

Frequently Asked Questions for STABLE 4ward

Please be sure to read the **STABLE Application Guidance** for details about STABLE 4ward. The guidance can be accessed in the application at <https://www.decalkoala.com/Default> as well as our DECAL website at <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/BftS/Stable.aspx>.

[STABLE Application - Availability](#)

How do I apply for STABLE?

To access the application (beginning October 18th, 2021), log on to your DECAL KOALA account at <https://decalkoala.com/>.

How long do I have to apply?

For the current round, the application will be open and available to eligible providers from October 18th, 2021, at 12:01 a.m. and will remain open until November 8th, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

Who can apply for STABLE?

The STABLE application is available for programs in the following categories because they have met all Office of Child Care health and safety requirements as of the date of their application submission.

- Licensed Child Care Learning Centers
- Licensed Family Child Care Learning Homes
- Child Care Learning Centers that have been issued a Temporary License and have had an Initial Licensing Visit
- Family Child Care Learning Homes that have been issued a Temporary License and have had an Initial Licensing Visit
- Licensed child care partners for Head Start and/or Early Head Start grantees that are in the categories above

Are programs that just opened able to apply for STABLE 4ward even though they were not open prior to the pandemic?

Yes, if you are a provider that meets the criteria under “Who can apply for STABLE?” during the application period, you can apply.

My program had to move locations since a prior round of STABLE funding, can I still apply?

Yes, if you are a provider that meets the criteria under “Who can apply for STABLE?” during the application period, you can apply.

Does a program have to be Quality Rated to be able to apply?

No.

Are licensed exempt providers able to apply for STABLE funding?

No, license exempt providers are not able to apply for STABLE.

Are afterschool programs able to apply for this benefit?

Yes, if you are a provider that meets the criteria under “Who can apply for STABLE?” you can apply.

Does my child care program have to be Quality Rated to receive STABLE funding?

No, being Quality Rated is not a requirement for STABLE 4ward.

The DECAL web site has a list of eligible and ineligible applicant types. Programs still under temporary COVID closure are not listed under either. Will they be eligible to apply?

Yes. Programs that are temporarily closed can still apply as long as they the program meets the criteria under “Who can apply for STABLE?”.

I am a FCCLH provider, and I am at full capacity. Does that mean I don't qualify for the stable 4ward? Do we have to have missing children to qualify?

All programs that apply can receive funding even if they are currently operating at full capacity.

We are in the process of acquiring a new center. Would I be able to apply if we are not able to get the license before November 8th?

No, you must be a provider that meets the criteria under “Who can apply for STABLE?” during the application period to apply.

[STABLE Application – Federal Reporting](#)

If the director changes after I apply, do I have to change my application?

No, if your director changes after submitting the application you do not have change the application. You will be able to update that information at the next possible quarterly report period.

[STABLE Application – Affirmations](#)

Regarding affirmations related to staffing, does this mean that if there is a COVID exposure in our center that forces a closure or quarantine, we will need to continue paying affected staff at their standard weekly pay?

That is correct based on the federal guidelines as this in considered involuntary. You are required to continue pay them at least the amount of wages and benefits that they typically received prior to your application or if they began employment after you application, the their typical amount of wages and benefits during normal operations. You do not have to pay them more than that amount during closures or involuntary absences. Example: if typical hours worked is 30 hours, 30 hours is their minimum that must be paid. You can't pay less but you don't have to pay more.

Regarding affirmations related to staffing, do we need to pay staff who are sick and quarantining for reasons unrelated to the center closing?

That is correct based on the federal guidelines as this in considered involuntary. You are required to continue pay them at least the amount of wages and benefits that they typically received prior to your application or if they began employment after you application, the their typical amount of wages and benefits during normal operations. You do not have to pay them more than that amount during closures or involuntary absences. Example: if typical hours worked is 30 hours, 30 hours is their minimum that must be paid. You can't pay less but you don't have to pay more.

Do we need to continue paying staff in cases in which they take a leave of absence for reasons other than a COVID quarantine/closure?

No, if their leave or reduced hours are voluntary, they asked or initiated time off, you are not required to pay those hours. DECALS recommends having the employee sign a voluntary acknowledgement form for such cases. Also, please know that if the employee is on leave for 6 months or more, they must redo their CRC.

STABLE Application – Attendance

What is the period of time for the attendance reported in the application?

Please enter the total attendance for the month of September 2021. If you were not granted permission to operate in September of 2021, use October 2021 attendance from the date of PTO to the application date. Please see the STABLE Application Guidance for a detailed explanation. The guidance can be accessed in the application at <https://www.decalkoala.com/Default> as well as our DECAL website at <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/BftS/Stable.aspx>.

When we upload September 2021 numbers, we are only reporting children who actually attended, not enrolled children who did not attend at all in September?

Yes. The exception being CAPS children for which payment was received should be counted as well.

Do CAPS kids who no longer attend, but we are getting paid for them anyway under current policy, count in our September 2021 enrollment numbers?

Yes. That is specifically addressed in the instructions. Applicants must count those children in their attendance. Please see the STABLE Application Guidance for a detailed explanation. The guidance can be accessed in the application at <https://www.decalkoala.com/Default> as well as our DECAL website at <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/BftS/Stable.aspx>.

Should we count our SOLVE kids that are attending our programs as well?

Yes, any child that attends should be counted according to the application instructions. Please see the STABLE Application Guidance for a detailed explanation. The guidance can be accessed in the application at <https://www.decalkoala.com/Default> as well as our DECAL website at <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/BftS/Stable.aspx>.

Do we have to count the children of staff that received free childcare?

No, only count children for which the program received funding from a parent or DECAL (CAPS, Pre-K).

For FCCLH programs, do we have to count children that are related that received free childcare?

No, only count children for which the program received funding from a parent or DECAL (CAPS, Pre-K).

I have children in care but do not see their age group in my application. What do I do?

The age groups shown on each application are based on how the license has been managed. If an age group is missing it is because an amendment was not submitted to DECAL to tell us that age group was being cared for. To add an age group, providers will need to submit a licensing amendment to DECAL in their DECAL KOALA account. This process can take 30 days to be completed. For STABLE 4ward, providers should submit their amendment but can go ahead and count children in the next closest age group shown in the application.

How is pre-pandemic attendance determined?

For STABLE 4ward, it is necessary to establish an estimate of pre-pandemic attendance for all applicants. This presents a significant challenge because it is necessary to use a consistent way that applies to all providers in a relatively equal way. It was determined that the most appropriate way to achieve this was for DEACL to use a formula based on each programs total capacity to provide each program with an estimate of pre-pandemic attendance to use for calculating their STABLE 4ward award amount. Please see the STABLE Application Guidance for a detailed explanation. The guidance can be accessed in the

application at <https://www.decalkoala.com/Default> as well as our DECAL website at <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/BftS/Stable.aspx>.

If my center was not open before the pandemic, how will my pre-pandemic attendance be determined?

For child care learning centers that were not open prior to the pandemic, the pre-pandemic attendance is determined by the current capacity for the program and calculates funding in a way to programs of similar size that were open prior to the pandemic. Please see the STABLE Application Guidance for a detailed explanation. The guidance can be accessed in the application at <https://www.decalkoala.com/Default> as well as our DECAL website at <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/BftS/Stable.aspx>.

If my attendance changes after I apply, do I have to submit those changes?

Yes, but only through the quarterly reporting process. STABLE 4ward funding will not change based on future changes to attendance if the provider is in continuous operations. If a provider remains closed for a significant period or reports no attendance, DECAL has the right to reduce or cease funding.

[STABLE Application – Budget Questions](#)

Do I have to budget STABLE 4ward funds to all budget categories?

No, you do not have to use all categories.

Can I budget 100% of STABLE 4ward for workforce expenses?

Yes, an applicant can budget 0-100% to the Workforce Support category.

Do I have to budget STABLE 4ward funds in the Tuition Relief category?

No, an applicant can budget 0-100% to the Tuition Relief category. While providers are encouraged to budget funds to this category they are not required to do so.

[STABLE Application – Funding Amount](#)

How is STABLE 4ward funding determined?

Please see the STABLE Application Guidance for a detailed explanation. The guidance can be accessed in the application at <https://www.decalkoala.com/Default> as well as our DECAL website at <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/BftS/Stable.aspx>.

If I am a Quality Rated provider, does that impact how my funding is calculated?

No, a provider's Quality Rated level does not have any impact on the STABLE 4ward calculation. Please see the STABLE Application Guidance for a detailed explanation. The guidance can be accessed in the application at <https://www.decalkoala.com/Default> as well as our DECAL website at <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/BftS/Stable.aspx>.

If you reported a number higher than your licensed capacity in round 1 of STABLE, will they use that number or your licensed capacity to determine the impact funding amount?

For each previous round, attendance over capacity was not factored into any payments. For STABLE 4ward, it is necessary to establish an estimate of pre-pandemic attendance for all applicants. DECAL is using a formula, supported by data, that is an accurate way to determine a close approximation of actual pre-pandemic attendance for most providers. For providers that did not exist prior to the

pandemic, it treats them like similar sized programs. Please see the STABLE Application Guidance for a detailed explanation. The guidance can be accessed in the application at <https://www.decalkoala.com/Default> as well as our DECAL website at <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/BftS/Stable.aspx>.

Is STABLE a grant or a loan?

STABLE is a grant and not a loan. Repayment would only be necessary if that is determined through the auditing and compliance process of DECAL.

Are STABLE funds taxable?

Yes, STABLE payments are considered taxable income. Maximus Inc. will send a 1099 to each program where CAPS and/or STABLE payments are greater than \$600 for the calendar year. For questions about your 1099 please contact Maximus Inc. by email at ECT2@maximus.com or by phone at 1-877-755-6522. If you do not have a provider PIN when calling you may dial 9 to be connected to a representative.

Will programs be allowed to increase their licensed capacity during the grant period and, if so, will that affect grant amount?

STABLE 4ward does not prevent a provider from changing their capacity. However, once they apply and begin receiving payment, a change in capacity will not change their STABLE 4ward payment amount.

[STABLE Application – General Questions](#)

If a child care operator has more than one location, operating under same tax ID #, can we apply for STABLE for each center?

Yes, an owner may submit a STABLE application for each location that meets the criteria under “Who can apply for STABLE?”.

I made a mistake on my application. Can I edit it or make a change?

Yes, the same link for the application can also be used to edit your submitted application. Once your changes are made, you will need to submit again. Be sure that you receive the confirmation for the new application. You can edit and submit as many times as is necessary during the current application period.

If I apply for STABLE 4ward in the first round, do I have to apply again in a future round?

No, once you apply and have an approved application, you will not need to apply for STABLE 4ward again.

[STABLE Payments](#)

When will payments begin?

STABLE payment disbursements will not begin until the application period has ended, and each application is approved. Upon approval, payments will be made monthly throughout the duration of the funding period which ends on September 30th, 2023. For the first round of STABLE 4ward, applications that have been approved will have payments begin before the end of November 2021.

We have a new bank account. How do we go about getting our account information updated?

To update your bank account, please contact Maximus Inc. by email at CAPSCOV19Compliance@Maximus.com or by phone at 1-877-755-6522. If you do not have a provider PIN when

calling you may dial 9 to be connected to a representative. You will have to complete an update direct deposit form for the new account.

Do you have to use STABLE 4ward funds right away?

Yes. Programs are required to use STABLE 4ward funds to maintain continuous operations to the greatest degree possible. Therefore, 50% of each monthly STABLE 4ward payment amount must be used within 90 days of receipt. Programs that do not meet the minimum spending will be at risk of having their STABLE 4ward payments reduced or cancelled.

Is it necessary or recommended to get a separate account for the STABLE 4ward payments?

No, it is not necessary. STABLE 4ward will be paid to the account that is provided to Maximus Inc. At this time, this will be the same account they will use for CAPS payments.

Will the STABLE 4ward payments be a separate deposit or lumped in with CAPS?

Unlike prior rounds, deposits will be separate from CAPS deposits.

[STABLE Reporting Requirements](#)

Will I be required to report how I have used STABLE 4ward funds when doing the quarterly reporting?

Yes, providers will have to tell DECAL how much of the funds were used in each budget category for the time period associated with each report.

Do I need to save receipts for quarterly recon and reporting?

You will not be required to provide receipts when completing quarterly reports. However, providers should maintain accurate records for how they have used STABLE 4ward funds to complete quarterly reports. Also, accurate records will be necessary in the event your program is audited by DECAL.

Will details of reconciliations and reporting requirements be provided in advance?

Yes. All STABLE 4ward recipients will be provided details and requirements of quarterly reporting in advance.

[Using STABLE Funds](#)

What is the time frame for spending STABLE 3 funds?

Programs may apply cost incurred from March 11th, 2021, through June 30th, 2024. Also, programs must spend at least 50% of all funds within 90 days of deposit and spend 100% of funds received by no later than June 30th, 2024.

Can 100% of STABLE 4ward funds be used for workforce expenses?

Yes.

How does the "workforce support" category apply to FCCLH programs? As sole proprietors, are we able to pay ourselves to satisfy this category?

Yes. As owner and sole employee, FCCLH programs may use STABLE 4ward funds to pay themselves salary.

Are providers required to provide tuition relief to families?

No, while providers are encouraged to provide tuition relief to families, there is no required that they do. If a provider chooses to provide tuition relief, the provider has the discretion to determine amount and who it is provided to. Providers will need to keep detailed records for how they go about providing relief to families.

Can STABLE 4ward funds be used for playground repairs?

Yes, recipients may use STABLE 4ward funds to improve playground equipment or areas. This type of cost should be budgeted for in the Facilities Cost category. The Facilities Cost category is subject to budget and spending limitations. Please see the STABLE Application Guidance for a detailed explanation. The guidance can be accessed in the application at <https://www.decalkoala.com/Default> as well as our DECAL website at <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/BftS/Stable.aspx>.

Can STABLE 4ward funds be used for new equipment?

Yes, recipients may use STABLE 4ward funds to add or replace equipment necessary for operating. This type of cost should be budgeted for in the Facilities Cost category. The Facilities Cost category is subject to budget and spending limitations. Please see the STABLE Application Guidance for a detailed explanation. The guidance can be accessed in the application at <https://www.decalkoala.com/Default> as well as our DECAL website at <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/BftS/Stable.aspx>.

Can STABLE 4ward funds be used for facility upgrades?

Yes, recipients may use STABLE 4ward funds improvements to the facility necessary for operating. This type of cost should be budgeted for in the Facilities Cost category. The Facilities Cost category is subject to budget and spending limitations. Please see the STABLE Application Guidance for a detailed explanation. The guidance can be accessed in the application at <https://www.decalkoala.com/Default> as well as our DECAL website at <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/BftS/Stable.aspx>.

[Change of Ownership](#)

If I purchase a child care program, will their STABLE payments transfer to me?

No, STABLE is a benefit of having a child care license and all STABLE awards are tied specifically to the program that applied for and received the funding. This benefit cannot be transferred to another owner because the change of ownership creates a new licensed owner that has yet to apply.

If I sell my program, what happens to my STABLE payments?

In the event that a child care program is sold to a new owner, STABLE payments will cease once DECAL receives the Change of Ownership notification. All unspent funds must be returned to DECAL upon after ownership ends.

[Prior STABLE Payment Information](#)

Where can we get a copy of all our prior stable applications?

Please email stable@dec.al.ga.gov to have summaries of prior rounds resent.