

CRECER New Mexico Project Plan Worksheet

As part of your funding application for funding through CRECER New Mexico, you will be asked to put together information about your project plan.

Applications are accepted through May 31, 2024 or until funding is exhausted, whichever comes first, with priority given to applications submitted by March 31, 2024.

Below you will find a worksheet to walk you through the project plan questions that you will see on the application. Not only will this worksheet help you prepare your responses ahead of time, it will also help you to think through the details of your plan in advance to help you be successful on your journey. You will also find tips to help you craft your responses and highlight information that will help to boost your score.

If you have any questions, contact the CRECER New Mexico team at info@crecernm.org or 505-819-0111.

Project Plan

As part of the first step of sharing your project plan with the CRECER New Mexico team, you'll be asked to provide an overview of your project:

- Please provide a brief overview of your proposed project and how it will impact access to high-quality child care. If your project plan will positively impact access to quality infant or toddler care (0-36 months), please provide these details as well. What are you proposing and why? Will this be a facility improvement or a space upgrade? Are you planning to invest in training for yourself or your staff? Will you be changing your hours or services?
- Please include the type of project (e.g. expanding capacity and/or increasing quality/star level) and how your plan will affect your child care business.
- While your project can include a range of costs, there are costs that grant funds cannot be used for. For more information and to see a list of allowable expenses, please visit the CRECER New Mexico Grant Application Guide at www.crecernm.org.

This is where you will want to explain what it is that you plan to do and why. You don't need to write too much, several sentences outlining your plan will do. The application will include several examples. As you read through each one, consider how well they explain what the applicant plans to do and why:

"We want to make our outdoor play area safer and more fun for the kids by adding new playground equipment and shaded areas. This will help them stay active and explore in a protected environment. We'll also train our staff to make sure they can supervise outdoor play properly and plan engaging activities. These changes will help us improve our child care quality. We'll spend money on outdoor toys, safety gear, and staff training."

"We want to make our child care facility safer by installing new safety equipment like fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, and carbon monoxide detectors. This will give parents peace of mind knowing their children are in a secure environment. We'll also train our staff on emergency procedures and child safety measures. These improvements will help us provide a high-quality and secure environment for children to learn and play. Expenses will include safety supplies and staff training."

"We're planning to upgrade our home kitchen to better prepare nutritious meals for the children in our care. This involves purchasing new appliances and cookware to improve food quality and safety. Additionally, we'll invest in kitchen supplies and serving items to enhance meal presentation and variety. These changes will support the health and well-being of the children and ensure we meet their dietary needs. Expenses will include kitchen equipment, supplies, and minor renovations."

"We're adding 10 infant slots at our child care business. Our plan is to convert unused space into an infant room. We will be purchasing cribs and safety gear for babies and training our staff to take care of them properly. It'll help us offer better care for families in our community if we can care for infants. Expenses will include cribs, safety equipment, and staff training."

PRO TIP: Funding is meant to help increase the supply of high-quality child care throughout the state. Remember – an increase in quality can look like many things, as can an increase in supply. Consider the following questions as you prepare your responses:

1. **Will your FOCUS star rating be affected by your project?** This can mean an increase or maintenance of your star level as well as entering the system for the first time.
2. **Will your project help you become licensed or change provider types?** Perhaps your project will help you go from a family child care home to a family group home. Or,

maybe your registered business will become licensed or your new business will become licensed. (NOTE: Businesses must be licensed by May 31, 2024 to receive funding)

3. **Will you be able to care for more children as part of your project?** If you are increasing your licensed capacity as part of your project, include that information in your overview. Increasing your hours or adding another shift so that you can enroll more children in your business counts as building supply too!
4. **Will you be increasing the quality or supply of infant and/or toddler care as part of your project?** Preference is given to projects that will help to increase the quality and/or supply of infant or toddler care so be sure to include this information if it applies to your plan!

Next, you'll be asked to explain how your plan will directly impact the quality of the care you provide at your child care business:

- How will your proposed improvements (whether through staff training, facility enhancements, or program enhancements), improve the overall quality of care and education you provide?

This is the chance to tell us more about why you are moving forward with your project plan. What will it do and why is this important to you, your business, and the community? A few sentences will be plenty.

The following question will be about the owner or director's experience:

- What is the owner or director's **relevant** experience in the child care business and/or field? Please include the number of years for each. (ECE, K-12, Business, Management, Program Directorship, etc.) Please also include any degrees, certifications, and/or accreditations from any field.

This can include experience working in child care, running a business of any kind, and education or certifications regardless of the field of study. Be sure to include information about both if you have two separate people filling these roles.

Finally, share the start date and end date of your project:

- What are the project start and end dates? If your project has multiple phases, please include the dates of the phase for which CRECER New Mexico funds would be used.

If your project has multiple phases or you've been working on it for a while already, you'll want to include the start date of the next phase that CRECER New Mexico funding will be helping with. For example, Rosa has been working on creating a consistent experience for her child care business and purchased a new curriculum for 3–5-year-olds in 2023. This year, she is going to purchase a new curriculum for her toddler classroom in June and wants to start training her staff on its use in July to begin using it in the upcoming 2024-2025 school year. She plans to use the funding to purchase the curriculum and cover training hours for herself and her staff. Though Rosa has been working on bringing new curriculum options to her business since 2023, her application start and end dates would be for the toddler curriculum that she plans to use her funding for:

Start date: June 2024

End date: October 2024

- Please share with us your mission statement which describes what your program aspires to do and whom the program aspires to serve. This is the “why you,” or why is it that families in your area are choosing or will choose your child care above others.
- If you are unsure what to include, consider the following format:
[Name of child care business] serves families with children between the ages of [ages served] in [geographic area]. Families love [why families keep coming back to you, why you are special].

For example: **Florence Perez Child Care** serves families with children between the ages of **0-5** in **Santa Fe**. Families love **how much we care about their children and the hours we are open.**

This section is like the mission statement you provided (or will provide) as part of your child care license application. Consider what makes your child care business special and unique. The CRECER New Mexico team wants to hear what makes your child care business stand out!

- What kind of revenue do you collect? **(Check all that apply)**
 - Private Pay
 - Child Care Assistance (ECECD subsidy)
 - Early Head Start/Head Start (select only if you have a contract to provide these services currently)
 - I do not get paid to provide child care
 - Other, please specify:
- Does your child care business or will your child care business provide any of the following types of child care services? **(Check all that apply)**
 - Early Head Start/Head Start (select only if you have a contract to provide

Next, you'll be asked to provide some basic information about the type of revenue your child care business collects and the kinds of services you offer. Simply check each option that applies to you.

PRO TIP: Certain types of services are harder to find than others. Some examples include infant or toddler care, subsidized care, overnight or weekend care, and drop-in care. Be sure to select these options if you offer these types of care at your child care business.

- Please enter the current hours of operation for your child care business:
- Will your operating hours change as a result of your quality improvement plan? If so, how?

This question is designed to help the CRECER New Mexico team understand if you provide any non-traditional hours or if you will be as part of your project plan. Enter your regular operating hours for each day in the chart followed by an explanation of how your hours will change as part of your project plan. If your hours won't be changing, you may include that information as your response.

- How do you know families in your area need the services you will provide?
For example, do you have a waitlist? Has something changed in your area such as the opening of a new, large factory where families will need care? Are nearby child care providers closing? Are there few providers in the area and you know they are full? Are there any other reasons why you know that there is demand for care in your area?

This question helps our team to understand the demand for your services in your community. Explain how you know that the families in your area want the services you will be providing.

PRO TIP: You can show demand for services in several ways. As you are preparing your response, consider the following questions:

- **Parent or Family Demand:** Do you have a waitlist for your child care business? Do you receive regular calls asking if you have openings? How many and for what age group(s)?
- **Landscape Changes:** Are there any changes in your community that would signal an increased need for child care? Some examples include nearby child care businesses that are closing or new factories opening in your area, or offering care for age groups that competitors do not cover.
- **Infant or Toddler Care:** Since it is harder to find, there's automatically more demand for services if you're offering care for children between 0-35 months.
- **Non-traditional Hours:** If you're offering overnight or weekend care, include this information in your response since it is also typically harder to find.

- Will you need to hire any new staff as part of your quality improvement plan? If so, what is your plan for finding and hiring new employees?

Understanding your hiring plan, if you need one, is an important part of developing a successful project plan. As you write your response, make sure to include how many employees you need to hire, what positions you need, and what your plan is to find them. For example:

"I am hiring 2 assistant teachers, and I will be posting job announcements on Indeed.com."

If you do not need to hire anyone, you may include that as your response.

- Will a build out, construction, or renovation be needed as part of your quality improvement plan?
 - Yes
 - No
- How long will build out, construction, or renovation take and how will you fund this work?

NOTE: Major construction and purchase of property cannot be covered by CRECER New Mexico grant funding.
- Please upload any contractor's estimates or floor plans.

If you're securing a new space or expanding an existing one, understanding your space needs will be an important part of your project plan. Even though funds can't be used for the purchase of property or for major renovations/construction, include information about your plans for

securing property or build out so that the CRECER New Mexico can fully understand your project details. Here are a few examples:

“I am converting unused space at my child care business into a new play area for infants. The contractor started renovations on February 1, 2024 and said it would take 6 weeks to finish the project.”

“I am in the process of signing a lease for my new child care business. The location used to be a child care so there isn’t any renovation needed. We expect to be licensed by the end of April 2024.”

Project Budget and Grant Funding

- How much grant funding are you applying for? **NOTE: Maximum request is \$10,000 per home or per classroom.**
- Please upload a budget for your project. Please see the Project Budget Template for more information. **NOTE: This is different from an operating budget and should include all costs associated with your project.**

Knowing what you need to spend on a project is an important part of planning and will help to set you up for success. As you put your project budget together, consider how much funding you will be requesting through the program. Though you may request up to \$10,000 through CRECER New Mexico’s grant program, be sure to include your full project budget. You may use your own budget, if you have one already, or use our [Budget Template](#) to create one.

PRO TIP: As you’re creating your budget, make sure you’ve considered all the expenses you expect to encounter and whether or not you’ve secured that funding already. If you have a cushion built into your budget to account for the unexpected, include that on your budget too!

Financials

- Please upload a projected cash flow forecast for the next 6-12 months. You may use the Cash Flow Workbook and upload your completed workbook (handwritten and/or pictures are accepted) or provide one of your own.

The cash flow forecast is one of the best tools you can have for understanding how healthy your organization is in the near term. Predicting cash flow is not about budgeting. It's about understanding how much money you are taking in minus how much money is going out. A cash flow can be created simply by adding the total money your business is taking in and subtracting out the total money being spent. This will let you know how much money your business has leftover each month so that you can plan ahead.

If you already use a cash flow for your business, you can upload that as part of your application. If you don't, you can use our [Cash Flow Workbook](#) to put one together. The workbook will guide you through adding up your revenue and expenses to help you understand what you can expect to have on hand each month. You can also connect with a coach for more assistance by contacting us at info@crecernm.org.

- Please upload at least **two** of the following documents as applicable:
 - 2022 Business tax returns
 - 2022 personal tax Returns
 - Profit and Loss Statement for 2023
 - 12 months of Business Bank Account Statements
 - Signed Attestation

Finally, you'll be asked to upload financial documentation along with your application details. You may select any two document options that you would like to provide. If you have any questions, contact info@crecernm.org.