



MAKING MINNESOTA GREATER

## **For immediate release**

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## **Minnesota Initiative Foundations Launch Emergency Child Care Grant Program in Greater Minnesota at the request of Governor Walz**

*Licensed family- and center-based providers caring for children of emergency and essential workers are invited to apply for grants*

DULUTH, Minn. - The six [Minnesota Initiative Foundations](#) have created an **Emergency Child Care Grant Program** to provide immediate financial support to licensed child care providers in Greater Minnesota in response to the coronavirus pandemic or COVID-19. All six foundations have committed \$50,000 – for a total of \$300,000 dedicated for Greater Minnesota child care providers right away – and are working to secure additional resources from other partners.

These six foundations include Initiative Foundation, Northland Foundation, Northwest Minnesota Foundation, Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation, Southwest Initiative Foundation and West Central Initiative.

The Minnesota Initiative Foundations will award grants of up to \$3,000 to licensed family- and center-based providers in their respective service regions. To be eligible, providers must be caring for the children (ages birth to 5 years) of parents or guardians who are working in [government-identified critical sectors](#) who are exempt during this time from the stay at home order. \*

Interested child care providers located in Greater Minnesota should complete a short application provided by the Minnesota Initiative Foundation that serves the community in which their business is located. A guide to the regions served by each Foundation can be found online at [www.greatermnnesota.net](http://www.greatermnnesota.net). The intent is to provide a response and funding to qualified child care businesses within two weeks of receiving their application.

Think Small is providing a similar grant opportunity to providers within the seven-county metropolitan area. Metro-area child care providers should contact Think Small or visit <https://www.thinksmall.org> for more information.

The Minnesota Initiative Foundations were established in response to the economic crisis of the 1980s and have a long history of working together to help Greater Minnesota communities thrive. Together, they became leaders in promoting early childhood care and education and building coalitions and collaborative partnerships to support young children and their families. Most recently, they have been working with the Minnesota Department of Human Services, the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development and dozens of local leaders, agencies, organizations and businesses to develop community solutions to address the child care shortage in Greater Minnesota.

“Child care providers fill a critical need in our communities at all times, but especially now as they care for children of emergency personnel and other essential workers during this crisis. The Minnesota Initiative Foundations will do what we can to play a part in helping child care businesses and people on the job in the identified critical sectors continue this vital work,” stated Tony Sertich, President of the Northland Foundation.

For more information about the Minnesota Initiative Foundations or this grant program, visit [greaterminnesota.net/childcare](http://greaterminnesota.net/childcare).

\*Workers who work in critical sectors during this time are exempt from the stay at home order. These exemptions are based on [federal guidance from the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency \(CISA\)](#) at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security with some Minnesota-specific additions. To learn more about who is considered a critical worker, please visit the [Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development's website](#). If you have additional questions, please email [CriticalSectors@state.mn.us](mailto:CriticalSectors@state.mn.us).

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*About the Minnesota Initiative Foundations*

The Minnesota Initiative Foundations are six regional foundations working to strengthen the communities and economies of Greater Minnesota. Established by McKnight Foundation in 1986, each foundation is independent and serves its geographic region with grants, business loans, programs and priorities, and donor services, as well as collaborates on statewide initiatives. The Minnesota Initiative Foundations are nationally recognized as unique resources to the people, businesses and communities of rural Minnesota. Learn more at [greaterminnesota.net](http://greaterminnesota.net).

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