



Washington Early Learning Loan Fund (WELL) FAQs

What defines a WELL loan from WCRA?

A WELL loan from WCRA is comprised of two loans, typically. One is sourced from the WCRA's Economic Development program and is funded by WCRA member banks. The other loan is funded by either the WA State Department of Commerce or a foundation, and due to its funding source has lower pricing.

Can we apply for Department of Commerce WELL funding alone, without also applying for a WCRA Economic Development loan?

No

What defines an Early Learning Center?

A center that offers programs that provide education for children outside their own home before entering kindergarten.

Why is Washington State short thousands of Early Learning Centers?

Financing, rapid population growth, rising building and commercial property costs, and displacement of existing childcare programs are all factors. During the Covid pandemic, many early learning centers were forced to permanently close, adding to the shortage.

Why is it important to have Early Learning Centers?

Research has firmly established that early learning produces numerous positive benefits for children. Children who participate in early childhood education programs have improved social skills and do better in school. Early learning centers also aid in the development of a child's emotional, cognitive, and physical needs to build a solid foundation for lifelong learning.

Who is eligible to apply for a WELL loan?

Early Learning Providers and Early Learning Center Developers



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What are the long-term covenants associated with the program?

A 10-year commitment to use the facility for childcare, providers must participate in a quality rating program acceptable to WCRA, and providers must accept subsidies so as to serve low income families.

What is the maximum WELL loan amount?

\$1,000,000 for acquisition or major repairs, and \$200,00 for minor renovations.
There is a 1:1 match for WCRA loans.

Does it matter where the childcare facility is located?

Yes. Priority is given to early learning providers who are located in low-income and/or areas of unmet need, and the center must be located within Washington State.

Are there prepayment penalties associated with a WELL loan?

No

What is the security required for a WELL loan?

A first deed of trust for the portion funded under the WCRA Economic Development Program, and a Junior Deed of Trust for the portion funded by the public or foundation funding.

Are there loan fees associated with a WELL loan?

Yes. Fees are dependent on loan type.

What if I need funds for construction and renovation?

Large projects may require a separate construction loan, for which WCRA has limited funding. Be sure to discuss this aspect with WCRA and/or Enterprise.

What is the difference between WCRA and Craft3 lending?

WCRA lends on real estate, while Craft3 lends on real estate and also provides business financing.