Contracting Information & Listening Session

September 2026

King County
Best Starts for KIDS

King County
DCHS
Department of Community and Human Services





Virtual Meeting Norms

- Q&A will come after the presentation. Use the raise your hand function or place questions in chat.
- We have a lot of people here, so please limit your questions and/or comments to two to three minutes.
- Questions should be relevant to the topic at hand.
- Be respectful to all and make sure to allow others space to share their thoughts.
- Be mindful of interpretation: Speak in a steady cadence, avoid speaking quickly.



Quick Note

Best Starts for Kids sits within two King County departments. You may have a contract with Public Health or DCHS, or both departments.

This presentation will largely focus on the changes you are seeing in DCHS contracting, but we will also touch on changes happening in both departments.

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Department of Community and Human Services

Public Health
Seattle & King County



Agenda

- Background: How We Got Here
- DCHS Contracting Practices and Changes
- How to Get Support
- Q&A



Grounding

This has been a year of enormous change for our department, the Best Starts Initiative, and community organizations who contract with us.

We can’t do our work without equitable community partnership, so we are grateful that you are here today to learn about the changes and share your experience and questions with us.

Background

- **August 2025:** The King County Auditor released an audit report related to DCHS's financial and contract management.
- Over the last year, **we've implemented the report's recommendations** to strengthen how we oversee public dollars.
- Since then, **three separate ordinances added additional requirements for DCHS** and, in some cases, specifically for Best Starts for Kids' funding application and contracting process.



What We’ll Go Over Today

- General Ledger Standards
- Making Sure Payments Match Expenses
- Documenting Budget Shifts
- How to Request a Subcontractor
- Sampling Expense Back-Up
- New Application & Contract Requirements



General Ledger Standards

- Reports should show transaction-level detail for categories like supplies, payroll, food, travel, rent, etc.
- This includes dates and vendor names (Example: Costco) as well as expense descriptions (Example: Field trip supplies).
- Only report expenses specific to your contract--not all of your organization’s expenses.





Making Sure Payments Match Expenses

- If you are asked for a general ledger or similar expense documentation, the contract is designed to reimburse expenses.
- If King County pays your organization more than you've spent, we can do one of three things:
  - Reduce or pause future payments until things even out.
  - Ask for a short plan explaining how you'll use the available money before the contract ends.
  - Ask you to return the unspent funds.

Sampling Expense Back-Up

- DCHS will be sampling expense documentation throughout your contract to make sure you’re ready for a site visit when the time comes.
- Back-up documentation can include things like receipts or mileage logs.
- At least quarterly, we will ask for a Cash Value Card (CVC) and Stipend or Incentive Logs.





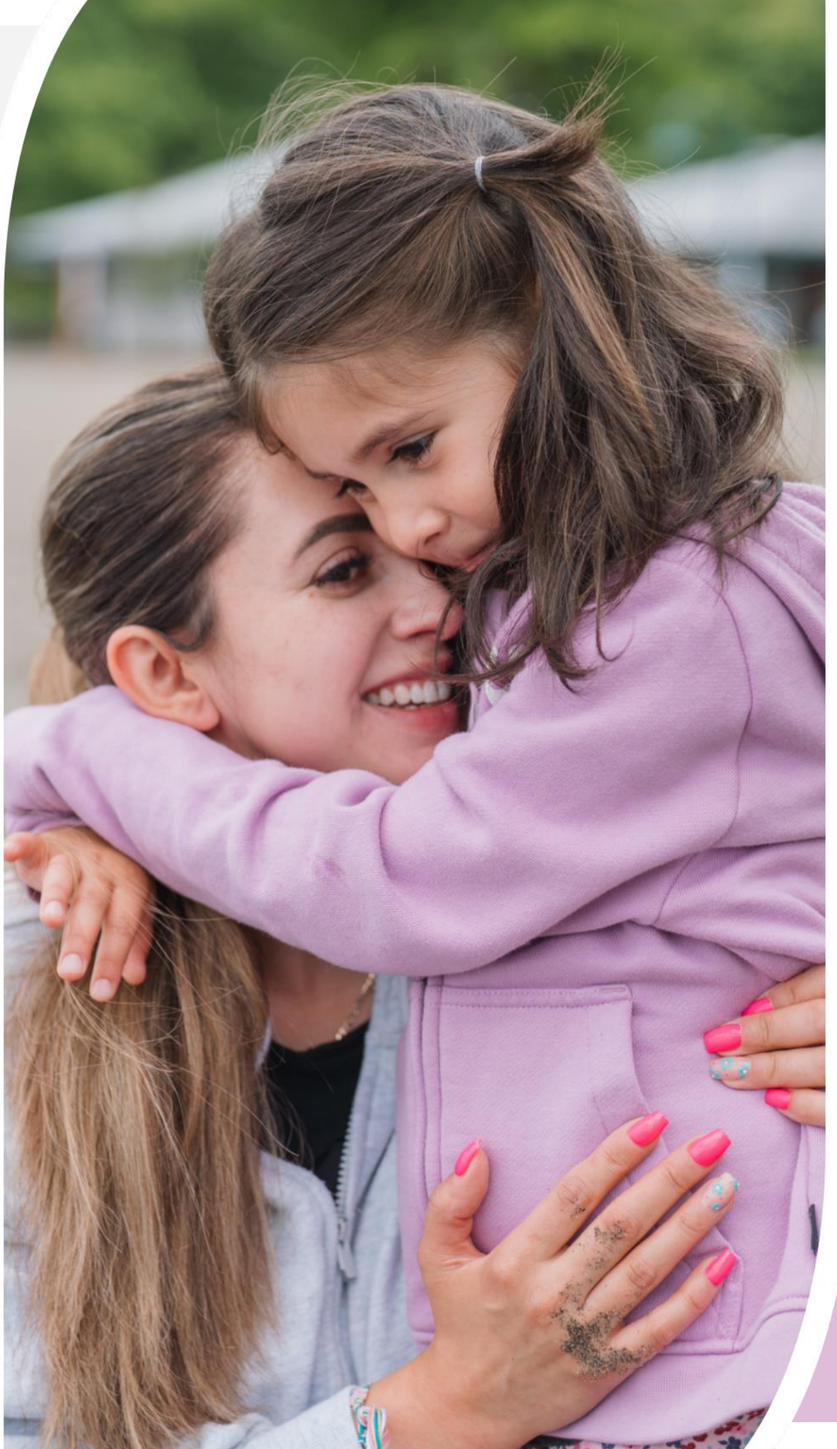
Documenting Budget Shifts

- Sometimes the scope of work changes and what you planned for your budget to do isn’t what you need to do to accomplish the contract goals. This is a normal part of contracting.
- DCHS will be making sure we're clearly documenting these changes through a contract amendment.
- You must first have an amended contract before billing the new/revised activities.
- Invoices should always match the most current, active contract and allowable activities.



How to Request a Subcontractor

- You must request your DCHS or Public Health Contract Manager's approval to subcontract at least 15 days in advance of when the subcontract is to take effect.
- Work with your Contract Manager to seek approval to enter a new subcontract.
- Guidance and tools on our webpage: **bit.ly/DCHSsubcontracting**



New Application & Contract Requirements

- New legislation, Ordinance 20086, helps ensure Best Starts is delivering the most benefit in community, confirms contractors' financial management requirements, and supports the success of community partners in using the funding.
- All applicants to new Best Starts funding opportunities will be asked to complete a brief “Organizational Capacity Questionnaire”
- Your contract manager will be in touch if this impacts your organization.



Support for Organizations

- New Provider Trainings
- Agiloft Tips
- Technical Assistance & Capacity Building

New Provider Trainings

To help you successfully contract with DCHS, there are three new trainings:

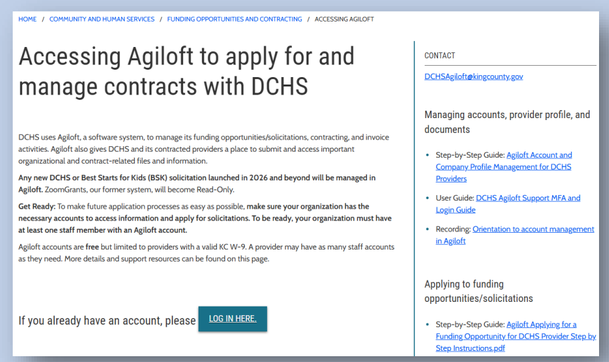
- Financial Management & Best Practices Training (required)
- DCHS Contracting Overview Training
- DCHS Fiscal Contract Compliance Training

Take the trainings today:
bit.ly/DCHSProviderTrainings



Agiloft Tips

- Agiloft is DCHS' contract management system.
- To apply for Best Starts for Kids' funding opportunities in both DCHS and Public Health, organizations must have an Agiloft account.
- It can take a week for an account to be set up.
- For more information on how to use Agiloft, visit **bit.ly/DCHSagiloft** or email DCHSAgiloft@kingcounty.gov.



HOME / COMMUNITY AND HUMAN SERVICES / FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES AND CONTRACTING / ACCESSING AGILOFT

Accessing Agiloft to apply for and manage contracts with DCHS

DCHS uses Agiloft, a software system, to manage its funding opportunities/solicitations, contracting, and invoice activities. Agiloft also gives DCHS and its contracted providers a place to submit and access important organizational and contract-related files and information.

Any new DCHS or Best Starts for Kids (BSK) solicitation launched in 2026 and beyond will be managed in Agiloft. ZoomGrants, our former system, will become Read-Only.

Get Ready: To make future application processes as easy as possible, **make sure your organization has the necessary accounts to access information and apply for solicitations. To be ready, your organization must have at least one staff member with an Agiloft account.**

Agiloft accounts are **free** but limited to providers with a valid KC W-9. A provider may have as many staff accounts as they need. More details and support resources can be found on this page.

If you already have an account, please LOG IN HERE.

CONTACT

DCHSAgiloft@kingcounty.gov

Managing accounts, provider profile, and documents

- Step-by-Step Guide: Agiloft Account and Company Profile Management for DCHS Providers
- User Guide: DCHS Agiloft Support MFA and Login Guide
- Recording: Orientation to account management in Agiloft

Applying to funding opportunities/solicitations

- Step-by-Step Guide: Agiloft Applying for a Funding Opportunity for DCHS Provider Step by Step Instructions.pdf





Best Starts Technical Assistance & Capacity Building

Technical Assistance is a no-cost support for applicants to Best Starts funding who need help with their application.

- Visit **bit.ly/BSK-TA**

Capacity Building is a no-cost support for organizations funded by Best Starts to improve their organizational systems like financial management, human resources, evaluation, IT, etc.

- Visit **bit.ly/BSK-CB**



Q&A

We'll first answer questions that were submitted in advance, followed by an open Q&A

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Q&A Submitted in Advance

How will King County make sure smaller community-based organizations are not disproportionately burdened by these new controls?

- Best Starts for Kids provides technical assistance and capacity building programs at no cost. To get started you can visit our webpages: Technical Assistance - Best Starts for Kids Blog and Capacity Building - Best Starts for Kids Blog. You can also email best.starts@kingcounty.gov.
- DCHS has new provider trainings to support you. You can find them on our webpage: DCHS contractor trainings and resources.
- DCHS is now looking into options in the short and long term to bring additional capacity building strategies and supports, grounded in equity, and responsive to needs that smaller organizations may have.

Q&A Submitted in Advance

Can King County provide a clear checklist of what could cause a payment delay, compliance finding, or corrective action?

- This is a question we can better respond to in coordination with your contract/program manager. Contracts across the Best Starts for Kids Initiative vary in size, scope, and deliverables.
- A compliance finding or corrective action typically result from not following the contract terms, like not spending in line with the approved budget or engaging in activities outside of the scope of work.
- Payment delays are often caused by us needing to follow-up on performance data or expenses where information is unclear or if you're spending less than we've paid to you under the contract terms.

Q&A Submitted in Advance

How will provider feedback from these listening sessions actually be used, and when should we expect changes or follow-up?

- Your feedback helps guide us as we work to make improvements across the Best Starts for Kids Initiative and contracting at DCHS.
- We take your feedback into consideration in real time as we partner with you to execute contracts and refine our RFP, contracting, and monitoring processes.

Q&A Submitted in Advance

Have we already heard about all the new requirements, or are there additional? Can we know the purpose of specific requirements in order to provide appropriate documentation? Or, some example/sample/templates, if needed?

- We are enforcing existing contract requirements that we may not have consistently enforced before or not had a formal process to document. The only new requirement is around funding opportunities.
- Your contract and/or program manager should already have been and/or will be in touch with you about any new or existing contract requirements as needed.
- Contracting requirements, including templates, can be found on our webpage: DCHS contractor trainings and resources

Q&A Submitted in Advance

How is DCHS examining whether inconsistent communication and enforcement of requirements have created racially inequitable impacts for smaller organizations operating in good faith?

- Last year's audit showed we need to standardize how we contract and strengthen internal controls.
- To make sure providers are supported, we launched our new provider trainings, which you can find on our website: **bit.ly/DCHSProviderTrainings**
- We want to make sure smaller organizations are supported and are looking for feedback so we can understand the hurdles you're facing and how we can address them.

Q&A Submitted in Advance

I would like to understand better why the documentation - monthly, quarterly and annually - have become so detailed?

- The DCHS audit showed that we need to do a better job of ensuring that the expenses being reimbursed are approved in contract.
- Contract monitoring includes making sure that expenses incurred align with the contract scope of work, the approved budget items, and don’t include any unallowable expenses.
- Detailed transaction ledgers make sure we can have this level of review.

Q&A Submitted in Advance

What accountability measures are being applied internally to DCHS leadership and systems when documentation or compliance expectations were always required but not consistently communicated, interpreted, or enforced across providers?

- We have introduced several measures over the past year for stronger accountability, including contracting and monitoring policies and procedures, mandatory contract management and anti-fraud trainings for DCHS staff, and a new Contract Compliance Monitoring Policy with clearer expectations and guidance.
- We know we haven't always gotten it right – and we're committed to continuous improvement.



Open Q&A

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