



Building Strong Business Practices:

A Public Funding Navigation Resource
for Child Care Business Owners in Oregon

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Introduction

Congratulations on taking the important step of accessing public funding! Public funding refers to financial support provided by federal, state, and local governments. Public funding can be obtained through grants, contracts, and subsidies. Programs administered by the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC), such as Preschool Promise, Baby Promise, and Employment Related Day Care (ERDC), provide vital resources to support your child care business and the families you serve. Other examples of public funding that may be used to support your child care business may include the Child Care Infrastructure Fund administered by Business Oregon and the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) administered by Oregon Department of Education.

Now comes the next phase: setting up the right business systems to meet the grant, contract, or subsidy compliance requirements to sustain your success.

This guide is for child care business owners who have already been approved for public funding and are figuring out what comes next. It will help you build strong systems for public funding monitoring and compliance. These systems will help you maintain funding, meet program requirements, and provide high-quality care for the children and families in your community.

Let's dive in and set your business up for long-term success!

Purpose and Importance of the Guide

Public funding is a powerful resource, but maintaining it requires more than just initial approval. This guide focuses on helping you develop effective systems for stronger business practices that will allow your child care business to thrive.

Compliance with public funding requirements isn't just about checking boxes or filling out paperwork. It's about building processes that make sense and make reporting easier, protect your funding, and help your business grow. When you have a strong public funding compliance system in place, you can spend less time worrying about requirements and more time focusing on giving quality care to the families you serve.

This guide offers practical steps and clear strategies to help you manage the responsibilities of public funding. With the right systems, you can create sustainable processes and confidently lead your business.

What is Public Funding?

When we say "public funding" we mean money available to child care businesses from federal, state, or local government programs. These funds can come as one-time grants, ongoing payments, or subsidies. The goal of public funding is to make quality child care accessible to all families, regardless of income, while helping child care business owners maintain high standards of care.

In Oregon, public funding programs may include options like Employment Related Day Care (ERDC), Preschool Promise, and Baby Promise. These programs provide financial support to help child care businesses deliver essential services while meeting specific eligibility and quality assurance requirements.

To make the most of public funding, it is important to understand how these programs operate and what is expected of participants. Knowing each public funding program's requirements helps you keep the funding you have been granted, grow your business, and provide high-quality care to the children and families in your community.



Understanding Public Funding in Oregon

Oregon offers several public funding programs to help child care businesses deliver high-quality care while making services more affordable for families. Programs administered by the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC), such as Employment Related Day Care (ERDC), Preschool Promise, and Baby Promise, provide financial support to child care businesses and promote equitable access to early learning opportunities for children.

First Children's Finance has created a series of one-page resources to help you navigate the application process, eligibility requirements, and funding compliance expectations for ERDC, Preschool Promise, and Baby Promise. These guides cover the key aspects of ERDC, Preschool Promise, and Baby Promise and are available in multiple languages [here](#).

Below, you'll find a description of some of Oregon's public funding programs to give you a better understanding of the opportunities available to child care businesses.

Overview of DELIC Programs (ERDC, Preschool Promise, Baby Promise)

[Employment Related Day Care](#)

The Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) program is Oregon's child care subsidy program. ERDC helps Oregon families afford child care while families work, attend school, or receive TANF benefits. The program provides subsidies directly to child care businesses, ensuring consistent payments for their services. By participating in ERDC, businesses support working families while maintaining a reliable source of income for their business.

[Preschool Promise](#)

Preschool Promise is a state-funded program that provides free, high-quality preschool education for children ages 3 and 4 from Oregon families who are living at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. The program ensures that children receive early learning opportunities that prepare them for success in school. Businesses participating in Preschool Promise receive funding to deliver these services and help families engage in their child's education and development.

[Baby Promise](#)

Baby Promise is a state-funded program that provides access to high-quality care for children from ages 6 weeks to 3 years in underserved communities. The program helps child care businesses expand infant and toddler care while supporting the development of young children. Businesses participating in Baby Promise receive funding to deliver these critical services and address the needs of families struggling to find care. To receive Baby Promise funding, the child care business must be ERDC listed and families participating in Baby Promise must meet ERDC eligibility requirements.

Overview of Additional Funding Opportunities

The [USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program \(CACFP\)](#) is a federally funded program that helps child care businesses offer nutritious meals and snacks to children in their care. The program reimburses for meals that meet specific nutritional guidelines, promoting healthy eating habits and addressing food insecurity. By participating in CACFP in Oregon, administered by the Oregon Department of Education, child care businesses can support children's health and development while reducing meal costs.

[Head Start](#) and [Early Head Start](#) are federally funded programs that support the education and development of children from low-income families. Head Start serves preschool children ages 3 to 5, while Early Head Start supports pregnant women, infants, and toddlers up to age 3. These programs receive funding to promote school readiness, narrow opportunity gaps, and provide comprehensive services to children and families.

[Oregon Pre-Kindergarten \(OPK\)](#) is a state-funded program modeled after Head Start that provides children with free, high-quality early education. OPK focuses on helping children develop social, emotional, and academic skills through a play-based curriculum, preparing them for kindergarten success. Early learning and child care programs participating in OPK receive funding to deliver these services and enhance early learning opportunities for children in their care.

[The Oregon Early Childhood Equity Fund](#) supports culturally responsive programming that addresses disparities in early childhood education. The Equity Fund provides financial resources to child care businesses and community organizations to deliver equitable, high-quality early learning services. By participating in the Equity Fund, child care businesses can better serve diverse populations and promote inclusive early learning opportunities.

[Oregon's Relief Nurseries](#) provide comprehensive care and family support services to help vulnerable children and families overcome challenges. Relief nurseries prioritize trauma-informed care and focus on strengthening family relationships while supporting children's social and emotional development. Early learning and child care programs operating as Relief Nurseries receive funding to deliver these wraparound services and promote healthy growth and resilience in children.

You've Said Yes to Public Funding, Now What?

Securing public funding is a major milestone for your child care business. It provides opportunities to grow your business, enhance your services, and better support the children and families you serve. Alongside these benefits, you'll also take on new responsibilities. By understanding what to expect and building strong systems, you can confidently navigate this next phase and set your business up for long-term success.

Here's a look at what's ahead:

Quality Assurance Requirements

- Public funding comes with requirements. You'll need to meet requirements like financial reporting, program monitoring, and quality standards. For example, you may need to track staff qualifications or submit monthly attendance records. Keeping organized systems in place will make this easier.

Increased Oversight

- Funding agencies may conduct site visits or request audits to confirm the money is being used correctly. Be ready to share documentation like financial records and safety checklists during these reviews.

Financial Stability

- Public funding provides reliable income that helps cover costs like staff wages and supplies. For example, you might finally have the funds to hire additional staff or upgrade learning materials.

Expanded Services

- With additional funding, you may increase your capacity to serve more families or add new programs. For instance, you could expand to offer after-school care, non-traditional operating hours or weekend care, or summer programs for older children.

Professional Development

- Many programs offer free or low-cost training for you and your staff. Take advantage of these opportunities to boost skills, like attending a workshop on classroom management or curriculum planning.

Quality Improvement

- Spark is Oregon's Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS). Spark is intended to continuously support programs in improving their practices to meet the needs and priorities of children, families, staff, and their communities. Spark offers financial incentives to aid programs in their quality improvement efforts. Some publicly funded programs, such as Preschool Promise, require Spark participation.

Networking Opportunities

- Join meetings or conferences with other child care entrepreneurs to exchange ideas and best practices. Networking might introduce you to resources or partnerships, like collaborating with a nearby child care business to share staff training opportunities.

Evaluation and Reporting

- You'll need to track outcomes, like data on child progress, and submit reports to the funding agency. Using tools like spreadsheets or child care management software can help simplify this process.

Organizational Efficiency

- Public funding often requires you to streamline operations, like setting up digital attendance systems or improving payroll tracking. These changes can save you time and improve overall efficiency.

Tax Responsibility

- Public funding counts as income, which means you'll need to include it when filing taxes. Tracking your business expenses like supplies, rent, and staff salaries can help offset your tax obligation. Use accounting software to stay on top of this. Please consult a tax professional for further tax guidance.

Insurance Requirements

- Some publicly funded programs require specific insurance coverage in order to receive public funding. The type of insurance and coverage amounts may vary depending on the scope of the contract. Please consult directly with an insurance carrier to ensure that your program has the required insurance coverage as outlined in your contract or grant agreement.

Building Capacity for Future Opportunities

- Managing public funding gives you experience and credibility, positioning your business for additional grants or funding opportunities. For example, you may later qualify for expansion grants to open a second location or add new services.

Turning Requirements into Routine

Now that you have a clear idea of what to expect when participating in public funding programs, it's time to focus on how to prepare. Public funding compliance might sound intimidating, but it doesn't have to be! It's about managing your business' finances, operations, and record-keeping to meet program requirements. When done right, public funding compliance helps you keep funding and maintain strong, organized operations.

Chances are, you're already doing many things that support public funding compliance without even realizing it. Tracking attendance, maintaining health records, following safety protocols, and keeping structured routines. All of these practices set the foundation for successful public funding monitoring and compliance. You're on the right path, and now it's time to build on those practices.

The following are the key steps to help you create strong systems for public funding monitoring and compliance, ensuring your business runs smoothly and meets funding requirements.



Review Program Requirements

Understanding the requirements of your public funding programs is the first step. Each program has specific rules for areas like staffing, health and safety, reporting, and more. Take time to study the program guides and manuals provided by the funding agency or department.

Real-World Example: Tracking Attendance for ERDC

The ERDC program requires submitting accurate monthly attendance records for participating children. To set yourself up for success:

- Use a simple system, like a sign-in/sign-out sheet or an attendance app, to track daily attendance including dates each child attended and arrival and departure times for each day recorded as the child care children arrive and depart.
- Schedule time at the end of each week to review your attendance records and verify they're complete and accurate.
- Submit the required forms promptly to avoid delays in payment.

Helpful Tip

Break the program guide into smaller sections and tackle them one at a time. To stay organized, use a checklist to track key requirements, like reporting deadlines and documentation needs.

Common Pitfall to Avoid

Don't assume you can skip reading the details. Missing a requirement, like tracking absences accurately, can lead to public funding program compliance issues or funding delays.

Putting it into Practice

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| Gather Program Materials | Collect guides, manuals, and any templates the funding agency provides. You can find funding program information below: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employment Related Day Care Program Information• Preschool Promise Program Information• Baby Promise Program Information |
| Highlight Key Requirements | Create a simple reference sheet summarizing what you need to do for each area, like attendance, health standards, or financial reporting |
| Review Regularly | Dedicate time to reviewing these materials regularly. If you're unsure about something, reach out to your CCR&R or program representative for guidance. |

Assess Current Practices

Once you understand funding program requirements, look closely at your current practices to see where you might need to make updates or changes. A thorough review of your policies, procedures, and daily operations will help you align with funding program expectations and identify areas for improvement.

Real-World Example: Aligning Health and Safety Standards for Preschool Promise Preschool

Promise requires specific health and safety standards to be met, including emergency preparedness and licensing compliance. To prepare:

- Review your current emergency plans to ensure they include evacuation procedures and up-to-date emergency contact information.
- Walk through your facility and use a health and safety checklist to identify hazards, such as loose cords or expired fire extinguishers. Here are some examples provided by the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC):
 - [Registered Family Child Care Health & Safety Review Checklist](#)
 - [Certified Family Child Care Health & Safety Review Checklist](#)
 - [Certified Child Care Centers Health & Safety Review Checklist](#)
- Schedule quarterly reviews of safety measures to maintain ongoing funding program compliance.

Helpful Tip

Involve trusted peers or mentors in your review process. They might notice areas for improvement that you've overlooked.

Common Pitfall to Avoid

Don't wait for a funding agency audit to uncover gaps. Regular self-assessments can save you stress, time, and potential penalties.

Putting it into Practice

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| Create Checklists | Develop or download simple checklists for compliance areas like staff qualifications, health and safety measures, and administrative processes. You can find examples on the DELIC Website . |
| Dedicate Time for Reviews | Set aside regular time to evaluate operations, such as attendance tracking, health record management, or safety protocols. |
| Engage Your Team | If you have staff, hold team meetings to gather feedback on current processes. For instance, ask how incidents are documented or training hours are tracked, and discuss opportunities for improvement. |
| Prioritize Improvements | Focus on one or two areas at a time, such as organizing health records or improving attendance tracking, to ensure steady progress. |

Develop Policies and Procedures

After understanding funding program requirements and assessing your current practices, the next step is to create or update your policies and procedures. A comprehensive set of policies ensures funding program compliance, promotes transparency, and keeps your business running smoothly and professionally.

Real-World Example: Creating a Family Handbook for Baby Promise

Baby Promise requires businesses to outline their policies on curriculum, attendance, and communication with families. A family handbook is an effective way to compile and share this information. Consider including:

- **Mission and Vision:** A brief statement about your business' purpose and goals.
- **Business Description:**
 - Operating hours
 - Ages of children served
 - Accreditation or QRIS status
- **Description of Curriculum and Schedule:** How your programming supports children's learning and development.
- **Family Engagement and Community Activities:** Examples of how families can participate in your program, such as parent-teacher meetings or community events.
- **Required Forms:**
 - Registration form
 - Immunization records
 - Medication authorization forms
 - Emergency contact forms
 - Permission forms
 - Administrative forms
- **Parent Communication Policies and Responsibilities:**
 - Methods for communicating with families (e.g., newsletters, apps, conferences)
 - Attendance policies
 - Discipline guidance
 - Drop-off and pick-up procedures
 - Policies for closures, tuition, meals and snacks, and health/illness protocols
- **Emergency Preparedness Plan:** Clear steps for managing emergencies, like fire drills or natural disasters.

Helpful Tip

Start with a handbook template and tailor it to your business' specific practices. Use tools like Word or Canva to create a professional-looking document that's easy to update.

Common Pitfall to Avoid

Don't overlook the importance of keeping policies up to date. Make sure to regularly review your handbook and update any changes in funding requirements or business practices.

When updates are made, notify families and funding administrators through newsletters, emails, or meetings to keep everyone on the same page. If the enrollment contract includes following the policies outlined in the program's handbook, families should sign new contracts or amendments stating that they understand and agree to the changes. Keep a copy of your policies on-site for easy access during inspections or when questions arise.

Putting it into Practice

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| Use a Template | Start with a template that covers the key sections outlined above. |
| Align with Requirements | Review funding program requirements to ensure your policies meet expectations. |
| Promote Transparency | Share the handbook with families and funding administrators to promote transparency. |
| Customize for Home-Based Care | If you're a family child care business owner, highlight policies unique to home-based businesses, like safety rules or daily routines. |

Create Documentation Systems

Strong documentation systems keep your business organized and prepared for audits, inspections, and reporting requirements. They help track critical funding program compliance areas like attendance, incident reports, and staff qualifications, making it easier to demonstrate accountability and meet funding program requirements.

Real-World Example: Tracking Attendance for ERDC

The ERDC program requires accurate monthly attendance reporting. To streamline this process:

- Use a digital child care management system (CCMS) to track attendance electronically. Examples of these systems include KidKare, Procare, Wonderschool, and Brightwheel.
- Set reminders to update attendance records daily and review them weekly for accuracy.
- If you're using paper-based systems, create a simple sign-in/sign-out sheet and file it in a designated binder for easy access during audits.

Helpful Tip

Set up a filing system—digital or physical—that's easy to use. For example, use color-coded or labeled folders for categories like "Attendance," "Health Records," and "Incident Reports." Create a binder or have a portable electronic records storage device that can be taken with you during an emergency evacuation that includes an attendance log, family contact information, children's records, and caregivers' records.

Common Pitfall to Avoid

Don't wait until audit season to organize your records. Keeping up with documentation on a regular schedule prevents last-minute stress and potential errors.

Putting it into Practice

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| Standardize Your Forms | Create templates for daily attendance, incident reports, and staff training logs to maintain consistency. Examples of these templates can be found on the DELC Website. |
| Schedule Regular Updates | Dedicate time daily or weekly to update records, ensuring they're always accurate and complete. |
| Organize Storage | Store documents securely, whether in a locked filing cabinet or password-protected digital files. |
| Prepare for Inspections | Keep all necessary documents easily accessible for audits or funding program compliance checks. |

Build Financial Management Systems

Strong financial management is critical for maintaining fiscal responsibility and meeting funding requirements. Well-organized systems help you track income, expenses, and reporting obligations, keeping your business compliant and financially healthy.

Real-World Example: Managing Finances for Preschool Promise

Preschool Promise requires detailed financial reporting to document how funds are used for business needs like staff salaries, curriculum, and classroom supplies. To stay compliant:

- Open a dedicated business bank account to separate your business' finances from personal funds.
- Use basic accounting software like QuickBooks or a detailed spreadsheet in Excel or Google Sheets to track income and expenses by funding source.
- Allocate expenses to specific funding sources, such as grants, subsidies, or parent fees, for accurate and transparent reporting.

Helpful Tip

Start small but plan for growth. A spreadsheet may work when you're starting out, but as your business expands, investing in software or professional accounting services can help you manage more complex requirements.

Common Pitfall to Avoid

Don't mix personal and business finances. Keeping them separate simplifies reporting, reduces confusion, and prevents funding program compliance issues.

Putting it into Practice

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| Open a Business Bank Account | Deposit all business income (e.g., grants, subsidies, tuition) into this account. Use this account for all business expenses. |
| Track by Funding Source | Use your accounting system to allocate income and expenses to specific funding sources. For example, track which expenses are covered by ERDC funds versus parent tuition. |
| Consult an Expert | Work with a child care-savvy accountant or bookkeeper to set up a financial system that meets your needs and can grow with your business. |
| Upgrade Over Time | As your business grows, consider child care-specific platforms to simplify payroll, billing, and funding program compliance reporting. |

Conduct Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

Maintaining funding program compliance goes beyond simply meeting requirements. It involves regularly evaluating and improving your operations to ensure high-quality care. A strong quality assurance process, combined with a commitment to continuous improvement, allows you to address challenges, adapt to changes, and enhance your business over time.

Real-World Example: Ongoing Facility Safety for Preschool Promise

Preschool Promise requires following health and safety standards, which can evolve over time. To stay ahead:

- Conduct monthly facility inspections using a checklist for playground safety, fire extinguishers, and cleanliness.
- Gather feedback from staff and families to identify areas for improvement, like upgrading outdoor play equipment or enhancing cleaning protocols.
- Set achievable goals, such as maintaining a 100% compliance rate for safety checks over six months, to track and measure progress.

Helpful Tip

Make quality assurance a team effort by involving staff and families. Use self-assessments, peer reviews, and family surveys to gather diverse insights.

Common Pitfall to Avoid

Don't depend solely on external audits to catch issues. Regular internal reviews help prevent small problems from becoming major funding program compliance violations.

Putting it into Practice

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| Develop a Review Cycle | Schedule regular audits or reviews to evaluate staff training logs, facility conditions, and documentation accuracy. For example, plan quarterly evaluations to stay proactive. |
| Seek Feedback | Use surveys, focus groups, or advisory committees to gather input from families and staff on areas for improvement. |
| Monitor and Adjust | Use trends from reviews and feedback to identify recurring issues and refine processes. For instance, if attendance tracking is frequently incomplete, revise your procedures to simplify and improve accuracy. |
| Celebrate Success | Recognize and share improvements. Highlight achievements like completing all scheduled safety checks or increasing family satisfaction scores. |

Manage Risk

Risk management is about identifying and addressing potential challenges before they become serious problems. Proactively managing risks ensures the safety and well-being of children, protects your business's financial health, and helps you maintain compliance with funding requirements.

Real-World Example: Staffing Shortages and Licensing Compliance

Licensing requirements for Baby Promise mandate specific staff-to-child ratios. To mitigate the risk of staffing shortages:

- Create an on-call list of qualified substitutes or partner with nearby child care businesses for shared staffing solutions. [The Child Care Substitutes of Oregon](#) program can also support eligible programs with subsidized substitute coverage.
- Cross-train your current team so they can step into different roles during emergencies.
- Regularly monitor your staff-to-child ratio, so you're consistently meeting licensing compliance standards.

Helpful Tip

Document your contingency plans and review them annually. For instance, have a written emergency staffing plan or a step-by-step protocol for handling risks.

Common Pitfall to Avoid

Don't wait for a crisis to think about potential risks. Failing to plan ahead can lead to costly fines, loss of funding, or safety concerns. Utilizing a [risk assessment tool](#) to identify possible risk factors can be helpful in planning and may be required for insurance.

Putting it into Practice

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| Conduct Risk Assessments | Walk through your facility and review operations to identify vulnerabilities, such as outdated equipment, inconsistent documentation, or staffing gaps. |
| Prioritize Risks | Rank potential risks by their likelihood and impact. For example, staffing shortages might be more critical to address than minor facility repairs. |
| Develop Contingency Plans | Write detailed plans for high-priority risks. For instance, if a staff member calls out sick, your plan could include contacting substitutes and adjusting class schedules. |
| Train Your Team | Ensure everyone on your team understands their role in mitigating risks, such as following emergency protocols or reporting hazards |

Establish Communication Channels

Clear communication builds trust, transparency, and accountability in your business. By establishing effective communication with staff, families, and funding administrators, you can address questions, share updates, and create a collaborative environment that supports funding program compliance.

Real-World Example: Keeping Families Informed in Preschool Promise

Preschool Promise requires businesses to keep families informed about business updates and policies. To ensure clear communication:

- Send out monthly newsletters with reminders about attendance policies, upcoming events, and important deadlines.
- Use communication apps to share quick updates, such as schedule changes or emergency closures. Examples of these apps include Remind, or CCMS platforms.
- Hold quarterly family meetings to answer questions and gather feedback about your business.

Helpful Tip

Plan ahead with a communication calendar. For example, schedule newsletters for the first Monday of each month and staff meetings on the last Friday.

Common Pitfall to Avoid

Don't depend on a single method of communication. Not everyone checks email or uses apps regularly. Provide multiple options, like newsletters, phone calls, and in-person meetings, to keep everyone informed.

Putting it into Practice

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| Engage Staff | Hold team meetings to share updates, discuss funding program compliance, and answer questions. Encourage staff to voice concerns or suggestions. |
| Keep Families Updated | Use a mix of tools, like emails, newsletters, and parent-teacher conferences, to communicate important information and gather feedback. |
| Collaborate with Administrators | Stay in touch with funding program representatives. Reach out when you have questions or updates to show your commitment to funding program compliance. |
| Gather Feedback | Use surveys or suggestion boxes to get ideas from staff and families on improving communication and operations. |

Access Business Resources and Support

The right resources and support can make managing funding program compliance, budgeting, and administrative tasks easier. Using local and statewide business tools helps you strengthen your operations and set your child care business up for long-term success.

Real-World Example: Business Training and Consultation with First Children’s Finance

First Children’s Finance provides tailored training and support to help child care business owners build strong business practices. For example:

- Attend a First Children’s Finance training on budgeting and cash flow management to learn strategies for tracking income and expenses by funding source. You can find information about current First Children’s Finance training opportunities [here](#).
- Work one-on-one with a consultant to develop a financial plan that meets funding program requirements, such as grant reporting or payroll management.

Helpful Tip

Combine general small business resources with child care-specific expertise. This blend offers practical tools and industry-focused strategies to meet your business’ unique needs.

Common Pitfall to Avoid

Don’t underestimate the value of professional guidance. Many entrepreneurs hesitate to invest in business training, but the benefits of stronger systems and funding program compliance far outweigh the initial cost.

Putting It into Practice

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| Start with Child Care Experts | Connect with First Children’s Finance for personalized training and consultation tailored to your goals. |
| Contact Local Resources | Reach out to organizations like your local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R), regional Early Learning Hub, and the Oregon Child Care Alliance (OCCA) for additional support and workshops. |
| Visit Small Business Centers | The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in your area can assist with business planning, marketing, and tax preparation. |
| Hire Professional Help | Partner with an accountant or financial advisor familiar with child care to set up effective systems for budgeting, grant tracking, and tax compliance. |

Conclusion

Public funding opens the door to opportunities for growth, stability, and expanding your child care services. While navigating funding programs can be complex, a strong commitment to funding program compliance, planning, and organization can help you lay the groundwork for long-term success.

This guide has highlighted the key steps for understanding Oregon's funding programs, meeting funding program compliance requirements, and building systems to sustain your business' success. From reviewing funding program expectations to developing policies and tracking finances, each step supports your ability to manage public funding effectively and maximize the benefits of public funding for your business.

You're not in this alone. Resources, support networks, and professional assistance are available to guide you every step of the way. Whether seeking guidance from industry experts, collaborating with fellow child care business owners, or accessing business resources, don't hesitate to ask for help when needed.

Remember, public funding compliance isn't just about ticking boxes. It's about creating a culture of accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement within your business. Invest time and resources into building robust public funding monitoring and compliance systems. You will position your child care business for sustainable growth and resilience in an ever-evolving landscape.



Resources to Help You Navigate Public Funding

[First Children's Finance](#)

First Children's Finance, in collaboration with DELC, is working to enhance the financial sustainability of existing child care businesses in Oregon and guide long-term business support and supply-building efforts. First Children's Finance offers free business training, one-on-one consultation, and opportunities to participate in business-oriented cohorts.

[Regional Child Care Resource & Referral \(CCR&R\)](#)

CCR&Rs play a key role in recruiting and supporting home- and center-based early learning and care programs, facilitating the expansion of high-quality services by providing resources and technical assistance.

[Regional Early Learning Hubs](#)

Oregon's Early Learning Hubs strategically connect and coordinate various programs and services on a regional level, prioritizing the voices of marginalized communities and facilitating collaboration to effectively address the needs of early learning and care providers, young children, and families.

[Preschool Promise](#)

Oregon's Preschool Promise program delivers high-quality preschool education to 3 and 4 year olds from Oregon families who are living at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. Preschool Promise fosters a solid foundation for future success by offering diverse program options and resources for family engagement, with the overarching goal of ensuring universal access to quality early learning experiences for all Oregon children.

[Baby Promise](#)

Oregon's Baby Promise program seeks to provide accessible high-quality early childhood education and care for infants and toddlers from ages 6 weeks to 3 years, specifically serving ERDC-eligible families in communities facing challenges in securing and maintaining quality care, with ongoing piloting to refine strategies for expanding infant and toddler care Statewide.

Employment Related Day Care (ERDC)

Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) is Oregon's child care subsidy program. ERDC helps families cover child care costs while they are working, going to school, or receiving TANF benefits. Through relationship building, education, and economic justice, NWNC works to create an inclusive economy where Native business owners and their communities can thrive.

The Northwest Native Chamber (NWNC)

The Northwest Native Chamber (NWNC) supports Native entrepreneurs across Oregon, Washington, and Idaho by providing culturally specific business resources, technical assistance, and networking opportunities. NWNC offers no-cost wrap-around services for businesses at every stage of growth, helping Native business owners strengthen and sustain their enterprises. Through relationship building, education, and economic justice, NWNC works to create an inclusive economy where Native businesses and communities can thrive. NWNC also serves as the culturally specific technical assistance provider for the Child Care Infrastructure Fund program.

Oregon Child Care Alliance (OCCA)

The Oregon Child Care Alliance, operated through Neighborhood House, is a Shared Services Alliance offering services for child care business owners to share resources, including group purchasing discounts, tax preparation, coaching, training, and business management tools. The Oregon Child Care Alliance provides free business coaching and child care solutions for child care businesses.

Spark

Spark is Oregon's Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS). Spark is intended to continuously support programs in improving their practices. It offers grants and incentives to aid programs in their quality improvement efforts. Spark is currently going through a redesign with the goal of building a more inclusive system for Oregon's diverse families, child care providers, and early learning programs. Learn more about the redesign here: [Spark Redesign - Oregon](#)
[Spark](#)