



Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage

Request for Proposals 2026-2027 Funding Questions and Answers

Questions and answers as of: 4/23/26

Please note: Answers added most recently can be found towards the end of this document.

a) Am I understanding this correctly that the Early Learning and Literacy Experiences RFP 3 could include childcare programming?

We do not currently have criteria that covers childcare. Ready by Five is awaiting recommendations at the county level to ensure we respond as directed.

b) Can supportive program expenses include direct assistance to families to stabilize in emergency/crisis situations?

If this is a part of your program model, it should be outlined within your RFP narrative and included within your budget (line specific).

c) For the LOI, is "new" defined as an organization who does not currently have a Ready by Five contract, even if they have been a previous recipient?

Yes, that is correct.

d) Can you confirm, did you say if it is a new program request, a video submission is required?

New programs must submit a 3-5 minute video which will support their proposal. The proposing programs will be provided criteria to complete videos upon approval of a Letter of Intent and invitation to apply for Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funding via the RFP.

e) Can you explain what demographic data organizations are required to collect from families, and any cost sharing requirements for families?

All organizations, unless directed otherwise, will be required to submit basic demographic data on a monthly basis for the duration of the contract term. Basic demographic data may include, but is not limited to: Date of birth, name, gender, ethnicity, address, city, zip, household income range, and primary language. All data

will be reported directly to Kent County and comes back to First Steps Kent – Ready by Five as disaggregate deidentified data. Not all organizations or program types will need to participate in cost share, however, proposers may reach out to the Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage team at any point after an award has been extended to find out if their program type should participate.

f) Just to confirm, a current funded program would not need to provide a video?

This is correct. Currently funded programs do not need to submit a video, however, you may be asked to submit one if the scope of work changes beyond the already understood service delivery metrics. *E.g., program expanding into new zip code typically unserved by organization, service delivery has changed significantly in operational framework, funding request has increased significantly without explanation of costs associated and tied to service delivery.*

g) Do current grantees have to apply under their current pillar? Or if the same program aligns better with a different pillar, can we apply there instead?

Yes. Current grantees may apply under a different service category (pillar) if they believe it better aligns with their program. Organizations are encouraged to select the category that most accurately reflects their services, based on the RFP descriptions and guidance. During the review process, Funding Administrators may follow up with questions or may reassign a proposal to a different category if it is a better fit, and they will communicate with the organization about any change.

h) Does a previously funded program have the opportunity to provide a video as they are considered a “new” organization?

Yes. All applicants, including previously funded programs, may indicate that they are interested in completing a 3–5 minute video for review. However, requesting to submit a video does not guarantee that you will be selected to do so. Videos are typically reserved for new proposals or for currently funded programs whose scope of work, service delivery, or program model has significantly changed.

i) If the only change is an increase in funding for an existing program but not an expansion or change in scope of work, is a video required?

No. If the only change is an increase in funding for an existing program and there is no expansion or change in the scope of work, a video is not required. However,

organizations must provide a clear written explanation that justifies the requested funding increase (for example, higher costs, increased need, or other documented factors).

j) For attachments - Attachment A does this need to include workshop leaders/facilitators that support our program model?

Attachment A should include all staff that support program models.

k) Where can I find a list of previously funded service providers?

You can find current providers here: <https://www.firststepskent.org/millage/providers>

l) Are there any geographical targets or focuses for these RFPs?

Proposals must serve Kent County, specifically, and indicate which areas or zip codes they plan to serve within the narrative portion indicated in the RFP. We encourage proposals that can extend their services to the furthest areas within Kent County, including Northern Kent County, Eastern Kent County, and Southern Kent County, as these are typically the furthest sections with lowest population concentration.

m) Do you prioritize any category over the other?

There is no category prioritization. Proposals are selected utilizing the criteria within each service category type and the current understanding of the needs of Kent County children and families.

n) Subcontracting, who should send a proposal?

The organization initiating the subcontract agreement should complete the proposal and include all subcontractors, indicating the relationship type (e.g.; exchange of data, exchange of funds, exchange of referrals, etc)

o) How much money will be available this year and what is the percent increase or decrease over the current year?

The amount available for the 2026-2027 contract term is \$8.7 Million, approximately \$600,000 than the 2025-2026 contract term.

p) Can you answer the financial question around the 50% of income?

Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funds may not account for more than 50% of an organization's overall operating budget. In our proposal, we will indicate the percentage of millage funding supporting each program, provide a total program budget, and clearly identify what percentage of the program will be funded by millage dollars to demonstrate compliance with this requirement.

q) Is program type what determines cost sharing or other factors?

Program type is one factor that can influence whether cost sharing applies, but it is not the only factor. Cost sharing is based primarily on family income and is only required for certain services identified in Ready by Five policies and RFP materials. Not all programs are eligible for or subject to cost share, and organizations will work with the Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage team during contracting to determine whether cost sharing is needed for their awarded services and how it will be applied.

r) The LOI asks "What percentage of your program's total budget is funded by Ready by Five?*" Is that for the funding we are currently receiving, or the percent of what we are requesting for FY27?

Letters of Intent should clarify the percentage of your total FY27 program budget that would be funded by Ready by Five millage funds during the upcoming contract term, based on the amount you are requesting, rather than your current-year funding level.

s) Can you share how to submit a Letter of Intent for a new program within the same organization?

If your organization is submitting a Letter of Intent for a new program, you will need to start a separate LOI in the online application system for that program. Each LOI/proposal must have its own application record and unique program name, even if they are under the same organization. For example: "First Steps Kent – Little Readers," "First Steps Kent – Curious Kids Literacy Collective," etc. This helps with review of each program separately while keeping them connected to your organization.

t) Under the information and organizational capacity, the RFP is requesting that we share our policies and practices related to child safety, mandated reporting, and risk management for services funded by Ready by Five. Our organization has specific

policy documents for each of these areas. Is it possible to add the attach document option so that we can upload the respective policy documents?

At this time, we cannot add an attachment upload option directly within the “information and organizational capacity” section. However, you are welcome to upload your child safety, mandated reporting, and risk management policy documents in the “public recognition” attachment section, which allows up to nine attachments. Please clearly label each file (e.g., “Child Safety Policy,” “Mandated Reporting Policy”) and note in the narrative response to the policies and practices question that these documents are attached in the public recognition section. This will help reviewers easily locate and reference your policies during review.

- u) Under the “programming criteria” for Early Learning Opportunities, it states, “If applicable, proposal describes strategies for child care access and navigation (e.g. helping families find licensed care, connecting to open slots, coordination with childcare systems).” This has a maximum of 15 points. How will it be determined if this is applicable to an applicant’s proposal, and, if it is not applicable, how will points be awarded?**

This criteria is considered applicable when your Early Learning Opportunities proposal includes activities that help families access or navigate child care or early care and education options—for example, helping families find licensed care, connecting them to available slots, or coordinating with local childcare systems. If your proposed program does not include any strategies related to childcare access or navigation, please briefly state that in your response and describe why it is not part of your program model. In those cases, reviewers will treat this indicator as not applicable and will not deduct points solely because your program does not provide childcare access/navigation services; applicants can still meet the minimum overall score of 70 points based on the other applicable criteria. When this indicator is applicable, up to 15 points will be awarded based on the clarity and strength of the strategies you describe.

- v) For Section 7 – Attachment F: Fee Schedule – Can you clarify what specifically you are looking for here?**

Attachment F: Fee Schedule should be completed if your proposal includes services that are billed at a specific rate, for example, professional development, coaching/consultation, or language/interpretation services. In this attachment, proposals will provide a fee schedule that lists each billable service and the associated

cost or rate. This helps reviewers understand how the service costs are structured and how they align with the overall proposed budget.

- w) **In Submittable, under the Sustainability and Resources Section, one question asks, "Could this service be provided in a reduced capacity if not funded at the above request? (Select one). Yes. No. Option 3." Could you please explain what Option 3 is?**

In this question, the RFP is asking whether your proposed service could still be offered if we funded it at a lower amount than requested. "Yes" means you can scale the service down; "No" means the service would not run at all if under-funded. The third option is meant for situations where the service might be offered only with significant changes, or where you are genuinely unsure. We appreciate you pointing this out, as it identified that the label for this option is not displayed correctly and it has been sent to our programming support team to fix.

- x) **The millage portal, under Funding Opportunities, has links to downloadable attachments B and C, but I could not find a link to the Attachment A form. There is no link in the RFP or online at Submittable. Could you please advise where to find that?**

Attachment A refers to your organization's staff and leadership diversity information. Unlike Attachments B and C, there is no standard form or download for Attachment A because organizational structures are unique. Please prepare this attachment in your own format and upload it where Attachment A is requested in the portal. You are not missing a link, there is simply no single template for this attachment.

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