

Oregon CARES

Early Childhood Professional Development Programs

Oregon CARES (*Compensation and Retention Encourage Stability*) is intended to help build and reward a skilled and stable child care workforce throughout the state through two major components:

Wage Stipends - Monetary rewards ranging from \$250 to \$4000 per year depending upon the professional development level. Registered and Certified Family Child Care Providers, Child Care center staff (including teachers, site supervisors and directors) that meet certain education and training qualifications, commit to continuing their professional development for at least 16 hours per year, and agree to provide child care services for a specified period of time.

Scholarships - Scholarships from \$250 to \$1000 per year for participants to attend college courses and training, pay for books and materials, hire support staff and/or substitutes to attend training. Professional development support is provided by additional financial assistance to participants to attain increased education. Scholarships and support reduce barriers to attending college courses, conferences and other in-depth training and education.

While each county is free to make variations on this model to meet needs, the five points below define the core principles of Oregon CARES:

1. CARES is inclusive-open to registered and certified family child care providers and center-based staff in public and private child care programs that meet establish criteria. In certified center programs, all teaching staff and directors are eligible.
2. Stipends reward individuals both for attained education and for continuing education and professional growth.
3. Stipend increments are based on the participant's step on the Oregon Registry: Pathways to Professional Recognition in Childhood Care and Education.
4. Stipends reward individuals who have been at their current job for a minimum of one program year and commit to remaining at their current place of employment for one additional program year
5. Scholarships are available to individuals who have been at their current job for a minimum of six months and commit to remaining at their current place of employment for one additional program year.

The implementation of an Oregon CARES: Early Childhood Professional Development Program in any county requires the establishment of a local Advisory Committee to assist in setting policies and procedures. The Advisory Committee would include representatives from the local childhood care and education workforce, CCR&R staff, the local higher education system, interested citizens and other appropriate members as determined by the individual counties.

CARES Wage Stipend: Basic Criteria

1. Work directly with children 0-5 years old at least 20 hours per week in a registered or certified family child care home or a certified child care center.
2. Have worked in the same setting for a minimum of one year and sign a contract agreeing to remain in the same setting for an additional year.
3. Care for a minimum of 3 children, in addition to providers' own children.
4. Earn less than \$12.00 an hour as a center provider or \$15.00 as a director or family child care provider.
5. Must be on the Oregon Registry at step three or higher.
6. Enrolled with local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency.

CARES Scholarship: Basic Criteria

1. Work at least 20 hours per week in a registered or certified family child care or a child care center with children 0-5 years old.
2. Have worked in the same setting for a minimum of six months (300 or more hours in a 6 month period) by the first of the month the training/class occurs.
3. Must be on the Oregon Registry at step one or higher.
4. All training/education must fall within the 10 core knowledge categories, as defined by the Oregon Registry, and be a minimum of 3 hours in length. The cost must be a minimum of \$50.00 per training/class. A transcript or certificate will be required upon completion of the education/training.

Scholarship funds can be used for the following:

1. Tuition for credit classes from an accredited college.
2. Fees for workshops/seminars that provide training hours.
3. Conference fees –that include training related to child care.
4. Pre-approved online classes from a nationally recognized organization.
5. Professional Association membership fees such as OAEYC, PRO or other.
6. In addition scholarships funds can be used for:
 - a) Books required for a class.
 - b) Back-up care at the rate of at least current minimum wage, if needed to attend credit classes or training during child care program hours.
 - c) 90% of the cost of tuition, fees and books are covered by a CARES scholarship from \$250 to a maximum of \$1000 per year based on funding available.