

CHAPTER 64
CHILD DEVELOPMENT COORDINATING COUNCIL

281—64.1(256A,279) Purpose. These rules structure the child development coordinating council, whose purpose is to promote the provision of services to at-risk three- and four-year-old children and public school child development programs for at-risk three-, four-, and five-year-old children. These rules also set forth the procedures and conditions under which state funds shall be made available to assist local child development programs for at-risk children.

281—64.2(256A,279) Definitions.

“Applicant” means a public or private nonprofit organization, licensed by the department of human services or approved by the department of education, which applies for the state child development funds.

“At-risk student” means a student who meets one or more of the primary and secondary risk factors stated in rules 281—64.7(256A,279) and 281—64.8(256A,279).

“Child development grants” means the funds awarded by the council to assist child development programs.

“Council” means the child development coordinating council.

“Department” means the department of education.

“Grantee” means the applicant designated to receive child development grants.

“Low-income family” means a family who meets the financial eligibility criteria for free meals offered under the child nutrition program.

“Project” means the child development program for which grant funds are requested.

“Public school applicant” means a public school district approved by the department which applies for the state public school child development funds.

“Public school child development grants” means the funds awarded by the council to assist public school child development programs as established in Iowa Code section 279.51.

“Public school grantee” means the applicant designated to receive public school child development grants.

“Public school project” means the public school child development program for which grant funds are requested.

281—64.3(256A,279) Child development coordinating council. The council members shall be as provided in Iowa Code section 256A.2. The Iowa resident parent shall be chosen by the Head Start director’s association in consultation with the Head Start parents’ association.

281—64.4(256A,279) Procedures.

64.4(1) A quorum shall consist of two-thirds of the members.

64.4(2) When a quorum is present, a position shall pass when approved by a majority of voting members.

64.4(3) The council shall meet at least four times per year and may meet more often at the call of the chair or a majority of voting members.

64.4(4) The chairperson and vice-chair shall be elected by the council for a term of two years.

281—64.5(256A,279) Duties. The duties of the council shall be as provided in Iowa Code sections 256A.3 and 279.51.

281—64.6(256A,279) Eligibility identification procedures. In a year in which funds are made available by the Iowa legislature, the council shall grant awards to child development programs for at-risk three- and four-year-old children and public school child development programs for at-risk three-, four-, and five-year-old children on a competitive basis.

281—64.7(256A,279) Primary eligibility.

64.7(1) *Child development grants.* At least 80 percent of the funded available enrollment slots for at-risk three- and four-year-old children shall be directed to serve children in primary eligibility categories as follows:

- a. Children reaching three or four years of age on or before September 15 of the contract year; and
- b. Members of a low-income family.

64.7(2) *Public school child development grants.* At least 80 percent of the funded available enrollment for at-risk three-, four-, and five-year-old children in public school child development programs shall be directed to serve children in primary eligibility categories as follows:

- a. Children reaching three, four, or five years of age on or before September 15 of the contract year; and
- b. Members of a low-income family.

64.7(3) *Enrollment criteria.* Applicants must document the number of children enrolled under primary eligibility and the criteria used for enrollment.

281—64.8(256A,279) Secondary eligibility.

64.8(1) *Criteria.* Up to 20 percent of the available funded child development enrollment slots for at-risk may be filled by children who are three or four years of age on or before September 15 or public school enrollment slots by children who are three, four, or five years of age on or before September 15; are above the income eligibility guidelines provided that they are served on a sliding fee schedule determined at the local level; and are eligible according to one or more of the following criteria if the child:

1. Is functioning below chronological age in two or more developmental areas, one of which may be English proficiency, as determined by an appropriate professional;
2. Was born at biological risk, such as low birth weight (under 1500 grams—approximately three pounds) or with a diagnosed medical disorder, such as spina bifida or Down's syndrome;
3. Was born to a parent who was under the age of 18; or
4. Resides in a household where one or more of the parents or guardian:
 - Has not completed high school;
 - Has been identified as a substance abuser;
 - Has been identified as chronically mentally ill;
 - Is illiterate;
 - Is incarcerated; or
 - Is a child or spouse abuser.
5. Has other special circumstances, such as foster care or being homeless.

The program may include children not at risk, provided they are at full pay and meet other age requirements.

64.8(2) *Enrollment criteria.* Applicants must document the number of children enrolled under secondary eligibility and the criteria used for enrollment.

281—64.9(256A,279) Grant awards criteria.

64.9(1) *Criteria points.* The following information shall be provided and points shall be awarded to applicants based on the following criteria as stated in the request for proposal:

1. Provision of a comprehensive child development program.
2. Limited class size.
3. Limited pupil-teacher ratios.
4. Provision of parental involvement.
5. Demonstration of community support.
6. Utilization of services provided by other community agencies.
7. Use of qualified teachers.
8. Existence of a plan for program evaluation including, but not limited to, measurement of student outcomes.

9. Developmentally appropriate practices.

64.9(2) Additional grant components. The following information shall be provided and points shall be awarded to applicants based on the following additional components.

1. Program summary.
2. Research documentation.
3. Identification and documentation of local at-risk population.
4. Letters of community support.
5. Program budget (administrative costs not to exceed 10 percent of total award).

281—64.10(256A,279) Application process. The council shall announce through public notice the opening of an application period.

281—64.11(256A,279) Request for proposals. Applications for the child development grants and public school grants shall be distributed by the department upon request.

The request for proposal for public school grants for at-risk three-, four-, and five-year-old children shall document all day, everyday kindergarten to serve at-risk five-year-old children, which may be a part-day combination of three- to five-year-old at-risk children.

Proposals not containing the specified information or not received by the specified date may not be considered.

All applications shall be submitted in accordance with instructions in the requests for proposals. The proposals shall be submitted to the department.

281—64.12(256A,279) Grant process.

64.12(1) An applicant shall make formal response using forms issued and procedures established by the council.

64.12(2) A rating team shall review and rank the proposals and shall be composed of persons with expertise in child development programs and fiscal management experience.

64.12(3) The council shall have the final discretion to award funds.

64.12(4) The council shall notify successful applicants and shall provide to each of them a contract for signature. This contract shall be signed by an official with authority to bind the applicant and shall be returned to the council prior to the award of any funds under this program.

281—64.13(256A,279) Award contracts. Administrative costs under these programs shall be limited to 10 percent of the total award.

281—64.14(256A,279) Notification of applicants. Applicants shall be notified within 45 days following the due date for receipt of proposals as to whether their request shall be funded. Funds for grants approved by the council shall be awarded through a contract entered into by the department and the applicant.

281—64.15(256A,279) Grantee responsibilities.

64.15(1) The grantee shall maintain records which include but are not limited to:

- a. Information on children and families served.
- b. Direct services provided to children.
- c. Record of expenditures.
- d. Other appropriate information specified by the council necessary to the overall evaluation.

64.15(2) Continuation programs shall participate in the Self-Study and Accreditation Program of the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. Programs shall have two years from the date of initial funding to complete the self-study process. Programs shall have three years from the date of initial funding to attain accreditation. Programs unable to attain accreditation by the end of the three-year period may apply for a waiver of accreditation by March 15 of the third year. Waivers shall be awarded at the discretion of the council. Programs not attaining accreditation or not receiving a waiver of accreditation will be terminated.

64.15(3) New/expansion programs shall participate in the Self-Study and Accreditation Program of the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs during their first year of council funding. New/expansion programs shall be granted a waiver of accreditation during their first year of funding. New/expansion programs must complete self-study and attain accreditation during their second year of funding. Programs not able to attain accreditation during their second year may apply for a waiver of accreditation by March 15 of the current fiscal year. Waivers shall be granted at the discretion of the council. Programs not attaining accreditation or not receiving waivers will be terminated.

64.15(4) Grantees shall provide quarterly reports that include information detailing progress toward goals and objectives, expenditures and services provided on forms provided for those reports. Failure to submit reports by the due date shall result in suspension of financial payments to the grantee until the time that the report is received. No new awards shall be made for continuation programs where there are delinquent reports from prior grants.

64.15(5) Grantees may direct the use of moneys received to serve any qualifying child ranging in age from three years old to five years old, regardless of the age of population indicated on the grant request in the grantee's initial year of application. A grantee is encouraged to consider the degree to which the program complements existing local programs and services for three-year-old, four-year-old, and five-year-old at-risk children, including other child care and preschool services, services provided through a school district, and services available through an area education agency.
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281—64.16(256A,279) Withdrawal of contract offer. If the applicant and the department are unable to successfully negotiate a contract, the council may withdraw the award offer.

281—64.17(256A,279) Evaluation. The grantee shall cooperate with the council and provide requested information to determine how well the goals and objectives of the project are being met.

281—64.18(256A,279) Contract revisions and budget reversions. The grantee shall immediately inform the department of any revisions in the project budget. The department and the grantee may negotiate a revision to the contract to allow for expansion or modification of services but shall not increase the total amount of the grant. The council shall approve revised contracts if the revision is in excess of 10 percent of a budget category. Grantees who revert 3 percent or more of their program budget at the end of the 1998 budget year, and every budget year thereafter, will have that dollar amount permanently deducted from all subsequent grant awards.

281—64.19(256A,279) Termination for convenience. The contract may be terminated in whole or in part when both parties agree that the continuation of the project would not produce beneficial results commensurate with the future expenditure of funds. The parties shall agree upon the termination conditions, including the effective date, and in the case of partial terminations, the portion to be terminated. The grantee shall not incur new obligations for the terminated portion after the effective date, and shall cancel as many outstanding obligations as possible.

281—64.20(256A,279) Termination for cause. The contract may be terminated in whole or in part at any time before the date of completion, whenever it is determined by the council that the grantee has failed to comply substantially with the conditions of the contract. The grantee shall be notified in writing by the department of the reasons for the termination and the effective date. The grantee shall not incur new obligations for the terminated portion after the effective date of termination and shall cancel as many outstanding obligations as possible.

The department shall administer the child development grants and public school grants contingent upon their availability. If there is a lack of funds necessary to fulfill the fiscal responsibility of the child development grants and the public school grants, the contracts shall be terminated or renegotiated. The council may terminate or renegotiate a contract upon 30 days' notice when there is a reduction of funds by executive order.

The contract may be terminated in whole or in part by June 30 of the current fiscal year in the event that the grantee has not attained accreditation by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs or has not been awarded a waiver of accreditation by the council.

281—64.21(256A,279) Responsibility of grantee at termination. Within 45 days of the termination, the grantee shall supply the department with a financial statement detailing all costs up to the effective date of the termination. If the grantee expends money for other than specified budget items approved by the council, the grantee shall return moneys for unapproved expenditures.

281—64.22(256A,279) Appeal from terminations. Any agency or public school aggrieved by a unilateral termination of a contract pursuant to 281—64.20(256A,279) may appeal the decision to the director of the department in writing within 30 days of the decision to terminate. The hearing procedures found at 281—Chapter 6 shall be applicable to appeals of terminated grantees, except that 281—subrules 6.10(3) and 6.10(4) and rules 281—6.11(290) and 281—6.12(290) do not apply to decisions of the director.

In the notice of appeal, the grantee shall give a short and plain statement of the reason for the appeal.

The director shall issue a decision within a reasonable time, not to exceed 120 days from the date of the hearing.

281—64.23(256A,279) Refusal to issue ruling. The director may refuse to issue a ruling or decision upon an appeal for good cause. Good cause includes, but is not limited to, the following reasons:

1. The appeal is untimely;
2. The appellant lacks standing to appeal;
3. The appeal is not in the required form or is based upon frivolous grounds;
4. The appeal is moot because the issues raised in the notice of appeal or at the hearing have been settled by the parties;
5. The termination of the grant was beyond the control of the department because it was due to lack of funds available for the contract.

281—64.24(256A,279) Request for Reconsideration. A disappointed applicant who has not been approved for funding may file a Request for Reconsideration with the director of the department in writing within 10 days of the decision to decline to award a grant. In order to be considered by the director, the Request for Reconsideration shall be based upon one of the following grounds:

1. The decision process was conducted in violation of statute or rule;
2. The decision violates state or federal law, policy, or rule (to be cited in the Request);
3. The decision process involved a conflict of interest.

Within 20 days of filing a Request for Reconsideration, the requester shall submit all written documentation, evidence, or argument in support of the request. The director shall notify the child development coordinating council of the request and shall provide the council an opportunity to defend its decision with written documentation, evidence, or argument, which shall be submitted within 20 days of receipt of the request. The council shall provide copies of all documents to the requester at the time the items are submitted to the director.

The director shall issue a decision granting or denying the Request for Reconsideration within 30 days of the receipt of the evidence, or no later than 60 days from the date of Request for Reconsideration, unless a later date is agreeable to the requester and the council.

281—64.25(256A,279) Refusal to issue decision on request. The director may refuse to issue a decision on a Request for Reconsideration upon good cause. Good cause includes, but is not limited to, the following reasons:

1. The request was untimely;
2. The requester lacks standing to seek reconsideration;
3. The request is not based on any of the available grounds in rule 281—64.22(256A,279), or is merely frivolous or vexatious;

4. The requester failed to provide documentation, evidence or argument in support of its request;
5. The request is moot due to negotiation and settlement of the issue(s).

281—64.26(256A,279) Granting a Request for Reconsideration. If the director grants a Request for Reconsideration, the council shall consider the grantee's application in accordance with the director's findings and decision.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code chapter 256A and section 279.51.

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