



NJ Child Care Facilities Improvement Program – Phase 1 Sample Facility Improvement Project Description and Justification for Application

The NJ Child Care Facilities Improvement application asks applicants to provide a detailed description of their proposed projects to ensure consistency with the eligible uses of the funding. The project description, contractor quote(s), FFE materials, and photos will provide NJEDA with valuable information during the application review process.

In the description you should answer the following questions in as much detail as possible:

1. Describe why this project is necessary, including the eligible uses, any requested furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FFE), and soft costs.
2. What current issues and challenges at the child care center will be addressed by this project?
3. How will this project help to maintain or increase the quality of the learning environment? Are there specific issues that will be addressed that have been documented in formal assessments like your last licensing report, Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS-3, FCCERS-3 or ITERS-3) results, and/or Grow NJ Kids assessment?
4. Are there potential risks or challenges to the facility if the project is not awarded funding? If so, please describe. If not, please write 'not applicable' in your response to question #4.
5. If applicable: Will this project increase access for more children to be enrolled in the facility, and if so, please describe, including the estimated number of additional children that can be enrolled and the age groups that you anticipate enrolling with this increased capacity? Please describe why increased access is important for your community. [Note: increasing access is not a requirement of this program. If this question does not apply to your project, please write 'not applicable' in your response to question #5]
6. What factors may impact your project timeline, including but not limited to winter heating needs or relocation? What is the plan to manage these elements?

Below are two examples of project descriptions to help you complete this step in your application. As you draft your description, please write the responses in your own words and please note you may say Not Applicable for Questions 4 and 5.

Example 1: Converting Space to a Classroom

1. Describe why this project is necessary, including eligible uses, any requested furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FFE) and soft costs.

Our project is to convert two underused rooms into one toddler classroom. The project will include 8 eligible uses:

1. Taking down a dividing wall;
2. Installing windows to improve the natural light in the room;
3. Installing ceiling lighting; extending the fire sprinkler system through the room;
4. Building an adjoining bathroom with two child-sized toilets and sinks with touchless faucets;
5. Replacing the flooring and ceiling tiles;
6. Repainting the room;
7. Building built-in storage cubbies, cot storage, counters, and higher locking cabinets across two walls; and
8. Building a diaper changing area with handwashing station, including one adult height sink and one child height sink with touchless faucets.

The furniture, fixtures, and equipment that are required for this project include: window coverings, a wall mounted white board and bulletin board, and a rug.

2. What current issues and challenges at the child care center will be addressed by this project?

This project is necessary to meet the demand for toddler care at our facility and to ensure quality care is provided. Currently we have one toddler classroom combining young and older toddlers. By adding an older toddler classroom, we can increase access by enrolling families from our long wait list. Separating the older and younger toddlers will also make the curriculum, care, and materials more age and developmentally appropriate.

3. How will this project help to maintain or increase the quality of the learning environment? Are there specific issues that will be addressed that have been documented in formal assessments like your last licensing report, Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS-3, FCCERS-3 or ITERS-3) results, and/or Grow NJ Kids assessment?

This project will increase the quality of the learning environment by providing older toddlers with a space and materials that is specific to their developmental and learning needs. The current classroom does not have an internal bathroom, so right now the potty-trained children must be taken to the preschool classroom to use the bathroom. During our last 2 licensing visits, we were cited under OOL regulation 3A:52-4.3(c) for not maintaining adequate staff/child ratios and would like to make sure we don't get cited for this again.

4. Are there potential risks or challenges to the facility if the project is not awarded funding? If so, please describe. If not, please write 'not applicable.'

If the project is not awarded funding, the facility will continue to keep the younger and older toddlers together. However, this would not cause any health or safety issues.

5. If applicable: Will this project increase access for more children to be enrolled in the facility, and if so, please describe, including the estimated number of additional children that can be enrolled and the age groups that you anticipate enrolling with this increased capacity? Please describe why increased access is important for your community. [Note: increasing access is not a requirement of this program. If this question does not apply to your project, please write 'not applicable.']

The project will add 6 toddler slots to our facility, bringing our total from 6 to 12. This will address the need in our community for toddler care, shown by our wait list of 16 families with toddler-aged children.

6. What factors may impact your project timeline, including but not limited to winter heating needs or relocation? What is the plan to manage these elements?

There are no factors that will impact our project timeline except contractor availability.

Example 2: Exterior Play Area Improvements

1. Describe why this project is necessary, including the eligible uses, any requested furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FFE), and soft costs.

Our proposed project is to re-do our playground. Currently our outdoor play area has plastic play structures, but it is not fenced in and is not shaded. The play area is behind our facility, and to get there the children must walk near the parking lot. The ground is also grassy and doesn't have the right kind of playground surfacing as measured in the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale – 3 (ECERS-3).

Re-doing our playground would include: installing a fence around the playground and walkway; installing a vehicle barrier between the fence and parking lot; improving the playground surface with three fall zones, a trike track path for riding toys, and repairing the grassy area by reseeding, laying sod, and planting low bushes; building a sand box; installing sun shade structures including a large awning and trees; and installing two toddler play structures, and an infant play maze.

Our proposed project includes soft costs. To design our playground, including the fencing, vehicle barriers, playground surfacing, shade structures, and playground equipment, our contractor will provide site planning for an architect fee. This cost is necessary to make sure our playground complies with the Playground Safety Subcodes under the New Jersey Uniform Construction Code and to design and coordinate the installation of a safe, enriching outdoor learning environment.

2. What current issues and challenges at the project site will be addressed by this project?

The issues and challenges at the project site that will be addressed by this project are:

- (1) Safety concern of children walking near the parking lot to the playground
- (2) Safety concern of not having a vehicle barrier between the parking lot and playground
- (3) Children don't currently have shade or cushioned play surfaces on the playground
- (4) Issue of not having an engaging outdoor environment for children to develop and grow

3. How will this project help to maintain or increase the quality of the learning environment? Are there specific issues that will be addressed that have been documented in formal assessments like your last licensing report, Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS-3, FCCERS-3 or ITERS-3) results, and/or Grow NJ Kids assessment?

This project will greatly improve the quality of the learning environment by creating an outdoor space that will function as an outdoor classroom for the entire facility. The current playground is not meeting our needs and also does not currently have an infant play area. Adding new play structures, safe surfacing, shade, and new activity stations will make our playground a more inviting place that children will want to spend time at.

4. Are there potential risks or challenges to the facility if the project is not awarded funding? If so, please describe. If not, please write 'not applicable' in your response to question #4.

If the project is not funded, the potential risks are the safety issues listed above. We do not have any code or licensing violations, but these safety concern are something we'd like to address, but do not have the money to pay for.

5. If applicable: Will this project increase access for more children to be enrolled in the facility, and if so, please describe, including the estimated number of additional children that can be enrolled and the age groups that you anticipate enrolling with this increased capacity? Please describe why increased access is important for your community. [Note: increasing access is not a requirement of this program. If this question does not apply to your project, please write 'not applicable' in your response to question #5]

Not applicable.

6. What factors will impact your project timeline, including but not limited to winter heating needs or relocation? What is the plan to manage these elements?

We do not anticipate any factors that will impact our project timeline.