



DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
Apprenticeship Program
Infant and Toddler
Interest Webinar
2026



AGENDA

- Welcome and Overview
- Apprenticeship Fundamentals
- Purpose of Apprenticeship
- Employer, Mentor, Apprentice Roles
- Funding and Requirements
- Submission of Application / Interest Form
- Timeline
- Closing / Q&A



WHAT IS REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP?

Apprenticeship is a structured, employer-driven approach to developing skilled employees while they work—often referred to as an “earn and learn” model. It offers an alternative pathway to a rewarding career.

- ✓ High quality training model approved and registered by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL)
- ✓ Results in a nationally recognized credential for apprentices upon completion

KEY COMPONENTS OF APPRENTICESHIP



Employer



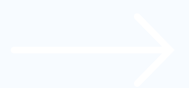
Paid On-the-Job Training – hands on experience / mentorship



Related Instruction – aligned to CDA infant/toddler competencies



Rewards for Skill Gains – wage progression



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

Employers use the Registered Apprenticeship System as a “VALUE-ADD” with the intention and purpose of:



Improving the overall quality of workforce talent



Retaining company knowledge



Reducing turnover



Increasing productivity



Increasing consumer confidence



Attracting a larger pool of applicants

REMEMBER: Apprenticeship is an **employer-driven** process.



THE NJ ECE Apprenticeship Model

- Apprentices are hired employees of the center.
 - Apprentices complete:
 - 2,000 hours of on-the-job training (OJT) over approximately one year.
 - Child Development Associate (CDA) Infant/Toddler coursework + Portfolio + Exam
 - CDA scholarship process is required
- Employers identify and assign a mentor who provides apprentices with coaching, feedback, and skill verification
- Employers follow a wage progression linked to skill gains and acquisition of the CDA and program completion (min 3% wage increase upon completion).
- Program is registered with USDOL, ensuring quality and portability
- Maintain program compliance – e.g., monthly check-ins, submit required documents/reports to program staff, etc.



EMPLOYER ROLE

Employers identify recently or newly hired individuals to participate.

Employer sites must identify apprentice(s) and notify the NJ Workforce Registry within 90 days of application acceptance.

- ✓ Are responsible for identifying, hiring, and onboarding apprentices
- ✓ Ensure the Apprentice has proper and adequate supervision
- ✓ Identify existing staff to serve as Mentors for the Apprentice and support their participation in training/coaching
- ✓ Provide a safe, supportive work environment that allows skills practice
- ✓ Release apprentices for program related activities (CDA coursework, monthly check-in, group session activities, etc.)
- ✓ Employer sites must agree to provide a minimum 3% increase to the Apprentice upon successful completion of all required activities.
- ✓ Maintain documentation and grant management



EMPLOYER QUALIFICATIONS

- Program has submitted a valid NJ Division of Taxation Tax Clearance Certificate and uploaded it to the NJCCIS File Cabinet-other

- Program is in good standing with the NJ OOL and has minimal outstanding licensing violations – verified through the NJ Childcare Explorer website via OOL

- Program completed and submitted the Apprenticeship Interest Form – verified in NJCCIS

- Program attended an informational session

- Program is licensed to serve and currently serving children 0-2.5 years old– verified in NJCCIS

- Program is in good standing with DOL and has no outstanding obligations to the Wage/Hour Division or employer accounts –verified by the NJ DOL



- Program meets Federal Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) health and safety requirements – verified in NJCCIS

- Has identified a qualified mentor – verified by reviewing the NJCCIS Professional Profile/Educational Experience and Work Experience

- Meets at least one of the following criteria: Participating in GNJK+CCAP and/or Head Start/Early Head Start

MENTOR ROLE

- ☑ Serve as the apprentice's primary workplace guide
- ☑ Provide structured coaching aligned to the CDA and OJT competencies
- ☑ Observe performance and give meaningful, actionable feedback



- ☑ Track apprenticeship skill development and verify competency completion
- ☑ Complete professional development, including group sessions and monthly coaching sessions, provided by program partner - NJ Early Childhood Leadership Institute (ECLI)
- ☑ Help apprentices integrate classroom learning into daily practice



MENTOR ROLE

The minimum qualifications for a Mentor are:

- Must possess an Associates or Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Education, Child Development, Human Services, or related field from an accredited post-secondary institution; and
- Have a minimum of 2 years classroom experience in an infant/toddler classroom.

OR

Possess a valid and current Child Development Associate (CDA); CCP; New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential; New Jersey Family Development Credential; US Department of Labor Child Development Specialist; or NJ-OOL3 Group Teacher approval; and

Have a minimum of 3 years experience in an infant/toddler classroom.



APPRENTICE ROLE

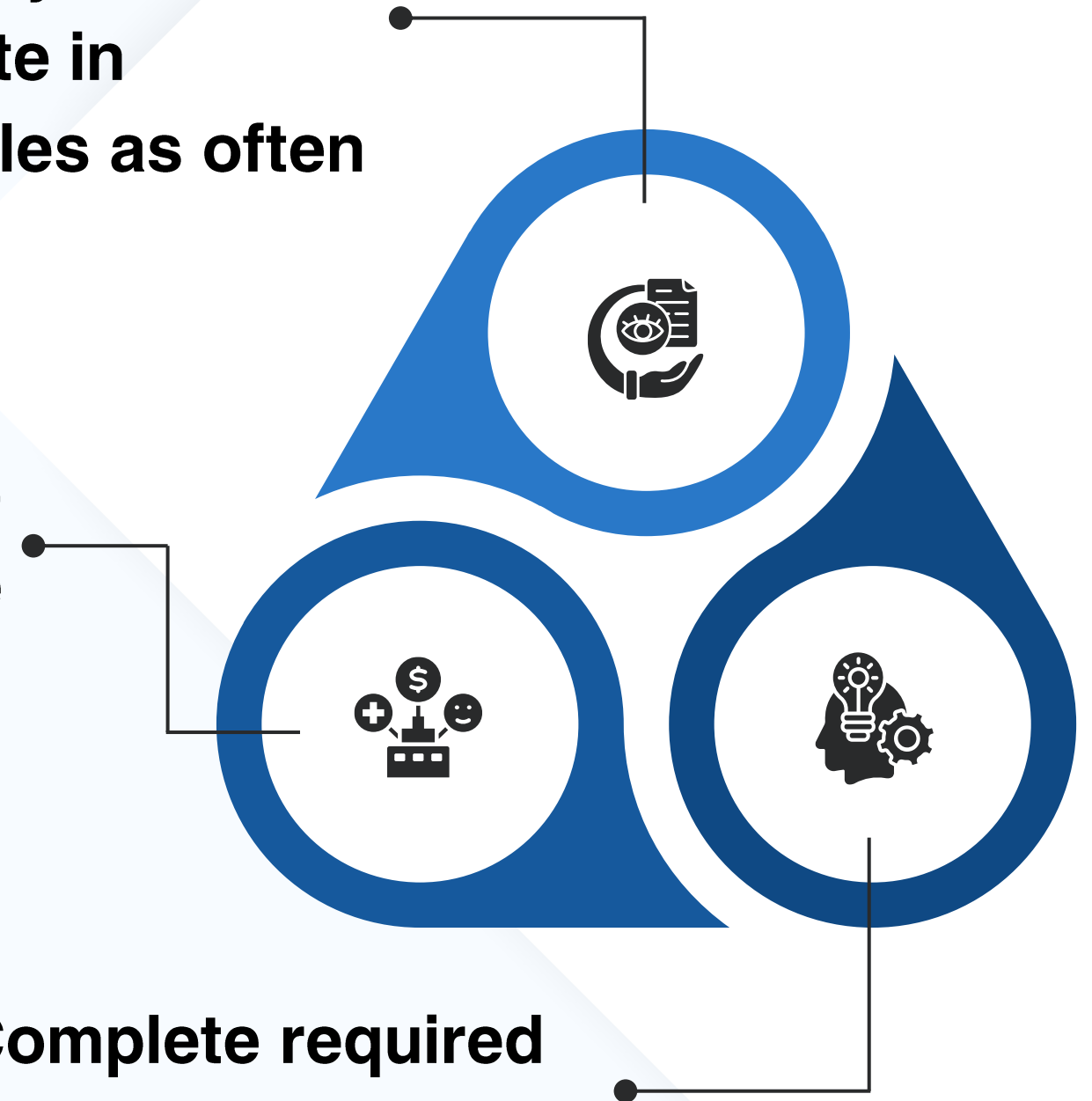
- Be an actively employed staff member in good standing
- Practice safe work habits; protect the property of the employer

Attend monthly check-ins and participate in feedback cycles as often as needed

Progress through the program at a reasonable pace (typically 12 months)

- Learn from an experienced Mentor and acquire, practice, and master competencies on the job (OJT)

Complete required CDA coursework, portfolio, and sit for final certification exam



APPRENTICE QUALIFICATIONS

Apprentice I – The applicant is new to the field of Early Childhood Education and lacks a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. They are a new employee at an approved employer site and have been cleared to work in a licensed program.

Apprentice II – The applicant is a current Early Childhood Education professional interested in upskilling by earning a Child Development Associate(CDA) credential; and the applicant is employed at an approved employer site.

The minimum qualifications are:



Applicant must be at least 18 years of age;



Must have a high school diploma or GED; verified by the registry



Must be employed full-time by an approved employer site.



FUNDING AND REQUIREMENTS

Approved employers are awarded \$15,000 per approved apprentice (up to 3 apprentices):

- Apprentices are required to apply for the CDA Scholarship
- If an apprentice(s) does not complete the program and/or awarded funds are not fully expended by the end of the grant period, DFD will recoup any unspent funds.



FUNDS MAY BE USED FOR PROGRAM SUPPORT SUCH AS:

- Mentor compensation
- Apprentice supports and compensation
- Admin support and compensation
- Paid release time
- Substitute support



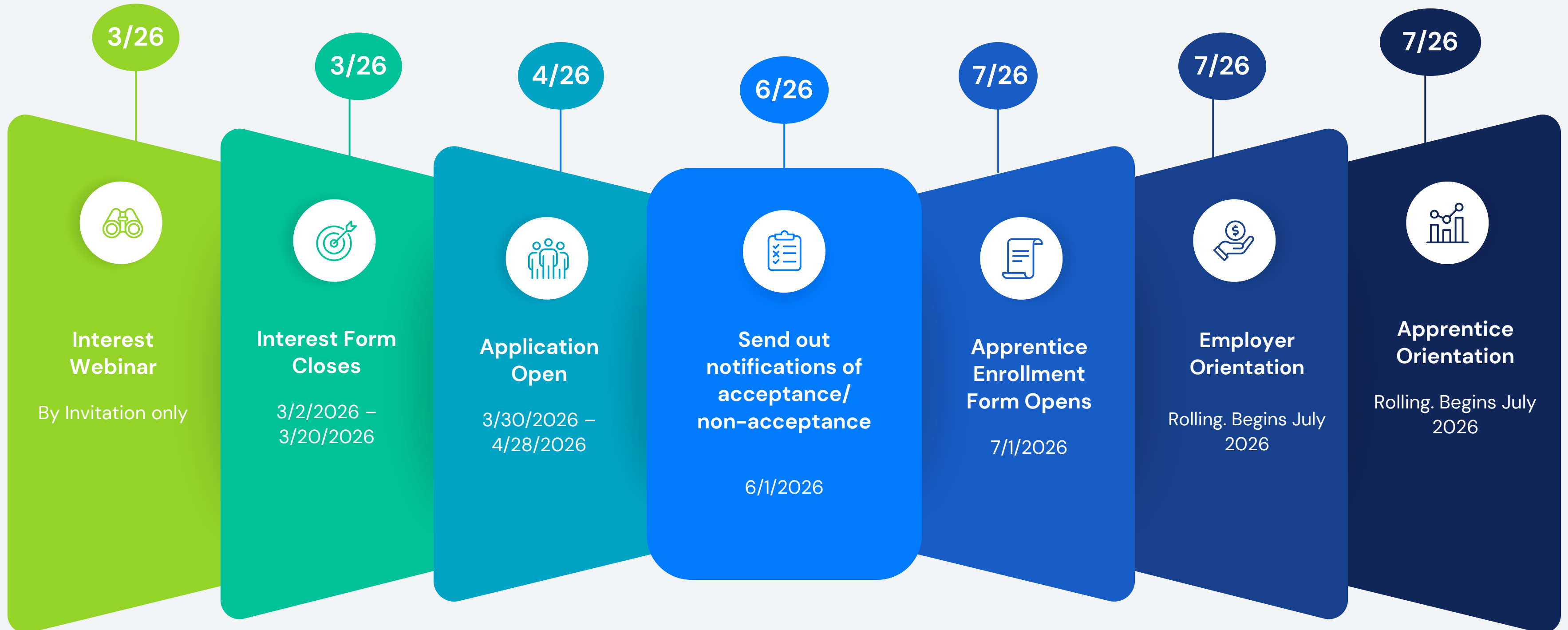
SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION

To access the application:

- Log into www.NJCCIS.com
 - Access your Facility page by going to Provider--> My Providers
 - Under Child Care Center Wizards, there will be a quick link titled "NJ Early Childhood Apprenticeship Program Application"
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- Please note that only staff with the position of Director and/or Owner/Director will be able to view and complete the application.
 - All providers will be notified of their award on or after June 1, 2026.



Timeline



The Apprentice Experience

Morning: On-the-Job Learning

- Paid, full-time employee at a licensed child care center checks in with Mentor
- Works directly with infants and toddlers (0–2.5 years)
- Practices health, safety, and child development skills aligned to CDA competencies

Throughout the Day: Mentor Support

- Supported by a trained and qualified Mentor
- Receives coaching, observation, and feedback
- On-the-job learning counts toward 2,000 required OJT hours

Scheduled Learning Time

- Completes 144 hours of CDA Infant/Toddler coursework
- Builds CDA portfolio using real classroom experiences
- Participates in monthly check-ins and group learning sessions with employer-approved paid release time (Apprentices and Mentors)

Ongoing Growth & Program Completion

- Progresses through the program over approximately 12 months
- Earns a nationally recognized CDA credential AND nationally recognized apprenticeship credential
- Receives a minimum 3% wage increase upon completion



Additional Resources

- Application: www.NJCCIS.com
- For more information, visit us at:
<https://www.childcarenj.gov/Providers/Grants/Apprenticeship>
- Additional questions? Visit the FAQ in the link above or email us at:
NJWorkforceRegistry@pcgus.com



QUESTIONS?





DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
NEW JERSEY EARLY CHILDHOOD

THANK YOU

FOR YOUR ATTENTION
AND PARTICIPATION



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