



FAQs: Year 4 Franklin County RISE Scholarships

General Questions	-----	2
Eligibility Questions	-----	4
Application Process	-----	5
Scholarship Details, Duration, and Conditions	-----	6
Scholarship Payment Forfeiture and Discontinuation	-----	7
Transfers and Absenteeism	-----	8

General Questions

Why are eligibility rules changing for Year 4?

Franklin County RISE was funded with temporary American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars intended for short-term stabilization during and after the pandemic. The federal government requires that all ARPA funds be spent and fully accounted for by December 2026.

As a result, this will be the final year of this version of Franklin County RISE. Franklin County is already working to identify new and sustainable funding streams to continue supporting families and providers in the future. Due to these funding constraints, Franklin County RISE has shifted to funding programs that are rated on Ohio's Step Up To Quality rating system. This ensures that remaining dollars are being directed towards programs aligned with State of Ohio Standards.

What if my program is not SUTQ rated?

Unrated programs will not be eligible for the scholarship in Year 4. Families may:

- Request assistance identifying a nearby SUTQ-rated program, or
- Work with their current provider to explore whether it is interested in beginning the SUTQ process. The process may extend over several months or longer, and there is no assurance that RISE funding will remain available once a program receives its rating.

What is required to participate in Year 4?

Programs must:

1. Be **rated in Step Up to Quality (any star level)**
2. Maintain compliance with licensing
3. Submit required paperwork promptly
4. Accept scholarship payments reliably and on time

What if our program is not rated in SUTQ?

Unrated programs **cannot** participate in the scholarship program this year. They may:

- Choose to begin the SUTQ rating process
- Continue serving families privately
- Request information or support on how to get started

Can unrated programs remain connected to RISE?

Yes. Franklin County RISE will continue sharing resources, professional development, and information through RISE Circle. Programs are encouraged to stay engaged even if they can't participate in the scholarship portion this year.

How will families and programs be notified about scholarship decisions?

Notifications will be sent via individual communication. Families and programs may also receive countywide letters explaining policy changes.

Why are some families receiving different messages than others?

Letters differ based on:

- Whether the program is rated or unrated
- Whether the child currently holds a scholarship

The goal is to ensure everyone receives clear, tailored information.

What should programs do if families have questions?

Direct them to contact RISEHelp@actionforchildren.org. Programs should avoid giving assumptions or guarantees about scholarship approvals.

How can families or providers stay engaged with Franklin County RISE?

Through **RISE Circle**, where they can find:

- Resource posts
- Professional development
- Health and wellness information
- Program updates
- Community partner announcements

Engagement on the platform ensures access to ongoing support.

Eligibility Questions

Am I eligible for a scholarship?

Each scholarship amount is determined based on the tuition charged by the child care provider and the income of the family.

Use the chart to determine the maximum payment allotted for your household income. You will be approved for either the maximum allotment allowable for your income or the maximum monthly tuition charged by your child care provider*.

In other words, eligible families will either get the maximum monthly payment allotted based on the sliding scale for income or the total monthly cost for tuition, whichever amount is smaller.

Federal Poverty Level Bracket	Maximum Monthly Scholarship Payment Per Child
146%-165%	\$750.00
166%-185%	\$687.50
186%-205%	\$625.00
206%-250%	\$562.50
251%-300%	\$500.00

Funds are paid directly to the child care program on the family's behalf for a period of time ending November 30, 2026. Months spent unenrolled or periods of school closures (i.e., a program that closes for the summer period), are forfeit.

**If a family is already receiving PFCC or related funding (such as Child Care Aware or a similar program), they are not eligible for a scholarship.*

Are there any age restrictions?

The scholarship will stop on the child's first day of kindergarten and is not available for school-aged children.

Do I need to live in Franklin County?

Yes. The RISE scholarship requires all eligible families to be residents of Franklin County. The child care provider must also be located in Franklin County.

What if I live in an area that shares two counties?

To be eligible, you and the child care program must be located inside Franklin County.

Are child care employees eligible for scholarships?

The simple answer is - yes! If you meet other scholarship requirements, you can also be an employee of the child care program.

Application Process

My child currently is receiving a RISE scholarship. Should I apply?

Yes. For future enrollment, we will need a new application for the 2025-2026 RISE cycle. The scholarship will start as early as December 2025 and end no later than November 2026.

My child is currently receiving a scholarship. Is the application for a “renewing” child different?

All RISE recipients will need to reapply for the year 4 scholarship, even past and current RISE recipients. Renewal of the scholarship is not automatic or guaranteed, so we recommend applying for the scholarship as soon as possible.

How do I apply for a scholarship?

You must work with an ODJFS licensed Franklin County child care program. The child care program will start the scholarship application on your behalf. Please contact [Action for Children](#) if you need help finding a child care program that meets your needs. Make sure your phone number and email are up to date with the child care provider, as we will use the contact information they enter to send the family their section of the application.

As part of the application process, you will need to provide verification of income, and proof of your child’s age. Income verification may include:

- Check stubs
- Unemployment payment statements
- A letter from your employer

Scholarship Details, Duration, and Conditions

How do I calculate my specific FPL percentage?

We recommend using this [online FPL calculator](#) to find your specific percentage.

Will I lose scholarship eligibility if I have a change in income status?

Your income will be verified at the beginning of the process. Much like a college scholarship, once your need has been demonstrated, the scholarship is committed to you. The only circumstance that would put your scholarship in jeopardy is if your child care provider becomes unlicensed, unrated, or you move outside of Franklin County or to a provider not located in Franklin County.

Why does the scholarship get paid to the provider?

The scholarship can only be used directly by the provider to offset expenses incurred by your enrollment in a child care program for regular and customary tuition fees. The individual child care program will decide if there are family co-pays or activity fees. This amount cannot be dispersed across multiple children and cannot be used for any other purpose, such as supplemental income.

How long does my child receive the scholarship?

Scholarships are approved for a **period of time ending November 30, 2026**. In instances when a child is absent from a program, such as during transfers between child care providers or summer break when a program is closed, the missed month(s) are forfeited. Please communicate any expected absenteeism in advance when possible. Payments will resume once the child returns, and enrollment verification is submitted. The value of the forfeited months will be removed from the total RISE scholarship.

Regardless of which month your scholarship begins, all scholarships will end November 30, 2026. This change will help all scholarships align with the funding contract cycle. Applying early is the best way to maximize the length of your scholarship.

What if I have more than one child?

Each child needs their own application, but as long as the child care program has slots available, child care providers can submit applications for multiple children within the same family. Child care centers can have up to 10 active scholarships, and family child care providers can have up to 7.

How soon after applying will I hear back?

Once your application has been submitted by the provider of your choice, and you have completed your income verification section, your application will be reviewed for eligibility. Estimated processing at the beginning of a scholarship cycle (November/December) is typically 2-4 weeks, so watch your email for more information.

Scholarship Payment Forfeiture and Discontinuation

Why could a month of RISE be forfeit?

- Transfer to a new child care program mid-month
- Attendance/Enrollment is not submitted within 6 weeks of the beginning of the month (ex. January verification is not submitted by the second week of February).
- If a child begins kindergarten, the days/months after their start date are forfeit.

Why could a RISE scholarship be discontinued?

- Child begins kindergarten
- Missing 2+ months of enrollment verification without reaching out to Action for Children
- Transfer to another child care taking 31+ days
- Transfer to an unlicensed/unrated child care provider or a child care provider outside of Franklin County

What if my child care program is not open year-round?

Closure months are forfeited. Please communicate these closures in advance to ensure the remaining months of scholarship are available. Scholarship dollars will not be paid out beyond November 30, 2026.

Transfers and Absenteeism

Can I transfer my child's RISE funding to a new child care provider?

Yes, transfers are possible. To begin, please email RISEHelp@actionforchildren.org with the following details:

- Your child's full name
- The name of their current child care provider
- The name and address of the new child care provider
- The new provider email (for the administrator who will interact with RISE)
- The date you would like the transfer to begin

Once we verify the new child care provider's details, we will send them an application to complete. Please note that transfers made mid-month may prevent us from paying either child care provider for that month. For this reason, we strongly recommend scheduling transfers at the beginning or end of the month.

What is required to maintain the scholarship?

For a monthly payment to be made and the scholarship to remain active, the child care provider and family must complete the monthly attendance/enrollment form.

Each month an email will be sent to the child care provider where they are asked to enter attendance data and confirm the child's enrollment. Following this completion, the parent will receive an email where they must confirm enrollment.

Payments are processed on the Friday of the third full week of each month. If confirmation of enrollment is not made prior to the beginning of the third full week, payment will be delayed and possibly discontinued.

How do I complete the new Enrollment/Attendance form?

The child care provider will enter their program's license number, which will auto-populate their current RISE recipients. They should then complete the previous month's attendance data. The provider should then enter each child's teacher, the number of days they actually attended, and the number of days they were expected to attend (the form will then auto-calculate all percentages). Lastly, the provider should include the month/year being reported and sign/submit the document online.

After completing the attendance information for the previous month, the provider will indicate if the child is still attending for the current month. If the answer is "yes", an email will be sent to the parent of the child to confirm expected attendance and document any attendance challenges the child has had. If the answer is "no" then no email is sent to the parent for additional confirmation. For this reason, it is important that families communicate their desire to transfer to another child care program directly to RISEHelp@actionforchildren.org.