



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS #2

Aboriginal Head Start On-Reserve (AHSOR)

The following questions were asked at the webinar FNHA hosted on April 25th, 2018

Q: If I have capital funding from another source can I still apply for operating dollars through FNHA?

A: Yes, you can still apply for operating funds through this application. If you are requesting Capital funding through this application process and have previously received child care Capital funding from the Ministry of Children & Family Development (MCFD) in the last five years (since 2013), you will be eligible to top up that funding to a maximum of \$600,000. For example, if you received \$500,000 from MCFD Capital in 2014, then the maximum you can request is \$100,000.00.

Q: Are fixed appliances (i.e. stoves, dishwashers, fridges, washer & dryer) and fixed playground equipment eligible capital expenditures?

A: Yes.

Q: Will the capital funds be for extra spaces needed and for safe indoor play and culture activities?

A: The capital funding is to create extra spaces and the operational funding is for programs and activities.

Q: Is this funding on a one-time basis?

A: The capital (and all other start-up costs – e.g. furnishings) is one-time funding; operational funding will be ongoing.

Q: If my community has the barrier of transportation but has also had 11 babies born, can I apply for capital for a new bus?

A: Purchasing a vehicle (bus/van) is not possible with these funds. However, you can budget some transportation costs within the operational budget to support families gasoline expenses, for example, if they use their own or shared vehicles.

Q: Our community is next to a municipality. If a non-community member attended the facility or participated in the program, would that affect funding eligibility?

A: The AHSOR program expansion funding is to create new spaces to accommodate additional First Nations children living on reserve. However, if your community members live off reserve and there are no Aboriginal Head Start programs they can attend, then these children and families can participate in the program on reserve.

Q: Are the Aboriginal Head Start programs eligible for the Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF)?

A: The funds for the expansion are being provided to us by MCFD. Any new spaces created with these funds will not be eligible to apply for CCOF through the province. Please keep this in mind when creating your operating budget to ensure that all the funding you will need to operate the new spaces are fully included in your budget.

Q: Is capital funding offered as part of the AHSOR program expansion funds?

A: Yes, capital will be offered as part of the application. The maximum request for capital is \$600,000.

Q: The biggest challenge to creating new spaces is having teachers because there is a teacher shortage. How are you addressing that?

A: *Staffing is a very big challenge throughout the province and there have been on-going conversations between many groups to address this issue. One of the benefits of a Head Start program is that it's a flexible model that includes parent participation. Head Start program On-Reserve is not dependent upon qualified staff for parent/tot drop-in programs or outreach programs. Parents are responsible for their children in these models. Head Start program can be delivered in a variety of models and depends on the needs and capacity of your community. It is beneficial to have qualified ECE staff as Head Start focuses on early learning and child development. ECE qualified staff are required for licensed centre-based programs.*

Q: Our community is remote. How can a remote community create a partnership with another community, agency or organization?

A: *We understand the challenges for remote communities to create linkages and partnerships with other agencies or organizations. We encourage the development of close relationships between the Head Start program and other existing programs and services supported by health or education departments in your own community. Our Head Start Program advisors can also provide ideas on how to connect with outside organizations, including getting ideas for programming.*

Q: Can I increase my licensed capacity with capital for renovations?

A: *Yes, you can increase your licensed capacity with capital funding.*

Q: For current sites wishing to expand, is it specific to seats or can we ask for enhancement of services? For example, offering interventions/services for early childhood mental health?

A: *For the existing Head Start programs wishing to expand they must create new spaces. If you create new spaces, you are eligible to apply for operational funds that can be used for services such as early childhood mental health interventions/services. If you cannot or do not wish to expand your spaces, you may want to look further into Jordan's Principle (JP) for funds to enhance your program with early childhood mental health intervention costs. Applications for JP can be used for individuals or as a group. For more information on Jordan's Principle you can visit: www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/maternal-child-and-family-health/jordans-principle*

Q: Will we be able to apply for enhancement dollars? For example we have a daycare/Head Start combination for 3-5 year olds but we have no funds to employ a staff member to fill the gap of services for birth to 3 years. Could we apply for an outreach worker?

A: *Based on the criteria set by our funder, the AHSOR program expansion funding is strictly to create new spaces that will serve additional children. The funds cannot be used for enhancement of current Head Start services. However, if you create a new program for your children birth to 3 years then you can apply for an outreach worker as you would be creating a new service.*

Q: Will there be an increase in funding for current sites to support wages and operating costs?

A: *For current sites, these funds can be for the creation of new spaces and not to enhance wages or operating costs. We are aware of the need to address current gaps in funding (i.e. wage increases) so we continue to advocate for these funds and hope that we will be able to address these issues in the near future.*

Q: Is the funding formula based on population? Is there a minimal population criteria?

A: *The funding formula used previously when establishing funding amount eligibility will only be used as a guide for this roll-out of funds. We are aware that communities with higher populations may require higher operating funds than smaller communities. In order to ensure program success, we recommend a minimum of 6 – 8 children aged birth to 6 years. To operate an outreach program, we recommend a minimum of 4 children aged birth to 6 years.*

Q: Are there any other factors that will affect the decision-making process?

A: *We will be assessing the applications based on need and community readiness. Also, the decision-making process will be dependent on the community's ability to comply with the community's or organization's present funding arrangement with FNHA.*