

Lack of resources and an effort to maintain affordability for parents often make it difficult for individual child care programs to reward or encourage teacher education through salaries. As a result, many teachers leave the field or never even consider the profession as an option. The Child Care WAGE\$® Program was created by Child Care Services Association in North Carolina in response to research-based evidence that shows that the quality of care children receive is lowered by high turnover rates and inadequate teacher education.

**What is Child Care WAGE\$® NEBRASKA (WAGE\$)?**

Child Care WAGE\$® NEBRASKA is a program that provides education-based salary supplements (sometimes called incentives) to low-paid early care and education providers working with children, ages birth to five, in licensed family child care settings in Nebraska. This program is designed to increase retention, education, and compensation of the early childhood workforce.

**What is the connection between WAGE\$ and T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA (T.E.A.C.H.)?**

The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA Scholarship Program and the Child Care WAGE\$® NEBRASKA program go hand-in-hand. T.E.A.C.H. is a means to support individuals as they work their way up the WAGE\$ scale and increase their education. Participants in both programs can receive bonuses from T.E.A.C.H. and incentives from WAGE\$ simultaneously. WAGE\$ and T.E.A.C.H. are both nationally licensed programs of Child Care Services Association in North Carolina.

**Why are only Family Child Care Providers eligible to participate in Nebraska?**

The first year (2020) for WAGE\$ in Nebraska was a pilot year. The decision was made to start the program small and build upon it. The plan is for WAGE\$ to be offered to all early childhood educators working in classrooms with children, ages birth to five, in the future. As additional funding is secured, additional eligible applicants will be notified. Keep checking back!

**Who is eligible to receive a salary supplement?**

The WAGE\$ supplement recipient must be:

- The licensee of a licensed family child care home,
- Earning at or below the income cap (\$17.50 or less per hour),
- Working with children ages birth to five at least 35 hours per week,
- Participating in Nebraska Step Up To Quality at a Step 1 or higher,
- Have a current contract to accept child care subsidy, or be listed as, “Currently do not accept subsidy, but willing to in the future” (aka-Title XX or Title 20), *and*
- Have a level of education that appears on the Child Care WAGE\$® NEBRASKA supplement scale.

**How much will I receive?**

Salary supplement amounts are tied to the recipient’s level of education. Awards are issued in two six-month payments.

**How do I apply to participate in Child Care WAGE\$® NEBRASKA?**

(1) Complete an application, (2) accept subsidy, have a child enrolled receiving child care subsidy, AND/OR be listed as, “Currently do not accept subsidy, but willing to in the future”, on the DHHS child care licensing roster, and (3) provide

official college transcripts for your education earned. Applications can be found at [www.NebraskaAEYC.org](http://www.NebraskaAEYC.org) or contact a WAGE\$ counselor (402-858-5143 or [wages@nebraskaeyc.org](mailto:wages@nebraskaeyc.org)) for more information, or to have an application mailed to you.

**How are supplements received?**

Checks are typically mailed by the end of the seventh month (following completion of a six-month commitment period) to eligible participants who have met the requirements.

**How can I increase the level of the supplement I receive?**

Participants in WAGE\$ can increase their supplement amounts by gaining more education. T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA offers scholarships to child care professionals who want to earn course credits toward specific early childhood credentials or degrees. Contact T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA (402-858-5143 or [teach@nebraskaeyc.org](mailto:teach@nebraskaeyc.org)) for more information. Participants are encouraged to send WAGE\$ an updated official transcript after the completion of any formal coursework so staff can determine the highest possible award.

**Do I have to pay taxes on the supplement I receive?**

Yes, because the salary supplement is income. Participants will receive an IRS-1099 form at the end of the year if they received \$600 or more from Nebraska AEYC during the calendar year. Recipients are responsible for reporting and paying personal income taxes due.

**To learn more about Child Care WAGE\$® NEBRASKA,  
visit our website at [www.NebraskaAEYC.org](http://www.NebraskaAEYC.org) and/or please contact:**

**Julie Warford, WAGE\$ Counselor**

**(402) 858-5143**

**[wages@NebraskaAEYC.org](mailto:wages@NebraskaAEYC.org)**

*Child Care WAGE\$® NEBRASKA is a licensed program of Child Care Services Association. Child Care WAGE\$® NEBRASKA is administered by Nebraska AEYC and is funded by the Nebraska Department of Education – Office of Early Childhood.*