

Questions and Answers
for the
FY2018 REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
for PHLpreK
(Quality Pre-Kindergarten Services)

Issued by:



Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC)
on behalf of the
City of Philadelphia Mayor's Office of Education



PHMC received many similar and duplicate questions so the questions have been consolidated below.

For clarity, the following definitions are provided:

Continuation Application Process (CAP). This is the application process for providers who were contracted in the PHLpreK program in FY17. Current PHLpreK providers who wish to apply for site locations that were not part of the program in FY17 will have to complete both processes – the Continuation Application for all current site locations contracted with PHLpreK and the Request for Qualification process for the new sites applying to join the program.

RFQ process: The process by which Providers who are licensed, quality community-based child care providers (center- and multi-site, group, family child care, school district and Head Start) who operate within the City of Philadelphia and did not participate in the PHLpreK program in FY17 can apply to determine qualification for participation in PHLpreK in FY18. Eligible providers are those that have a Keystone STAR 3 or 4 designation or NAEYC accreditation at the time of application. *NOTE: Current Star 3 or 4 Providers that have opened new facilities, have a provisional DHS license for those new facilities and are thus awaiting Stars designation are encouraged to apply.* Providers who are currently participating in 'Success by 6' are also encouraged to apply. This process is designed to develop a pool of qualified potential partners to expedite contracting in the event of redistribution of existing slots or an increase to slot allocations in FY18.

Questions are organized into the following topics:

- I. Application**
- II. Pre-Application Conferences**
- III. Technical Language**
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- VIII. Nutritional Standards**
- IX. Wage and Benefits Compliance**
- X. Miscellaneous**

I. Application

Q. If our site submitted an application for the RFQ from last year, do we have to submit a new application this year?

A. Yes, you must submit another application. This year, the RFQ process is being managed by PHMC, not the Mayor's Office of Education and a new web-based application system is being used.

Q. Can you use the same login when you add multiple sites in Reviewr?

A. Yes, you can use the same login. You must submit one application before you are able to add another. Upon login after submission, there is an option to add another submission. A separate application must be submitted for each site location.

Q. Will the Reviewr system notify you if there is missing information?

A. No, the Reviewr system will not notify you. You will receive a confirmation notification when your application has been submitted. You must make sure that everything is submitted correctly, on time, and completely. If you skip a question, you will not be notified. You need to make sure you have something entered for every field and all required documents are uploaded. A completion checklist is available on the www.phlprek.org website that can be used as a guide to ensure all necessary items are completed.

Q. If you started Reviewr in Safari, do you need to start over again?

A. No, you don't need to start over again. It is best to use Google Chrome or Firefox when working in Reviewr. However, if you started a submission in another browser, you may find some of the data grids looked as if they have been shifted and will not collect the data correctly. In such cases, simply save and logout of the Reviewr system. Go back to the site using Chrome or Firefox and log back in. The information you added previously should be there.

Q. Is one of the application requirements an audit of the last fiscal year?

A. Yes one of the requirements is submission of an audited financial statement for the most recent completed Fiscal Year. We will accept Schedule C instead of the financial statements. If you don't have an audit you can submit your income taxes for the most recent complete Fiscal Year.

Q. If you have multiple sites do you have to fill out all of the organization information for each application?

A. Yes, all identifying information about the parent organization will need to be entered for each site application submitted.

Q. Will we get a confirmation that the application was received?

A. Yes, when you click the 'I'm Finished. Submit My Idea' button, a message will pop up stating that it was submitted. A similar message will be sent to the email used for login. However, this doesn't mean that the application is complete. It is your responsibility to make sure the application is complete.

Q. What is the Data Responsibility Form; what kind of data are you looking for?

A. This form demonstrates how you monitor data and ensure the quality of data. On the form, you need to list any data systems you use (i.e. PELICAN, ChildWare, etc.) and identify who is responsible for tasks such as entering the data and reporting on the data.

Q. In the Staff Qualification Grid, there are columns for "Enrd" and "Attd" under each level of education. What does that mean?

A. Place a check in the column labeled "ENRD" if the staff member is currently enrolled in courses for that degree level. Place a check in the column labeled "ATTD" if the staff member has already attained/received the degree. In either case, enter the area of study of the coursework as well. If the staff member doesn't have that level of education, leave the column blank.

Q. The only thing we need as confirmation that we submitted the application is the message we will get from Reviewr?

A. The message from Reviewr acknowledges the submission only. The message doesn't mean that the application is complete. A completion checklist is available on the www.phlprek.org website that can be used as a guide to ensure all necessary items are completed.

Q. Are you asking for budgets for the past 2 years?

A. Yes. The documents must be uploaded into the Reveiwr application system.

Q. Does this year's application system have anything to do with last year's?

A. No, a new web-based application system named Reviewr is being used for this year's process.

Q. If I have never been a part of PHLpreK, which application do I fill out/complete?

A. The Request for Qualification (RFQ) Application is used for new sites wishing to become pre-qualified for the PHLpreK program.

Q. What type of Additional Information are you referring to that I should not require families to complete?

A. The only child eligibility requirements for PHLpreK are age and residency. If a family provides proof of both and signs a completed PHLpreK Enrollment Request Form, the child should be allowed to begin the program. There should be no additional information required by a site prior to the child's entry into the program. Any further documentation required by your site should not prevent the child from beginning your program.

Q. Is the Staff Qualification Form for the entire program/staff or just for teachers who will be working with PHLpreK children?

A. The Staff Qualification Grid needs to include all instructional staff, including Assistant teachers and Aides, and Directors. Agencies applying for multiple sites under one owner/corporation must also include the CEO and fiscal staff on the grid.

Q. In the Reviewr System, the limits in allowed characters for the narrative questions are interfering with our ability to add desired information.

A. Limits were placed on allowed characters to aid in application completion and scoring review. If you believe you cannot answer the question appropriately within the given space, you could add additional documentation and upload it in the supporting documentation chart near the end of the application. Be sure to clearly identify and describe what the document is and a justification for having to submit it separately.

Q. Is the budget request within the application only for PHLpreK?

- A. Yes the budget template is to be completed based on the number of PHLpreK slots requested. However, we also require a current operating budget and budgets for the two most recently completed fiscal years. Those budgets would be for the entire site.

Q. Can we submit a compilation instead of a full audit ?

- A. You must submit an audited financial statement for the recently completed Fiscal Year (2015-2016). If you do not have one, you may submit tax documentation.

Q. Do I have to take the City regulatory tax form somewhere to be signed?

- A. No the form does not need to be signed by anyone other than the applicant.

Q. I am having trouble logging in to the Reviewr system. Who do I contact for assistance?

- A. The staff at Reviewr are available to assist with any issues you experience within the system. Email details about your specific issue to support@Reviewr.com.

Q. On the last page of the online application, I don't see the Staff Qualifications Grid or the PHLpreK Data Responsibility Form to download and complete. How do I get those forms?

- A. The Staff Qualifications Grid and the Data Responsibility form are available for download earlier in the application. The forms are also available for download within the RFQ packet and the Submission Checklist available on www.phlprek.org (click "Resources" in the upper right corner, scroll down to "For PHLPreK Providers", click the link for "Request for Qualifications Application for PHLpreK". Near the bottom of the page is a link to the RFQ Packet and the Submission Checklist).

Q. How are each of the application questions weighted?

- A. Questions are informational to develop a profile of the provider. A rubric will be used but the rubric will not be publicized. The areas of prioritization are listed in the application packet.

Q. Will we be notified of our results in the application process?

- A. All sites will receive notification of whether they have been pre-qualified to be part of PHLpreK.

Q. If you won't have your license by the application deadline should you apply with your existing facility?

A. You must be a licensed Star 3/Star 4 provider in order to apply. If you are awaiting full licensure on another site location but have been given a provisional license status, you may submit an application for that site location as well.

Q. In the chart that outlines current revenue sources, can children be counted more than once?

A. We understand that some children may be funded by various funding sources and will thus be counted more than once in the chart.

Q. Do current PHLpreK Providers have to reapply?

A. Yes. A separate Continuation Application process was developed for current PHLpreK locations to reapply. Current providers who wish to add new site locations to PHLpreK must apply for those new sites through the RFQ process.

II. Pre-Application Conferences

Q. Do I have to attend separate Pre-Application Conference sessions for each site I am applying for?

A. As long as a representative from your organization attended one Pre-Application Conference session you do not need to attend an additional sessions. It is that person's responsibility to inform all sites of the necessary application requirements.

III. Technical Language

Q. How are you defining legal entity?

A. Legal entity is the business name you submit to DHS (with Certificate of Compliance).

IV. Eligibility

Q. Our application has been submitted to DHS. Do I go through the application process if I don't currently have a license number for that center? What should I write in on the application?

A. To be eligible for the upcoming year, a site must be licensed by the Application deadline date.

Q. I thought all new sites had to be STAR 3 or 4?

- A. Sites/agencies not currently part of the PHLpreK network need to be STAR 3, STAR 4, NAEYC accredited, currently participating in Success by 6, or a STAR 3 or 4 waiting for designation.

Q. Will an incident report jeopardize eligibility to apply/remain the PHLpreK program?

- A. No, only things that cause changes/suspension of site license.

Q. Why are current PHLpreK providers given the highest priority?

- A. Current providers represent a diverse group including small business owners, group child care and FCCH providers. Existing PHLpreK providers are given priority to maintain seats so that they can continue to serve children who remain eligible for PHLpreK in FY 18. This provides consistency of care. RFQ solicits new providers to serve unmet need of existing 2000 seats and to be ready to serve once the beverage tax litigation is resolved.

Q. How is high need defined?

- A. Map of high need areas is included on www.phlprek.org in the RFQ Application. The map compares supply of quality sites, poverty rates and prevalence of Risk Factors

Q. What happens with those who apply for the RFQ, if no new seats beyond the current 2,000 become available in FY18?

- A. All providers will receive a notice of pre-qualification but, it has not yet been determined that eligible providers deemed eligible in FY18, will also be deemed eligible in FY19.

Q. How are Fund For Quality sites evaluated if they have a provisional DHS license and have not yet achieved STAR 3 or STAR 4 because they are a new facility?

- A. If the legal entity is currently an operator of other STAR 3 and 4 facilities, and has a new site on a DHS provisional license they are eligible to apply.

Q. What happens if you are in an area that is not considered high need?

- A. High need defined for this process includes a neighborhood with low availability of high quality providers and families who experience multiple risk factors. Applications are reviewed for other priorities as well, not just high need.

Q. What happens to eligibility if the program is not immediately awarded seats in September and then fill their seats by the time the beverage litigation is resolved and additional PHLpreK seats are needed (filled vacant seats with children accessing other funding streams)?

A. Once a site is determined eligible, the site will remain “pre-qualified” throughout the upcoming program year (as long as all eligibility requirements remain in good standing). If additional PHLpreK slots become available during the program year, they will be allocated based on availability of seats at current and pre-qualified sites

Q. Would I be eligible to apply if I’m not approved by Success By 6?

A. The eligibility requires that applicants who are not Star 3 or Star 4 be actively participating in Success by Six. If you are not currently participating in Success by Six, you would not be eligible to apply.

V. Budget

Q. Will you be able to use CCIS for Wrap Around?

A. Yes you can use CCIS for Wrap Around services such as before and aftercare.

Q. Is the budget request within the application for the center/site or for PHL Pre-K slots?

A.: When completing the Budget Template, the budgeted amount is for requested Pre-K slots only. The total budget amount would be determined by multiplying the number of requested slots by \$8,500.

VI. Children

Q. What is the requirement/expectation for FY18 PHLpreK hours/day?

A. The requirement is 5.5 instructional hours per day for 180 days of the 2018 school year. The number of days will be prorated for new sites, depending on when additional slots become available and contracts are executed.

Q. For our 2 year olds who are turning three before September 1st, are they eligible for PHLpreK?

A. Children who are 3 on September 1, 2017 are eligible for PHLpreK.

Q. Does PHLpreK provide families or does the provider recruit families to apply?

A. PHLpreK uses provider driven recruitment and outreach to fill seats. MOE supports this effort with broad city wide outreach. Parent goes directly to providers to enroll. Enrollments are confirmed by PHMC.

Q. Can current students apply for PHLpreK?

A. PHLpreK slots are intended for new children. Children who will be turning 3 by September 1st, 2017 will be eligible for PHLpreK.

Q. Do families have full choice of which PHLpreK site they select based on their convenience?

A. Families can select the PHLpreK site of their choice.

Q. How do you recruit for FY18 without knowing whether you were awarded seats?

A. Providers should maintain a waitlist of families interested in PHLpreK. The long-term goal is to continue to increase PHLpreK seats so a waitlist will help to identify families when funding for additional seats becomes available.

Q. Can a family who is receiving CCIS but can't afford a copay switch to PHLpreK?

Families are discouraged from disenrolling from CCIS, and instead are encouraged to blend both CCIS and PHLPreK to cover full day of care.

Q. What about families who disenrolled from a program with CCIS and re-enroll in a PHLPreK site?

Families can select the provider that best meets their needs. Families are encouraged to keep their CCIS subsidy to help pay the cost of before and after care and summer.

Q. Is this economic status of a parent ever considered with eligibility for PHLpreK?

A. Eligibility requirements are age and residency. All families with children who meet those criteria are eligible and economic status is not considered.

Q. If a PHLpreK child is referred for ELWYN and funded for childcare what happens?

A. Children receiving itinerant services also be enrolled in PHLpreK. Children referred for Special Education classes will be disenrolled from PHLpreK and that seat is now available.

Q. What are the child qualifications for PHL Pre-K?

A. To be eligible for PHLpreK, a child must reside within the City of Philadelphia and must be 3 years old by September 1, 2017 or younger than kindergarten entry age on September 1, 2017.

VII. Requesting Slots

Q. Can a program apply for 40 seats?

A. If you have capacity you should apply based on the level of your capacity. There is no guarantee that you will be awarded those seats.

Q. Are Pre-K counts, CCIS, and private pay children considered new slots?

A. No. New slots are considered those that are not currently occupied by any child.

Q. If slots do not become available in this Fiscal Year, will responders to the RFQ need to re-apply?

A. The application process for FY 19 has yet to be determined.

Q. When will more slots be available?

A. Availability of additional PHLpreK slots is dependent on the resolution of the litigation from the beverage industry.

Q. If slots do come available when will approved providers be notified?

A. Providers will be notified as soon as possible when new slots become available.

Q. How many slots are going to be available for FY18?

A. At this time, there is no increase in the number of slots from this year to next year. 2,000 slots are available, but these slots will be distributed among current PHLpreK providers first.

Q. Is there a minimum amount of slots we can apply for?

A. You can apply for as many slots as you would like depending on your licensed capacity and seats available that are not occupied by another funding source.

Q. On the application, it asks to project slots for preschool children, is that the number of children currently enrolled or available seats? And when are they expected to be available?

A. The number of PHLpreK slots requested should be for new, available seats. Slots should be requested based on availability in September.

Q. If you have a current license for a capacity of 100 children and plan to expand, should your request be for current capacity or anticipated capacity?

A. There are questions built into the application asking if the requested number of slots are currently available. If the seats are not available at the time of application, additional questions must be answered which outline plans for expansion and expected availability date.

VIII. Nutritional Standards

Q. Do the new nutrition standards for PHLpreK align with the new CACFP program?

A. The standards are closely aligned. The standards are linked in the PHLpreK application packet available on the www.phlprek.org website. In the upcoming year, we will develop a plan for prioritizing the standards and assisting providers with gradual implementation of the standards as prioritized. PHLpreK administrators have been meeting with food vendors to make them familiar with the standards as well.

IX. Wage and Benefits Compliance

Q. Is the minimum wage for all staff or just for PHLpreK staff?

A. The minimum wage requirement only applies to PHLpreK staff.

Q. What is the minimum wage requirement?

A. The new minimum wage is \$12.10/hour.

Q. Do you need separate payroll accounts for PHL Pre-K staff?

A. No but you will need to demonstrate how you spent the funds received from PHLpreK so the funds should be coded accordingly in your accounting system.

X. Miscellaneous

Q. I have started the M/W/DBE certification process with the City but I may not be certified by the time the application is due. Will this impact my application?

A. We understand that everyone may not be able to complete the certification process by the application deadline. Consideration will be given to those that have at least started the certification process.

Q. Will ChildWare be available for new PHLpreK providers as of September?

A. ChildWare will be available for all PHLpreK providers.

Q. How are PHLpreK programs supported in managing children with behavioral health and special needs? Are there expulsion policies? What are the expectations of parents?

A. A suspension/expulsion policy is being developed. The city is committed to supporting children and families with behavioral health and special needs and providers' resources are being expanded. The expectation is for parents and providers to remain partners in supporting the unique needs of each child.

Q. Is the City going to start with quality PreK and move to universal preK eventually?

A. The City has committed to increasing quality pre-K for 6,500 students by 2020. However, expansion beyond the first 2000 seats has been stalled due to an ongoing lawsuit challenging the Philadelphia Beverage Tax.

Q. Are you funding based on an 85% attendance rate?

A. Funding is determined based on the number of approved enrollments as of the last program day of each month. Funding is impacted by enrollment rates, not attendance rates, but providers are expected to maintain an average daily attendance rate of 85%.

Q. Is it okay to have private pay families pay less than the \$850 per student allotted for PHL Pre-K?

A. The provider determines their rate for private pay individuals.

Q. Do you include snacks and lunch time in the 5.5 hours of instructional time?

A.: Snack/Meal times are considered instructional periods. Nap time and arrival/departure time are not.

Q. Is there a published list of PHLpreK providers?

A. The list of PHLpreK providers is available on the PHLpreK website under FAQ section