/or return funds incorrectly paid.
- I agree to certify attendance on a weekly basis for all families with children eligible to receive the Essential Worker Scholarship.
- I certify to the best of my knowledge the information I certify weekly is true and correct. I agree to immediately update OCFS through the Provider portal of any changes that may affect the child's eligibility.
- I understand that the scholarship awarded for the Parent/Child will be sent directly to the me, the provider, to be applied to the parent's account. The scholarship awarded will be the lesser amount of the parent's weekly tuition, market rate or the family's co-pay and the parent is responsible for any amount charged over the market rate.
- I agree that my program will follow all OCFS regulations and New York State Department of Health (DOH) guidance, as applicable.
- I understand that, regardless of the parent's eligibility, the Essential Worker Scholarship is contingent on the availability of funds to support it.
- I understand that at any time I may be asked to produce records for verification purposes, such as attendance rosters.

300% Federal Poverty Level (2021-2022)

6/1/2021-5/31/2022	
Family Size	300% FPL
1	\$38,640
2	\$52,260
3	\$65,880
4	\$79,500
5	\$93,120
6	\$106,740
7	\$120,360
8	\$133,980
9	\$147,600
10	\$161,220
11	\$174,840
12	\$188,460
13	\$202,080
14	\$215,700
15	\$229,320
16	\$242,940
17	\$256,560
18	\$270,180
19	\$283,800
20	\$297,420

[2020 Poverty Guidelines | ASPE \(hhs.gov\)](#)

[20-OCFS-INF-07.pdf \(ny.gov\)](#)

[2021 Poverty Guidelines | ASPE \(hhs.gov\)](#)

Appendix A: Market Rates

County	Day Care Center Average Market Rate				Family Day Care Average Market Rate				Legally-Exempt Group Child Care	
	Infant (Under 1 1/2)	Toddler (1 1/2 to 2)	Pre- School (3 to 5)	School- Age (6 to 12)	Infant (Under 2)	Toddler (Age 2)	Pre- School (Age 3 to 5)	School- Age (Age 6 to 12)	Pre-School (Age 3 to 5)	School-Age (Age 6 to 12)
Albany	\$282	\$265	\$250	\$230	\$225	\$210	\$200	\$200	\$188	\$173
Allegany	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Broome	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Cattaraugus	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Cayuga	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Chautauqua	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Chemung	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Chenango	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Clinton	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Columbia	\$280	\$264	\$245	\$215	\$190	\$185	\$180	\$175	\$184	\$161
Cortland	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Delaware	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Dutchess	\$282	\$265	\$250	\$230	\$225	\$210	\$200	\$200	\$188	\$173
Erie	\$280	\$264	\$245	\$215	\$190	\$185	\$180	\$175	\$184	\$161
Essex	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Franklin	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Fulton	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Genesee	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Greene	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Hamilton	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Herkimer	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Jefferson	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Lewis	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Livingston	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Madison	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Monroe	\$280	\$264	\$245	\$215	\$190	\$185	\$180	\$175	\$184	\$161

Montgomery	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Nassau	\$364	\$338	\$310	\$317	\$300	\$295	\$285	\$275	\$233	\$238
Niagara	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Oneida	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Onondaga	\$280	\$264	\$245	\$215	\$190	\$185	\$180	\$175	\$184	\$161
Ontario	\$280	\$264	\$245	\$215	\$190	\$185	\$180	\$175	\$184	\$161
Orange	\$282	\$265	\$250	\$230	\$225	\$210	\$200	\$200	\$188	\$173
Orleans	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Oswego	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Otsego	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Putnam	\$364	\$338	\$310	\$317	\$300	\$295	\$285	\$275	\$233	\$238
Rensselaer	\$280	\$264	\$245	\$215	\$190	\$185	\$180	\$175	\$184	\$161
Rockland	\$364	\$338	\$310	\$317	\$300	\$295	\$285	\$275	\$233	\$238
St. Lawrence	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Saratoga	\$282	\$265	\$250	\$230	\$225	\$210	\$200	\$200	\$188	\$173
Schenectady	\$280	\$264	\$245	\$215	\$190	\$185	\$180	\$175	\$184	\$161
Schoharie	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Schuyler	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Seneca	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Steuben	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Suffolk	\$364	\$338	\$310	\$317	\$300	\$295	\$285	\$275	\$233	\$238
Sullivan	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Tioga	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Tompkins	\$280	\$264	\$245	\$215	\$190	\$185	\$180	\$175	\$184	\$161
Ulster	\$282	\$265	\$250	\$230	\$225	\$210	\$200	\$200	\$188	\$173
Warren	\$280	\$264	\$245	\$215	\$190	\$185	\$180	\$175	\$184	\$161
Washington	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Wayne	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Westchester	\$364	\$338	\$310	\$317	\$300	\$295	\$285	\$275	\$233	\$238
Wyoming	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
Yates	\$220	\$206	\$195	\$180	\$160	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$146	\$135
NYC	\$406	\$315	\$289	\$236	\$200	\$196	\$185	\$170	\$217	\$177