



Rhode Island Department of Human Services

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Office of the Director

Kimberly Merolla-Brito

October 30, 2026

The Honorable Daniel J. McKee
Governor of the State of Rhode Island
State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: DHS Report on Child Care for Child Care Staff Pilot

Dear Governor McKee:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Department of Human Services (DHS), I am submitting the annual report on the CCAP for Child Care Staff Pilot as required in Rhode Island General Laws § 40-5.2-20.

In an effort to support Rhode Island's broader efforts to strengthen the early childhood workforce, the CCAP for Child Care Staff Pilot was established to help child care workers access affordable child care. The enclosed report provides an overview of pilot trends from August 2025 through July 2026, including application and participation metrics, program impact, and lessons learned.

Importantly, the FY27 Enacted Budget allocated funding to support the pilot's extension and continued benefit payments through August 2030. This investment builds on the State's continued efforts to expand access to affordable child care, including improvements to CCAP eligibility and benefit coverage in recent enacted budgets.

DHS appreciates the continued support of your Administration and the General Assembly in serving Rhode Island's children and families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kimberly Merolla-Brito".

Kimberly Merolla-Brito
Director
Department of Human Services

CC: Antonio Afonso, Chief of Staff, Office of Governor Dan McKee
Joseph Almond, Senior Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of Governor Dan McKee

CCAP for Child Care Pilot

FY26 Annual Report

October 1, 2026



PUBLIC
CONSULTING GROUP

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BACKGROUND

The Rhode Island Department of Human Services administers the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), which distributes child care subsidies directly to child care providers. These providers care for children of eligible families, supporting families in accessing affordable child care. Family eligibility is based on multiple criteria, including parental employment or education status, household income, and age and residency/citizenship requirements.

In June 2023, the State of Rhode Island approved the CCAP for Child Care Educators and Child Care pilot. Like regular CCAP, this pilot provides funding to cover child care expenses. Uniquely, this pilot initiative is designed to support the child care workforce, allowing the children of early educators to access needed child care while the parent is working in a DHS-licensed child care program. The intended outcome for participating in the CCAP for Child Care pilot is for early educators to have a reduced cost of child care burden on their family, and for DHS-licensed child care programs to see an increase in recruitment and retention of staff by offering access to this benefit.

DHS partnered with Public Consulting Group (PCG) to rapidly stand up and administer this pilot in summer 2023. The initial application to participate in the pilot opened on August 24, 2023, and remained open until July 31, 2024. Subsequently, the pilot was renewed for additional years as follows:

TABLE 1. APPLICATION TYPES AND TIME PERIODS

	Time Period
Initial Pilot (Year 1)	August 2023-July 2024
Renewal (Year 2)	August 2024- July 2025
Pilot Extension (Years 3-6)	August 2025-July 2028 ¹

This report will focus on applications received during the third year of the pilot from August 2025 through July 31, 2026.

APPLICATION, BENEFITS, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

This pilot uniquely serves early educators actively working a minimum average of 20 hours weekly in a DHS-licensed child care program. As of August 1, 2025, applicants were required to apply for regular CCAP through DHS and meet all requirements of the CCAP program, except for household income. For the pilot, household income is capped at 300% for the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) rather than the standard 261% FPL.

In keeping with the regular CCAP certification period of 24-months (effective July 2025), the CCAP for Child Care pilot provides child care benefit coverage for a continuous 24-months. The benefit may be used at a DHS-licensed and CCAP-approved provider. For approved households not covered by regular CCAP, the pilot benefit covers the full subsidy reimbursement rate. For families currently receiving regular CCAP benefits, the pilot covers only the family copay. Families are also required to maintain their CCAP benefit for the pilot to remain active. For example, should a household's regular CCAP benefit close, the pilot benefit would also close.

During the 24-month pilot benefit period, applicants are required to complete a mid-certification eligibility review at the 12-month period. Applicants are required to provide a recent paystub to verify they are still actively working in child care. If the applicant is no longer working in child care or fails to respond to the review, the pilot benefit will close at the 12-month mark.

¹ Applications will close on July 31, 2028, with payments continuing through August 2030.

These requirements and benefits coverage criteria are detailed in several documents housed on the DHS website: [CCAP for Child Care Staff Pilot | RI Department of Human Services](#)

These documents include an FAQ, overview document, application guide and overview to support the completion of the application, as well as a pre-recorded webinar. All technical assistance materials are available in both English and Spanish.

PCG also offers technical assistance support (in English and Spanish) by email. (CCAPforChildCare@pcgus.com).

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

In coordination with DHS, PCG developed process workflows, and all collateral materials related to implement work related to the following:

1. Application Process
2. Enrollment/Disenrollment
3. Attendance and Payments

Application Process

PCG developed an application (available in English and Spanish) hosted on JotForm, a web-based portal. As part of the application development process, PCG reviewed the current regular CCAP application and DHS policy requirements specific to the pilot to align existing fields and identify any additional required fields or attestation language. PCG also worked with their internal corporate legal team to develop attestations aligned to the pilot's requirements. The goal was to develop a streamlined application, gathering key information while also increasing the applicant's ease of access. Application reviews were estimated to be completed within 30 days of receipt.

PCG developed an application review workflow and excel rubric tool. Applications are hosted on a SharePoint site for internal review, where a document library of the application and any associated documents submitted with the application (e.g., Benefit Decision Notices, pay stubs) are securely stored. The applications undergo two levels of review prior to being sent to DHS for final review. Application information and notes are documented in a SharePoint form, illustrated in the following image.

FIGURE 1. CCAP FOR CHILD CARE REVIEW FORM

Review Form

CCAP Verification | **Application Type-Child ID** | Child 1 | Child 2 | Child 3 | Child 4 | Child 5 | Household Income | Attestations | Review

General Information [Application Documents](#)

Submission ID: [Redacted] Application Type: Extension Renewal Submission Date: 2025-08-01T07:00:00Z

Assigned To: [Redacted] Year: Year 3 Status: Approved

First Name: [Redacted] Last Name: [Redacted] Phone: [Redacted] Email: [Redacted]

CCAP Benefits: Yes Number of Children: 1 DHS Work Program: Child Care Center DHS Work Location: [Redacted]

DHS Work Position: Preschool Lead Teacher

After two PCG team members have reviewed an application, it is shared to an external SharePoint site, accessible by the DHS project team, for final review.

FIGURE 2. DHS APPLICATION REVIEW FORM

FIGURE 3. SECONDARY DHS APPLICATION REVIEW FORM

DHS' final review populates a SharePoint list, documenting the status of all applications. Families are then sent a notice by email including a pilot ID and dates of coverage. Providers receive an email with enrollment instructions. Families who are not eligible are notified by email.

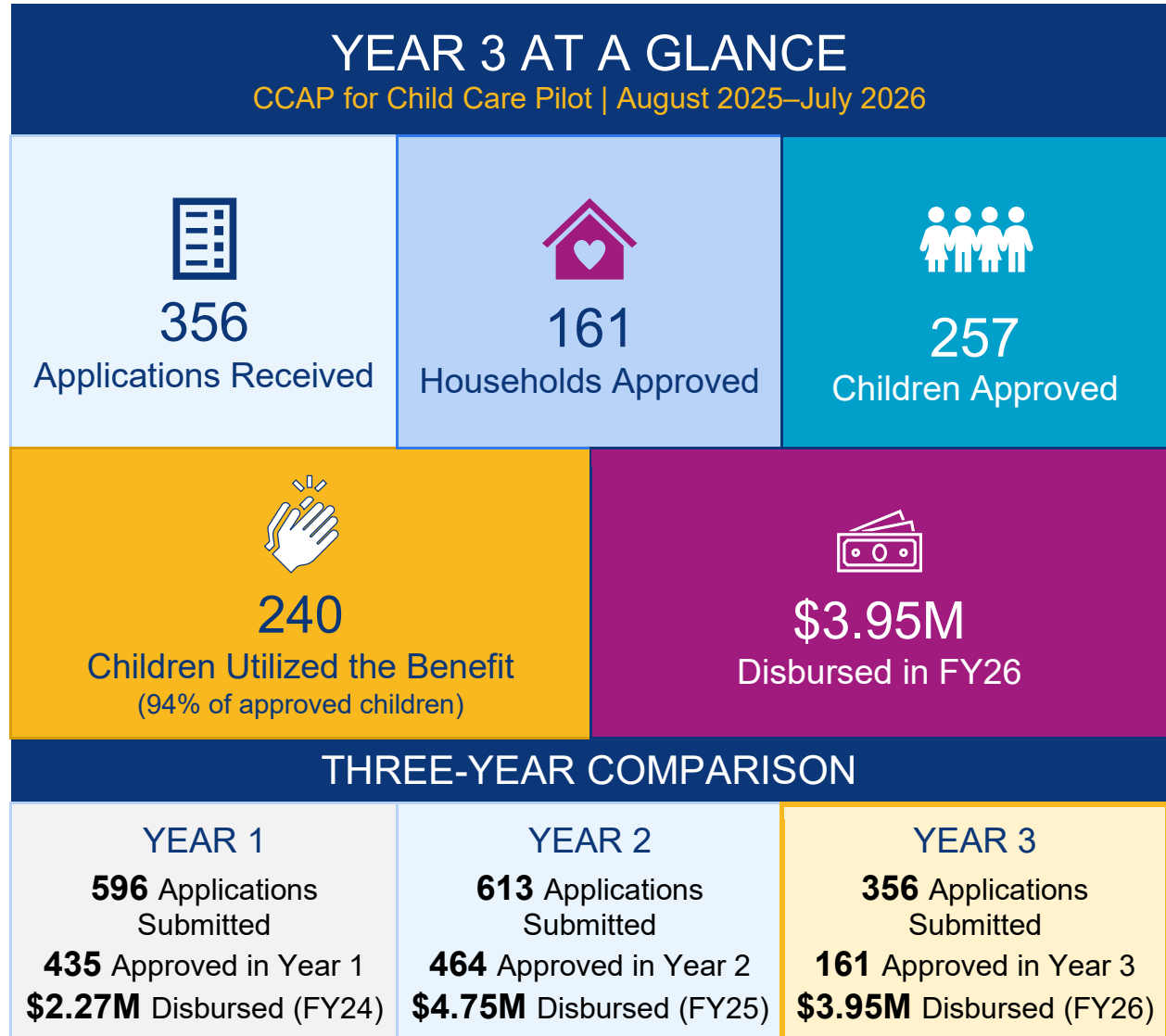
Pilot Administration

PCG set up an enrollment and disenrollment form for CCAP providers to enroll or disenroll approved pilot participants. Using the reported enrollments, PCG requests biweekly attendance reports by

email from CCAP providers to track the attendance of pilot participants' children in their program. This attendance request schedule aligns with the RIBridges attendance batching.

Monthly, PCG processes the attendance submissions from providers and issues payments by direct deposit or check to the CCAP provider. Monthly, PCG develops a projection spending workbook. This workbook projects the estimated total cost of the pilot.

FIGURE 4. CCAP FOR CHILD CARE PILOT YEAR 3



Year 3 operated under revised eligibility requirements. Duplicate submissions are excluded from application status totals.

APPLICATION STATUS

Year 3 applications fall into two categories. **Extension New** applications are from applicants applying to join the pilot during the extension period. **Extension Renewal** applications are from current or prior participants seeking continued eligibility under the extended pilot. The following table categorizes the application types throughout the life of the pilot.

TABLE 2. DEFINITION OF APPLICATION TYPES

Eligibility Regulations	Year	Application Type	Benefit Length	Definition
Original Eligibility Regulations	Year 1: August 23, 2023-July 2024	Pilot	1 year	Applied in Year 1, all first-time applicants
	Year 2: August 2024-July 2025	New	1 year	Applied for the first time in Year 2
		Renewal	1 year	Received benefits in Year 1 and reapplied Year 2
Revised Eligibility Regulations	Year 3: August 2025-Present	Extension New	2 years	Applied for the first time in Year 3
		Extension Renewal	2 years	Received benefits in Year 1 and/or Year 2, and reapplied in Year 3

Between August 1, 2025, and July 31, 2026, 356 applications were received. Of these, 265 or nearly three-quarters of Year 3 applicants were Extension Renewal applications from participants seeking continued eligibility, and 91 were Extension New applications.

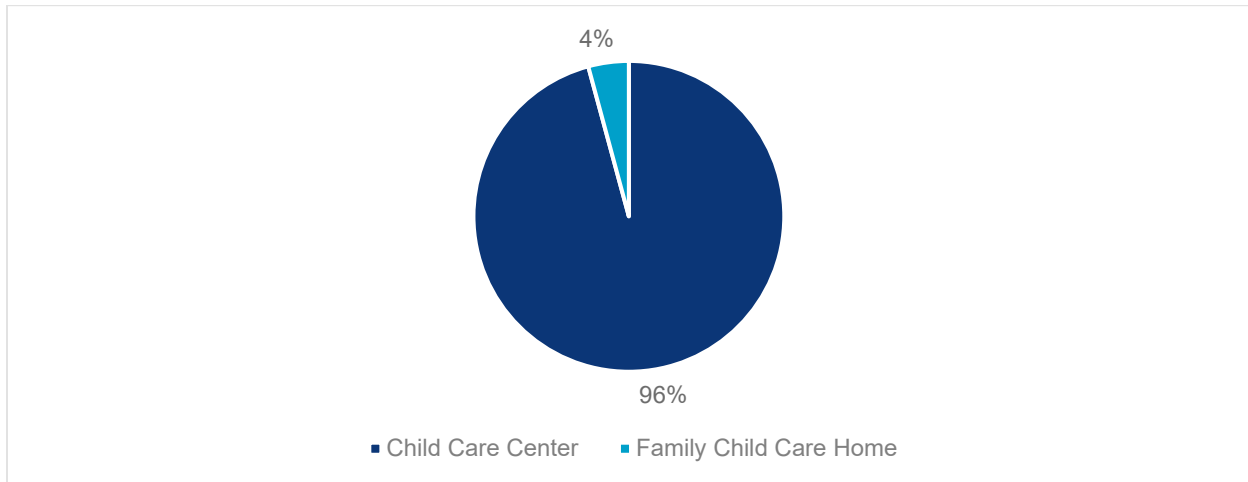
An “Approved” application means the applicant is approved to participate and utilize their benefits; an “Approved-Closed” application means the applicant was approved to participate; however, their benefit period has since closed.

TABLE 3. YEAR 3 APPLICATION STATUS DISTRIBUTION

Application Status	Count	Percent of Year 3 Applications
Approved-Active and Approved-Closed	161	45.2%
Canceled	93	26.1%
Denied	79	22.2%
Other review or processing statuses	23	6.5%
Total	356	100%

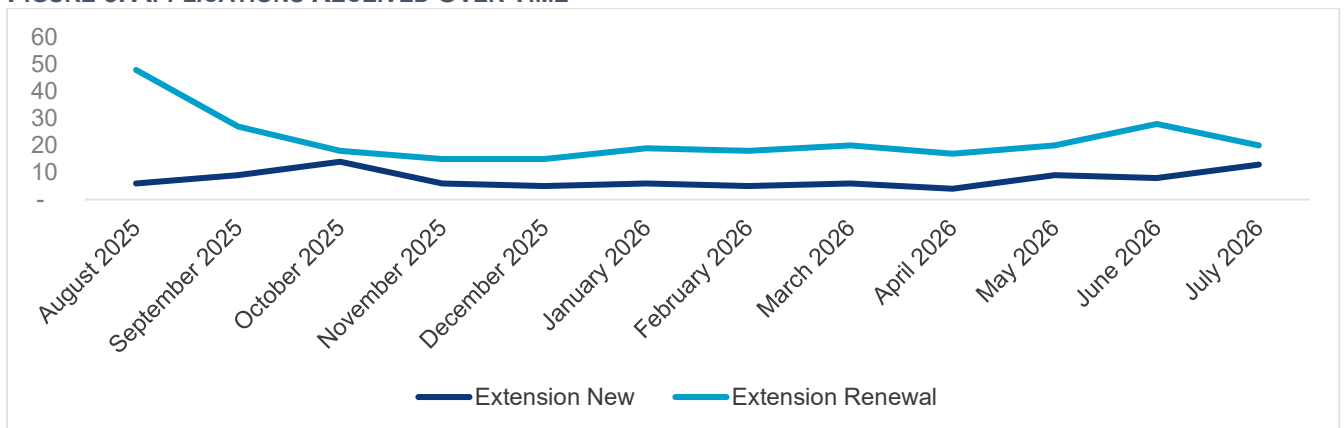
Almost all applications received are from early educators working at a child care center (96%). This high percentage of child care center participation remained consistent throughout Year 1 and Year 2.

FIGURE 5. APPLICATIONS BY PROVIDER TYPE



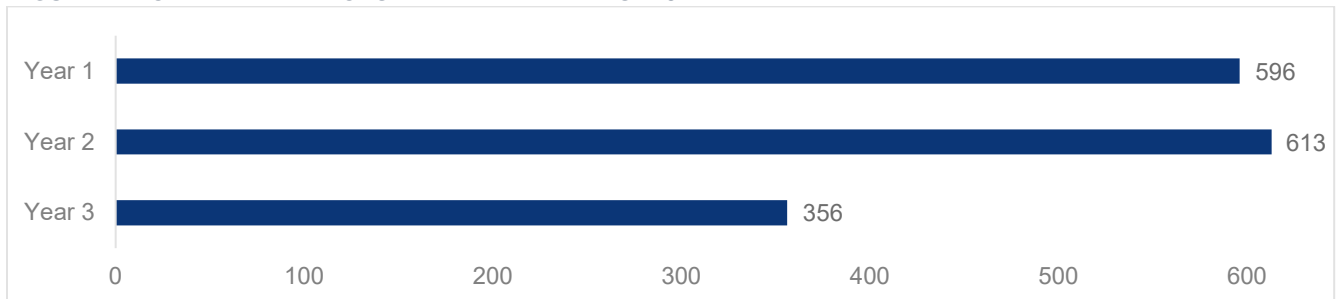
This distribution shows that Year 3 primarily served participants returning for continued eligibility. Extension Renewal applications outnumbered Extension New applications every month.

FIGURE 6. APPLICATIONS RECEIVED OVER TIME



Across the three years of the pilot, application volume was highest in Year 2 before declining in Year 3. The pilot received 356 applications in Year 3, reflecting lower overall submission volume than in the prior year. This decrease coincided with the extension period's revised eligibility requirements, including the requirement that applicants first apply for regular CCAP. The decline may also indicate that the pilot had already reached many eligible families during its first two years.

FIGURE 7. TOTAL APPLICATIONS RECEIVED IN YEARS 1-3



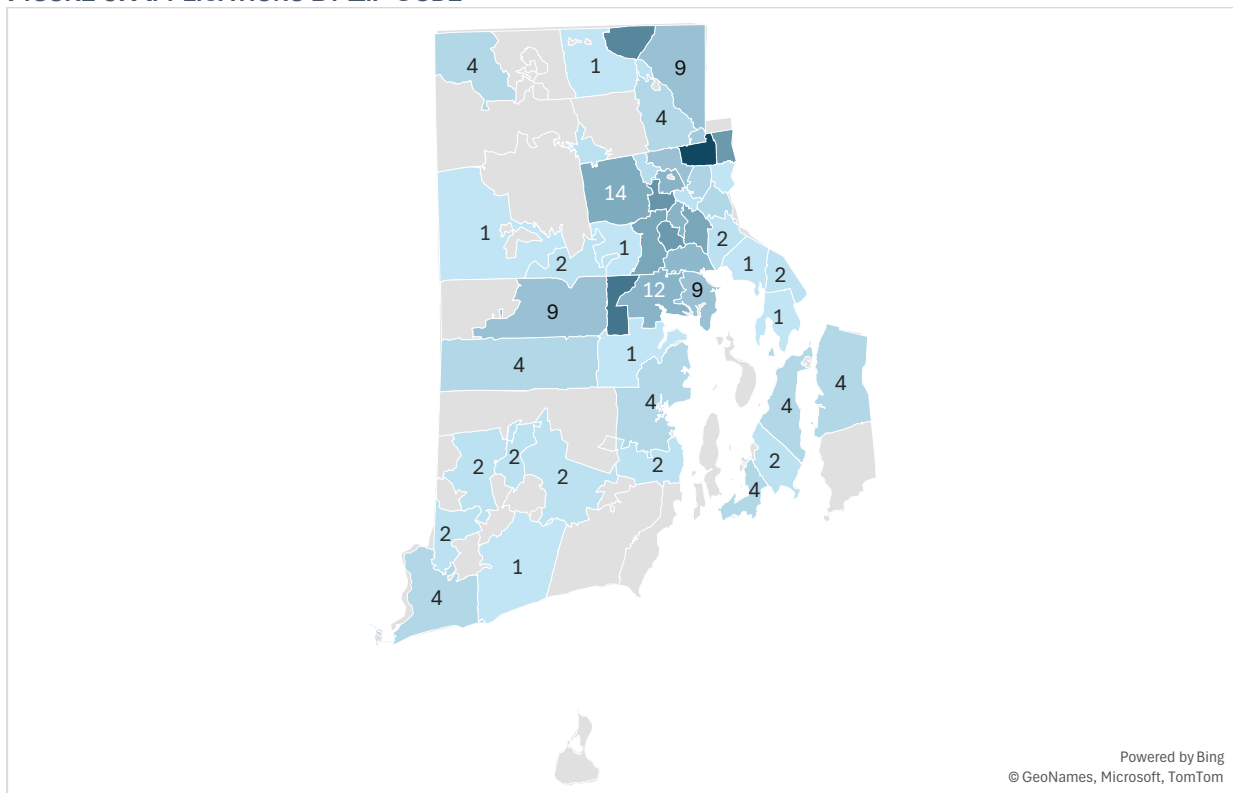
In Year 3, Providence accounted for the largest share of applications among the top 10 listed cities, with 69 applications (19.4%) in Year 3. Pawtucket followed with 53 applications (14.6%), while Cranston accounted for 40 applications (11.0%) and Warwick accounted for 32 applications (9%). Across the top cities shown below, Extension Renewal applications generally outnumbered Extension New applications.

TABLE 4. APPLICATIONS BY TOP 10 CITIES IN RHODE ISLAND FOR YEAR 3

Rank	City	Extension New	Extension Renewal	Total	Percent
1	Providence	15	54	69	19.4%
2	Pawtucket	12	41	53	14.6%
3	Cranston	12	28	40	11.2%
4	Warwick	6	26	32	9.0%
5	West Warwick	11	14	25	7.0%
6	Woonsocket	9	13	22	6.2%
7	Johnston	3	11	14	3.9%
8	Coventry	4	5	9	2.5%
9	Cumberland	0	9	9	2.5%
10	Central Falls	1	7	8	2.2%

While the heat map below indicates applicants came from various places across Rhode Island, most came from Providence.

FIGURE 8. APPLICATIONS BY ZIP CODE



DENIED APPLICATIONS

During Year 3, 79 applications were denied. Most denials (39) were due to household income being over 300% of the FPL. Additional reasons for denial included:

TABLE 5. DENIAL REASONS

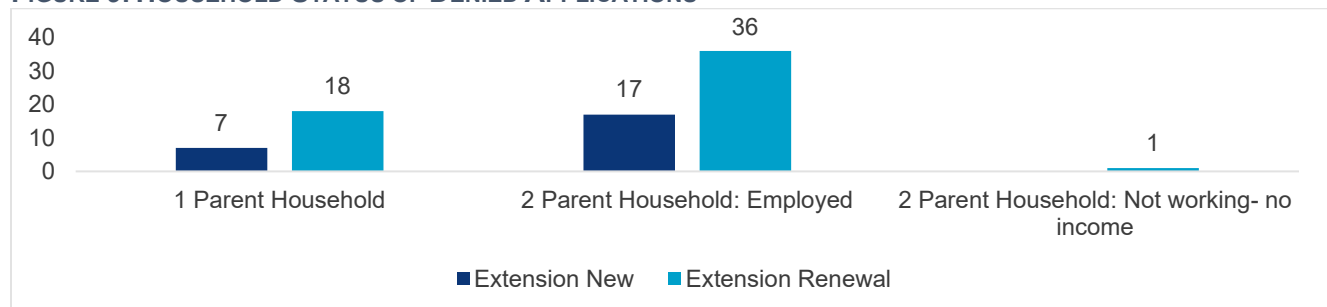
Denial Reason	Extension New	Extension Renewal	Year 3 Total
Household income is above 300% of the Federal Poverty Level	10	29	39
Failure to respond to DHS request for additional documentation for regular CCAP application	6	14	20
Parent is available to care for the child	7	8	15
Parent and/or child are not residents of Rhode Island		1	1
Not currently working in a DHS-licensed child care program at least 20 hours a week	1	1	2
Child is not between ages 6 weeks and 13 years old		1	1
Approved for regular CCAP with a \$0 copay, meaning participating in the pilot adds no additional benefit		1	1
Total Count	24	55	79

In Year 3, a new denial reason “Failure to respond to DHS request for additional documentation for regular CCAP application” was introduced with the requirement of applying for regular CCAP; this was the second most common denial reason (20). While applicants submitted a Benefit Decision Notice (BDN, to verify they’d applied to regular CCAP), the applicant’s failure to respond to an additional document request from DHS was the reason for denial (e.g. DHS could not properly determine eligibility and thus pilot eligibility could not be assessed).

The third most common denial reason (15) was “Parent in the household is available to care for the child”. This language also comes from the denial reason listed on the regular CCAP BDN. Of the 15 denied applications, most (13) were from a two-parent household where DHS did not receive verification that the second parent was participating in a need activity (employment or education).

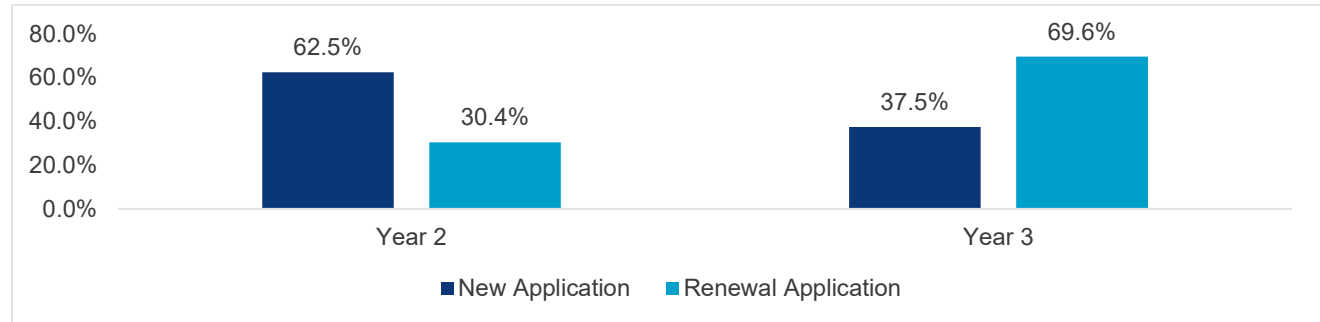
Two-parent households with both parents employed accounted for about two-thirds of denials in both Year 2 (66.6%) and Year 3 (67.09%).

FIGURE 9. HOUSEHOLD STATUS OF DENIED APPLICATIONS



In contrast from Year 2 where most denials came from new applications (62.5%), Year 3 denied applications were generally from renewal applicants (69.6%).

FIGURE 10. APPLICATION TYPE FOR DENIED APPLICATIONS YEAR 2 AND YEAR 3



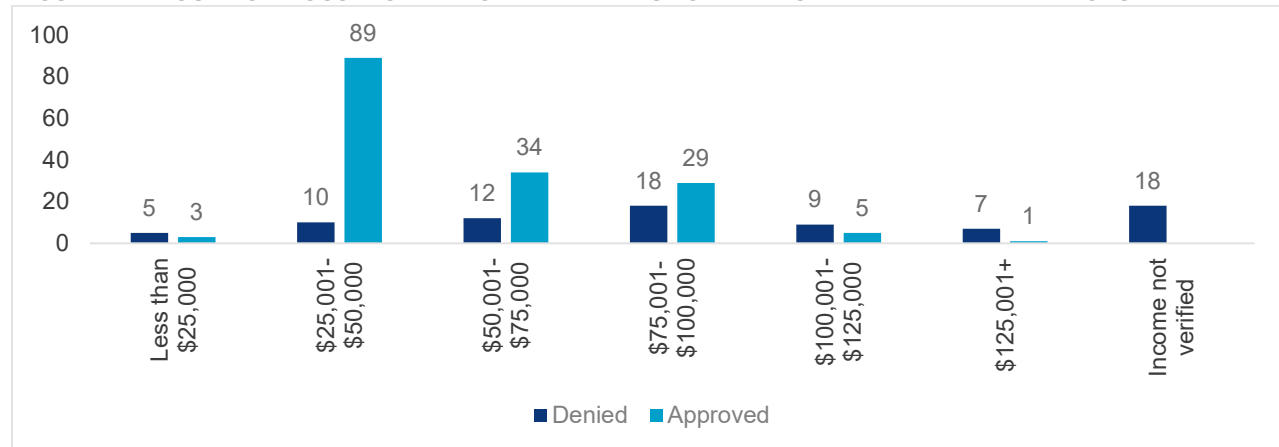
For two-parent households (not accounting for household size), the average income for those denied was similar to the household income of approved families. The income difference widens when comparing the income across all application years.

TABLE 6. AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY APPLICATION STATUS FOR TWO-PARENT HOUSEHOLDS

Household	Denied	Approved
Two-Parent Household in Year 3	\$86,387.80	\$81,610.70
Two-Parent Household across all years (Year 1-3)	\$72,810.80	\$54,100.02

Most denied applications had calculated income within the \$75,001-\$100,000 range². Household income data³ was provided by DHS from the regular CCAP application process; as some applicants did not complete their CCAP application or failed to provide complete paystubs, they were denied and their income was not verified.

FIGURE 11. COUNT OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME BRACKETS FOR APPROVED/DENIED APPLICATIONS



² Note that the federal poverty limit thresholds are specific to household size. A two-parent family with one child would have a lower threshold than a family with two, three or more children.

³ Of the 18 where "Income was not verified", CCAP applications were denied for reasons that didn't necessitate the verification of income (such as "Parent and/or child is not a resident of Rhode Island" (1), or "Parent is available to care for child" (5) while others (10) may not have provided sufficient income information and were denied due to "Failure to respond to an ADR". For 2 applicants, household income was estimated as being significantly over 300% FPL based on self-reporting and limited paystubs; however, income was not verified.

CANCELLED APPLICATIONS

In Year 3, 93 applications were cancelled. The primary cancellation reason was failure to provide the required Benefit Decision Notice (BDN) from regular CCAP (57). Providing a BDN is required to verify if the applicant met all regular CCAP requirements, except for household income. The second most common reason was failure to provide proof of regular CCAP application (24). Both cancellation reasons are new in Year 3, related to the requirement to apply for regular CCAP.

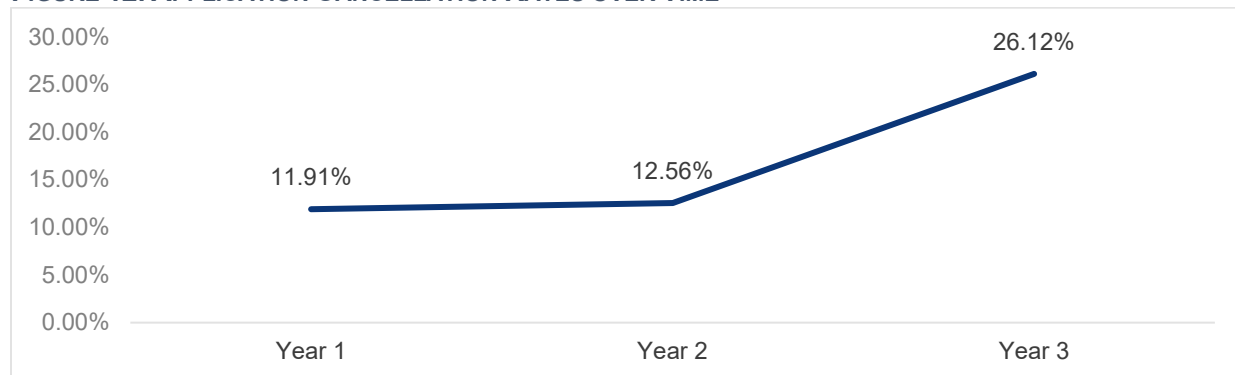
Failure to provide paystubs was the third most common cancellation reason in Year 3, while it was the most common cancellation reason in both Year 1 and Year 2.

TABLE 7. COUNT OF CANCELLATION REASONS IN YEAR 3

Cancellation Reason	Count
Failure to upload BDN	57
Failure to upload proper proof of applying for regular CCAP	24
Failure to provide pay stubs	6
Applied for renewal too early (more than 30 days prior to benefit expiration)	2
Voluntarily withdrew	2
\$0 family copay assigned to household, so no benefit in continuing application	1
Parent not working in child care	1
Total	93

The cancellation percentage in Year 3 was 26.12%. This was higher than previous cancellation rates, of 12.58% in Year 2 and 11.91% in Year 1.

FIGURE 12. APPLICATION CANCELLATION RATES OVER TIME



Renewal applications represented more of the cancelled applications (70.9%) than new applications (29.03%). This is also different from Year 2 when new applications represented more of the cancelled applications (62.33%) than renewal applications (37.66%).

APPROVED APPLICANTS

Approval rates remained relatively stable during the first two pilot years before declining in Year 3. The shift occurred as the pilot moved into its extension phase and introduced revised eligibility and application requirements, including the requirement to first apply for regular CCAP.

TABLE 8. APPROVAL RATE BY PILOT YEAR

Pilot Year	Approved Applicants	Total Applications	Approval Rate	Change vs. Prior Year	Application Types
Year 1	435	596	73.0%	—	Pilot Application
Year 2	464	613	75.7%	+2.7%	New + Renewal

Pilot Year	Approved Applicants	Total Applications	Approval Rate	Change vs. Prior Year	Application Types
Year 3	161	356	45.2%	-30.5%	Extension New + Extension Renewal

Year 3 approved applicants were overwhelmingly child care center employees and predominantly from one-parent households (71.4%).

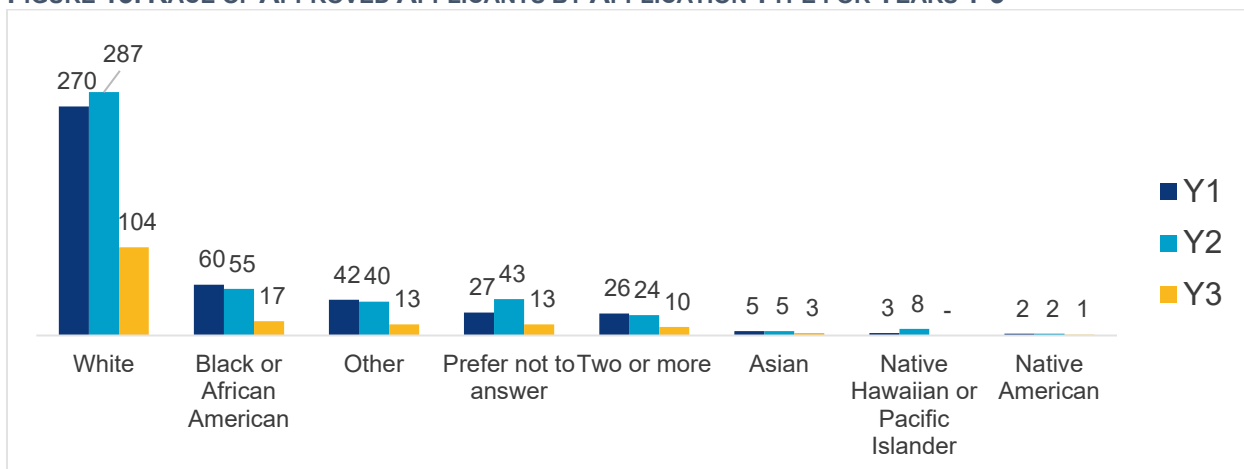
Consistent with Year 2 approvals, most participants (16%) listed their role as a Preschool Assistant Teacher.

TABLE 9. MOST COMMON JOB TITLES AMONG APPROVED APPLICANTS FROM YEARS 1-3.

Most Common Job Ranking	Year 1	Year 1 Percent	Year 2	Year 2 Percent	Year 3	Year 3 Percent
1	Toddler Assistant Teacher	13.13%	Preschool Assistant Teacher	12.1%	Preschool Assistant Teacher	16%
2	Toddler Lead Teacher	11.75%	Toddler Lead Teacher	11.9%	Preschool Lead Teacher	15%
3	Infant Assistant Teacher	11.29%	Toddler Assistant Teacher	11%	Toddler Lead Teacher	12%
4	Preschool Lead Teacher	9.91%	Preschool Lead Teacher	10.1%	Infant Lead Teacher	9%

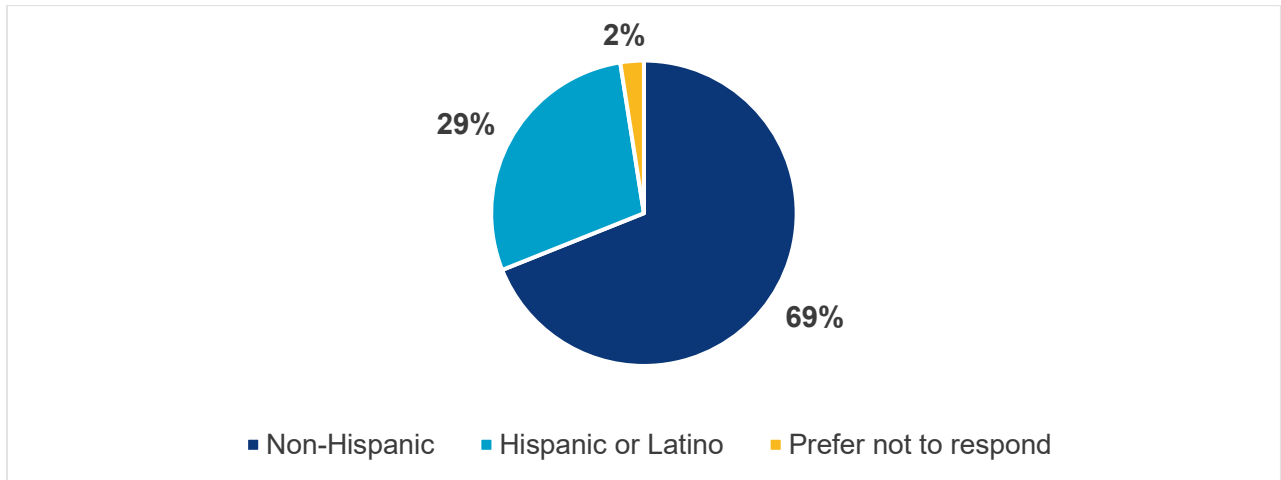
Among the 161 applicants approved in Year 3, nearly two-thirds identified as White (104, or 64.6%). Black or African American applicants represented 10.6%, while 8.1% identified as another race and 8.1% preferred not to answer.

FIGURE 13. RACE OF APPROVED APPLICANTS BY APPLICATION TYPE FOR YEARS 1-3



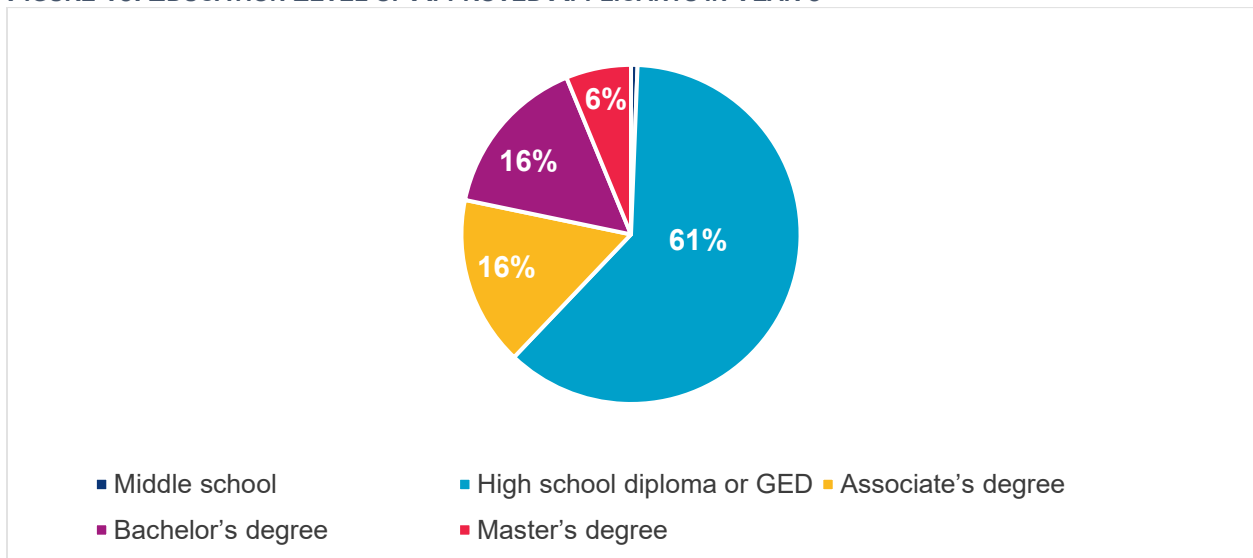
In Year 3, most approved applicants (68.94%) identified as non-Hispanic, while nearly 30% identified as Hispanic.

FIGURE 14. APPROVED APPLICANTS BY ETHNICITY IN YEAR 3



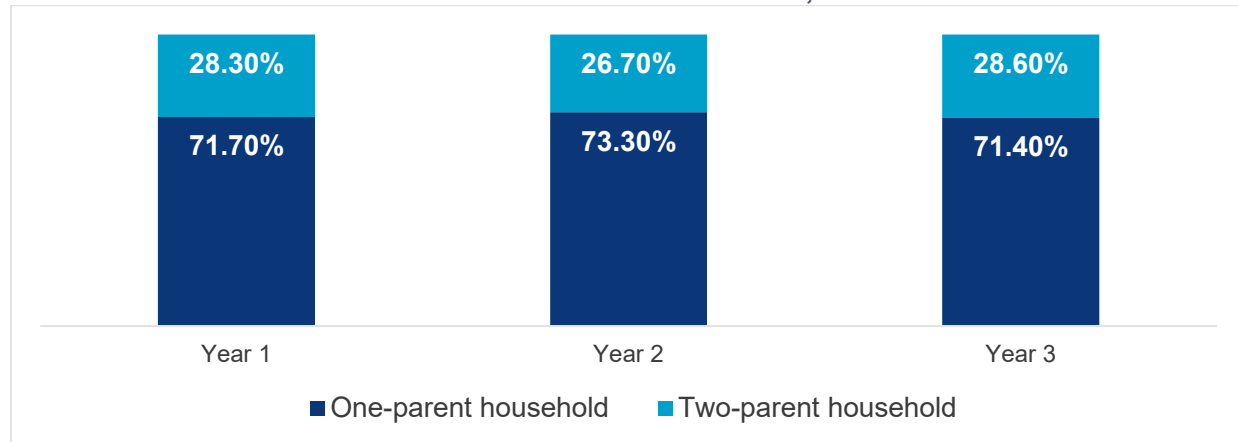
In Year 3, most approved applicants reported a high school diploma or GED as their highest level of education. About one-third (32%) held a postsecondary degree, most commonly an associate or bachelor's degree, while comparatively few (6%) reported a master's degree, doctoral, or professional degree. Overall, Year 3 approvals primarily served early educators without a college degree.

FIGURE 15. EDUCATION LEVEL OF APPROVED APPLICANTS IN YEAR 3



Across all three years of the pilot, nearly three-quarters of approved applicants were from one-parent households (72.4%), while 27.6% were from two-parent households. Beginning in Year 3, in alignment with regular CCAP requirements, both parents were required to participate in approved training or education; this did not appear to impact the proportion of two-parent households approved to participate.

FIGURE 16. APPROVED APPLICANTS BY HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION, YEARS 1–3



In Year 3, approximately 60% of applicants approved lived in households of two or three people. Households of four represented another 26.7%, while households of six or more accounted for 4.35% of approved applicants.

TABLE 10. YEAR 3 APPROVED APPLICANTS BY HOUSEHOLD SIZE

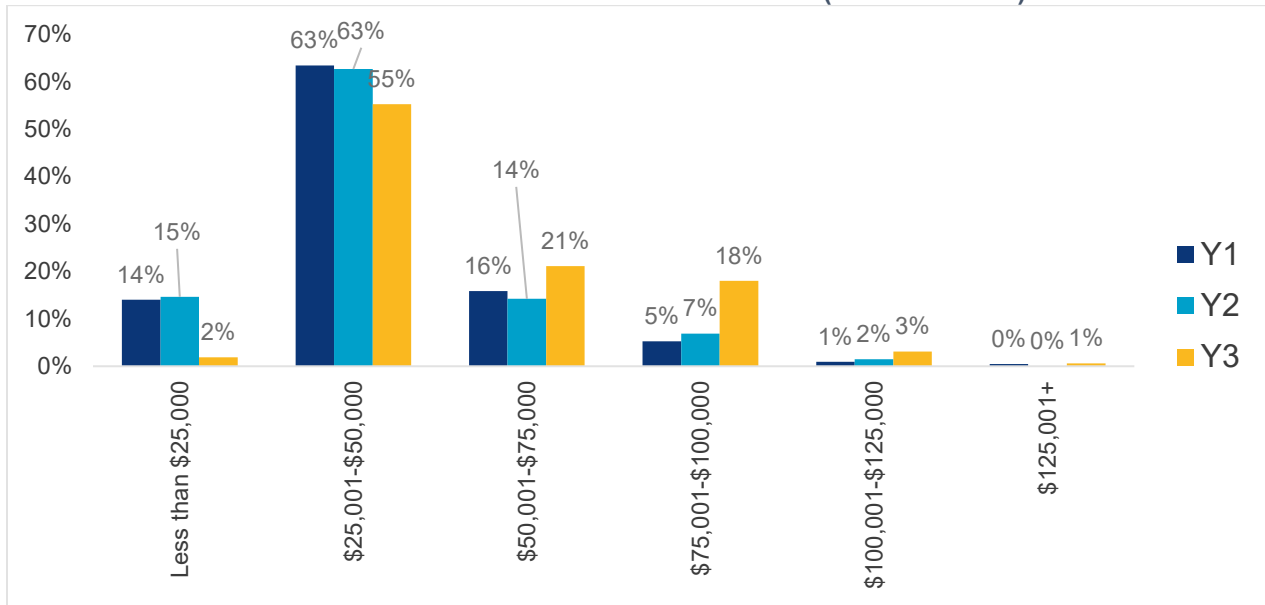
Household Size	Applicants	Percentage
2	52	32.30%
3	45	27.95%
4	43	26.71%
5	14	8.70%
6	5	3.11%
7	2	1.24%
8	0	0.00%
Total	161	100.00%

Average household income differed substantially by household composition in Year 3. One-parent households had an average income of \$43,095.75, compared with \$81,610.70 among two-parent households. This pattern was evident across both application types. Among Extension Renewal applicants, average income was \$44,674.53 for one-parent households and \$79,443.71 for two-parent households. Among Extension New applicants, the corresponding averages were \$36,028.81 and \$88,505.65. Because the two-parent Extension New subgroup included only 11 approved applications, that estimate should be interpreted with appropriate caution.

TABLE 11. HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY APPLICATION TYPE AND HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION IN YEAR 3

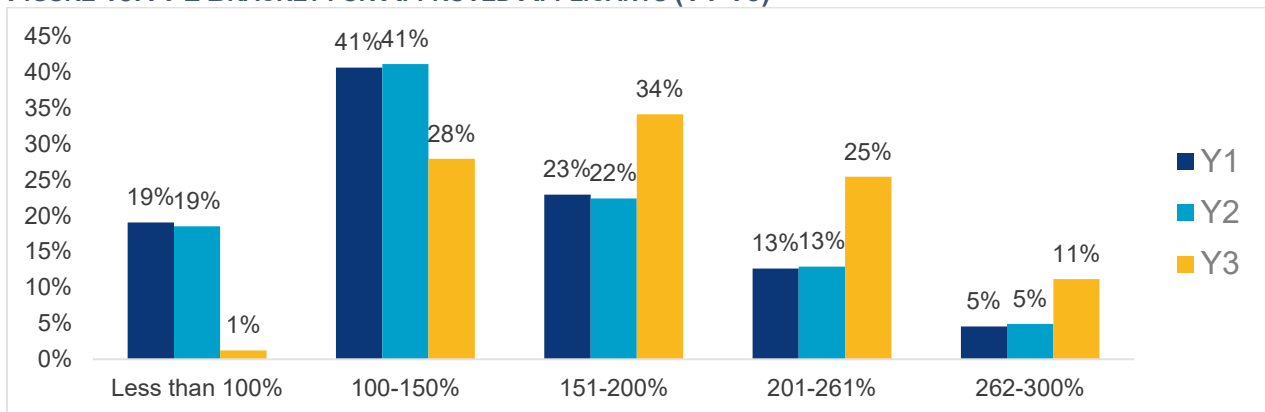
Application Type and Household Composition	Year 3 Applications	Average Income	Share of Cohort
Extension Renewal	129	\$54,108.03	80.1%
One-parent household	94	\$44,674.53	58.4%
Two-parent household	35	\$79,443.71	21.7%
Extension New	32	\$54,067.73	19.9%
One-parent household	21	\$36,028.81	13.0%
Two-parent household	11	\$88,505.65	6.8%
Year 3 Total	161	\$54,100.02	100.0%
One-parent households	115	\$43,095.75	71.4%
Two-parent households	46	\$81,610.70	28.6%

FIGURE 17. APPROVED APPLICANTS' HOUSEHOLD INCOME BRACKET (YEAR 1-YEAR 3)



The household eligibility income limit for the pilot is 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). Using 2026 FPL thresholds, 88.82% of Year 3 approved and approved-closed applicants had household income at or below 261% FPL, making them income eligible for regular DHS CCAP benefits. The largest share had income between 151% and 200% FPL (34.16%), followed by those between 100% and 150% FPL (27.95%).

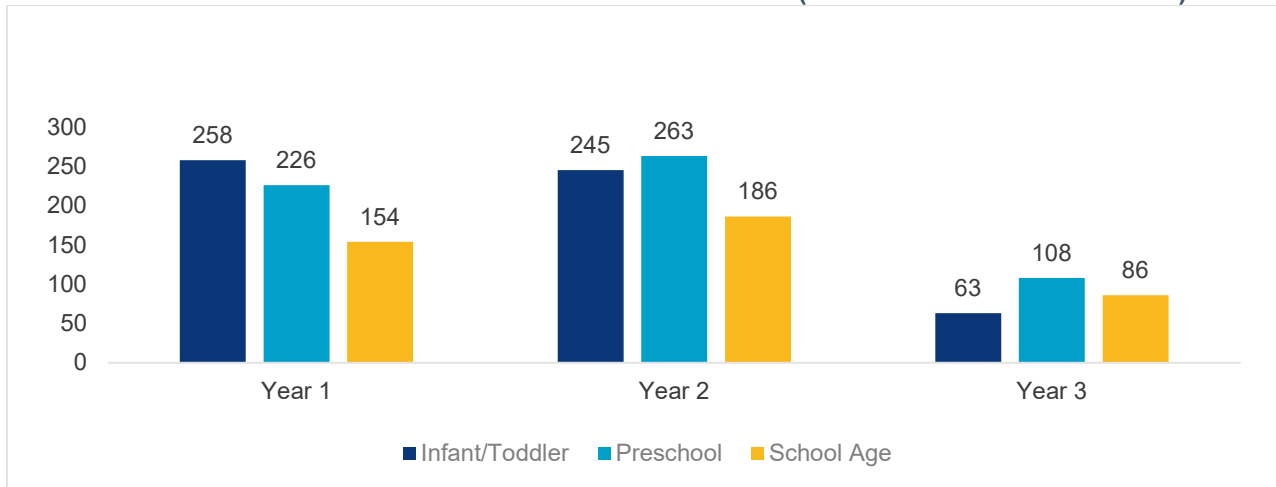
FIGURE 18. FPL BRACKET FOR APPROVED APPLICANTS (Y1-Y3)



PARTICIPATING CHILDREN

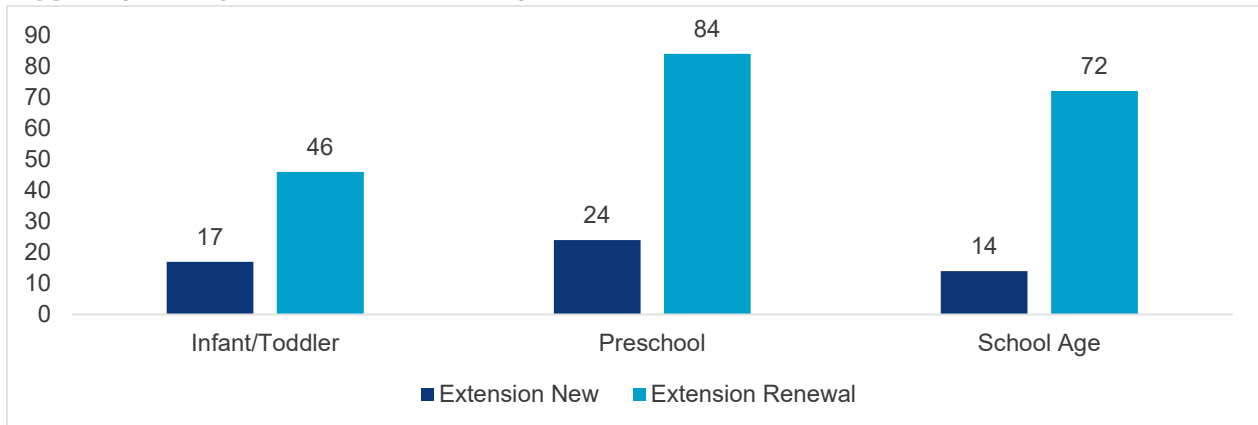
A total of 1,589 children have been approved to participate in the pilot since the inception of the program in 2023. During Year 3 of the pilot, 257 children were approved. Preschool was the most common age category served by the pilot program, with 42% of those with an approved benefit being preschool aged.

FIGURE 19. CHILDREN APPROVED BY AGE AND APPLICATION TYPE (INCLUDING APPROVED-CLOSED)



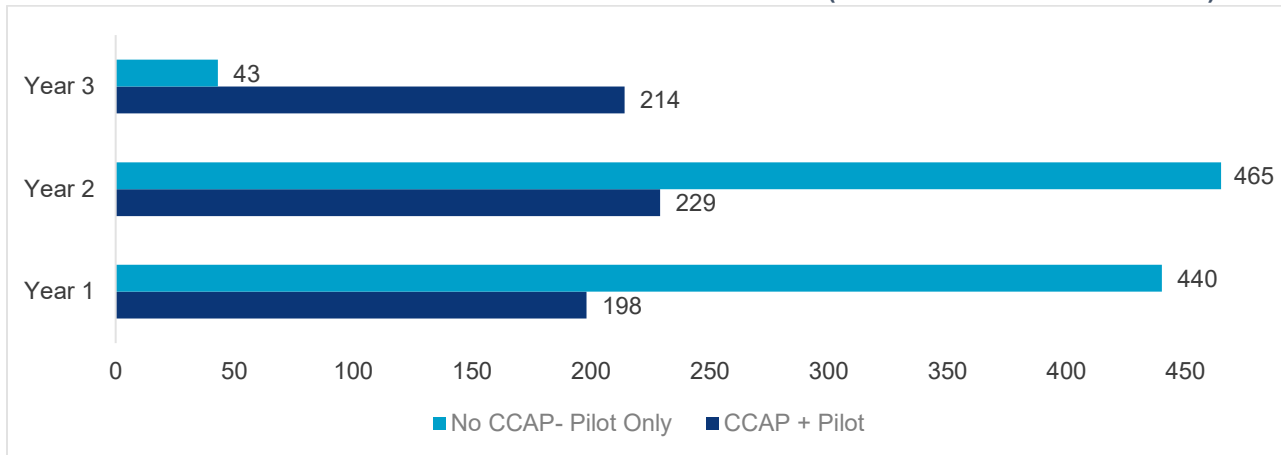
As of July 31, 2026, 257 children were approved for Year 3 of the pilot. The number of approved children in Year 3 is lower than the number of children who were approved in Year 2 (257 vs. 695). This decline can be attributed to fewer applicants overall. Children with an extension renewal application made up 79% of Year 3 applications.

FIGURE 20. APPROVED CHILDREN IN YEAR 3



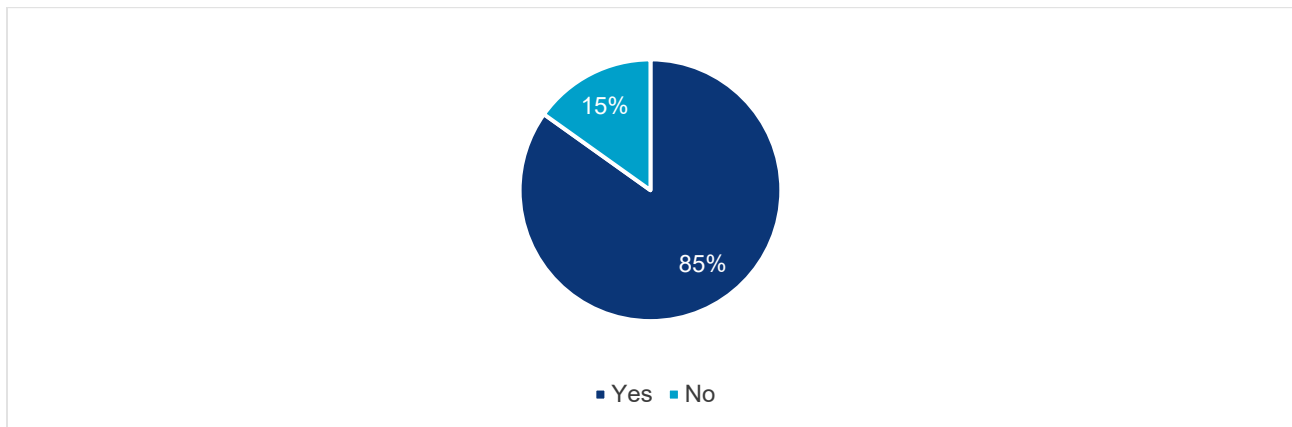
Over the three years of the pilot program, the number of children participating in regular CCAP has drastically shifted. In Year 1 and 2 of the pilot, children were approximately twice as likely not to participate in CCAP as to participate. By Year 3, children were approximately five times more likely to participate in regular CCAP than to be covered by the pilot only.

FIGURE 21. COUNT OF CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN REGULAR CCAP (INCLUDING APPROVED-CLOSED)



Currently, of the 251 Approved-Active children, 85% are participating in regular CCAP.

FIGURE 22. APPROVED-ACTIVE CHILDREN COVERED BY REGULAR CCAP IN YEAR 3



ENROLLMENTS

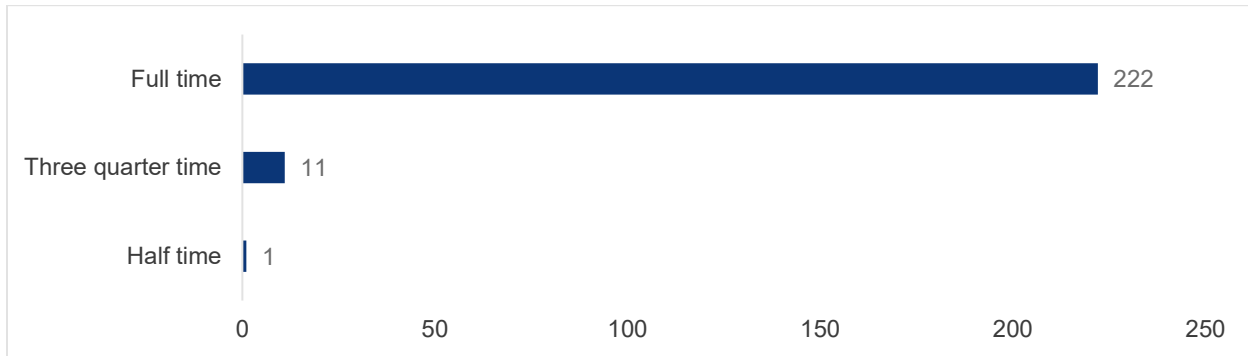
Throughout Year 3, 93.4% of approved children utilized their pilot benefit by enrolling in a CCAP program at some point during the year. Most of the children (78%) utilizing their benefit were covered by both regular CCAP and the pilot. Of the approved children who never utilized their pilot benefit (6.6%), most (71%) were associated with new applications. These children were also more likely to participate in regular CCAP.

TABLE 12. BENEFIT STATUS IN YEAR 3

Benefit Status	Pilot Only	Regular CCAP + Pilot	Total
Utilized Benefit	16%	78%	93.4%
Never Utilized Benefit	1%	5%	6.6%
Grand Total			100%

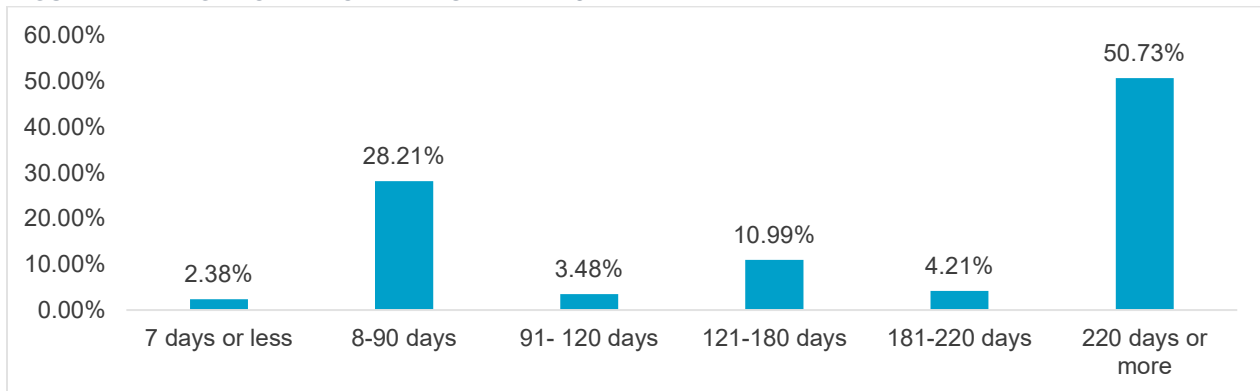
Most active enrollments were for full-time coverage.

FIGURE 23. ACTIVE ENROLLMENTS BY ENROLLED HOURS FOR APPROVED CHILDREN



Across the life of the pilot (Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3), the average length of time a child was enrolled in a CCAP program was 265 days. This is an increase from the 243 days over Year 1 and Year 2. In Year 3, half of the children stayed in their enrollment for longer than 220 days (just over seven months).

FIGURE 24. LENGTH OF ENROLLMENTS IN YEAR 3



Most (41.42%) approved-active children in Year 3 have enrolled in a single program throughout their benefit period.⁴ Another 25.52% enrolled with two different programs throughout their benefit period. A small percentage (5.45%) enrolled with six or more providers during their benefit period.

TABLE 13. NUMBER OF ENROLLMENTS DURING BENEFIT PERIOD

Number of Enrollments	Percent of Children
Enrollment 1	41.42%
Enrollment 2	25.52%
Enrollment 3	17.57%
Enrollment 4	6.69%
Enrollment 5	3.35%
Enrollments 6+	5.45%

The following table shows the average enrollment rate over time during Year 3 of the pilot. Please note, this table references specific dates that are a point in time and may be inclusive of all approved children (Pilot Application from Year 1, New and Renewal Applications from Year 2, and Extension

⁴ For children under an Extension Renewal application, their enrollment is also inclusive of their Year 1 and Year 2 participation. For these children, if the renewal application was processed prior to the closure of their Year 1 or Year 2 benefit, the child's enrollment was continuous, meaning the child was not disenrolled from their program and reenrolled.

New and Renewal Applications from Year 3). On average, 74% of approved children utilize their benefit by enrolling in a CCAP program.

TABLE 14. COUNT OF ACTIVE ENROLLMENTS POINT IN TIME EACH MONTH

Date	Enrolled Children	Total Approved Pilot Children	Enrollment Rate
8/26/2025	513	644	80%
9/30/2025	424	556	76%
10/28/2025	398	522	76%
11/24/2025	394	516	76%
12/30/2025	364	474	77%
1/27/2026	342	449	76%
2/24/2026	307	411	75%
3/31/2026	287	396	72%
4/28/2026	275	379	73%
5/26/2026	247	335	74%
6/30/2026	201	294	68%
7/30/2026	186	262	70%

CHILDREN WITH NO ENROLLMENTS

Of the 17 approved children in Year 3 who have not yet utilized their pilot benefit, 41% were approved in June 2026 or July 2026, and have up to 24 months to utilize their pilot benefit.

TABLE 15. CHILDREN NEVER ENROLLED BY APPLICATION MONTH

Application Approval Month	Count
September 2025	1
November 2025	2
January 2026	1
February 2026	5
April 2026	1
June 2026	4
July 2026	3
Total	17

These 17 children are evenly split across age categories, with six infants/toddlers, four preschool age, and seven school-age children. Of these children, 82% are approved for regular CCAP, meaning that there are only three children who are not utilizing full pilot coverage.

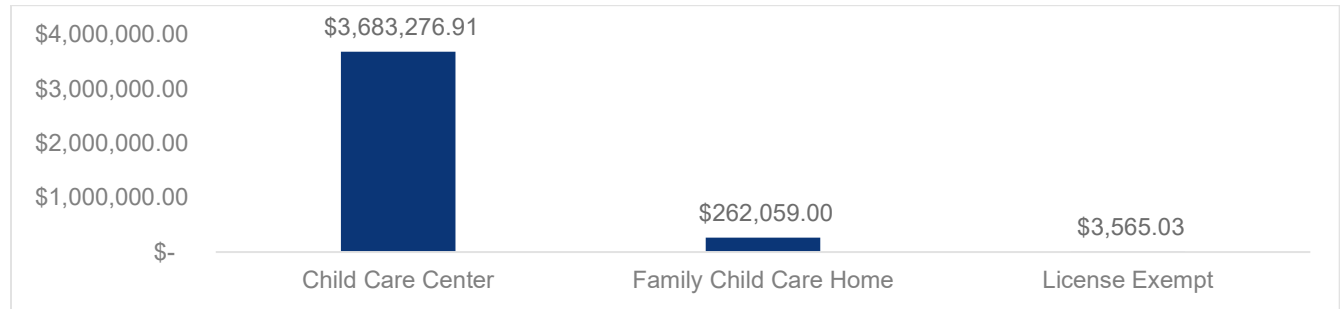
IMPACT

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds Disbursed

In FY26, the pilot distributed a total of \$3,948,900.94 in child care payments. Most of these funds went to Child Care Centers (\$3,683,276.91; 93.3%), followed by Family Child Care Homes (\$262,059.00, 6.6%). Only a very small share went to license-exempt providers (\$3,565.03; <0.1%). This distribution reflects the structure of the provider market, where Child Care Centers serve most families.

FIGURE 25. FUNDS DISBURSED IN FY26 BY PROVIDER TYPE



Overall, as of July 31, 2026, the pilot has disbursed \$10,960,714.82 in funds to child care programs.

TABLE 16. FUNDS DISBURSED TO DATE BY PROVIDER TYPE

Provider Type	FY24	FY25	FY26	Total
Child Care Center	\$2,025,357.20	\$4,324,951.53	\$3,683,276.91	\$10,033,585.64
Family Child Care Home	\$235,506.89	\$418,328.00	\$262,059.00	\$915,893.89
License Exempt	\$4,362.26	\$3,308.00	\$3,565.03	\$11,235.29
Total	\$2,265,226.35	\$4,746,587.53	\$3,948,900.94	\$10,960,714.82

The decrease in pilot costs in FY26 may be attributed to the increase in regular CCAP participation (where the pilot issued a copay only for the child) as well as a decrease in the number of children approved to participate.

In FY26, the pilot issued payments to 230 CCAP programs on behalf of 697 unique children. This is a slight decrease in both programs and children from FY25.

TABLE 17. COUNT OF UNIQUE PROGRAMS AND CHILDREN TIED TO PAYMENTS

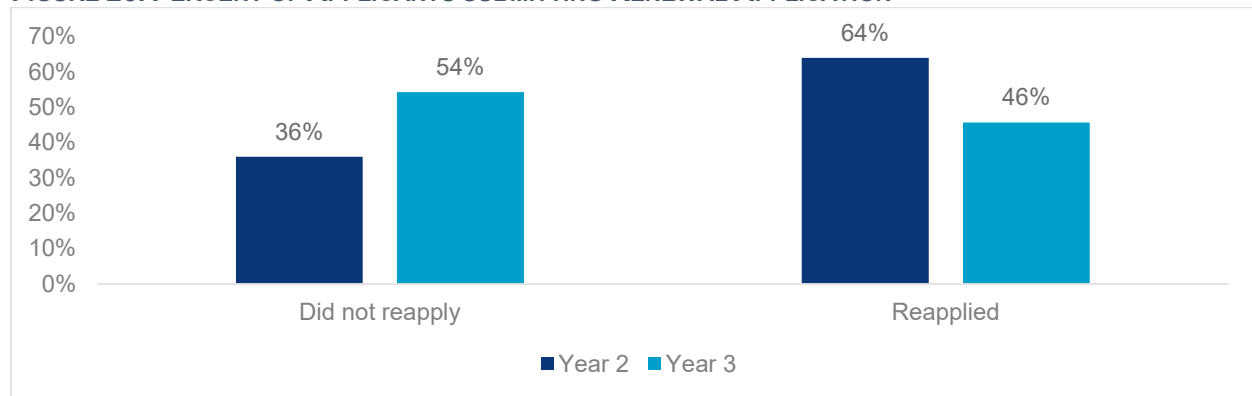
Fiscal Year	Unique Programs Receiving Payments	Unique Children Associated with Payments
FY24	200	568
FY25	247	740
FY26	230	697

Renewal Rate

Year 2 approved applicants were notified 60, 30, and 10 days in advance of their pilot benefit closure and encouraged to reapply for Year 3. Of the 464 applicants approved in Year 2, 212 (45.69%) submitted a renewal for Year 3, while 252 (54.31%) did not.

Year 3 saw a lower renewal rate when compared to Year 2. In Year 2, nearly two-thirds of applicants approved in Year 1 submitted a renewal application. In Year 3, less than half of applicants approved in Year 2 submitted a renewal application.

FIGURE 26. PERCENT OF APPLICANTS SUBMITTING RENEWAL APPLICATION



Of the 212 applicants who submitted a renewal application, most (125, or 58%) submitted the application prior to their previous benefit expiring (so there is no gap in coverage). The remaining 87 submitted their renewal after their pilot benefit expired, creating a gap in coverage.

For those who submitted their renewal in Year 3, 56.6% were approved to continue their pilot benefit. As noted previously in this report, 16.98% of applications were cancelled and 19.34% were denied.

Quarterly throughout Year 3, PCG conducted outreach to Year 2 approved participants who had not yet reapplied to better understand their reason for not reapplying; this accounted for 252 participants. Surveys were sent quarterly by email and follow-up phone calls were conducted, 30.16% responded to outreach. This response rate to outreach was similar in Year 2, at 31.54%. A small percentage (1.98%) had unreachable contact information, and one person requested no additional contact.

The most common reason for non-renewal was staff leaving the child care workforce, which accounted for 37 cases (23.23%). Other reasons included not realizing a renewal was required (3.23%) or no longer needing the benefit (3.23%) or moving out of state (0.65%).

TABLE 18. REASONS FOR NON-RENEWAL IN YEAR 2

Reason for Not Submitting a Renewal Application	Count	Percent
Unknown, non-responsive	170	67.46%
I no longer work in child care	25	9.92%
I didn't want to apply for regular CCAP	20	7.94%
I have submitted a renewal application	6	2.38%
I no longer needed the pilot benefits	6	2.38%
I am having trouble applying for regular CCAP.	6	2.38%
I haven't submitted a renewal application, but still plan to do so	7	2.78%
Unreachable Contact Information	5	1.98%
I didn't know I had to submit a renewal application	3	1.19%
I was approved for regular CCAP with a \$0 copay, so the pilot provides no additional benefit	2	0.79%
Requested no additional contact	1	0.40%
I did not have a positive experience with the CCAP for Child Care pilot and did not want to reapply	1	0.40%
Total	252	100.00%

MIDPOINT SURVEY FINDINGS

Applicant Midpoint Survey Insights

In January 2026, PCG released an online midpoint survey to 309 approved pilot participants (the total approved families at that point in time). The survey was open from January 8, 2026-January 31, 2026. The purpose of the survey was to better understand participants' experience with the pilot. There were 102 respondents, representing a response rate of 33%.

The following section highlights key findings from this survey.

Awareness and Outreach

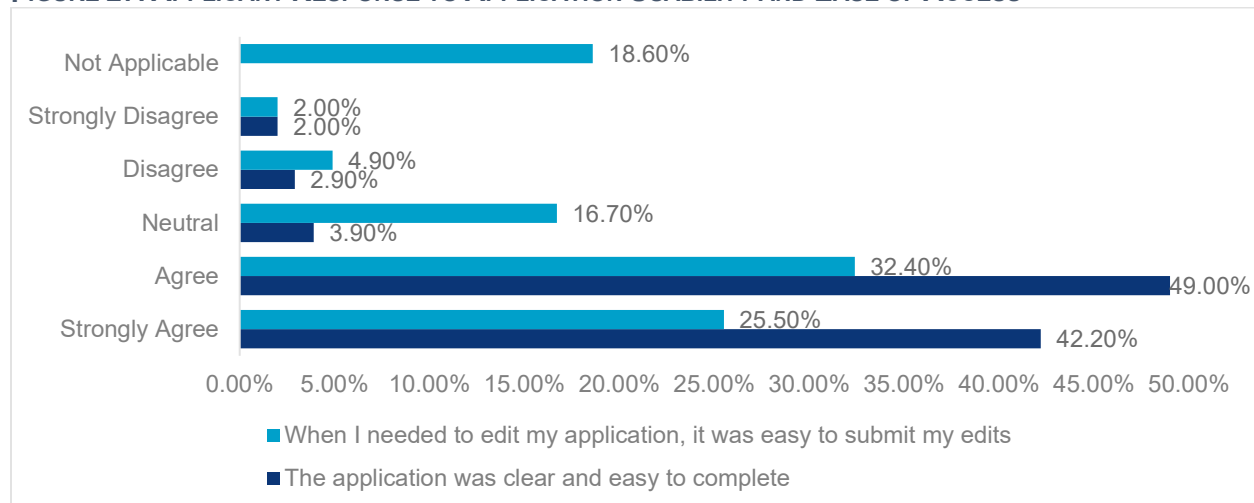
Most people (64.7%) heard about the pilot from their employer. Fewer people learned through DHS announcements (17.6%) or coworkers (6.9%), and only a handful heard through friends, family, or other channels.

Application Usability and Support

The majority of applicants described the application as easy to find, access, and complete. The survey indicated 76.5% agreed it was simple to find information about the program online, and 85.3% said it was easy to access the application itself. Additionally, 91.2% felt the application was clear and easy to complete. These responses were similar to the FY25 applicant responses.

Some applicants identified challenges with the application process. These were focused on the time required to complete the regular CCAP application, the regular CCAP eligibility requirements (outside of income), and difficulties accessing the application portal.

FIGURE 27. APPLICANT RESPONSE TO APPLICATION USABILITY AND EASE OF ACCESS



Technical support played an important role. Half (52%) of applicants did not need technical support, and almost all rated the assistance they received as positive. Only 2% said they had a negative experience. Applicants also noted that responses from the CCAP for Child Care email inbox were timely, with more than half (52.9%) calling them promptly and another quarter (44.1%) reported the wait was about what they expected.

Enrollment Experience and Provider Support

Most applicants (79.4%) agreed or strongly agreed that it was easy to find a CCAP program for their child to attend, while 7.8% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Most applicants (81.4%) stated their child was attending the CCAP program where they were already enrolled. This is an increase from FY25 where only 65.5% of children were enrolled in a CCAP program where they were already enrolled.

TABLE 19. WHERE PILOT CHILDREN WERE ENROLLED

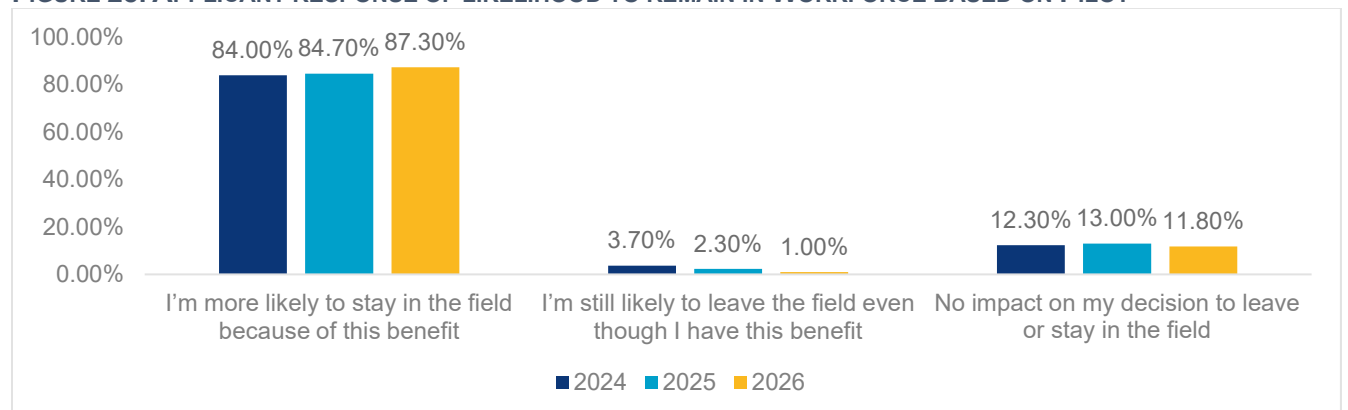
Where did you enroll your child in care during the CCAP for Child Care Program?	2024	2025	2026
I have not enrolled my child at a CCAP program/I am not utilizing the benefit	3.70%	1.50%	1.00%
My child is attending the CCAP program where they were already enrolled	68.50%	65.60%	81.40%
My child moved from a non-CCAP program to a CCAP program as a result of this pilot	10.50%	9.20%	3.90%
My child was not enrolled in any care and became enrolled at a CCAP program as a result of this pilot	17.30%	23.70%	13.70%

Most applicants understood how to complete the enrollment process. About 83% agreed or strongly agreed that the steps were clear. Applicants (85.3%) also felt their providers generally knew how to support the enrollment, with only 4% expressing some uncertainty or disagreement.

Impact of Workforce Retention

Survey results showed 87.3% of applicants said they are more likely to stay in the workforce because of the benefit, slightly increased from previous years (84% in both 2024 and 2025). A small number (1%) said they would still leave despite having access to the benefit, and 11.8% said the pilot had no impact on their decision.

FIGURE 28. APPLICANT RESPONSE OF LIKELIHOOD TO REMAIN IN WORKFORCE BASED ON PILOT

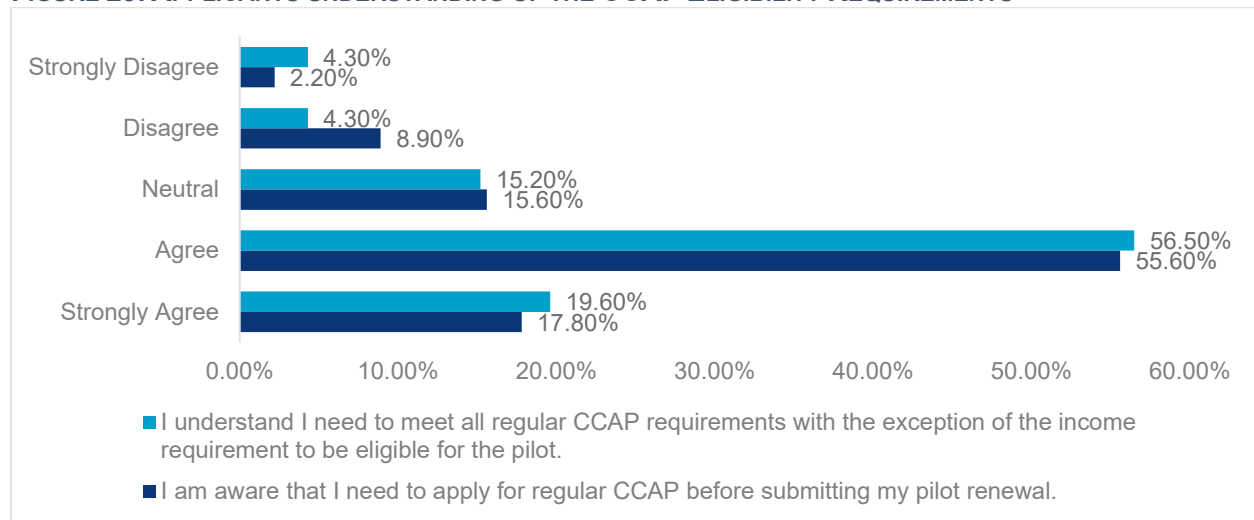


Future Participation and Transition to Regular CCAP

The program has strong support moving forward. Nearly all applicants (97.1%) said they were somewhat likely or very likely to apply again if the pilot continues.

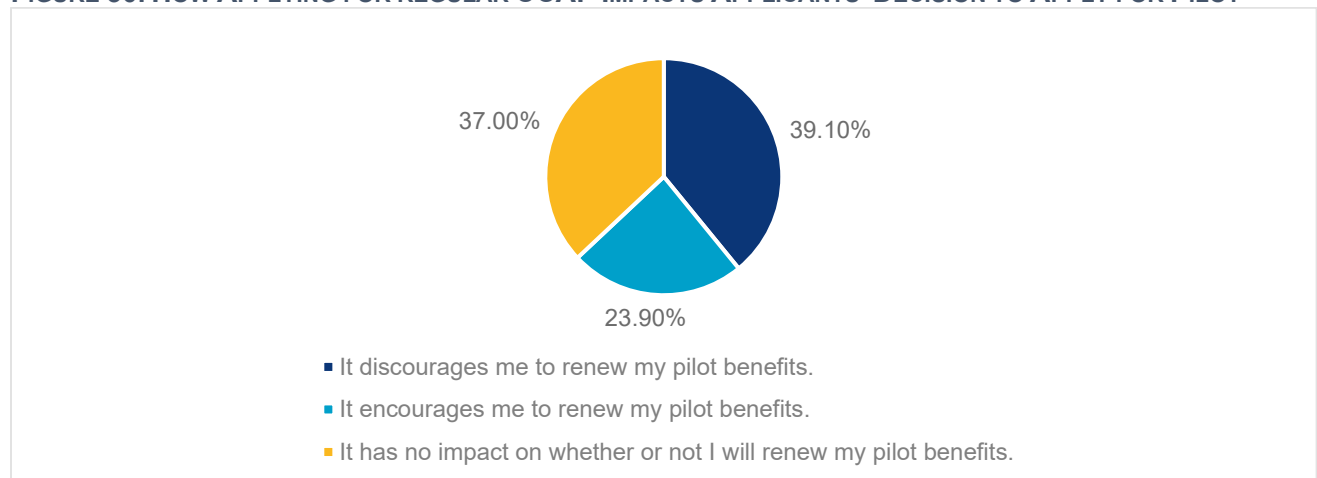
Almost three-quarters of applicants were aware they needed to apply for regular CCAP as part of the pilot application process (73.4%). And 76.1% understood they needed to meet all CCAP eligibility requirements (except for income) as part of the pilot eligibility process.

FIGURE 29. APPLICANTS UNDERSTANDING OF THE CCAP ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS



The requirement to apply for regular CCAP as part of the pilot application had mixed responses from applicants.

FIGURE 30. HOW APPLYING FOR REGULAR CCAP IMPACTS APPLICANTS' DECISION TO APPLY FOR PILOT



Provider Midpoint Survey Insights

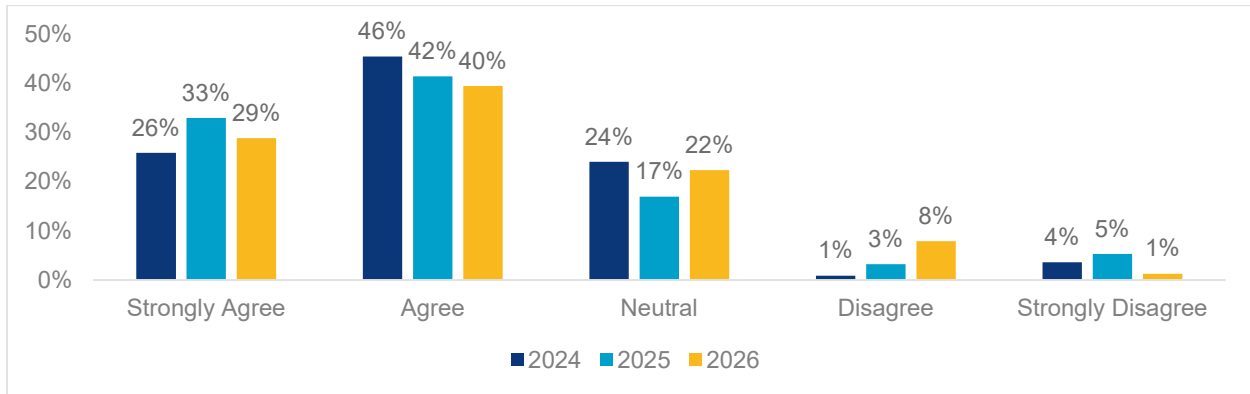
The midpoint survey was also sent to child care employers to better understand the pilot's effectiveness in supporting their programs and strengthening workforce retention. It was distributed to 157 CCAP providers across Rhode Island, who employ approved pilot participants and/or care for children approved for the pilot. The survey was completed by 76 respondents, achieving a 48% response rate.

Awareness and Access to Information

Providers almost always heard about the pilot directly from DHS. Nearly 80% said DHS announcements were their main source of information. Very few learned about it from coworkers, PCG, or family networks.

Once they knew about the pilot, 69% agreed it was easy to find information online. Over time, agreement to this statement decreased, down from 75% in 2025. Between 2025 and 2026, more providers in 2026 feel neutral or disagree with this sentiment compared to 2025.

FIGURE 31. RESPONSE TO "IT WAS EASY TO FIND INFORMATION ONLINE ABOUT THE PILOT"



Support and Communication

When providers needed technical assistance, the majority (68.4%) rated their experience as good or great, slightly increased from 2025 (64.9%). Around a quarter of providers never needed technical assistance. Five percent of providers did report a negative experience.

Generally, email communication worked well. More than half of providers (56.6%) said responses were prompt, and another 38.2% said the turnaround was about what they expected. Only 5% said responses were too slow, unchanged from 2025.

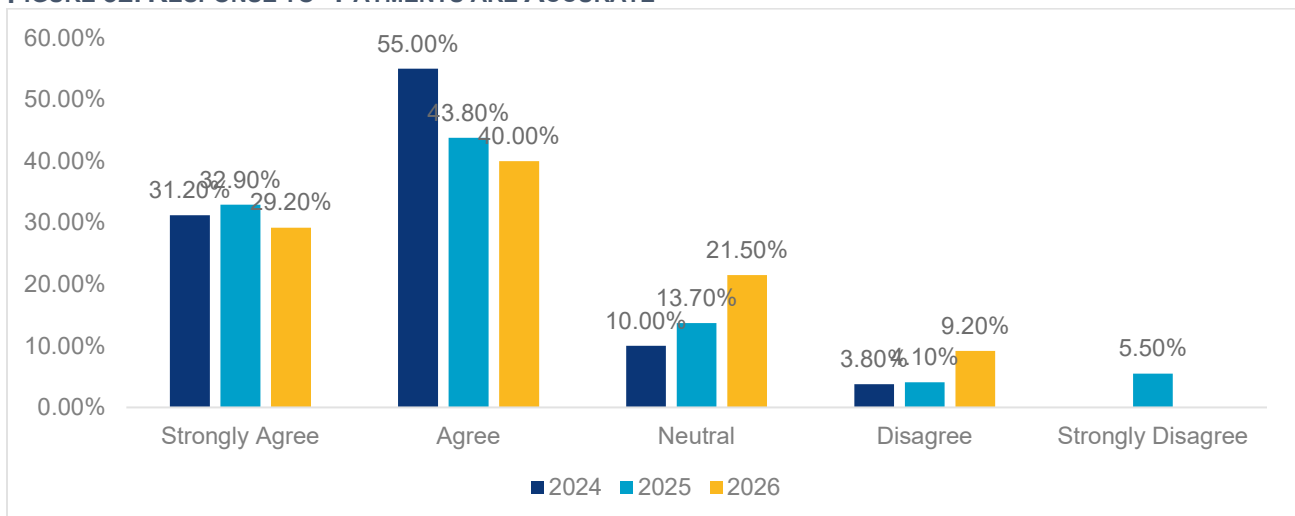
Enrollment and Attendance

Most providers (87.7%) agreed that submitting enrollment or disenrollment forms was easy and that they understood the process was being tracked outside of the Provider Portal, consistent with findings from 2025 (86.3%). Submitting attendance by email also worked well, with 87.7% finding it easy.

Understanding timelines was generally strong. Most (89.2%) providers said they knew when attendance requests and payments were scheduled.

Payment accuracy was mixed with 70% saying payments were accurate. Another 21.5% of providers were neutral and 9.2% of providers disagreed on payments being accurate. While most providers felt details were clearly documented in the email receipt (69.2% positive), some reported challenges with clarity.

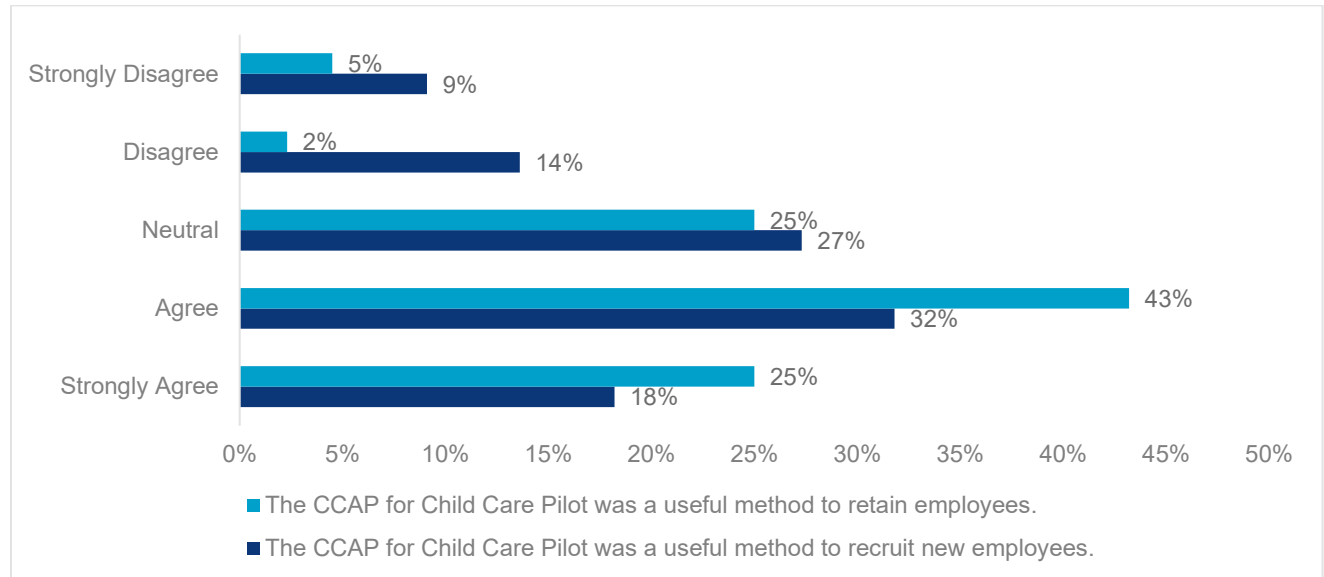
FIGURE 32. RESPONSE TO "PAYMENTS ARE ACCURATE"



Workforce Recruitment and Retention

The majority of providers strongly agree or agree that the pilot is a useful mechanism for recruiting and retaining employees. More than two-thirds of providers agree or strongly agree that the pilot is useful for retaining employees while half strongly agree or agree that the pilot is a useful method for recruiting.

FIGURE 33. PROVIDER RESPONSES RELATED TO WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION



These findings echo what applicants reported: the pilot reduces financial stress and makes it easier for staff to stay in the child care field.

PROVIDER YEAR-END SURVEY

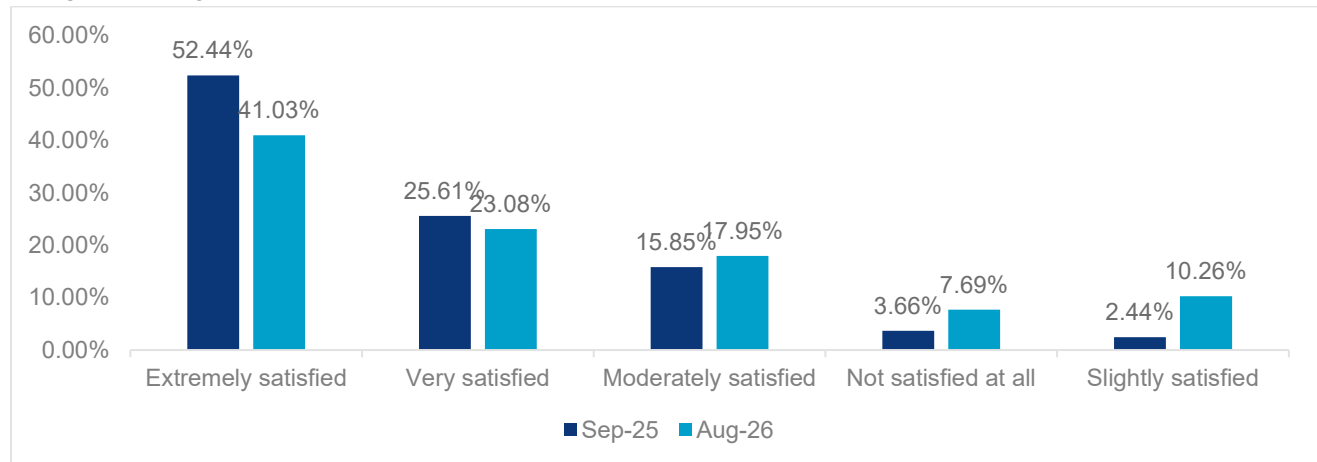
In August 2026, PCG released a brief survey to child care providers who were employers or CCAP providers for children approved for the pilot. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish. It was based on the same questions asked in the provider impact interviews in FY24 and FY25. The survey was sent to 123 child care providers (with multi-site programs only receiving one outreach). In total, 44 providers (42 Child Care Centers and two Family Child Care Homes) responded, for a response rate of 35.8%.

Just over 47.7% of respondents agreed that the pilot significantly or somewhat improved their ability to retain staff, with another 45.45% stating the pilot has no impact on retention. Most (61.36%) agreed the pilot had slight or significant positive changes to their staff's well-being or work-life balance. This is down from 75.61% in FY25.

Nearly 42% reported a significant or somewhat positive improvement in staff scheduling or workload management due to the pilot. Another 56.1% of other respondents reported no impact.

The survey also showed that 64.1% of respondents reported they were extremely or very satisfied with the pilot. This is less than FY25, where 78.05% of providers were very or extremely satisfied. Of the three not satisfied at all with the pilot, open response comments included removing the requirement to apply for CCAP to make the application process easier and offering to more staff.

FIGURE 34. PROVIDER RESPONSE TO "OVERALL, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE PILOT?" COMPARING FY25 AND FY26



Child care providers cited the following benefits of the pilot:

- “It has helped because it would have been financially difficult to give a discount to multiple staff members for their children.”
- “Yes, we no longer are giving away free or reduced spaces from employee children reducing the loss of thousands of dollars each year at the center.”
- “The pilot has helped at least three children maintain consistent enrollment, which means consistent income.”

Common challenges cited by child care providers include:

- The timeliness of parents providing a CCAP Benefit Decision Notice or Pilot Eligibility Notice to the program can lag, delaying payments to programs for services.
- The application process can be long and is more difficult than the previous process.
- The lack of a pilot portal/ navigating two systems for attendance and enrollments is challenging.

When asked about improvements to the pilot or additional resources that may be beneficial, providers noted:

- Improving the application processing time for approval and denials.
- Creating a portal to allow programs to access information related to enrollment/disenrollment or outstanding attendance.
- Increasing or removing the household income eligibility limit.

LESSONS LEARNED

The following observations have been identified related to the implementation and operations of the pilot. When taken together, Year 3 demonstrates how the requirement to apply for regular CCAP as part of the pilot application process impacts participation. In short, the share of regular CCAP participation has increased while the overall volume of pilot participation has decreased.

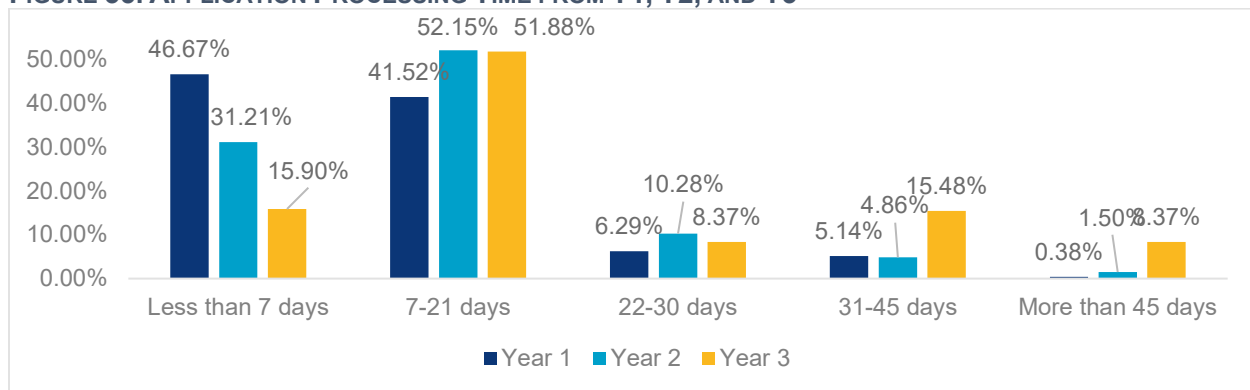
Submitted applications and approvals decreased in Year 3. In Year 3, a total of 356 applications were submitted, down from 613 applications in Year 2 and 596 applications in Year 1. Similarly, the rate of approved applications decreased from previous years. As noted in this report, denial and cancellation unique to Year 3 are related to the requirement to meet all CCAP eligibility requirements.

TABLE 20. APPLICATION STATUSES ACROSS TIME

Application Status	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3 ⁵
Approved	72.99%	75.69%	45.22%
Canceled	11.91%	12.56%	26.12%
Denied	15.10%	11.75%	22.19%

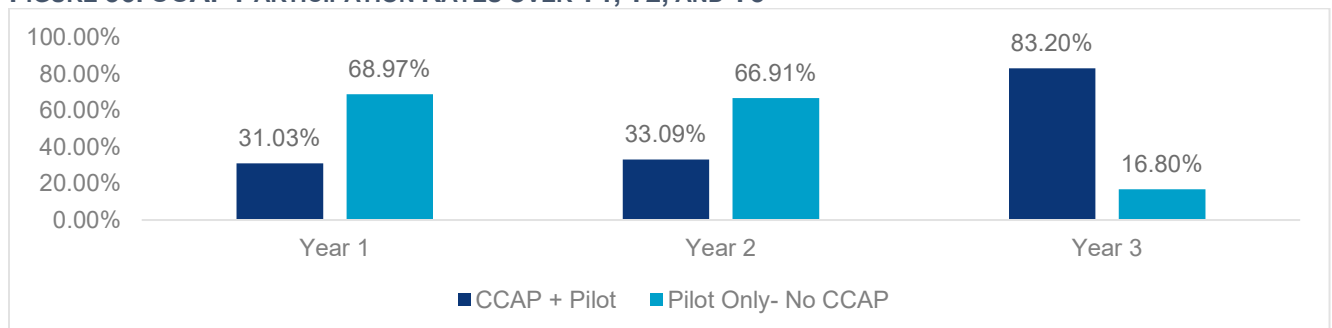
Most Year 3 applications (76.1%) were processed in less than 30 days. However, applications taking longer than 30 days to complete increased from previous years. This was related to holding applications while applicants resolved document requests and completed their regular CCAP application. In many of these cases, the application could have been cancelled, due to an unresolved edit reaching 30 days after application submission. These applications were kept open⁶ as an act of applicant-centered approach intended to support positive relationships and reduce the administrative burden on families.

FIGURE 35. APPLICATION PROCESSING TIME FROM Y1, Y2, AND Y3



The regular CCAP participation requirement increased the proportion of children approved for regular CCAP. In Year 3, more than 80% of children are also approved for regular CCAP. In prior years, the CCAP participation was less than a third of approved children.

FIGURE 36. CCAP PARTICIPATION RATES OVER Y1, Y2, AND Y3



FUTURE OUTLOOK

The CCAP for Child Care pilot continued to serve a niche population in Year 3, including early childhood educators, and childcare staff who meet all eligibility requirements (with the exception of income) for regular CCAP while actively working at a licensed child care program. Looking ahead to Year 4, the following implications will be considered:

⁵ As of July 31, 2026, 6.46% of applications were still under review for Year 3.

Applicants approved for regular CCAP must maintain their benefit for the pilot to be active.

For those who fail to renew their regular CCAP benefit, their pilot will close.

- ▶ At the time of this report, two applicants had their pilot benefit closed due to their decision not to submit a renewal for their CCAP benefit.
- ▶ To reduce the administrative burden on families, benefit periods will be aligned. This will put the regular CCAP and pilot benefit on the same renewal cycle.
- ▶ The entry FPL threshold for regular CCAP will increase from 261% to 285% effective January 1, 2027, allowing applicants with income up to 285% FPL to be income eligible for regular CCAP. The pilot threshold will remain at 300% FPL.
- ▶ The transitional/exit FPL for regular CCAP and the pilot will increase from 300% FPL to 325% FPL effective January 1, 2027.

Applicants must maintain their employment in child care. This eligibility requirement is reviewed at the 12-month mark of the 24-month benefit. If an applicant is no longer working in child care or failing to verify their employment, the applicant's pilot benefit will end at the 12-month mark.

- At the time of this report, 38 mid-certification reviews have been completed. Most applicants (30) are still working in child care. There were eight benefit closures at the 12-month mark, which includes one applicant who reported they are no longer work in child care and seven applicants who failed to complete the review.