

READY Infrastructure and Capacity Grants

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Last updated: September 20, 2022

1. How will the funding priorities be considered in the application scoring?

Each complete application from an eligible local First Steps partnership submitted by the deadline will be read by a 3-person review team, randomly selected from the Local Partnership Program Officer team. Identifying information from each application will be redacted, so that reviewers will not know which local partnership's application they are reading. Program officers will not review their own counties.

The scores for Round 1 will be weighted as follows:

- What will be achieved with this funding that benefits children/families/providers: 40%
- Need for funds: 35%
- Alignment with READY legislative priorities: 15%
- Partnership performance (corrective actions over the past 3 years): 10%

Top scoring applications will be ranked and funding recommendations provided to the Program and Grants Committee of the SC First Steps Board of Trustees at its next meeting October 12.

2. Can a local partnership change its application once submitted?

Yes, applicants may make changes or corrections to their submitted application and re-submit up until the deadline of September 27, 2022 at 5:00 pm. To re-submit an application, first email grants@scfirststeps.org and request that your submitted application be placed back in draft status.

3. Are storage buildings an eligible use of READY capacity grant funding?

Leasing or renting a storage space/facility would be an eligible use of grant funding. Purchasing a storage building would be a capital expenditure, and therefore would require special approval by the SC First Steps Board of Trustees in addition to the grant application. If this situation applies to your local First Steps partnership, in addition to submitting your READY grant application by the deadline you must email Mark Barnes, Director of Administration (mbarnes@scfirststeps.org) with your justification, including where the facility will be located, how it will be properly secured and maintained, and how/if it would be relocated if necessary. Submit this email no later than the application deadline for review by the board Finance and Administration Committee on September 29. Be prepared to attend the committee meeting virtually to respond to questions.

4. How are the “rural” and “urban” designations determined?

To determine whether a South Carolina county is “rural” for the purposes of meeting READY legislative priorities, SC First Steps is using the United States Department of Agriculture Rural-Urban Continuum Codes. The 2013 Rural-Urban Continuum Codes form a classification scheme that distinguishes metropolitan counties by the population size of their metro area, and nonmetropolitan counties by degree of urbanization and adjacency to a metro area. It is also used by the South Carolina Office of Rural Health. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/rural-urban-continuum-codes.aspx>

5. Will applicants be able to obtain their score sheets?

Summary scores by category will be made available to applicants upon request.