

Heidi Hedberg
Commissioner

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Department of Health

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Shirley Sakaye, DOH, 907-269-4996, Shirley.Sakaye@alaska.gov

Alaska Announces New Funding and Program Updates to Strengthen Child Care

February 5, 2026, ANCHORAGE, AK — In Fiscal Year 2026, the State of Alaska added \$5.9 million to the budget to support licensed child care providers statewide. The new funding expands long-term support through the Child Care Grant program and reflects the state's commitment to strengthening access to affordable, high-quality child care for families across Alaska.

The Child Care Program Office is using this investment to carry out recommendations from the Governor's Task Force on Child Care. It will also modernize the Child Care Grant Program to better meet the needs of providers and communities.

“Alaska’s child care providers are essential partners in supporting Alaska’s workforce and keeping families and communities strong,” said Department of Health Commissioner Heidi Hedberg. “This new funding incentivizes care for infants and toddlers and helps providers deliver the high-quality services families rely on every day. We are committed to continuing the implementation of the recommendations from the task force and build a child care system that works for every region of Alaska.”

Updated Grant Rates

The base grant rates were increased and per-child caps were removed beginning in November 2025, giving providers more predictable and flexible monthly support to help stabilize operations and keep doors open for families.

Infant and Toddler Support Pilot

To expand access to infant and toddler care, the state is launching a new pilot program that provides additional monthly funding to providers who care for Alaska’s youngest children. Starting in January 2026, participating providers will receive supplemental

payments on top of their regular grant amount, helping offset the higher cost of caring for infants and toddlers.

The pilot will run through June 2026 or until funding is exhausted. Provider feedback will be used to assess the program's impact and guide future improvements.

Supporting Families and the Workforce

The Child Care Grant program helps providers cover operating costs, retain staff, and maintain safe, healthy learning environments for children. Together, these investments aim to strengthen Alaska's child care workforce, support working families, and promote economic stability statewide.

If you are a licensed child care provider interested in participating in the Child Care Grant program, please visit our [web page](#) to learn more. Families and providers with questions may visit our [website](#) or contact the Child Care Program Office at (907) 269-4500 or email dpaccp@alaska.gov.

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