

## **Overview**

The Cabarrus Share Grant Program (CSGP), an innovative Public Private Partnership made possible because of a one-time State of North Carolina Appropriation to the Cabarrus County Partnership for Children. The CSGP was created to address the alarming cost of child care causing employees to leave or be unable to re-enter the workforce. A lack of access to affordable, high-quality child care is the biggest barrier to workforce entry and employer recruitment and retention. Through the CSGP, the employer provides a flat fee contribution of the employee's monthly child care cost and the Cabarrus County Partnership for Children will equally match that contribution and pay to the employees' child care provider monthly. The CSGP Coordinator will provide coordination of the monthly payments and work with the employer and employees to make sure payments are made every month from October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025.

## **Program Objective and Guiding Principles**

The aim of the CSGP is to make child care affordable and accessible for working parents, and help employers retain and attract employees. For the CSGP implementation, program administrators must ensure that the following principles and priorities are consistently applied in decision making:

- Ensure parents participating in CSGP have the choice of child care provider(s)
- By requiring the CSGP Coordinator to determine the eligibility screening process, it limits the burden to employers and child care providers in determining employee eligibility.

## **Administration Roles and Responsibilities**

The roles and responsibilities for CSGP Coordinators and CSGP participants are detailed in this section. Any of these entities may be required to sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to administer aspects of this program.

## **Facilitator Coordinator Roles & Responsibilities**

As recipients of funding from the State of NC, the Cabarrus County Partnership for Children are responsible for executing the administrative goals and duties to ensure the program's success. The CSGP Coordinator will oversee the following duties.

### **Coordination of Payments**

In accordance with these guidelines, the CSGP Coordinator will further create and define payments policies and coordinate and administer billing and fees among employers and the Cabarrus County Partnership for Children and the selected child

care providers. The Cabarrus County Partnership for Children will pay the child care providers on a monthly basis.

### **Reporting Requirements**

The CSGP Coordinator shall submit monthly, by the \_\_\_\_ of each month, the CSGP Invoice.

### **Program Evaluation**

To ensure the improvement of the program, the CSGP shall support the efforts to assess outcomes and take part in evaluations.

### **Personalized Support for Employees**

Employees are ensured personalized support by the CSGP in selecting a licensed child care provider that meets their needs. This support can be provided by the CSGP Coordinator directly.

### **Eligibility Determination for Employees**

The gathering of income data, as well as the determination of the employee's eligibility to take part in the program, will be coordinated by the CSGP Coordinator.

### **Participant Roles and Responsibilities**

Employees are responsible for contributing the remaining balance of their childcare cost. In the event of any employee experiencing change in employment status, the employee will be responsible for the full payment to their child care provider.

Participating employers are responsible for working with the CSGP Coordinator to pay their portion of the grant amount. Employers are required to pay an agreed upon flat fee monthly/biweekly. The CSGP then typically contributes the amount equal to the employer's contribution and pays invoices submitted by providers. If the child care tuition is less than or equal to the combined contribution of the employer and the CSGP, the employer will still contribute their flat fee while the CSGP contribute 50% of the remaining balance.

No less than a 60-day notice must be provided to the CSGP Coordinator and to employees, for any employer who wishes to end their participation in the program.

### **Eligibility**

With the intended purpose of targeting CSGP resources to the population that do not qualify for child care subsidy services, the Cabarrus Partnership for Children has established these eligibility criteria. As long as all other requirements are met and all

relevant MOAs are signed, child care providers are eligible to serve as both an employer and a provider. As previously stated, the CSGP Coordinator is responsible for vetting participant eligibility.

## **Employer Eligibility**

**Employers must be located in Cabarrus County** or have at least one location within the county.

Employers have flexibility in deciding how many employees they will sponsor. Possible ways to make this determination include:

- Each participating family receives one slot
- Participating families receive multiple slots based on family need

There is no minimum or maximum number of employees who can participate. Because contribution amounts are based on a flat rate, there is no minimum financial contribution as long as the employer's payment and CSGP's payment match.

Employers are encouraged to actively participate in the collection of data. Data may be collected in the form of surveys, focus groups and more.

## **Employee Eligibility**

To participate in the CSGP, an employee must be employed with participating employers located in Cabarrus County, and cannot receive child care subsidy, NC Pre-Kindergarten or Head Start.

The CSGP also has an income-based requirement. Eligibility for the CSGP is decided by using the employee's family size, which is the immediate family members, and the household income of all contributing adults who live in the home. An employee's household income must be no greater than 400 percent of the Federal Poverty Line (FPL).

Eligible child care includes all licensed full-time child care providers. Children ages 0-5 years qualify for CSGP, if they receive care from a licensed provider in North Carolina and attend at least 30 hours or more.

## **Provider Eligibility**

To receive the CSGP grant, an employee must select a licensed child care provider located inside of North Carolina. The licensed child care provider may be the

employee's existing provider, or they can select any licensed child care provider that meets their needs.

Child care rates for families participating in the CSGP are not to be increased unless the provider increases the rates for all families for reasons unrelated to the CSGP (based on annual tuition increase, cost of living, etc.).

## **Recruitment and Enrollment**

### **Recruitment**

Due to the knowledge that the Cabarrus Partnership for Children have of their community, the CSGP will recruit potentially eligible employees, employers and child care providers while consulting local employers.

### **Enrollment**

#### **Employer Enrollment**

The Cabarrus Partnership for Children requires employers to sign an MOA to participate in the Cabarrus Share Grant Program.

#### **Provider Enrollment**

Child Care Providers will be enrolled when children are enrolled in specific child care programs at the request of their families. Families will determine when child care providers are enrolled upon enrollment of their child.

#### **Employee Enrollment**

An employee is officially enrolled in the CSGP when all documents have been processed and the CSGP Coordinator determines the enrollment date. The requirements for enrolling in the CSGP include completing the eligibility screening, having all relevant MOAs signed, and the use of a licensed child care provider.

#### **Initial Eligibility Screening**

The completion of the eligibility screening process for potential employee participants is under the responsibility of the CSGP. This process must be completed before an eligible employee can enroll in the CSGP.

The CSGP eligibility process will use information, such as household size, income, location, and other factors from employees to use in determining the threshold of participation within the program. This data will be collected digitally, in person or over the phone. Any sensitive information collected by the CSGP will be kept confidential and only used for employee eligibility purposes.

An employee can continue the enrollment process if the household income falls within the established eligibility.

As previously mentioned, employees will be referred to DHHS to determine eligibility for child care subsidy if they do not meet the minimum eligibility threshold. If an employee is denied subsidy after completing the application process, the employee can provide the CSGP with the denial letter so that a determination can be made.

### **Reassessment Process**

The Cabarrus Share Grant Program initial approval is valid for only one year, requiring employees to undergo an eligibility reassessment process before the anniversary of their enrollment.

The Cabarrus Share Grant Program will initiate the reassessment process by contacting employees 30 days before the anniversary of their enrollment. The CSGP will require employees to update their income, and all other non-income related information (e.g. household size and/or full-time employment status). Reassessment decisions will be given at least two weeks before the anniversary date of enrollment. If the employees remain within the program after reassessment, they will continue to be reassessed every year using the same process.

### **References**

Michigan Tri-Share Child Care. (n.d.). *MI tri-share child care program*. Retrieved from <https://www.michigan.gov/mileap/early-childhood-education/mi-tri-share-child-care/mi-tri-share-child-care-program-guidelines>