



**Linn County Community
Empowerment**

Every child will have access to quality services
empowering them to be healthy and successful.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

**For Implementation of the
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)
Infant and Toddler Quality Child Care Program
On Behalf of the Linn County Community Empowerment Board**

Issued November 2009

Overview

The Iowa Legislature allocated Federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 funds to Community Empowerment Areas to implement an Infant and Toddler Quality Child Care Program. The Linn County Community Empowerment Board seeks to contract out the coordination and implementation of the ARRA program to a highly qualified vendor in Linn County.

The ARRA program provides child care financial assistance for families that meet eligibility guidelines. Child care financial assistance is provided during times when the eligible parent is working, in school, a combination of work and school or for up to 90 days when an unemployed parent is actively job searching. There are 4 restrictive categories of eligibility criteria:

- **Child Eligibility:** Up to 24 months of age, US citizen, residing with parents or loco parentis
- **Family Eligibility:** Employed, Student, Combination of Work/Student, Recently unemployed
- **Family Income:** Gross household income more than 145% and less than 185% of US Poverty
- **Childcare Provider:** Must be accredited (NAEYC, NAFCC) or have Iowa QRS rating of 3, 4 or 5

The program shares several features of the Iowa Department of Human Services' Child Care Assistance funds. Key differences are that the funds can assist families that are recently unemployed and the requirement that funds are expended **only** at registered child care homes and licensed or licensed exempt centers that meet above stated high quality standards.

The vision of Linn County Community Empowerment Board is that *Every Child Will Have Access To Quality Services Empowering Them To Be Health And Successful*. We invite you to assist us in meeting our vision by submitting an application to administer the ARRA Infant and Toddler Quality Child Care Program. To learn more about the local Empowerment Board contact the Project Director at (319) 892-5721 or visit our website at: www.linncountycommunityempowerment.org

Timeline

- November 13, 2009: Linn County Empowerment Board issues a competitive Request for Proposals.
- November 30, 2009: Letter of Intent Due
- Week of Dec. 7: An ARRA training session is held by the State Department of Human Services.
- December 30, 2009: Deadline to submit a Proposal to the Linn County Empowerment Board.
- January 2010: Linn County Empowerment Board awards a contract to successful bidder.
- February 2010: ARRA Program is implemented.
- June 30, 2011: ARRA Program funds are fully expended.

Funding

ARRA funds awarded to Linn County Empowerment Board (as of Nov. 13, 2009):

- To be used for Child Care scholarship assistance: \$171,282.15
- To be used for Administrative funds: \$ 7,514.85*

*Admin funds paid pending satisfactory performance. The total funds may increase pending the final DHS allocation.

Expectations & Responsibilities of Applicant- to include but not limited to:

- Applicant agency is located within Linn County.
- Has experience in determining child and family eligibility for publicly funded programs.
- Has experience in calculating child care provider payment rates and family co-payment fees using the Iowa Department of Human Services' criteria.
- Has working relationship with staff at the Department of Human Services Cedar Rapids office and Child Care Resource & Referral at HACAP.

- Will develop an Advisory Group to include the Linn County Empowerment Director, selected Board members and relevant community partners. Initially the Advisory Group should meet monthly and then may shift to quarterly meetings when the program is fully operational.
- Able to identify eligible child care providers and market the program to them.
- Develop a referral system that includes local contacts at Department of Human Services and Iowa Workforce Development.
- Implement the Infant and Toddler Quality Child Care Program per the *Program Implementation Handbook*. Handbook is available under the What's New Section of the Linn County Community Empowerment website @ www.linncountycommunityempowerment.org
- Ensure retention of family and program records for 5-10 years, depending upon type of record.
- Have fiscal ability to verify child care provider claims for payment, provide payment to provider and submit for reimbursement to the Community Empowerment Board. The Board will offer an advance to assist with upfront cash flow.
- Monitor and re-verify child, parent and child care provider eligibility every 6 months or 90 days when parent is unemployed.
- Ensure that child attendance documentation is collected.
- Provide Quarterly and 6 Month fiscal and performance measure data by mandated deadlines. Proposed quarterly data deadlines for 2010 are: April 4, July 4 and October 4. Proposed 6-month data deadlines for 2010 are: April 26 and October 25.
- Use *Iowa's Recovery Process: Financial and Results Reporting* web-based data collection system for reporting required Federal and State fiscal and performance measure data. Training on the system will be provided by the Iowa Department of Human Services during the first full week of December 2009 via conference call, ICN or webinar.

APPLICATION TIMELINE

Linn County Community Empowerment reserves the right to adjust this timetable as needed.

DATES	ACTIVITY
Friday, November 13, 2009	Request for Proposal (RFP) issued <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Posted on Linn County Empowerment website "What's New" @ www.linncountycommunityempowerment.org ○ Sent via e-mail to local agencies ○ Notice sent to Legal Section of Cedar Rapids <i>Gazette</i>
Monday, November 30, 2009	Letter of Intent Due (no form provided) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Submit via e-mail by to chris.kivett-berry@linncounty.org ○ By 4:30 pm ○ There is <u>not a form</u> for the Letter of Intent. Simply send an e-mail to Chris Kivett-Berry alerting her to your intent to submit.
Week of December 7, 2009 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dec 7: 9-11 am, 1-3 pm ○ Dec 8: 9-11 am, 1-3 pm ○ Dec 9: 9-11 am, 1-3 pm ○ Dec 10: 1-3 pm ○ Dec 11: 9-11 am 	Participate in Training on Statewide ARRA Database <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2-hour session via Webinar ○ Only need to participate in 1 session
Monday, December 7, 2009 by Noon	Deadline to submit questions about the project to chris.kivett-berry@linncounty.org
Friday, December 11, 2009	Answers to the questions submitted will be shared with all persons submitting a Letter of Intent.

Wednesday, December 30, 2009 by Noon	Proposal Due <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Electronic submittal due by Noon on Dec. 30, 2009. o Hard copy must be postmarked by December 30, 2009.
January 11-22, 2010	Proposals Read and Scored by Empowerment Committee. Empowerment Committee contacts bidders with questions.
Tuesday, January 26, 2010	Empowerment Board takes action to award contract.
Wednesday, Jan 27, 2010	Notification letters sent to all applicants.
Feb 1, 2010-June 30, 2011	Contract duration period.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Responses to the RFP Application must be typed in font no smaller than 12-point, with 1” page margin all around.

Proposals shall not exceed eleven (11) one-sided pages, including the Cover Sheet and 2 Budget Forms.

Submit:

- **One Letter of Intent** via e-mail by 4:30 pm, Monday, November 30, 2009 to chris.kivett-berry@linncounty.org. There is not a form- simply send an e-mail.
- **One RFP Application Packet** as an e-mail attachment by Noon on Wed. December 30, 2009 to Chris Kivett-Berry at chris.kivett-berry@linncounty.org
- **One** stapled original, **plus four** stapled copies of the RFP packet **Postmarked** by or before December 30, 2009 or **hand delivered by Noon on December 30, 2009**. *Note that the copies can be double-sided.*

Send to: **Chris Kivett-Berry**
Linn County Project Director
520 11th Street NW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52405

Items must be submitted by the dates and times specified or they will be rejected. Respondents are responsible for all costs associated with the development, preparation and delivery of the proposal. The Linn County Empowerment Board is not responsible for any costs incurred by the respondent relative to this process.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCESS

Proposals will be reviewed by members of a Linn County Community Empowerment Committee to be comprised of members who are not employed by an organization submitting a response to this RFP.

Total Points for the Proposal is 50 points. The points available per section are listed in each section.

There is also a short section at the end for that does not have any points assigned. This Non-Scored section is to assist the Board in collecting information for implementation of this new ARRA project.

ACCEPTANCE/REJECTION RIGHTS

The Linn County Empowerment Committee shall accept & consider all proposals that are properly submitted. The submission of a proposal does not guarantee the respondents any rights, nor obligates the Linn County Community Empowerment Board in any way. The Linn County Community Empowerment Board reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals submitted. Applicants may request a clarification of proposal rejection by submitting a written or e-mail request to the Empowerment Director.

**Application to Implement the
Linn County Community Empowerment Board's
FY 10 ARRA Infant and Toddler Quality Child Care Program**



COVER PAGE

APPLICANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency Name:

Address:

Contact Name:

Phone:

E-mail Address:

Date of Submittal:

My signature attests that at least one agency staff person involved in writing this Proposal has reviewed the ARRA Infant and Toddler Quality Child Care Program Implementation Handbook (Handbook is posted on the Linn County Empowerment website.)

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

**Application to Implement the
Linn County Community Empowerment Board's
FY 10 ARRA Infant and Toddler Quality Child Care Program**



OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

Experience with Child, Family and Child Care Provider Eligibility	Points: 15 points
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1. Describe your agency's experience in determining child and family eligibility for publicly-funded programs.

2. Describe the steps you would put into place to ensure that child, family and child care provider eligibility is re-verified every 6 months (or 90 days for unemployed parent).

3. Describe your agency's experience in calculating child care provider payment rates and family co-payment fees using the Iowa Department of Human Services' criteria.

4. The federal ARRA funds may only be used with child care homes or centers that meet the eligibility criteria listed on page 2 of this application. Describe the process you would use to identify and contact eligible child care providers in Linn County.

Experience in Working with Community Partners	Points: 5 points
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5. Describe your experience in creating and working with an Advisory Board to implement a community project and indicate which community partners you might invite to be on the ARRA Advisory Board.

6. As applicable, describe your experience in working with staff at the following agencies:
 - o Department of Human Services-child care services, Cedar Rapids office:

 - o Child Care Resource & Referral, at Hawkeye Area CAP:

 - o Iowa Workforce Development, Cedar Rapids office:

Experience Administering Publicly Funded Programs	Points: 20 points
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7. Describe other federally-funded programs or grants for which your agency provided direct oversight or administration.

8. Describe the steps you would put in place to ensure that federal and state deadlines for collecting and reporting of fiscal and performance measures data are met. Indicate if you

participated in ARRA Statewide data collection training during the week of December 7th.

9. Describe the proposed staffing plan to implement the ARRA project and specify if new or existing staff will be utilized. Include information on the FTE status, experience and education level of the staff that will implement or that will be hired to implement the program.
10. Provide a Time line & Work Plan for ARRA program implementation.

FISCAL CAPACITY	Points: 10 points
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11. The ARRA program will involve processing and verifying the claims and documentation of the child care providers in the program. Indicate who in your agency would have this fiscal responsibility and describe their experience and education level with fiscal management.
12. Submit a budget to implement the project using the approved Budget Form. You will complete **one form per state fiscal year** as explained below (e.g. submit 2 forms). Note that the Excel Budget form has 2 tabs (FY 10 and FY 11).
 - o Remainder of Fiscal Year 10: Feb 1, 2010-June 30, 2010
 - o Fiscal Year 11: July 1, 2010- June 30, 2011

<p style="text-align: center;">Provide Your Comments On The Items Below In This <u>Non Scored</u> Section. Your proposal will not earn points based upon your responses. This information will be used to assist the Linn County Empowerment Board with its ARRA planning efforts.</p>

1. Identify any possible barriers or challenges in implementing the ARRA program in Linn County or fully expending the funding by the deadline.
2. What assets does your agency have that makes it the best candidate to implement the ARRA program?
3. Describe what you think the benefits are of the ARRA program to Linn County families and/or child care providers.
4. The ARRA program will require that the successful bidder provide prompt payment to child care providers for eligible expenses and then wait for reimbursement from the local Empowerment Board. Indicate if your agency would need an advance from the local Empowerment Board in order to assist with the initial cash flow.

