



County of Los Angeles
Child Care Planning Committee
INVESTING IN EARLY EDUCATORS STIPEND PROGRAM



CYCLE 10A: For Persons Working in Child Development Centers
Instructions and Application

FUNDING FOR CYCLE 10 IS DEPENDENT ON THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS FROM THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION/CHILD DEVELOPMENT DIVISION (CDE/CDD).

Schedule for Stipend Program – Cycle 10	
Stipend Program Cycle 10 applications posted on the Web site at www.childcare.lacounty.gov	August 2008
Applications with supporting documents due:	Mail in: Thursday, October 23, 2008 (postmarked) Walk in: Thursday, October 30, 2008
Application Disqualification Letters mailed by:	Thursday, January 8, 2009
Appeal Letters for Application Disqualification due:	Thursday, January 22, 2009
Verification Forms mailed to eligible applicants by:	Thursday, January 22, 2009
Verification Forms with supporting documents due:	Mail in: Thursday, March 5, 2009 (postmarked) Walk in: Thursday, March 12, 2009
Verification Disqualification Letters mailed by:	Monday, May 4, 2009
Appeal Letters for Verification Disqualification due:	Monday, May 18, 2009
Stipends sent to qualifying applicants:	July/August 2009

READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE AND WHILE COMPLETING THE APPLICATION AND PROVIDE ALL INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS REQUESTED.

Overview

The *Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program*, funded by the California Department of Education/Child Development Division (CDE/CDD) and developed by the County of Los Angeles Child Care Planning Committee, is designed to increase the retention of teachers working in child development programs – centers and family child care homes – in which most of the children are subsidized by the CDE/CDD. In addition, the *Stipend Program* helps teachers work towards completing college coursework that contributes to a degree in child development or a closely related field.

The instructions serve as your guide for completing your application to the *Stipend Program*. It is critically important that you **read the instructions** carefully and provide all information and documents as requested. Note that each cycle is separate; therefore, you must submit all supporting documents requested for this cycle. **Applications that have missing information and/or missing documents will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed.**

The instructions also provide you with information on the process leading up to awarding stipends, including the appeal process and a detailed timeline.

Applying to the *Stipend Program* is a two-part process:

- 1. Application:** determines that you meet the employment eligibility criteria.
- 2. Verification:** verifies that you have met the educational requirements, hold a Child Development Permit, and continue to meet the employment criteria.

If you work in a Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) classroom only, you may be eligible for their Professional Growth Plan (PGP) Stipend Program. Visit www.laup.net and click on Professional Growth Opportunities for more information.

STEP 1: Determining Eligibility¹ (see note below)

To be eligible to apply for a stipend, you **must**:

1. Work in a California Department of Education/Child Development Division (CDE/CDD)-contracted child development center, **OR**
Work in a licensed center in which the majority (51% or more) of the children receive a child care subsidy from the CDE/CDD-contracted agency at the time you submit your application; **AND**
2. Work directly teaching children as a teacher, teacher/director (those with dual roles), or substitute in the classroom on a consistent and continual basis at least 20 hours per week (see details in box below for special categories of teachers and exceptions); **AND**
3. Maintain employment at any child development center located in the County of Los Angeles from July 1, 2008 through March 12, 2009; **AND**
4. **PERMIT REQUIREMENT!** Hold a Child Development Permit issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to be submitted with the Verification Form (see Schedule). See Step 2, Item 2 under **Eligible Coursework** for more information on obtaining or upgrading a permit.

You may be eligible to apply to the Stipend Program if you meet one of the following relating to Item 2:

- Teachers working in **State Preschool** must work directly teaching children at least 15 hours per week.
- Aides or assistants working in any child development program must work directly teaching children at least 15 hours per week.

You must also meet the eligibility criteria as specified in Items 1, 3 and 4.

If you meet the eligibility criteria, then continue to Step 2.

STEP 2: Meeting the Educational Requirements

To earn a stipend, you **must**:

1. Complete **at least** three (3) semester units (4.5 quarter units) of eligible coursework at a community college, college, or university; **AND**
2. Complete the class(es) **after** February 28, 2008 and **before** March 1, 2009; **AND**
3. Pass the class(es) with a grade of "C" or better; **AND**
4. Submit your transcript(s) and Child Development Permit when requested with your Verification Form.

Eligible Coursework

All coursework must be unit-bearing. Extension or continuing education courses are **not** eligible unless the applicant has a Bachelor Degree (BA/BS) or higher.

¹ State law limits eligibility to the *Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program* to persons serving a majority of children receiving CDE/CDD subsidies. Staff working in Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) and Head Start Programs **only** are ineligible to apply.

Eligible coursework is limited to the following five categories:

1. **If you are not proficient in English** as indicated on your application, you may take English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) classes at a community college if directed to do so by your college. This option is intended for applicants needing to improve their English language skills in order to enroll in college classes toward earning a degree.
2. **If you do NOT have a child development permit issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC)**, you may take required child development classes, or the required general education courses. **If you already have a permit**, you may take classes needed to upgrade or renew your permit.

Note: *If you do not have a permit, contact CTC by visiting their Web site at www.ctc.ca.gov or contact the child development department at your community college. You will need a valid permit to qualify for a stipend at the time of verification; it takes approximately **nine months** for your permit to be issued.*

3. **If you do NOT have an Associate Degree (AA/AS)**, you may take English, math or general education classes; OR prerequisites to classes that are transferable for degree credit, including child development. Check with an advisor at your college or university before enrolling in a class if you are not sure it is a prerequisite or transferable class.
4. **If you have an AA/AS or are working toward a BA/BS**, you may take classes that are transferable and are counted as credit toward a four-year college or university degree; OR classes at a four-year college or university that count towards a degree. **ACCEPTABLE DEGREES** include Early Childhood Education, Early Special Education, Child Psychology, and Child Development.
5. **If you have a BA/BS OR higher**, you may take college or university classes that are directly related to your work with children and families. Sample topics include: special needs children, diversity, dual language learners, parent relations, adult supervision, program evaluation, and advanced child development. Unit bearing extension or continuing education courses can be counted as eligible only for individuals who already hold a BA/BS or higher.

If you will meet the eligibility criteria **and** understand the educational requirements, then continue with your application.

STEP 3: Completing the Application

Be sure you have the correct application:

- If you work in a **child development center**, complete the application for **Cycle 10A**.
- If you work in a **family child care home**, complete the application for **Cycle 10B** (see separate instructions for Cycle 10B).

Section 1. Applicant Information

- Enter your full name in the appropriate box on the top of each page of your application.
- Fill in every box; do not leave blanks. If the information is not applicable, then write in "N/A".
- Enter **all** telephone numbers where we can reach you from 9 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Special instructions:

- *Enter your full name **exactly** as it appears on your social security card.*
- *Enter your social security number (SSN) **exactly** as it appears on your card.*
- *All SSNs are verified with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), so accuracy is critical.*

Section 2. Applicant Education and Permit Levels

- Check your **highest level of education** that you have **COMPLETED**.

Note: If you are working toward a degree, **DO NOT** check that you have the degree.

- Check the type of Child Development Permit you **CURRENTLY HOLD**.

Section 3: Continuing Education Requirement

- Check all that apply; indicate major, if you have checked that you are working to obtain an AA, BA/BS or MA/MS.

Section 4. Applicant Employment Information

- For **Name of the Child Care Center**, enter the name of the site where you work.
- For **Administered by**, enter the agency name, school district or company.
- The **Program Manager** is the manager overseeing the program, NOT the site supervisor.
- Your **Job Title** must have the word “teacher” in it, such as Preschool Teacher, Assistant Teacher, Associate Teacher, or Substitute Teacher. If your job title is “coordinator”, “supervisor, or “director”, you probably do not qualify for a stipend. However, job titles such as “teacher/supervisor” are permissible. **If you work in a State Preschool, add “State Preschool” to your title.**

Note: Indicate if the classroom in which you work is also a Los Angeles Universal Program (LAUP) classroom as well as a CDE/CDD-contracted classroom or a classroom in which the majority of children are subsidized by the CDE/CDD-contracted agency.

Section 5. Applicant Salary Information

- Complete information for your gross annual salary or gross monthly salary, whichever you can most accurately calculate.

Section 6. Employer-provided Benefit Information

- Check all that apply.

Section 7. Children with Whom Applicant is Currently Working

- Check all that apply.

Section 8. Program Manager’s Certification

- It is your responsibility as the applicant to make sure that your Program Manager completes this section, signs and dates it.
- There are two options to this section, depending on whether or not your program has a CDE/CDD-contract. Be sure your Program Manager completes only one portion of this section:
 - For programs that do not hold a contract with the CDE/CDD, **OR**
 - For CDE/CDD-contracted programs

Special instructions for programs that do not hold a contract with the CDE/CDD:

- Enter the total number of children currently enrolled and of those children, the total number of **subsidized** children.
- **Attach** to the application a copy of the invoice or contract documents listing **all** of the subsidized children. The documents should be copies of the most current printout(s) you received from the funding agency(ies) with the agency's(ies') name on it and list the children's names; the payment amounts may be blocked out. Write the stipend applicant's name on the upper right hand side of the document(s).

Section 9. Applicant Certification and Signature

- Read and initial each of the seven statements of certification.
- Be sure to sign and date this section.

STEP 4: Submitting Your Application

1. Be sure that you have completed every section of the application and your name is entered at the top of each page. **It is highly recommended that you have someone review your application for you before you submit it.**
2. Be sure that your name is included at the top of the supporting documents.
3. Check to make sure that your Program Manager has completed, signed and dated Section 8.
4. If you work in a program that does not hold a contract with the CDE/CDD, be sure that you have attached a copy of the most current invoice/contract documents listing **all** of the subsidized children enrolled in your program. The invoice/contract documents should be a copy of the printout(s) received from the funding agency(ies) with their name on it. You **will not** be eligible for a stipend without the invoice/contract documents.
5. **Make a copy of your completed application, including supporting documents, for your records.**
6. Submit your completed original application, with supporting documents if applicable, in person or by U.S. mail, certified mail or Domestic Return Receipt, to:

Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program – Cycle 10A
Office of Child Care, SIB/CEO
County of Los Angeles
222 South Hill Street, 5th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Application due dates:

Mail in: Thursday, October 23, 2008 (postmarked)

Walk in: Thursday, October 30, 2008

DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE DEADLINE TO APPLY!

- Applicants are encouraged to **apply early**. If you walk your application into the Office of Child Care, you will receive a stamp-dated receipt with all documents noted on the receipt.
- Persons submitting applications in person on behalf of several colleagues should request individual receipts per applicant.
- **Do not mail groups of applications in same packet.**
- If you choose to mail your application, send it certified mail or Domestic Return Receipt.
- Faxed, late, or incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Stipend Program staff will not call to remind you to send missing information. This is your responsibility.

STEP 5: Application Review

1. Upon receipt of your application, *Stipend Program* staff will screen your application for completeness. Only complete applications will be fully reviewed. **Applications that have missing information and/or missing supporting documents will not be reviewed.**
2. Staff will review your complete application to ensure that you meet the eligibility criteria to participate.
3. **If you are eligible**, your information is entered into the *Stipend Program* database and a **Verification Form with instructions will be sent to you by U.S. mail by Thursday, January 22, 2009**. If you do not receive a Verification Form by early February 2009, contact the Office of Child Care at (213) 974-4674.
4. If your application is incomplete or you are not eligible, you will be notified with an Application Disqualification Letter by U.S. mail in early January 2009. You may appeal this decision. Instructions for submitting a letter of appeal are outlined in Step 6 of these instructions.

Note: Due to the anticipated number of applications, the review process can take several weeks. Please **do not** call to ask about your application. Your Verification Form or letter of disqualification will serve as notice regarding your application.

STEP 6: Submitting a Letter of Appeal

- If you are **DISQUALIFIED**, you may submit a letter of appeal. **Appeals must be submitted in writing.**

An appeal is not the time to submit new information or supporting documents. Rather, it is an opportunity to prove that your application was complete, included the required supporting documents, was submitted by the due date, and you meet the eligibility criteria based on your original application.

- Your letter of appeal should include the following information:
 - The date your appeal letter is written
 - Your full name and social security number (SSN) as written on your application
 - Reference to the reason you were disqualified as indicated in the letter you received from the Office of Child Care
 - A brief description of why you think the decision to disqualify your application is incorrect
 - A copy of your application and supporting documents **as submitted** by the due date
 - A copy of the receipt you were provided when you submitted your application in person or a copy of your certified mail receipt
- Make a copy of your letter of appeal and supporting documents for your records.
- Send your **letter of appeal** with supporting documents by Thursday, January 22, 2009 to:

Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program – Cycle 10A
Office of Child Care, SIB/CEO
County of Los Angeles
222 South Hill Street, 5th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012

- The Office of Child Care management team reviews appeals, including review of the original application. Decisions to grant or not grant the appeal, based on whether the applicant met the application requirements and deadlines, are made within two (2) weeks of receipt of the letter of appeal. The applicant will be notified of the decision by U.S. mail. **ALL DECISIONS ARE FINAL.**

For more information on the *Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program* and to download the instructions and application, visit www.childcare.lacounty.gov. Instructions and application forms are also available by contacting the Office of Child Care at (213) 974-4674.