

# Request for Grant Application Guidelines Family Literacy Direct Service

---

For services offered with the following funding:

Pennsylvania Act 143 of 1986, Title 24, Chapter 31  
Adult and Family Literacy Education Act

*March 2025*



Pennsylvania  
**Department of Education**

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

Forum Building, 607 South Drive  
Harrisburg, PA 17120  
[www.education.pa.gov](http://www.education.pa.gov)



Pennsylvania  
**Department of Education**

**Commonwealth of Pennsylvania**  
Joshua Shapiro, Governor

**Department of Education**  
Dr. Carrie Rowe, Acting Secretary

**Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education**  
Lynette Kuhn, Deputy Secretary

**Bureau of Postsecondary and Adult Education**  
James Ayrton, Director

**Division of Adult Education**  
Amanda Harrison, Chief

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) does not discriminate in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices, based on race, color, national origin, [sex] gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, ancestry, union membership, gender identity or expression, AIDS or HIV status, or any other legally protected category. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with State Law including the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act and with Federal law, including Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the Pennsylvania Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies:

**For Inquiries Concerning Nondiscrimination in Employment:**

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Equal Employment Opportunity Representative  
Bureau of Human Resources  
Voice Telephone: (717) 783-5446

**For Inquiries Concerning Nondiscrimination in All Other Pennsylvania Department of Education Programs and Activities:**

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
School Services Unit Director  
Forum Building, 607 South Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17120  
Voice Telephone: (717) 783-3750, Fax: (717) 783-6802

If you have any questions about this publication or for additional copies, contact:

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Bureau of Postsecondary and Adult Education  
Forum Building, 607 South Drive, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Harrisburg, PA 17120  
Voice: (717) 787-5532  
[www.education.pa.gov](http://www.education.pa.gov)

All Media Requests/Inquiries: Contact the Office of Press & Communications at (717) 783-9802

**Table of Contents**

INTRODUCTION ..... 2

GENERAL INFORMATION ..... 2

    Program Purpose ..... 2

    State-Imposed Minimum Program Requirements ..... 3

    Eligible Applicants ..... 3

    Eligible Program Participants..... 4

    Funding Priorities ..... 4

    Grant Terms and Conditions..... 5

        Multi-Year Contracts ..... 5

        Program Funding Requests ..... 6

    Grant Application..... 6

        Narrative ..... 6

        Agency information ..... 6

        Budget ..... 6

    Application Review ..... 6

    Grant Award Selection and Notification Process..... 7

        Award Selection ..... 7

GRANT REQUIREMENTS..... 7

GRANT TIMELINE ..... 8

AWARD WINNERS..... 9

    Grant Agreement..... 9

    Funding Accountability and Transparency ..... 10

    General Program and Fiscal Requirements ..... 10

APPENDIX..... 11

    Scoring Summary ..... 11

# Family Literacy Direct Service

## INTRODUCTION

Pennsylvania Act 143 of 1986 (Act 143), Adult and Family Literacy Education Act, provides funds to be awarded through the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), Bureau of Postsecondary and Adult Education, Division of Adult Education to provide adult and family literacy education services throughout the state. The estimated total funding available for awards for Family Literacy Direct Service programming for fiscal year (FY) 2025-26 is \$3.615 million. This amount is subject to change.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Program Purpose

As stated in statute, the intent of [Pennsylvania Act 143 Adult and Family Literacy Education Act](#) is to provide coordination among and broaden the scope of educational activities to uneducated and undereducated adults in the Commonwealth and their families, including those who speak other languages, and to provide programs to those individuals who have previously been unserved. The goals of the act include:

1. Increased and improved services to adult learners and their families through the coordination of funding streams and programs across state agencies; and
2. Expanded adult and family literacy education programs so that adults and their families will function more effectively in their personal lives and as citizens and be better prepared for workforce training and employment that they may become more responsible and productive members of society.

Under Act 143, adult and family literacy education providers may apply to PDE for grants to provide the following services:

1. Adult literacy education programs for eligible adults;
2. Family literacy education programs for eligible parents and their children;
3. Training for volunteer adult literacy education instructors; and
4. Administration, support services for learners, and outreach activities.

This grant opportunity is for family literacy education programs. Family literacy education is defined in Act 143 as services that are of sufficient intensity and duration to make sustainable changes in a family and that integrate the following four components:

1. Interactive literacy activities between parents and their children (ILA);
2. Training of parents to be the primary teacher for their children and full partner in the education of their children (parent education);
3. Parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency (adult education); and
4. Age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school (early childhood education/ECE)

## **State-Imposed Minimum Program Requirements**

Full details regarding all minimum requirements for adult education and family literacy programs are available in the *Adult Education and Family Literacy Program Guidelines*. Requirements specific to family literacy programs are in Appendix C of the guidelines. For the purposes of the competition, a draft version of the *Adult Education and Family Literacy Program Guidelines* for Program Year 2025-26 is on the [Division of Adult Education Grants](#) webpage.

Successful applicants must integrate the four components listed above. Programs should use grant funds to support the adult education, parent education, and ILA components; they are strongly encouraged to find partners to provide additional parent education and ILA activities as donated services. Programs should pursue opportunities to partner with local early childhood education programs to meet the requirement for the ECE component. Programs that are not able to collaborate with ECE partners may use grant funds to provide age-appropriate in-house ECE activities to meet the requirement for the ECE component.

Successful programs must provide a schedule of adult education, parent education, and ILA of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to make sustainable changes in a family and must ensure full participation in all components. Parent education and ILA are essential components of the four-component model in Act 143.

Successful programs must ensure that family literacy services are available to students year round with minimal breaks. Programs may not close for the summer.

1. Programs must provide adult education, parent education, and ILA year round.
2. Programs that use grant funds to provide the ECE component must provide those services year round.
3. Programs that partner with an ECE program that is open year round should ensure that the children participate in the ECE program year round.
4. For school-age children and children in partner ECE programs that close for the summer, family literacy programs must help families identify and register the children for summer educational activities. In cases in which that is not possible, the program must support parents to provide ECE activities to their children.

## **Eligible Applicants**

In Act 143, eligible applicants for funds under are local education providers, defined in the Act as an approved educational agency, institution, or organization making use of either professional or voluntary personnel, which may be any of the following:

1. School districts;
2. Intermediate units;
3. Area career and technical centers/vocational-technical schools;
4. Community colleges;
5. Literacy councils;
6. Local libraries;

7. Community-based organizations, which are private, nonprofit organizations and are representative of communities or significant parts of communities and which provide adult or family literacy education programs; and
8. Any other educational entity recognized by the Secretary of Education for providing appropriate and effective adult or family literacy education programs.

For the purposes of this competition, a consortium or coalition of any of the above listed local education providers is also an eligible applicant. A consortium or coalition of agencies will be defined as a main grantee with one or more subgrantees. The main grantee will serve as both the fiscal agent for the grant and a provider of some of the services proposed in the grant application. The main grantee is responsible for ensuring that all activities provided are completed as proposed and is responsible for monitoring and compliance of the subgrantees. Agencies that apply for the Family Literacy Direct Service grant under this RGA as the main grantee cannot subcontract with another agency that is also applying for a Family Literacy Direct Service grant under this RGA for a portion of the proposed services. Agencies can only receive Family Literacy Direct Service grant funds as a main grantee *or* as a subgrantee. Answers in the Narrative and Agency Information sections of the grant application should reflect the work of the consortium/coalition rather than treat each entity separately, except where otherwise noted.

### **Eligible Program Participants**

An eligible family literacy education program participant is:

1. 17 years of age or older;
2. A resident of Pennsylvania;
3. Not currently enrolled in a public or private secondary or postsecondary school; and
4. An eligible parent/caregiver, defined as an adult who meets criteria 1-3 and who has one or more children ages birth through third grade. This includes a legal guardian, grandparent, stepparent, aunt, uncle, sibling, or other person with whom the child lives or who has been designated by a parent, legal guardian, or court to act in place of the parent.

### **Funding Priorities**

In awarding funds, PDE will prioritize funding, through the review and rating process, to grant applications from eligible providers with past effectiveness in providing high-quality four-component family literacy programs and achieving associated outcomes. PDE will prioritize funding for those applications that demonstrate a thorough and detailed plan for a four-component family literacy program that meets all of the minimum requirements, fully integrates the four required components, conducts parent education and ILA activities of sufficient intensity, duration, and quality to lead to demonstrable gains in parents' ability to serve as their children's first and most important teachers, and provides:

1. Evidence of the applicant's organizational capacity to meet all of the programmatic, reporting, administrative, and fiscal requirements of the grant;
2. An excellent description of need for and interest in the four-component family literacy program and explanation of how that need and interest was determined;

3. High-quality adult education instruction that is based on best practices and the *College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education* and *English Language Proficiency Standards* and is of sufficient intensity to lead to student outcomes;
4. Sound practices and instruction aligning parent education and ILA activities that lead to measurable outcomes, including language and literacy development and learning behaviors;
5. High-quality early childhood education services for children birth to third grade that are based on best practices and curricula aligned to current educational standards; and
6. High-quality student support services that help participating families to persist and succeed in the program and meet their personal, educational, and career goals.

In addition to the plan for services and evidence of past effectiveness, PDE will consider, but not be limited to, the following factors outlined in Act 143 when evaluating the need portion of proposals:

1. Percentage of eligible adults expected to be enrolled for instruction who are receiving either state or federal public assistance, or who are unemployed workers or displaced homemakers;
2. Percentage of eligible adults in any local area who do not have certificates of graduation from a secondary school and who are not currently enrolled in adult or family literacy education programs;
3. Percentage of eligible adults expected to be enrolled who are members of minority groups; and
4. Percentage of eligible adults with less than a fifth grade reading level to be served.

## **Grant Terms and Conditions**

### **Multi-Year Contracts**

Successful applicants will be approved for a three-year grant cycle. Grant funds will be awarded through annual one-year notifications of funding contingent on the availability of funds. Each year, grantees will submit budgets and program year-specific information via the eGrants system to receive funding. Each year's renewal option and grant amount will be based on the following criteria:

1. Contract compliance, including success in meeting contracted enrollment and providing the contracted services;
2. Evidence of sufficient progress in meeting the state-imposed performance standards and the agency-specific family literacy outcome targets negotiated with PDE;
3. Evidence of continuous program improvement;
4. Compliance with fiscal and programmatic policies and guidelines; and
5. The amount of the state appropriation.

Grantees that fail to sufficiently address the above criteria may be terminated prior to the end of the grant cycle.

## **Program Funding Requests**

Applicants should apply for those funds necessary to meet the grant requirements, provide the proposed services to the number of families they can serve based on need and interest, and meet the state-imposed and negotiated performance targets. PDE reserves the right to adjust the actual grant award amount and contracted enrollment of successful applicants during the grant contract approval process.

Applicants may apply for funding up to a maximum of \$6,200 per contracted family. Applicants may apply for a reasonable amount of additional funds to provide high-quality ECE activities to preschool-age children in enrolled families who are not able to attend other ECE programs. The additional amount requested must align with and be justified by the description of the ECE activities in the grant narrative. PDE strongly encourages applicants requesting the maximum allowable cost per family to prioritize the use of funds for full-time direct service staff positions with benefits.

## **Grant Application**

Applicants will submit the Family Literacy Direct Service grant application in eGrants. A document explaining how to create the grant application in eGrants is available on the [Division of Adult Education Grants](#) webpage. The grant content, including all help button text, is also available on the [Division of Adult Education Grants](#) webpage for reference.

The Family Literacy Direct Service grant application consists of three components: Narrative, Agency Information, and Budget.

### **Narrative**

The narrative addresses PDE requirements and describes agency capacity, past effectiveness, and proposed program activities. It is the basis for analysis of the applicant's ability to provide the required services.

### **Agency information**

The agency information component provides detailed information regarding staff qualifications, program sites and class schedule, proposed contracted enrollment and participation, program contact information, and assurances.

### **Budget**

The budget demonstrates fiscally sound allocation of funds to successfully provide education services. When completing the budget, applicants should refer to the *Adult Education and Family Literacy Guidelines* Section 600 for fiscal guidance and information on grant limitations and cost functions and object codes.

## **Application Review**

All applications will be reviewed except those disqualified for one or more of the following reasons:

1. Entity submitting the application does not meet the definition of Eligible Applicant;



2. Applicant does not answer one or more of the required questions in the narrative or agency information sections;
3. Applicant does not complete the budget; and/or
4. Applicant does not complete the full application by the application deadline. Completion will be determined by the time the eGrants system records that the program completed the application by marking all sections complete and clicking the “Complete” button.

Grant applications will be reviewed and scored by teams of no fewer than three individuals comprised of staff from PDE, other Commonwealth agencies, and/or peer reviewers. Peer reviewers will be non-applicants who have experience in adult education or related activities. Reviewers will be screened for conflict of interest and will not benefit financially from grant awards. Depending on the number of applications received, a single team or multiple teams will review and score all applications. Analyses will be done to account for scoring differences among the teams.

## **Grant Award Selection and Notification Process**

### **Award Selection**

Reviewers will use an application review guide to review and score applications. Scored items will be rated on a scale of 0-4. The maximum possible score in the Family Literacy Direct Service grant is 120.

Scores will be totaled for each of the following sections of the grant: Program Need, Agency Structure and Capacity, Program Improvement and Data, Program Delivery System, Adult Basic Education Instruction, Parent Education and Interactive Literacy Activities, Early Childhood Education, Technology, Summer Services, and Past Effectiveness in Providing Family Literacy Services. Each section will be weighted to reflect the priority of that section in the application. Applications will be ranked using the weighted scoring and funded from highest scoring to lowest scoring based on the following criteria:

1. A minimum unweighted score of 84, and
2. Availability of funds.

Applications with an unweighted score of less than 84 will not be funded regardless of availability of funds. The Division of Adult Education will notify each applicant of the outcome of the review process and whether its application will be funded. Applications that are selected for award as a result of the application review and scoring process may require revisions or submission of additional information during the contract review and approval process.

## **GRANT REQUIREMENTS**

1. Grant applications will be submitted through the eGrants system, which is accessed through [MyPDESuite](#).
2. For access to the eGrants system and the related grant opportunities, prospective applicants should send an email to [ra-able@pa.gov](mailto:ra-able@pa.gov) with the subject line “Family Literacy

Direct Service grant competition.” In the body of the email, prospective applicants should state the agency name and its plans to apply for Family Literacy Direct Service grant. Prior to sending the email, the applicant should search for the agency record in the PDE Education Names and Addresses ([EdNA](#)) database.

- a. Agencies found in EdNA should include in their email their Administrative Unit Number (AUN) and contact information for the individual at the agency who will create and complete the grant application.
  - b. Agencies not listed in EdNA should indicate in the email that they are not in the state database and provide contact information for the agency administrator who will work with Division staff to establish a listing and be assigned an AUN.
  - c. Under extraordinary circumstances affecting an agency’s access to the eGrants system, the requirement to submit the grant application via eGrants may be waived. Eligible applicants who believe they have such circumstances should contact the Division of Adult Education at [ra-able@pa.gov](mailto:ra-able@pa.gov) prior to the application due date to discuss an alternative submission process. Please note that all applications must be received by PDE by the deadline regardless of submission process.
3. For the purpose of planning, writing, and submitting applications, this document should be used in conjunction with information available on the Division of Adult Education Grants webpage. Applicants should also review this information in conjunction with the Division guidelines and policies and the eGrants application to develop a complete understanding of the intent and requirements of the application process.
  4. Applicants must submit questions regarding the Family Literacy Direct Service grant application process to [ra-able@pa.gov](mailto:ra-able@pa.gov). Division of Adult Education staff will periodically post responses to submitted questions on the Division of Adult Education Grants webpage for all applicants to review.
  5. Application Deadline: Eligible applicants must submit their proposal to PDE in eGrants by 2:00 PM on Monday, April 14, 2025. To submit the proposal, applicants must mark all sections complete (evidenced by a check mark next to each section) and then click the complete button. Completion will be determined by the time the eGrants system records that the program completed the application by marking all sections complete and clicking the “Complete” button

## GRANT TIMELINE

Dates	Activity
March 13, 2025	Grant Application Guidelines and Related Information Available
March 17, 2025	Family Literacy Direct Service Application Available (open)
April 14, 2025, 2:00 PM	Family Literacy Direct Service Completion Deadline (close)

## AWARD WINNERS

To complete the grant award process, applicants under consideration for acceptance are required to provide proper signatures to the grant agreement and complete the Funding Accountability and Transparency form located in the grant in eGrants.

All contract components are produced by eGrants.

1. Grant Agreement Signature Page;
2. Appendix A – Special Program Terms;
3. Appendix B – Grantee’s Program Narrative(s) and Budget(s); and
4. Appendix C – Payment Terms, Responsibilities and Contact Information.
5. Appendix D – Worker Protection and Investment Certification Form

### Grant Agreement

1. The Grant Agreement is a binding agreement between PDE and the eligible grant award recipient. The beginning and end date of the project, total amount of funds, and project number will appear on the grant agreement.
2. There must be an electronic signature or a manual signature in blue ink on the Grant Agreement. Stamped signatures are not acceptable.
3. Agencies approved for eSignature can electronically sign the Grant Agreement. The authorized signatory must be in the eGrants system in order to electronically sign contracts.
4. Agencies not approved for eSignature must print the signature page of the grant agreement from eGrants, have it signed in blue ink by the authorized representative(s), scan the signed document in color, and email the scanned copy to the Division at [ra-able@pa.gov](mailto:ra-able@pa.gov). Division staff will contact awardees for the signed signature page when the grant application content is approved by the Division. Grantees should submit the signature page within five (5) business days of such notification.
5. The authorized signer(s) must be (an) authorized representative(s) of the agency as described below:

<b>Agency</b>	<b>One Authorized Representative</b>	<b>Two Authorized Representatives</b>
School District	Superintendent	
Intermediate Unit	Executive Director	
Career & Technical School	Director	
Charter School	Chief Executive Officer	
University, College, or Community College	President	
Public Library	Director	
Community-Based Organizations and Corporations		President or Vice-President AND Secretary or Treasurer

6. Changes to the grant agreement language will require review and approval by PDE, Office of Chief Counsel, the Office of General Counsel, and the Attorney General's office and will cause delays in approving the agreement.
7. Per Management Directive 215.9, amended November 18, 2019, staff of the PDE Division of Adult Education will determine whether the applicant has delinquent tax debt or other conditions as specified in the State Contractor Responsibility Program. Any related issues must be resolved before the grant agreement is reviewed and approved.
8. Applications recommended by Division staff for approval are then reviewed by the Director of the Bureau of Postsecondary and Adult Education, the Bureau of Management Services, PDE Budget Office, the Office of Chief Counsel, and the Comptroller's Office. Upon approval from the Comptroller's Office, the contract is considered fully executed. The fully executed contract with supporting documentation is uploaded to the Treasury website and to the final reporting section of the grant in eGrants. The status of an application can be verified in the eGrants system. The status will change to "Completed" once the grant is fully executed.
9. After complete review and approval by PDE and the Comptroller's Office, an approved and fully executed grant agreement will be available in eGrants.

### **Funding Accountability and Transparency**

Grantees must complete the Funding Accountability and Transparency (FAAT) form located in eGrants.

1. Grantee must maintain current registration in the [System for Award Management](#) (SAM) at all times during which they have active federal awards funded pursuant to this agreement. A Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number is required for registration in SAM.
2. The applicant must complete the FAAT form that is located in eGrants.
3. The following information is required on the FAAT form: (1) UEI number; (2) city, state, and zip code +4 digit extension of the primary location, and (3) compensation of officers is necessary if grantee received more than 80 percent of federal funds in the preceding fiscal year.
4. The Commonwealth will not process a grant until the grantee provides this information.

### **General Program and Fiscal Requirements**

Award winners are subject to all applicable state and federal administrative requirements, cost principles, and audit requirements, which are incorporated into each grant award.

Such requirements include, but are not limited to:

1. *Adult Education and Family Literacy Guidelines*
2. [All Bureau of Postsecondary and Adult Education, Division of Adult Education policies](#)
3. [PDE Master Standard Terms and Conditions](#)

4. [Education Department General Administrative Regulations \(EDGAR\) 34 Code of Federal Regulation \(CFR\) Parts 75, 76, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99 as amended on December 19, 2014](#)
5. [Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards](#)

## APPENDIX

### Scoring Summary

Section	Maximum Points	Weighting
Program Need	8	5%
Agency Structure and Capacity	16	20%
Program Improvement and Data	12	5%
Program Delivery System	16	20%
Adult Basic Education Instruction	8	10%
Parenting Education and Interactive Literacy Activities	16	10%
Early Childhood Education	12	10%
Technology	12	5%
Summer Services	4	10%
Past Effectiveness	16	5%
Total	120	100%

Minimum acceptable total points = 84/120