

# Empower Awards FAQs

**What are Empower Awards?** Empower Awards by Action for Children are monetary incentives provided to eligible licensed child care programs for achieving specific quality and program goals. The Empower Awards are designed to provide financial support to your child care program for both achieving new goals and doing what you already do.

**What awards are available?** There are several categories of Empower Awards. Award availability is dependent on the county in which your child care program is located. Eligibility must have been achieved between July 1, 2022 – **July 28, 2023** (DEADLINE EXTENDED FROM APRIL 28, 2023).

*Empower Awards for child care programs located in Delaware, Fairfield, Licking, Madison, Pickaway, or Union County:*

- **Programs that sign a new PFCC agreement** are eligible for a one-time payment of \$1,000.
- **Centers that gain their first SUTQ star** are eligible for a one-time payment of \$2,500. **FCCs that gain their first SUTQ star** are eligible for a one-time payment of \$1,000.
- **Centers that remain SUTQ rated for 6 months** are eligible for a one-time payment of \$2,500. **FCCs that remain SUTQ rated for 6 months** are eligible for a one-time payment of \$1,000
- **Centers that earn a 3-, 4-, or 5-star SUTQ rating** are eligible for a one-time payment of \$10,000. **FCCs that earn a 3-, 4-, or 5-star SUTQ rating** are eligible for a one-time payment of \$5,000.
- **Programs that become licensed through the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (ODJFS)** are eligible for a one-time payment of \$1,000.
- **Child Care Centers that open an Infant Classroom are eligible for** a one-time payment of \$20,000.
- **Child Care Centers that open a Toddler Classroom** are eligible for a one-time payment of \$15,000.
- **Child Care Centers that open a Preschool Classroom** are eligible for a one-time payment of \$10,000.

*Empower Awards for child care programs located in Franklin County:*

- **Programs that become licensed through the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (ODJFS)** are eligible for a one-time payment of \$1,000.
- **Child Care Centers that open an Infant Classroom** are eligible for a one-time payment of \$20,000.
- **Child Care Centers that open a Toddler Classroom** are eligible for a one-time payment of \$15,000.
- **Child Care Centers that open a Preschool Classroom** are eligible for a one-time payment of \$10,000.

**Are these awards the same as Franklin County RISE?** No, these are two separate programs and offer expanded incentives to a larger geographical area. Child care programs located in Delaware, Fairfield, Licking, Madison, Pickaway, or Union County, as well as programs that have applied for RISE incentives are also welcome to apply for Empower Awards. [PFCC and SUTQ Incentives through the Franklin County RISE program are available for programs located in Franklin County.](#)

**Can I receive multiple Empower Awards?** Absolutely. The incentives are not mutually exclusive.

**When will Empower Awards start?** The applications for opening classrooms (Infant, Toddler, and Preschool Classrooms) are currently available on Action for Children's website. Additional incentive applications are emailed monthly to the email on file for your program with ODJFS.

*Need help finding an email? Search for [EmpowerHelp@actionforchildren.org](mailto:EmpowerHelp@actionforchildren.org) in your inbox!*

**What information is needed to apply for an Empower Award?**

To apply, providers will need:

1. Functioning email
2. Program License Number
3. EIN or Social Security Number
4. Account & Routing Numbers for Direct Deposit (Direct Deposit is strongly recommended to reduce the risk of mailing delays or lost checks)
5. To apply for the Opening Classrooms Empower Award, you will need to provide proof of attendance increases, and a site visit will be scheduled.

**How long will it take for application information to be reviewed?** We estimate it will take 3 – 5 business days to review for accuracy and completeness. Once that step is completed, a Provider Agreement will be emailed to the Child Care Program. The Provider Agreement must be completed, signed, and submitted before payment can be processed.

**How long until my program receives an Empower Award payment?** Payments are processed the third week of each month. Processing will take the full week. Direct Deposit is strongly recommended to reduce the risk of mailing delays or lost checks. After processing direct deposit, timing will depend on your bank, or the postal service for paper check delivery. Plan for 30 days for payment.

*Discover new ways for your child care program to earn more.  
[Visit our website to learn more and apply!](#)*