

Fact Sheet

Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$[®] Plus

What is Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$[®] Plus?

Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ Plus provides education-based salary supplements to low-paid teachers and family child care providers working full-time (30 hours per week) with children birth through age two in North Carolina. The program is designed to increase retention, education and compensation. AWARD\$ Plus is funded by the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE).

Who is eligible to receive a salary supplement?

- To be eligible for AWARD\$ Plus, applicants must:
- work at least 30 hours per week with infants, ones or twos.
- earn at or below \$20 per hour.
- work in a licensed child care center or home.
- have a level of education on the AWARD\$ Plus supplement scale.

How much will I receive?

Salary supplements are tied to the recipient's level of education. The scale shows annual award amounts for full-time eligibility. Awards are issued in two six-month payments, each after the participant completes an assigned six-month commitment period in the same child care program.

What do I have to do to participate in AWARD\$ Plus?

Infant-toddler educators must submit the AWARD\$ Plus application, pay documentation and official transcripts or an active CDA Credential issued by the Council for Professional Recognition. See application for details.

How are supplements received?

Payments are issued following commitment period completion to eligible participants who have met the requirements. Commitment periods run from mid-month to mid-month and are established by Child Care Services Association (CCSA) for each participant using application date, start date and education documentation. Payments are based on half of the annual award amount and are contingent upon funding availability. Program staff must verify that participants have worked in their child care programs during the preceding six months before payments can be issued. Payments are issued after CCSA has received the necessary funding from DCDEE. Once approved for an award, participants who remain in the same child care program do not need to reapply to receive future payments.

Do I have to pay taxes on the supplement I receive?

The salary supplement is income. Participants will receive an IRS-1099 form at the end of the year if they received \$600 or more from CCSA during the calendar year. Recipients are responsible for reporting and paying any personal income taxes due.

If I work in a child care center, what is the center's responsibility?

A child care center must agree to provide verification of an applicant's employment status and income and agree not to use participation in the program to offset normal pay increases. The center is not responsible for providing the salary supplement should funding no longer be available.

How can I increase the level of the supplement I receive?

Participants in AWARD\$ Plus may increase their supplement amounts by gaining more education. The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood[®] Scholarship Program offers scholarships to early care and education professionals who want to earn course credits. Contact the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood[®] Scholarship Program at CCSA (919-967-3272) for more information. Participants are encouraged to send AWARD\$ Plus an updated official transcript after completing any formal coursework so staff can determine the highest possible award.

Will I receive a supplement if I move to another child care program?

Payments are issued to participants after each eligible six-month period in the same child care program. If a participant moves to another licensed child care program and works with infants, ones or twos, then the commitment period must be reset based on reapplication and the employment date at the new site. This policy is designed to encourage more stability for the children in care.

What is the Child Care WAGE\$[®] Program and how is it different from Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$[®] Plus?

The Child Care WAGE\$[®] Program (WAGE\$) provides education-based salary supplements to eligible early educators working with children ages birth to five. WAGE\$ is an option for all Smart Start partnerships and is available in counties that have elected to fund the program. AWARD\$ Plus is statewide and funds full-time infant-toddler teachers and family child care educators.

Can I participate in both AWARD\$ Plus and WAGE\$ (or a local supplement program)?

Interested infant-toddler educators may apply to participate in AWARD\$ Plus, but individuals can only participate in one salary supplement program. If you are currently receiving WAGE\$ or a local supplement and a waiting list exists for AWARD\$ Plus, you may continue to be paid by your current program until funding is available for AWARD\$ Plus. If your current initiative provides higher payments, consider continuing with that program. If you are unsure which supplement program is most beneficial to you, contact an AWARD\$ Plus Counselor at 919-967-3272.

Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$[®] Plus
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