

ECAP Voluntary Pre-Bid Meeting January 23, 2020 Questions and Answers

1. What is does it mean to apply for ECAP funding?

The Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP) is Delaware's state-funded early learning program for income-eligible families. ECAP began in 1994 when it was written into law. In the current program year of 2019-2020, we have 13 ECAP programs who serve 845 children ages 3 and 4. The expansion to open enrollment to 3 year olds happened in 2017-2018. The total state funding for the current fiscal year is a little bit over 6 million.

In this request for proposal (RFP), we are asking eligible programs to apply for ECAP funding for the next three years. The current open RFP will determine our cohort of ECAP programs for the next three years, which will begin on July 1, 2020. ECAP grants are available to non-profit and for-profit child care in any setting, such as Head Start agencies, public schools, community-based organizations, and private and faith-based centers.

Programs that are awarded ECAP seats will receive funds to serve that number of children and their families. There is a yearly contract that an ECAP program signs to serve the number of children they will enroll using State dollars. One seat in an ECAP-funded program is currently \$7,140 per year, or \$595 per month. The total funding per seat depends on the state budget allocation every year.

The submission date for all materials in your request for proposal response is February 19th at 2pm EST. Please go through the entire RFP before January 29th to determine if you have any questions about submitting your proposal response, because that is the deadline for submitting any questions online.

2. If you implement some of the Head Start requirements for governance (i.e. Parent Council) but plan to implement a Policy Council, should you answer only in Column 2 of Appendix B? Is there a way to articulate what you plan to do in addition to what you already do?

If you are implementing some standards, please describe how you are doing so in Column 2. You can describe any small changes or plans to meet that deliverable only if you currently have these plans in place. The point of the two different columns in Appendix B is for programs who are not meeting a deliverable; they can suggest what they might do differently if they were awarded ECAP funding in Column 3. Again, please be brief and only fill out Column 2 **or** Column 3.

3. Where can I find the list of state approved Data Management Systems?

There is no state-approved list of data management tools at this time. Please share what you use currently or anticipate using so that our reviewers can learn more about your program.

4. Can the community assessment completed by the state be used as a basis for determining community needs?

Yes, any public community needs assessment can be used, with reference to local community need. The Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five needs assessment can be used.

5. Does ECAP funding supplement or replace funding for POC eligible families?

ECAP funding supplements funding to serve POC families. Currently, ECAP programs receive partial funding for their program service hours and POC funding can supplement before or after care hours.

6. How many hours per day is ECAP?

ECAPs currently follow the Head Start Program Performance Standards on the length of day. However, there is no hours per day requirement delineated in the RFP language. Please share your hours of operation in Appendix C, Chart A, Question #10.

7. When is the ECAP program year?

Programs are required to have a program year, which is the State of Delaware's fiscal year. This RFP is for three years, even though you renew your contract every program year. The duration of this RFP from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2023. You will be required to meet ECAP contract deliverables starting July 1, 2020. You will thus have between the ECAP funding award in March/April 2020 and the start of the program year on July 1, 2020 to make any changes necessary to meet ECAP requirements.

8. If we are an existing program and our request for ECAP seats is greater than what we are currently serving, does requesting more seats jeopardize your current seats?

All current ECAP seats are up for bid with this RFP. If you are a current ECAP program, you must reapply for all seats that you would like funded. The only criteria used for evaluation is listed in the RFP.

9. Is there a template available for the budget/price? Do we would need to present percentage of funds spent on salaries, supplies, etc in our proposal?

You must have a separate file for your price proposal. This can be a Word or Excel file that you create – there is no template. This document must simply state how much you are proposing for total funding. This is a simple case for the ECAP Bid because it is the number of seats you are proposing multiplied by the current cost per seat per year.

EXAMPLE: If I apply for 10 seats, I can create a price proposal as a separate word document where I will write "10 seats X \$7,140.00 per seat per year = \$71,400.00 total request for funding per year." If I have multiple sites that I would like funded, I could use one price proposal file to write the total funding request for each site.

10. Will there be any oral presentations required?

No, the written proposal application will be the only required submission to the ECAP Bid.

11. In response to all questions on the specific pieces of the "Complete Application Package," please read below.

How to Submit Documents

You need all of the following components for a "complete application package." To package the proposal, you need to have six paper copies of each of the documents. You will have one collated packet that is the original, and then you need five photocopies.

You need to submit two USB flashdrives that contain *at least* two files. One file has to be the price proposal and one can be a comprehensive file of your entire proposal. You can opt to have more files if you would like to save each of these documents below individually. You will put these copies and USBs in a package and write "BID ENCLOSED CONTRACT NO. 2020-10 ECAP RFP" and you will be bringing it or sending it to Dover Delaware as per RFP instructions.

Complete Application Package Components:

SUBMIT AS ONE SEPARATE FILE ON EACH USB:

Price Proposal

You need to include a price proposal. There is no template for the price proposal. This can be an excel or word document file that lists how many seats you are asking for multiplied by the price per seat per year (currently at \$7,140), as stated above.

SUBMIT AS ONE PDF FILE IN FULL OR EACH COMPONENT AS A SEPARATE SAVED OR SCANNED FILE ON EACH USB:

Transmittal Letter

You need to include a transmittal letter. This is a no more than one page letter that highlights your experience as an early learning program and addresses why you want to get involved in ECAP, but this should not include all your information in Appendix B. This is like a basic cover letter.

Attachment 2

Attachment 2 is the Non Collusion statement. One copy of this must be signed and notarized.

Attachment 3

Attachment 3 is your RFP exception form. The DOE Contract boilerplate template is part of the RFP text. This is your opportunity to read the contract in full. If you take no exceptions to the contract language, check the box and submit. If you do take exceptions, aka if you have an issue or a problem with the contract or RFP language, you need to explain what you are taking exception to and what you are proposing in terms of a compromise.

Attachment 4

Attachment 4 is the Confidential Information Form. The form would be filled out when a vendor has confidential or proprietary information (copyrights, patents, trade secrets, etc.) in their proposal. Note that this is part of the State's RFP template and may not apply to the ECAP RFP. If there is anything that is confidential or proprietary, include it here. If not, check the box.

Attachment 5

Attachment 5 is the business reference form. You must have three business references that must be non-state of Delaware employees. Even if you are a school district, you need to reach out to people who are not state of Delaware employees to list.

Attachment 6

Attachment 6 is the Subcontractor form. It is only necessary if a vendor has subcontractors that would provide services as part of this RFP. For example, if a vendor were to hire a staffing agency for additional child care workers, this would require the form filled out and submitted. This is not allowable for delivering ECAP services, so it is unlikely an applicant will have subcontractors.

□Attachment 7

Attachment 7 is the Office of Supplier Diversity application. This is not submitted to the Department of Education but rather the Division of Small Business. The application is optional and does not influence the outcome of any award decision. They are trying to track to see who is applying to RFPs and who is contracting with the State.

□Appendix B (one)

Complete only one Appendix B – Program Structure and Service Delivery Chart. Please be brief, using bullet points. This is a simplified look at how you are currently operating for the Reviewers. Complete your responses directly in the fillable word document chart that is a separate link on the bids website.

The first column describes the ECAP deliverable, or what an ECAP program needs to do when they are providing early learning services to children and their families. Fill out Column 2 if your program is currently doing what is described in Column 1. Describe what you are doing briefly. If you do not currently do this in your program, you must fill out Column 3 only. In this column, describe how you propose to do what is described in Column 1, and any additional supports needed from the State in order to serve children and families in this way. Again, we are looking for bullet points and succinct summaries.

□Appendix C (one per site you are applying for)

You must complete Appendix C – Proposal for Funding Chart A for every site that you are asking for ECAP funding. This is required for all programs applying for funding. This chart tells the State how many ECAP seats, and therefore eligible children and families, you are able to serve. If you are a large program that has multiple sites, you must decide if you are using ECAP funds to serve children at one or multiple sites. If you are requesting funding for multiple sites, complete Appendix C for each site for which you are applying for funding. EXAMPLE: If you are requesting funding for two sites, a Bear location and a Lewes location, please fill out the chart twice, one for each site location.

□Appendix D (one per existing ECAP site, if applicable)

If you are a current ECAP program, you must complete at least one Appendix D – Current ECAP Site Chart B. If you are not currently receiving ECAP funding, do not fill out and submit Appendix D. **The State should only receive Appendix D from the existing 13 ECAP programs, if they are applying.**

If you currently receive ECAP funding for multiple sites, fill out this chart for each site that currently receives funding. Please note, this is so that the State can compare how your current service of children and families to your request in Appendix C. Thus, you still need to fill out Appendix C to articulate the total number of children you want to serve at each site between 2020-2023, *not in addition to the current number of children you currently serve*. EXAMPLE: If you are a current program serving five children at a Milford site and would like to continue serving the same number of children at this same Milford site, you fill out Appendix C requesting funding to serve five children total at this site AND you fill out Appendix D for the Milford site to share that you currently serve five children.

Questions and Answers

Early Childhood Assistance Program - 1/15/2020 7:30:00 AM

Number: 2020-10

Questions and Answers:

Q: Budget Template

Posted On: 1/15/2020 3:30:48 PM

Is there a budget/pricing template ?

A: You must have a separate file for your price proposal. This can be a word or excel file that you create. Please note that there is no template available. You must create this document to state how much you are proposing for total funding. This is a simple case for the ECAP Bid because it is the number of seats you are proposing multiplied by the current cost per seat per year. EXAMPLE: If I apply for 10 seats, I can create a price proposal as a separate word document where I will write "10 seats X \$7,140.00 per seat per year = \$71,400.00 total request for funding per year." If I have multiple sites that I would like funded, I could use one price proposal file to write the total funding request broken down by each site.

Answered On: 2/4/2020 8:12:53 AM

Q: Requirement

Posted On: 1/15/2020 5:50:13 PM

As a family childcare center I would like to know what is the requirements? Please and thank you

A: All types of child care settings are invited to apply. Please read below for the documents you must submit in multiple formats and multiple copies for the "Complete Application Package."

Answered On: 2/4/2020 8:12:36 AM

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Attachment 2 is the Non Collusion statement. The original document must be signed and notarized. You may use any authorized Notary Public of your choosing (including in-house) to notarize the non-collusion agreement.

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□Appendix D (one per existing ECAP site, if applicable)

If you are a current ECAP program, you must complete at least one “Appendix D – Current ECAP Site Chart B.” If you are not currently receiving ECAP funding, do not fill out and submit Appendix D. The State should only receive Appendix D from the existing 13 ECAP programs, if they are applying.

If you currently receive ECAP funding for multiple sites, fill out this chart for each site that currently receives funding. Please note, this is so that the State can compare your current service to children and families to your request in Appendix C. Thus, you still need to fill out Appendix C to articulate the total number of children you want to serve at each site between 2020-2023, not in addition to the current number of children you currently serve. EXAMPLE: If you are a current program serving five children at a Milford site and would like to continue serving the same number of children at this same site: 1) Fill out Appendix C requesting funding to serve five children total at this site AND 2) Fill out Appendix D for the Milford site to share that you currently serve five children.

Q: Program Structure

Posted On: 1/16/2020 10:54:03 AM

In the RFP it states to follow Head Start guidelines. Regarding program structure under those guidelines it states, "a program must provide, at a minimum, at least 160 days per year of planned class operations if it operates for five days per week, or at least 128 days per year if it operates four days per week. Classes must operate for a minimum of 3.5 hours per day.". Does this allow for a morning and afternoon session? Does each session need to be 3.5 hours if the program is 5 days a week with 160 days? This would be a change from the previous RFP.

A: "Early Childhood Assistance Program Site Eligibility Requirements" (pg. 3) states "All programs must assure their ability to meet any required criteria derived from the federal Head Start Act of 2007 and 2016 Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), and any subsequent federal Information Memorandums (IMs) and Program Instructions (PIs) as articulated by DOE." Please note that this statement states "any required criteria" derived from Head Start guidelines.

Answered On: 2/4/2020 8:16:37 AM

Unlike the previous RFP, we are asking programs to list their overall hours of operation in box 10 of Appendix C.

One ECAP-funded seat serves one child per day, which does not allow for a morning session enrollment of one child and afternoon session enrollment of a different child.

Q: Number of slots allocated

Posted On: 1/16/2020 10:58:51 AM

Based upon program site eligibility requirements, serving unserved and underserved communities, may a participating organization ask for additional slots if needed or should only request currently funded slots? If the opportunity is allowed to request an increase of slots and the funding is not granted, would the program be able to retain the currently funded slots?

A: "Appendix C -Proposal for Funding Site Information Chart(s)" asks for the proposed number of ECAP-funded seats at a particular site. Please fill out this chart with the proposed number of seats you would like to have at a particular site based on your community's need and site's capacity. If you are applying for seats at multiple sites, fill out Appendix C for as many additional sites as you would like to have ECAP-funded seats.

Answered On: 2/4/2020 8:13:25 AM

A note for current ECAP programs: If you are a current ECAP program, you may request as many seats you would like to have funded; this number can be more or less than your current number of contracted seats as long as it reflects your community's need.

All current ECAP seats are up for bid with this RFP; current programs will only be able to retain their current funded seats if they are awarded those seats through this RFP process. If you are a current ECAP program, you must reapply for all seats that you would like funded.

Q: New Providers - Pending Licensure

Posted On: 1/16/2020 12:37:29 PM

I am in the process of opening a child care facility and am currently going through the licensing process with the Office of Child care for the state of Delaware. I have experienced delays in opening, but will be open within the next 30 day.

My question relates to my ability to apply for the ECAP grant if I haven't yet received the license from OCCL. I feel confident that I will have by the deadline date, but if I received it within a week or two after the deadline, will my application still be considered?

A: One of the six eligibility requirements to be an awarded ECAP sites is: "The facilities used by a program must meet state, tribal, or local licensing requirements, even if exempted by a licensing entity. When state, tribal, or local requirements vary from DOE requirements, the most stringent provision takes precedence (Cited from HSPPS 1302.21)." (Early Childhood Assistance Program Site Eligibility Requirements pg. 3). Please apply if you will meet this, and all other eligibility requirements, by the RFP submission deadline, February 19th at 2pm EST.

Answered On: 2/4/2020 8:15:31 AM

Q: Word limits and Narrative

Posted On: 1/16/2020 3:13:41 PM

I did not see a request for a formal narrative. Are we to ONLY submit information into the grids for consideration or should we provide a formal narrative as well? If so, what are the page limits? If the grids are the only forms to use/complete, is there a word count requirement or limit within the boxes?

A: A formal narrative is not requested for this RFP; narrative information should be bulleted in Appendices B, C, and D as applicable. Word count limits are further explained below.

Answered On: 2/4/2020 8:16:11 AM

Please find a full checklist for the "Complete Application Package" in the Questions and Answers document from the Voluntary Pre-Bid Meeting.

A transmittal letter needs to be included in the Complete Application Package. This is a one page letter (only one page) that highlights your experience as an early learning program and addresses why you want to get involved in ECAP. This is similar to a basic cover letter.

In Appendix B, the first column describes the ECAP deliverable, or what an ECAP program needs to do when they are providing early learning services to children and their families. Fill out Column 2 if your program is currently doing what is described in Column 1. If you do not currently do this in your program, you must fill out Column 3 only. In this column, describe how you propose to do what is described in Column 1, and any additional supports needed from the State in order to serve children and families in this way. Again, we are looking for bullet points and succinct summaries.

There is no word count limit for Appendix B and C; please use bullet points and be brief. Complete your responses directly in the fillable word document chart boxes that is a separate link on the bids website. You may adjust chart margins and page orientation to make the document easy to read. This is a simplified look at how you are currently operating for the Reviewers. Reviewers are expecting lists and brief summaries in these charts.

Q: Funding

Posted On: 1/16/2020 3:52:51 PM

What is the total amount of money available?

A: One seat in an ECAP-funded program is currently \$7,140 per year, or \$595 per month. The total funding per seat depends on the state budget allocation every year. We will not know the total amount of money available until the state of Delaware has approved the new fiscal year budget by July 1, 2020.

Answered On: 2/4/2020 8:15:00 AM

Q: Appendix B

Posted On: 1/17/2020 11:07:07 AM

Program Governance - Question 1 asks for a program's vision, mission, and goals.
Can you clarify -- are you looking for 1 year of goals, 3 years, 5 years ? Could we include an attachment listing our goals or strategic plan ?

A: Appendix B asks "List your program's vision, mission, and goals, as applicable." Any length of goals are acceptable (e.g. 1 year goal, 5 year goals). Answered On: 2/4/2020 8:14:42 AM

Do not submit an additional attachment listing your goals and strategic plan. In the chart, please be brief, using bullet points. Complete your responses directly in the fillable word document chart that is a separate link on the bids website. Again, we are looking for bullet points and succinct summaries.

Q: Licensing Requirement? Posted On: 1/21/2020 9:45:16 PM

Is every site that offers ECAP slots required to be licensed by the Office of Child Care Licensing?

A: One of the six eligibility requirements to be an awarded ECAP sites is: "The facilities used by a program must meet state, tribal, or local licensing requirements, even if exempted by a licensing entity. When state, tribal, or local requirements vary from DOE requirements, the most stringent provision takes precedence (Cited from HSPPS 1302.21)." (Early Childhood Assistance Program Site Eligibility Requirements pg. 3). Answered On: 2/4/2020 8:14:22 AM

Q: Education Posted On: 1/23/2020 5:25:05 PM

Appendix B asks what percentage of our staff hold Associates Degrees. Is it asking about the teachers that teach the age group for the ECAP children? Or all the staff including aides and assistants and substitutes?

A: Appendix B (pg. 67) asks "What percentages of your staff hold at least an Associate's Degree? Describe whether any staff are working towards higher education degrees?" In Column 2, it states "Administration, Teacher, and Assistant Teacher." Answered On: 2/4/2020 8:14:04 AM

This ECAP deliverable is asking about your program's current degree-holding administrators, teachers, and assistant teachers throughout your entire program. Whether or not you are a current ECAP program, please answer this question in terms of your entire program percentages.

Q: Notary Posted On: 1/29/2020 2:57:20 PM

May we use an in-house Notary for the Non-Collusion form?

A: Part of the minimum RFP mandatory submission requirements include: one (1) complete, signed and notarized original copy of the non-collusion agreement (Attachment 2 / pg. 38). Yes, you may use any authorized Notary Public (including in-house) of your choosing to notarize the non-collusion agreement. Answered On: 2/4/2020 8:13:48 AM
