



Provider Emergency Revolving Fund Grantmaking Partner RFP –

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated 9.30.2025

The [Provider Emergency Revolving Fund RFP](https://www.first5alameda.org/rfp-rfq@first5alameda.org) was posted on September 12, 2025. Bidders may submit questions to rfp-rfq@first5alameda.org by **5:00 p.m. PDT on Wednesday, October 1, 2025**, to ensure responses can be provided in advance of the proposal due date. Responses to all collected questions will be compiled and posted on the First 5 Alameda County website, and updated as needed, to ensure equal access to information for all applicants.

Proposal Review & Selection

- **What are the main criteria reviewers will use to assess proposals?**

Proposals will be evaluated based on the Selection Criteria outlined in the RFP (page 15), which includes:

- Applicable Experience (e.g., grantmaking experience; knowledge and work with child care partners; equity-focused outreach and support; linguistically and culturally responsible services; and capacity to manage compliance, financial oversight, and data-sharing requirements).
- Applicable Approach (e.g., program design and eligibility, technical assistance, equity and language access, data collection, technology, reporting, and evaluation; ability to quickly launch and implement the Fund).
- Fit with First 5 (understanding of need; alignment with First 5's equity, transparency, and systems-change values).
- Cost (reasonableness, cost-effectiveness, and clarity of the proposed budget).

- **Will there be a more detailed scoring rubric provided?**

Proposals will be reviewed and scored based on the Selection Criteria outlined in the RFP, which reflect the key factors reviewers will use in their assessments.

- **Is there a preference for applicants with prior experience managing emergency funds or grantmaking?**

Per the eligibility requirements in the RFP, applicants must have demonstrated experience in administering public or philanthropic grant programs (see page 12). In addition, applicants must have the organizational capacity, qualified staff, and technical infrastructure necessary to carry out the full scope of work described, including program design, grants administration, fiscal management, compliance, and reporting.

- **Are there any Small, Local, Emerging Business (SLEB) requirements for this RFP?**

This procurement does not include Small, Local, and Emerging Business (SLEB) requirements. Proposals will be evaluated according to the Selection Criteria outlined in the RFP.

Fund Administration & Disbursement

- **Can you clarify what “prompt disbursement” means in practice? Is there a target timeframe for issuing emergency payments once approved?**
First 5 expects approved emergency payments to be issued as quickly as possible once eligibility is verified. Any timeframe requirements will be established as part of the Phase 1 planning contract.
- **Will First 5 provide an upfront advance of the \$10M, or will disbursements be made on a reimbursement basis?**
As outlined in the RFP (page 15), payment terms will be negotiated with the selected Grantmaking Partner and may include advance payments, milestone-based disbursements, or reimbursement upon invoicing, depending on the nature of the activities and timing of deliverables. Payment structure will be finalized during contract negotiation in alignment with the approved scope of work and budget.
- **How will the \$10M “revolve” in the Fund?**
The Fund is budgeted at \$10 million for FY 2025–26, with the intention to sustain a \$10 million annual allocation in future years. It is not a loan or repayable fund.
- **Are these true grants?**
Yes. These are grants and do not have to be repaid.
- **What will the average grant size be? What is the range of award sizes?**
The methodology for calculating award amounts—including any caps or limits—will be proposed by the Grantmaking Partner and finalized in Phase 1 with First 5. As outlined in the RFP (page 4), the current recommendation is that grants will not be awarded at a flat rate. Instead, award amounts will be customized to the provider’s specific circumstances, such as risk level, operational costs, and program characteristics. No set averages or ranges have been predetermined.

Eligibility & Award Criteria

- **Is this just for licensed Centers and FCCs? Or could another type of provider apply such as a family resource site?**
Eligibility for this Fund is limited to licensed Family Child Care and Center-based providers serving children birth to five. As part of Measure C, there are additional investments available for Family Resource Centers, family shelters, and Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers.
- **Will First 5 impose a lifetime cap on awards per provider or is that left to the Grantmaking Partner’s discretion?**
As outlined in the RFP (page 4), the current recommendation is to limit awards to once per year. During Phase 1, the Grantmaking Partner will explore additional limitations—such as lifetime caps or sustainability-based restrictions—and propose options. Final criteria will be determined in collaboration with, and subject to approval by, First 5.
- **How will “at risk of closure” be defined?**
The Grantmaking Partner will work with First 5 in Phase 1 to finalize criteria and thresholds for

identifying providers “at risk of closure.” This may include financial documentation, enrollment data, or other indicators of sustainability. First 5 will approve the overall eligibility framework and prioritization process to ensure consistency, equity, and alignment with Measure C goals.

- **How will at-risk programs be identified? Will First 5 make recommendations?**

First 5 will share provider data with the Grantmaking Partner on a regular basis, including information on licensed providers, current Measure C funding, and other core metrics to support prioritization and assessment of applications. These data will help inform identification of providers “at risk of closure.” Outreach and eligibility determination will be collaborative, with the expectation that First 5 and other Measure C third-party administrators coordinate to ensure providers are aware of, and have access to, all funding opportunities for which they qualify. Final determinations will be made through the processes established and implemented by the Grantmaking Partner, in alignment with First 5’s approved program design.

- **Could the emergency grants be used for expansion (e.g., more space or an emergent need for another location)?**

This RFP is focused on emergency operating grants to prevent provider closure. Expansion or capital-related expenses are not the primary intent of the Fund but could be allowable, depending on the final eligibility criteria and allowable uses proposed by the Grantmaking Partner and approved by First 5. As part of Measure C, there are additional investments for child care facilities grants.

- **What volume of applicants and awards does First 5 anticipate, and what percentage might not meet eligibility?** The actual number of applications and awards, as well as projections of ineligible applicants, will depend on the eligibility criteria, thresholds for “at risk of closure,” and program design, which will all be proposed by the Grantmaking Partner during Phase 1 and finalized in collaboration with First 5. For the purposes of budgeting in this RFP, applicants are asked to structure proposals around an illustrative base rate of 100 grants per cycle (page 14).

- **What is First 5’s ideal cadence for these grants? For example: Rolling awards, monthly awards, quarterly awards, etc.?**

The cadence of awards will be determined during Phase 1 design. First 5 anticipates the Fund will need to be flexible enough to respond quickly to emergencies while balancing administrative efficiency and sustainability.

Outreach, Platforms, & Technology

- **Is Submittable an acceptable platform for both intake and payment processing?**

Applicants may propose systems such as Submittable that meet the requirements outlined in the RFP.

- **Will First 5 provide access to their data systems or APIs for integration or must the Grantmaking Partner build that infrastructure independently?**

As outlined in the RFP (page 6), the Grantmaking Partner will be required to establish secure data-sharing processes with First 5 using one of the approved methods (e.g., API access, direct system access, or automated extracts). Applicants should propose their preferred integration approach and data-sharing processes based on the requirements in the RFP. If API access is

proposed, First 5 will work with the selected contractor during Phase 1 planning to finalize the integration approach, with details incorporated into the Phase 2 contract.

- **What are the requirements for a “user-friendly” system?**
Applications must be mobile-friendly, web-based, and available in multiple languages, with options for paper-based applications for providers with limited digital access.
- **Will the Grantmaking Partner need to translate application materials produced for the Fund?**
Yes. The Grantmaking Partner will be responsible for ensuring all processes are designed and implemented with an equity and accessibility lens. This includes translating key materials (e.g., outreach, applications, award letters, appeals guidance) into Alameda County’s priority languages and providing interpretation or multilingual technical assistance (e.g., phone, email, virtual office hours).
- **Alameda County is linguistically diverse, with 57 languages spoken. Is the expectation that communication in the 4–6 most common languages is sufficient, or, given the emphasis on equity and language access, is more translation work desired?**
The expectation is that the Grantmaking Partner will prioritize Alameda County’s most common languages, consistent with First 5’s equity and language access priorities. At minimum, outreach and application materials must be available in the County’s priority languages as outlined in the RFP (page 8), including but are not limited to Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Traditional Chinese (written), Mam, Vietnamese, Arabic, Hindi, Khmer, Tagalog, and Farsi.

Compliance, Monitoring & Reporting

- **What are the expectations for monitoring grantees?**
Specific monitoring and compliance requirements will be defined during the Phase 1 planning process. However, applicants should anticipate responsibilities such as verifying emergencies, ensuring grant funds are used for allowable purposes, and monitoring compliance with program requirements.
- **Has First 5 given thoughts to monitoring these grants or service terms that might be tied? OR is that planning for phase 2?**
As part of Phase 1, the Grantmaking Partner will be responsible for proposing service terms and monitoring requirements. These will be reviewed and approved by First 5 to ensure alignment with program goals and compliance standards. The requirements for the [Early Care and Education Emergency Grants](#) currently being administered by First 5 may serve as a helpful reference point.
- **Are there specific data or evaluation requirements related to the use of the Fund?**
As part of design, the Grantmaking Partner will propose data and reporting requirements for applicants and awardees. As outlined in the RFP (pages 8-9), the Grantmaking Partner will be expected to:
 - Collect and analyze data on applications and awards (e.g., emergencies reported, fund utilization, demographics, children served).
 - Use an equity lens to disaggregate results (e.g., by race/ethnicity, language, geography).
 - Partner with First 5 to co-develop Results-Based Accountability (RBA) measures.
 - Produce quarterly reports and an annual learning memo to inform continuous improvement.

- **What are the expectations for reporting outcomes, especially for capital projects?**
This RFP is focused on emergency operating grants, not capital projects. However, expansion or capital-related expenses could be allowable if included in the final program design. Reporting will be finalized as part of Phase 1 and is expected to include quarterly reports on award distribution, provider demographics, Results-Based Accountability (RBA) outcomes, and analysis linking fiscal and program data.

Appeals Process Design

- **Is there a preferred framework for the appeals process, or should the proposer design one during the planning phase?**
Applicants should propose an appeals approach; details will be finalized with First 5 during the Phase 1 planning contract.
- **Will First 5 provide legal guidance or review for the appeals process to ensure compliance with county or state regulations? Should we budget for dedicated staff or legal support to manage appeals, and are those costs considered allowable under the operating budget?**
Applicants may budget for legal/appeals support as an allowable administrative cost. First 5 will review for compliance and provide guidance on any Measure C requirements but will not provide direct legal services for appeals.
- **Is there a required turnaround time for resolving appeals?**
No required timeline; applicants should propose a reasonable standard.
- **Will First 5 be involved in final decisions or oversight of disputed cases?**
The Grantmaking Partner is responsible for administering appeals, subject to First 5 oversight.
- **What level of detail is expected in monthly appeals reporting?**
First 5 expects summary-level data—for example, the number of appeals submitted, their outcomes, and average resolution timelines—on at least a monthly basis. More specific reporting requirements will be developed and agreed upon during the Phase 1 planning process.

Budget & Cost Structure

- **Can platform costs be included in the operating budget?**
Yes, if costs are reasonable and aligned with the RFP.
- **Is there an indirect cost cap?**
Yes. Indirect costs are capped at 15% of total administrative costs.
- **Does the 15% indirect apply to each phase or overall?**
The budget for each phase would include both direct and indirect costs, with the indirect cost rate at 15% across all phases.
- **If we have a federally approved NICRA, can we exceed the 15% indirect cost cap stated in the RFP?**
An approved Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement may be submitted in lieu of the 15% indirect cost rate.

- **For Phase 2 is there a cap on the admin on grants/passthrough?**
For Phase 2, we are asking for your proposal to include the cost to administer 100 grants. Applicants should structure their proposed framework around anticipated recurring annual expenses for administering a Fund with an illustrative base rate of 100 grants per year. This assumption is for proposal evaluation purposes only. Applicants should also describe how their costs would scale if the number of grants differs from this base rate.
- **How should applicants structure the Phase 2 budget?**
As outlined in the RFP (page 14), please provide a preliminary annual (12 month) budget framework for Phase 2. Applicants should provide projected annual costs associated with ongoing implementation, including staffing, outreach, compliance, reporting, and technical assistance.
- **Should the operating budget scale if fewer grants are awarded, or is a flat cost acceptable?**
Applicants should describe their cost structure and whether it is fixed or scalable.
- **Will this be a cost-based or deliverable-based contract?**
Terms and conditions for the contract will be finalized during contract negotiation in alignment with the approved scope of work and budget.
- **Can you clarify what types of travel are anticipated under this contract? Will staff be expected to conduct regular site visits, or is travel occasional?**
Travel within Alameda County may include occasional site visits, in-person outreach, or participation in First 5 meetings.
- **Are costs related to automobile insurance (e.g., premiums, reimbursements, liability coverage) considered allowable under the operating budget?**
Yes, if directly tied to project activities.
- **Does the automobile insurance requirement apply only to staff conducting site visits, or to all staff involved in the project?**
Only to staff driving for program purposes.

Bidder's Conference

- **Is there a Zoom recording of the Bidder's Conference?**
The Bidder's Conference was not recorded. Key questions and answers from the session, along with questions submitted via email, are summarized in this FAQ to ensure equal access to information. Slides from the session are also available here: [Provider-Emergency-Revolving-Fund-RFP-Bidders-Conference-9.23.25.pdf](#)
- **Will you be releasing the Bidder Conference attendee list?**
First 5's current practice does not include releasing Bidder's Conference attendee lists.