



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 21-476, **Version:** 1

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### **TITLE:**

FY23 Subsidized Child Care Assistance Application for Smart Start Grant Funding

### **INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Ashley Lantz, Human Services Director of Social Services, 704-296-4380

### **ACTION REQUESTED:**

- A) Approve the Child Care Assistance program's request to apply for FY23 Smart Start grant funding.
- B) Upon award of the grant, authorize the County Manager to execute related contracts and/or agreements, pending legal review.
- C) Upon receipt of the grant award, recognize, receive, and appropriate the awarded amount to the Division of Social Services budget.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Union County Human Service Agency Division of Social Services wishes to apply for FY23 Smart Start grant funding to support our Subsidized Child Care Assistance Program. In FY22 we received a total of \$1,097,785 Smart Start funds, including \$175,000 for personnel and \$925,785 for direct purchase of services. For FY23 we are requesting a total of \$1,215,294, which includes \$243,220 for personnel and \$972,074 for direct purchase of services (which is not coming out of Union County funds). The additional \$68,220 will cover the increasing cost of 4 personnel and the additional \$46,289.00 represents a 5% increase to cover cost of care increases.

North Carolina boasts one of the highest rates of working mothers with young children in the nation, making the availability of quality child care essential for the State's economic development and stability. Many of Union County's working families are struggling financially to meet the needs of their families. The availability of affordable, quality, legal and safe child care offers them financial support and relief as well as increases their likelihood of being successful in their jobs. By providing subsidized child care assistance to children in Union County, pre-school aged children can get a high-quality early childhood education which increases their chances of being healthy and more socialized. Additionally, early education enhances a child's ability to learn therefore they are better prepared for academic success when it is time for them to enter kindergarten.

In FY22, a total of 640 unduplicated children were served through the Subsidized Child Care Program. 187 of those children were funded with Smart Start Funds. The target population we serve with Smart Start Funds is pre-school aged (birth through age 5) residents of Union County, who are

placed in a 5-star Union County child care facility or a 5-star child care home that has completed an agreement through NC FAST. One of our goals is to reach out and provide childcare assistance to as many eligible Union County families possible so they can become more financially stable in conjunction with strengthening each child's health, emotional development and educational foundation.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

The Union County Human Service Agency Division of Social Services is required to contribute a cash and in-kind contribution which is primarily provided by County personnel and use of office space. For FY23 we are requesting a total of \$1,215,294, which includes \$243,220 for personnel and \$972,074 for direct purchase of services.