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General Incentive and Stipend Questions

Q1. What are the consequences for programs and providers that have applied for and received funds that are not following attestation(s)?

If there is an indication that a provider isn't following agreed upon attestation, it could result in termination of future payments, repayment of funds already received and/or an audit.

Q2. Who is administering these funds?

The North Dakota Department of Human Services Early Childhood Division will administer the Incentive and Stipends through the ND Growing Futures Registry.

Q3. What types of Incentives and Stipends are available?

Eligible individuals may apply for one or all the following

Career Pathways Incentive:

- Receive one (1) Career Pathways incentive award ranging from \$900 to \$1,600 for completing an approved Early Childhood credential or degree. [Career Pathway Handout](#)

Workforce Training Incentive:

- Receive multiple Workforce Training Incentives for completing specific coursework and training requirements. [CDA Track Training Bundles Handout](#)

Workforce Retention Stipend:

- Receive quarterly stipends for completing the required Getting Started training course AND working in a licensed child care program for the previous 90 days (minimum 15-hours per week). Your employer must have verified your employment in the Growing Futures Registry.

More information on Eligibility can be found at:

<https://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/earlychildhood/ec-stipends-incentives.html> or by clicking on the following link: [HANDOUT](#)

Q4. How will I receive the Incentive and/or Stipend funds?

The funds will be sent by direct deposit or check, based on the option you choose when you set up your payment account, within 30 days of creating that account.

Q5. Should I save any records and for how long?

It is recommended that you maintain all financial records for 7 years from the time you receive your award.

Q6. Are Workforce Incentives and Stipends taxable and will I receive a 1099 for tax purposes?

Yes. Workforce incentive and stipends are considered income by the IRS and you will receive a 1099. Please consult your accountant or tax professional to understand more about your tax situation.

Q7. What are the funding cycles?

Career Pathways Incentive: Individuals may be awarded only one Career Pathways incentive

Workforce Training Incentives: Individual may apply for an incentive more than once as additional training/coursework is completed, up to an individual maximum amount of \$3600.

Workforce Retention Stipend: Individual childcare workers may be eligible to receive a quarterly stipend for a period of up to 18-months. Individuals must apply every quarter to receive the stipend.

Q8. Is the data in the provider application about funding awards public information?

Department of Human Services Early Childhood Division will not use providers confidential information for anything other than what's necessary for the purpose of the funding as permitted by law.

Q9. Under any circumstances will I have to pay the funds back?

If you are found fraudulent in your application, you may have to pay the funds back.

Q10. How can I ensure that I receive the email communications related to the incentive and stipends?

Be sure the email in your Registry Account is current and is your personal email address.

You will also want to add dhsec@nd.gov and no-reply@ndgrowingfutures.org to your safe sender list to ensure all emails are delivered to your inbox. If you do not see the emails, please check your Junk/Spam folders or your All Mail folder.

Q11. Why do I have to enter the last 5 digits of my social security number?

Your social security number helps to verify your identity both within Growing Futures Registry system and with the Internal Revenue System.

Q12. I do not have access to my Growing Futures account, what do I do?

The resource below can guide you through logging into and accessing your account:
https://www.ndgrowingfutures.org/files/pdf/ndgf-login_instructionsV2.pdf

Q13. How long does it take for my transcript, or credential to be verified in my Growing Futures account?

It can take up to ten business days from the date that Growing Futures receives your transcript(s). If official documents are not received within 30 days of your Growing Futures membership or renewal application submission, your application will be processed without your transcript. **For more information on College Transcripts and Professional Documents visit Growing Futures at <https://www.ndgrowingfutures.org/training-records-help>**

Q14. How long does it take for my employment to be verified?

It is the responsibility of the Child Care Program to verify Organization Account information (business information stored within Growing Futures). The Organization Verification process ensures that your employment information is complete, accurate and current. Contact your employer to verify your employment information. Here is a helpful resource for your employer: [Organization Verification](#)

Q15. **NEW** I recently applied for an Incentive/Stipend will I be able to apply again?

Yes, as soon as your Payee Profile (Supplier ID) has been completed and confirmed in your Growing Futures account you will be able to go back and check eligibility. Please allow one to two weeks for this process to be completed.

Remember that you are eligible to apply again as you complete new training bundles and as you continue to be employed in a direct care position with one employer for another 90-day period (up to maximum award amounts).

Eligibility

E1. Who qualifies for the Incentives?

Individuals who work in Early Childhood, are a current member of Growing Futures and have either successfully completed an Early Childhood professional credential or an Early Childhood specific degree from an accredited college or university.

OR current Growing Futures Registry member who are working toward an Early Childhood degree and have completed specific training and/or course work in the required time period.

The verified information in your Growing Futures account will be used to determine your eligibility. See [Individual Stipend Qualifications](#) for more information.

E2. I have a Growing Futures Account how do I know if I am a member?

Growing Futures offers both Basic Accounts and Memberships. To qualify for the Workforce Stipends and Incentives you must have a membership.

This resource will answer your questions and provide instructions on becoming a 'Member': <https://www.ndgrowingfutures.org/basic-member-accounts>

E3. How is my Career Pathway placement determined?

Your [Career Pathways](#) placement is based on the Early Childhood education and career preparation you have documented in your Growing Futures Member Account.

<https://www.ndgrowingfutures.org/career-pathways>

E4. **NEW** I have a degree, why am I not eligible for the Career Pathway incentive?

Eligible degrees **must** be an **Early Childhood OR Child Development Major** and be submitted to and verified by Growing Futures. Related degrees, such as Elementary Education or Human Development & Family Science, are **not** eligible for the Career Pathway incentive.

For more information on Eligibility Requirements see the following [HANDOUT](#)

E5. Who Qualifies for Workforce Retention Stipends?

Individuals who work in Early Childhood direct care positions who are Current members with the Growing Futures Registry, have completed the Basic Child Care Requirement (Getting Started) and whose Employer has completed the Organization Profile Review in Growing Futures Registry.

The verified information in your Growing Futures account will be used to determine your eligibility. See [Individual Stipend Qualifications](#) for more information.

E6. Who is considered a direct care worker for stipends and why do they need to be in a direct care position to qualify?

Quality early experiences begin with a qualified, trained, and consistent workforce. Children benefit from stable attachment to caregivers and teacher turnover can disrupt the benefits of positive child-teacher interactions, which include early language and literacy skills, social development, and self-regulation.

While we don't disagree that programs may employ staff in a number of roles, the North Dakota Department of Human Services is using federal relief dollars in this workforce incentive pilot to examine if influencing direct child care worker wages has an impact on teacher/provider turn over.

E7. How long do I have to work in my current position at my current employer to be eligible for Workforce Retention Stipend funds?

Individuals need to have worked at least three (3) months with one (1) employer.

For more information on Eligibility Requirements see the following [HANDOUT](#)

E8. My employer changed ownership am I still eligible when I have been working for longer than 90 days in the same position?

An Individual's start day of employment with the new employer is the date that is used to qualify an employee. Individuals need to have worked at least three (3) months with one (1) employer.

For more information on Eligibility Requirements see the following [HANDOUT](#)

E9. If I work for more than one licensed child care program, am I eligible to receive Early Childhood Workforce Retention Stipend for each licensed program?

No. If an individual has two open employments that started at least 90 days ago with two different organizations, they both show as eligible, but you will only be able select one in the application. Remember the stipends are based on tiers related to the number of hours you work in a program.

Incentive Categories per Quarter:

- 15-19 hours of continuous employment in the previous 3 months = \$150
- 20-30 hours of continuous employment in the previous 3 months = \$300
- 31-40 hours (or more) of continuous employment in the previous 3 months = \$600

NOTE: If an organization has not completed their Organization Profile review (Organization Verification), you will not be eligible. Contact your employer to have them complete this step. Here is a helpful resource for your employer: [Organization Verification](#)

E10. My hours have been changed in my current position, am I still eligible for Workforce Retention Stipends?

If you are still working in a direct care position and working a minimum of 15 hours you are still eligible. Make sure your employment in your Growing Futures membership account is up to date. If your employment is verified and you need assistance editing your information due to inaccuracy, have your employer email Growing Futures with the hour adjustment. registry@ndgrowingfutures.org

E11. NEW Do non-direct care staff also qualify for the Workforce Retention Stipend?

No, not at this time. Quality early experiences begin with a qualified, trained, and consistent workforce. Children benefit from stable attachment to caregivers and teacher turnover can disrupt the benefits of positive child-teacher interactions, which include early language and literacy skills, social development, and self-regulation.

While we don't disagree that programs may employ staff in a number of roles, the North Dakota Department of Human Services is using federal relief dollars in this workforce incentive pilot to examine if influencing direct child care worker wages has an impact on teacher/provider turn over.

Incentive and Stipends Application Process

AP1. I am not sure how to apply for the Workforce Incentives and Stipends?

Below are links to resources that can walk you through the application process.

[Application Instruction Handout](#) – How to Apply

[Application Instruction Video](#) – How to Apply

Payment Processing

P1. I received a Supplier Account error, how do to fix it? What does it mean?

Please review the email sent to you and follow the steps indicated. If your email directs you to update your supplier onboarding account, follow the instructions found in the link below:

OMB Instructions: <https://www.omb.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/doing-business-with-the-state/procurement/grants-stipends-sobp-quick-help-guide.pdf>

Reminder that OMB Supplier Setup requires the use of your legal name, address and social security number that is associated with your tax information.

P2. My address, payment situation, or name has changed, how do I update this information?

Follow the instructions in the email you received or 'Sign In' to the link below and update the information that is not accurate:

https://www.cnd.nd.gov/psc/supplier/SUPPLIER/ERP/c/NUI_FRAMEWORK.PT_LANDINGPAGE.GBL

Training, Credentials, and College Transcripts

T1. My Growing Futures Learning Record is not showing the training I have completed, what do I do now?

Please allow the Training Sponsor 10 business days (excluding holidays and weekends) from the time you submit your training to award credit (if you passed) and for the course to appear on your Learning Record. After 10 days, if you do not see your training having a date under Completed and showing "Verified" under your blue "Training" tab or on your DHS Licensing Training Record, please contact the Training Sponsor directly.

The Training Sponsor contact information is found in the training description located in the event on the Training Calendar. Click on the green "View Details" button on the event for additional information. It can also be found in your Growing Futures Account under the blue "Training" tab by clicking on the title of the training event. If your specific training is not listed in either place, search for the sponsor on the Training Calendar for another event they may be sponsoring.

T2. How do I know that my documentation has been received by Growing Futures?

You can view your documentation or transcript when you log into your Growing Futures account and look at your blue "Education" tab. Here you will see the items you have added. To the left of each one is a blue box indicating you have submitted a document for review to the Registry. If you click on this box you can view the actual document we received. Once these documents have been reviewed and accepted, they will show "verified" to the right of the listed item.

For more information on submitting documents and transcripts see the link below:
<https://www.ndgrowingfutures.org/send-documents-college-transcripts>

T3. How is my coursework calculated into the Career Pathways.

Only courses specific to the field of early care and education apply

For further information use the link below:
<https://www.ndgrowingfutures.org/adding-college-courses-to-record>

T4. Which training meets the CDA Bundle Requirements?

The PDF flyer that lists the eligible trainings can be found in the Help Center (Training and Records Help) of Growing Futures. Located under the section 'Find Approved Training' click on the document titles 'CDA Track Training Bundles' in the link below:

<https://www.ndgrowingfutures.org/training-records-help>

All trainings have been pre-approved and listed within the Growing Futures Training Calendar <https://www.ndgrowingfutures.org/find-training>

T5. How do I know if I have completed the Basic Child Care/Getting Started Requirement?

If you have met the requirement in the top section of your DHS Licensing Training Record, you have satisfied the Getting Started Requirement.

Example of not completed:

| Basic Child Care Training List | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Basic Child Care Completion date | Not Complete |

Example of completed:

| Basic Child Care Training List | |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| Basic Child Care Completion date | 06/29/2022 |

T6. What is the difference between a transcript and the Growing Futures Learning Record?

A transcript is an official transcript from the College sent directly to the Growing Futures Registry to be verified.

A Growing Futures Learning Record is a list of your complete training of clock hours for licensing.

Helpful Links:

More information on Stipends and Incentives, including all eligibility requirements, can be found on the DHS Early Childhood website:

<https://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/earlychildhood/ec-stipends-incentives.html>

Growing Futures Help Center has many useful resources see the link below:

<https://www.ndgrowingfutures.org/help-center>

I still have questions and I am not finding answers in the FAQ. Please email your questions to: dhsec@nd.gov