



Child Care Helps America Work and Learn



Administration for Children & Families

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Recovery Act Promotes Improvements and Training in Region IX

I am pleased to introduce the latest issue of the Child Care Bureau's *Child Care Helps America Work and Learn* series. This issue focuses on exciting ways that Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Region IX States and Territories are using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) funds to help child care facilities improve environments and materials and boost professional development opportunities.

Thanks to the Recovery Act, work is underway to ensure providers maintain healthy, safe, and accessible child care environments through grants that help facilities meet licensing and Americans with Disabilities Act requirements. In addition, States and Territories are allocating funds to purchase or replace indoor and outdoor equipment needed to ensure children's health and safety. Funds also are covering the costs of new developmentally appropriate materials for child care programs.

Additional training to providers is another top priority for ACF Region IX. Specifically, the Recovery Act is making funding available for college credits leading to early childhood education certification.

Region IX has made great strides in ensuring the health and safety of children in out-of-home care and making professional development opportunities more accessible. ACF looks forward to its ongoing partnership with these States and Territories to ensure all low-income families have access to high-quality care for their children.

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Region IX States Use Recovery Act for Direct Services to Low-income Families

- 8,000 additional children have received child care services in **Hawaii** due to Recovery Act funds.
- 779 children received assistance in **Nevada** as a result of the Recovery Act.

CNMI Grants Provide New Equipment, Materials

Thanks to the Recovery Act, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) is offering multi-faceted competitive grants to upgrade child care environments across the Territory.



CNMI awarded 19 grants to improve indoor and outdoor health and safety conditions and purchase educational materials.

- Eight centers received a maximum of \$2,000 each to eliminate unsanitary carpeting and replace it with easy-to-clean surfacing. Any leftover funding has gone toward educational materials to support curricula.
- Seven centers received a maximum of \$3,000 each for new playground surfacing and additional shading—a critical need given CNMI's tropical climate. Additionally, centers used funds to purchase outdoor toys such as sandboxes and equipment for active play.
- Finally, four infant and toddler and preschool programs received mini-grants of \$1,000 each to support their curricula through the purchase of developmentally appropriate toys.

Child Care and Development Fund Highlights in Region IX

Recovery Act Investments Enhance Child Care

- **American Samoa** is using Recovery Act funds to launch the "I CARE" campaign that will focus on increasing parent and provider awareness about health and safety, rights and responsibilities, and choosing the right provider.
- **Hawaii** is using funds to support infant and toddler care through contracts on or near the grounds of certain high schools. These programs are designed to support teen parents in completing their high school education and provide high-quality care for their infants and toddlers.
- **Nevada** is using Recovery Act funds for a 2-year quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) pilot involving 24 southern Nevada child care centers. The State will analyze the information collected for future planning of a statewide QRIS.

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California Promotes Higher Health and Safety Standards

California is using \$2,500,000 of its Recovery Act funds for Facilities Renovation and Repair grants, which help maintain healthy, safe, and accessible environments for children in subsidized child care programs.* As a condition of funding, agencies must have a State contract serving subsidized families in licensed or license-exempt, center-based programs administered by the California Department of Education.

These grants are specifically made available to:

- Maintain compliance with health and safety requirements set by California licensing and local fire and health departments;
- Comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act; or
- Purchase or replace equipment necessary for the health and safety of children.



Already, the Recovery Act has funded upgrades to a fire suppression system and replacement of 40-year-old commercial kitchen ranges at two sites where staff prepare breakfast, lunch, and snacks for more than 300 children served by the Child and Adult Care Food program. Other programs have expended resources for needed structural renovations and fencing repairs.

*Child Care and Development Fund regulations prohibit use of funds for the purchase, construction, or permanent improvement of any building or facility. However, funds may be used for minor remodeling and upgrading of child care facilities to ensure that providers meet State and local child care standards, including applicable health and safety requirements.

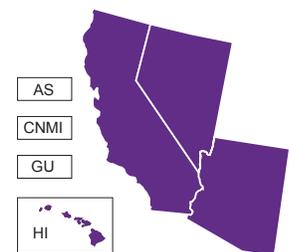
Guam Targets Professional Development Through Recovery Act

In an effort to promote early childhood quality, Guam is using Recovery Act funds to pay the tuition, fees, textbooks, and placement test fees associated with new professional development activities.

The Guam Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program is collaborating with its community college to create the Certificate in Early Childhood Education (ECE) cohort program. The college-level training is available for child care staff working in both center- and home-based care settings. The Territory developed the program in response to direct feedback from center directors and family child care providers about their desire to access college courses and credits—instead of just workshops and continuing education units—during more convenient times. Consequently, all courses are held on Saturdays.

Twenty-five providers were enrolled in a cohort of three-credit ECE courses, including ECE Orientation and Environments for Young Children. These are the first of 10 core classes for the Certificate in ECE, which include other courses that cover topics such as cognitive and social-emotional development.

Region IX States, Territories, and Tribes (American Samoa, Arizona, California, CNMI, Guam, Hawaii, and Nevada) have been allocated a total of \$309,087,805 in Recovery Act funds.



ABOUT THE RECOVERY ACT

The Recovery Act (Public Law 111-5) provided \$2 billion in supplemental funding to CCDF for grants to States, Territories, and Tribes for child care assistance to low-income families and investments for improving the quality and availability of child care. **Section 1512 of the Recovery Act** requires recipients of Recovery Act funds to submit quarterly reports detailing the use and impact of the funds, including jobs created and retained. The reports are available to the public at www.recovery.gov.

About the Child Care Bureau

The Child Care Bureau administers the CCDF program, a multibillion-dollar Federal and State partnership to support access to high-quality child care for working families. The Child Care Bureau helps States, Territories, and Tribes administer their CCDF programs through program support, policy guidance, technical assistance, and research.