



Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

SCHOLARSHIPS & INCENTIVES

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IN EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

INCENTIVES Pre-Qualification and Application Form

“Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is proud to support and encourage Georgia’s early care and education professionals through the **SCHOLARSHIPS & INCENTIVES** programs. These innovative programs help create a high quality, stable early care and education workforce that benefits families, contributes to the state’s economy, and helps prepare Georgia’s young children for success in school.”

Bobby D. Cagle, MSW, Commissioner

INCENTIVES is a salary supplement program that encourages early care and education professionals to increase their level of education and that rewards job stability. Research confirms that high levels of caregiver/teacher education and reduced teacher turnover positively impact the quality of care provided to children. Eligible participants receive a maximum of two payments per education level.

To be eligible:

- You must be a teacher, assistant teacher, director or assistant director (all other positions do not qualify) in a child care learning center or group day care home that is licensed by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning or the Department of Defense (DOD) **OR** you must work in a registered family day care home.
- You must work with children, ages five or younger, at least 25 hours per week if you are a teacher or assistant teacher **OR** 40 hours per week if you are a director or assistant director.
- You must earn \$15.00 per hour or less.
- You must have been employed with your same employer for at least 12 consecutive months in a teaching or program administration position, or be a registered family day care provider for 12 months.
- You must submit your Georgia Professional Registry (PDR) number and a copy of “My Profile.” To enter your information in the PDR, see <https://pdr.dec.state.ga.us>. For technical support, call 404-492-5853.
- Your work setting must be **ONE** of the following:
 - a. Accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA), the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) or other approved national accreditation. See www.caresolutions.com for a list of approved national accreditations.
 - OR**
 - b. A participant in the Child and Adult Care Food Program.
 - OR**
 - c. Serving children of whom 25% or more receive Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) subsidy.
- You must have earned an early childhood education, child development or child care administration credential or degree. The Child Development Associate (CDA) credential must be valid as of April 15 for the spring payment and as of October 15 for the fall payment.

INCENTIVES applications must be dated and postmarked between February 15 and April 15 for the spring payment **OR** between August 15 and October 15 for the fall payment. For additional information, contact the **SCHOLARSHIPS & INCENTIVES** office at 800-227-3410 or 770-642-6722.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- 1. What are the **INCENTIVES** application deadlines?** Applications must be postmarked between February 15 and April 15 for the spring payment and between August 15 and October 15 for the fall payment. **INCENTIVES** payments are typically mailed to approved applicants within six to eight weeks of the close of the application period.
- 2. I received an **INCENTIVES** payment in the past. Am I eligible for future payments?** As of July 2011, qualifying applicants may receive a maximum of two payments per education level. Previous recipients of an **INCENTIVES** award may reapply if they have earned a higher credential or degree since their last **INCENTIVES** payment and meet all other requirements.
- 3. I am paid a salary. How is my hourly rate calculated?** Your hourly wage is calculated by dividing your annual salary by the actual number of hours you work all year to determine your hourly wage. Regardless of whether you are a 10 or 12 month employee, your actual hourly wage must be \$15.00 or less to qualify for **INCENTIVES**.
- 4. What is the Professional Development Registry?** The Professional Development Registry (PDR) is an innovative resource developed by Bright from the Start for early care and education (ECE) professionals. It allows individuals to track their career, training hours, and any credentials or degrees earned. Effective January 1, 2011, all individuals applying for any Bright from the Start programs are required to enter their information in the PDR to be considered for funding. See <https://pdr.dec.state.ga.us>.
- 5. Where can I find a Notary Public to notarize the “Affidavit Verifying Status?”** A Notary can often be found at your local bank, post office, public library or court house.
- 6. Are all ECE degrees accepted?** No. Your degree must have been earned through a college or university that is regionally accredited. Six accepted agencies accredit college and university higher education programs. They are:
The Middle States Association of Colleges & Schools
The New England Association of Schools & Colleges
The North Central Association of Colleges & Schools
The Northwest Commission of Colleges & Universities
The Southern Association of Colleges & Schools
The Western Association of Schools & Colleges
- 7. How many ECE hours must my associate or bachelor’s degree have in order to qualify for **INCENTIVES**?** The **INCENTIVES** program requires your associate degree to have at least 30 semester or 39 quarter hours in ECE-specific courses. A bachelor’s degree must have at least 36 semester or 48 quarter hours in ECE-specific courses.
- 8. The **INCENTIVES** program requires that the applicant’s employer serve DFCS-subsidized children, participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program or be nationally accredited. What national accreditations are accepted by Bright from the Start as meeting this work setting requirement?**
 - Accredited Professional Preschool Learning Environment (APPLE)
 - Association of Christian Schools International
 - Council on Accreditation
 - International Montessori Council
 - National Accreditation Commission for Early Care & Education Programs (NAC)
 - National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
 - National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)
 - National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)
 - National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA)
 - Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)
- 9. Can I fax my application?** Faxed applications are not accepted.
- 10. Should I send a copy of my credential/degree or do I need to send an official transcript?** If you have earned a CDA Credential, Technical Certificate of Credit or Technical College Diploma, submit a copy of your credential. If you have earned an associate, bachelor’s or master’s degree, submit a copy of your official transcript from the Registrar’s Office. Transcripts printed online are not accepted.
- 11. When will I find out if I have been approved for an **INCENTIVES** payment?** You should receive a letter indicating the status of your application within two to three weeks. If you have not heard from the program within three weeks, call 770-642-6722 or 800-227-3410 to confirm receipt of your application.

STEP 1: Personal Information (Please print):

Name: _____ County of Residence: _____
First-middle initial-last (as it appears on your social security card)

Home Address: _____ Apartment Number: _____
Street or post office box (Enter only one)

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: () _____ Cell Phone: () _____ Date of Birth: ____/____/____

Social Security Number: ____/____/____ E-mail: _____

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male | Race: <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black / African-American <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Native American / Alaskan Native <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Bi- / Multi-Racial <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | Ethnicity: (any race) <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic / Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Not Hispanic / Latino | Georgia Professional Development Registry ID#: _____ (Payment will not be issued without a copy of "My Profile," reflecting your PDR number, included with this application.) |
|---|--|---|--|

Note: You will receive an IRS Form 1099 as required and must report INCENTIVES income on your tax return.

STEP 2: Employment Information (Employer must complete, sign, and date):

Name of center or family/group day care home: _____
Enter name as it appears on license/registration

Work Address: _____ County: _____
Enter actual location as it appears on license/registration

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: () _____ Fax: () _____

Facility type (check one):
 Child Care Learning Center
 Group Day Care Home
 Family Day Care Home

Home or center is licensed by (check one):
 Bright from the Start (BFTS)
 Department of Defense (DOD)

Family Day Care Homes Only

Date you opened your family day care home: ____/____/____

Number of hours your family day care home operates each week: _____

Number of children currently enrolled in your family day care home: _____

Ages of children currently enrolled (circle all that apply):
Birth – 1 2 3 4 5

Your Net Income from previous year's IRS Schedule C tax form: \$ _____

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)?
 Yes No

Serve DFCS subsidized children?
 Yes No

Child Care Learning Centers and Group Day Care Homes Only

Applicant's Job Title (mark all that apply):
 Asst. Teacher Asst. Director Owner
 Teacher Director (other positions do not qualify)

Is the applicant a Georgia lottery-funded Pre-K teacher? Yes No

Is the applicant a Head Start or Early Head Start teacher? Yes No

Number of hours applicant works each week: _____

Number of months per year applicant works (circle one): 9 10 12

Number of months per year applicant is paid (circle one): 9 10 12

Applicant's current hourly wage: \$ _____

Applicant is paid: Weekly Bi-Weekly Bi-Monthly Monthly (circle one)

Applicant's date of hire: ____/____/____ (use original hire date if employment has been continuous with present employer, but at different locations)

If applicant is in the classroom, # of children in applicant's classroom: _____

If applicant is in the classroom, ages of children in class (circle all that apply):
Birth – 1 2 3 4 5

As **Owner, Director or Human Resources Manager**, I verify that the above employment information for this applicant is true and accurate. I understand and agree that receipt of **INCENTIVES** monies by the applicant will not affect any salary adjustments the applicant may be eligible to receive through our program.

Name (print): _____ Title (print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPLICANTS MUST COMPLETE THIS SECTION

To qualify for **INCENTIVES**, your credential or degree must be in Early Childhood Education, Child Development or Child Care Administration.

| INCENTIVES Award Levels | | | |
|--|----------|-----------------------------|------------|
| Level 1 – Child Development Associate | = \$ 250 | Level 4 – Associate Degree | = \$ 750 |
| Level 2 – Technical Certificate of Credit | = \$ 375 | Level 5 – Bachelor’s Degree | = \$ 1,000 |
| Level 3 – Technical College Diploma | = \$ 500 | Level 6 – Master’s Degree | = \$ 1,250 |
| Eligible applicants may receive a maximum of two payments per education level. | | | |

STEP 3: Indicate the highest early childhood education credential or degree you have earned:

Levels 1, 2, and 3 Completed Education Credential(s):

Child Development Associate Credential (CDA) issued _____ Award Date ____ / ____ / ____ Expiration Date ____ / ____ / ____
by the Council for Professional Recognition

Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC)

Technical College Diploma (TCD)

Levels 4, 5, and 6 Completed Education Degree (s) from SACS-accredited or other regionally-accredited institution:

AAS/AAT Early Childhood Ed./Child Development/Child Care Administration

BA/BS Early Childhood Ed./Child Development/Child Care Administration

MA/MS/M.ED. Early Childhood Education/Child Development/Child Care Administration

STEP 4: List all credentials and/or degrees you have previously earned:

| Credential/Degree Earned: | Institution | Program of Study | Year Earned |
|--|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Development Associate | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technical Certificate of Credit | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technical College Diploma | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Degree | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor’s Degree | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Master’s Degree | _____ | _____ | _____ |

Were any of the above credentials or degrees earned with **SCHOLARSHIPS** support? If so, circle the credential or degree.

Bright from the Start SCHOLARSHIPS Program

Are you currently pursuing a credential or degree in early childhood education, child development, or child care administration? You may be eligible for **SCHOLARSHIPS**, which offers tuition assistance and a stipend for academic programs at Georgia’s HOPE-eligible colleges, universities, and technical schools. Visit our website at www.caresolutions.com for the **SCHOLARSHIPS** program requirements and application as well as more information about going back to school.

STEP 5: Affidavit Verifying Status:

U.S. Citizens: If you have previously submitted a notarized affidavit for participation in **SCHOLARSHIPS, INCENTIVES**, or the **FIRST** program, you may skip this section.

Qualified Aliens: If it has been over 12 months since you have submitted a notarized affidavit for participation in **SCHOLARSHIPS, INCENTIVES**, or the **FIRST** program, complete this section.

**Affidavit Verifying Status
For
Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
SCHOLARSHIPS, INCENTIVES or FIRST Payment**

By executing this affidavit under oath, as an applicant for a **SCHOLARSHIPS, INCENTIVES** or **FIRST** payment or for other public benefit as referenced in **O.C.G.A. §50-36-1(a)(3)(A)**, I hereby swear and affirm that the following is true and correct with respect to my application for a **SCHOLARSHIPS, INCENTIVES** or **FIRST** payment or for other public benefit:

Name of Person Receiving Benefit: _____

Check One:

1) _____ I am a United States citizen; OR

2) _____ I am a legal permanent resident 18 years of age or older or I am an otherwise qualified alien or non-immigrant under the Federal Immigration and Nationality Act, 18 years of age or older, and lawfully present in the United States. *

* _____
Alien Registration Number for Non-citizens

In making the above representation under oath, I understand that any person who knowingly and willfully makes a false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or representation in an affidavit in any matter within the jurisdiction of any department or agency of state government shall be guilty of a felony in violation of O.C.G.A. §16-10-20. See O.C.G.A. §50-36-1(g).

Signature of Applicant

Date

Printed Name: _____

Printed Address: _____
Mailing Address

City

State

Zip

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN
BEFORE ME ON THIS THE
____ DAY OF _____, 20__

Notary Public
My Commission Expires: ___/___, 20__

*Note: O.C.G.A. § 50-36-1(e)(2) requires that aliens under the federal Immigration and Nationality Act, Title 8 U.S.C., as amended, provide their alien registration number. Because legal permanent residents are included in the federal definition of "alien," legal permanent residents must also provide their alien registration number. Qualified aliens who do not have an alien registration number may supply another identifying number: _____

STEP 6: Attach the following documents to your application:

| INCENTIVES | |
|--|---|
| <p>Child Care Learning Center/ Group Day Care Home Employee</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of your valid (not expired) CDA credential, Technical Certificate of Credit, Technical College Diploma OR an official transcript if you hold an Associate, Bachelor’s or Master’s Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of two recent pay stubs reflecting the name of your employer, your name, and your gross (before deductions) wages <input type="checkbox"/> Military base centers only: Copy of license from Department of Defense <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of your Professional Development Registry “My Profile” reflecting your PDR number |
| <p>Family Day Care Home/Group Day Care Home</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of your valid (not expired) CDA credential, Technical Certificate of Credit, Technical College Diploma OR an official transcript if you hold an Associate, Bachelor’s or Master’s Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of last year’s Schedule C or other IRS form reflecting net profit <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning license or registration letter <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of your Professional Development Registry “My Profile” reflecting your PDR number |
| | |

STEP 7: Sign and date the application:

STATEMENT OF AFFIRMATION: Read carefully before signing and dating. Unsigned applications will not be processed.

I _____ (*Applicant’s Name*), attest that all of the information appearing on this application and in supporting documentation is true to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any false or incomplete information knowingly provided on this application or in supporting documents may be grounds to be denied participation in this program and may prevent me from future participation in the program. I understand that intentionally providing false information on this application or in supporting documents is a violation of state law and may result in civil or criminal proceedings. I authorize any agent or employee of Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning to verify this information and release it to any necessary party for my consideration to participate in this program.

I also understand and agree that my personal information may be shared with the Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development Registry.

_____ _____
Applicant’s Signature *Date*

STEP 8: Detach pages three through six and mail to:

SCHOLARSHIPS & INCENTIVES Programs
 c/o Care Solutions, Inc.
 1117 Perimeter Center West, Suite W-300
 Atlanta, GA 30338

INCENTIVES is funded by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning through the federal Child Care and Development Fund.

If you have any questions, call toll free 800-227-3410 or 770-642-6722.
www.caresolutions.com




SCHOLARSHIPS & INCENTIVES are managed by Care Solutions, Inc.

All individuals applying for the INCENTIVES program must register with the Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development Registry (PDR) to be considered for funding. The PDR will help you keep track of your information relating to professional development, including training and any credentials or degrees you have earned. All your professional development records will be located in one convenient location.

Registering with the PDR is easy. You can sign up immediately even if you are currently working on your first credential or degree in ECE. To register:

1. Visit <https://pdr.dec.state.ga.us>
2. Follow the directions to create your confidential account
3. Enter your identifying information, work history, educational background, and training

After you have completed these steps, you will receive a PDR number. Then you will receive an e-mail indicating the documentation required to verify your registration. Two additional tabs will be available to you after you submit your profile for verification: *Other Career Data* and *Demographics*. Completing the information under these tabs is voluntary; if you choose to supply the information under *Other Career Data*, check each program through which you have received funds: **SCHOLARSHIPS**, **INCENTIVES** or **FIRST**. Lastly, you will be able to **print your “My Profile”** to submit with your **INCENTIVES program application** or to submit to future employers.

You can update your information by submitting documentation of state-approved trainings, credentials or degrees as you complete them. If you need help to begin the application process or have questions about the PDR, contact the PDR at 404-492-5853 or e-mail pdrsupport@dec.state.ga.us.

The PDR is a tool that benefits the early care and education community in Georgia, and we encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity. Thank you for your dedication to your professional development and your commitment to improving the quality of care for young children.

If you have any questions, call toll free 800-227-3410 or 770-642-6722.
www.caresolutions.com



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