



## Frequently Asked Questions:

- Q1.** Can I use a CCMS even if I'm not good with technology?
- A.** Yes. Individuals who may not be tech-savvy can still succeed in implementing a CCMS. CCMS software is easy to learn and use. Both brightwheel and Playground have onboarding staff to help you get started setting up your program, child, and family records in the CCMS. As part of the program, you also automatically get help from a Financial Management Coach (FMC) at the Child Care Collaborative Iowa to fully use the features and functionality in the CCMS to support your child care business.
- Q2.** How long is my program eligible for a free, state-funded monthly child care management system (CCMS) software license/subscription for either brightwheel or Playground?
- A.** The State of Iowa will pay monthly CCMS license fees for either brightwheel or Playground through June 30, 2027. Note: You must work with a Financial Management Coach to be eligible for a state-funded brightwheel or Playground monthly license.
- Q3.** What am I required to do to receive a free, state-funded monthly CCMS software license for either brightwheel or Playground?
- A.** Your first step is to complete the [Online Application](#) for Financial Management Coaching. You must work with a Financial Management Coach (FMC) for up to 12 months. The FMC will meet with you via phone, virtual and/or face-to-face. The FMC will help you learn how to use CCMS features/functionality and how to analyze the data in the system to improve business and human resources practices. In addition, the FMC will help you identify and realize business goals around budgeting, cash flow, financial reporting, marketing, profitability, staff compensation (if applicable), growth, debt, and other key business metrics.
- Q4.** What is the cost of the monthly CCMS software license fees when the state-funded license ends on June 30, 2027?
- A.** Contact the CCMS vendor directly for pricing information. With full implementation of a CCMS, you can then determine if the cost of the CCMS is offset by increased revenue, decrease tax liability, reduced time spent on administrative tasks (your time is of value), and the value add for your child care business, such as parent engagement, regulatory compliance, etc. The cost of the CCMS license is also an expense you can deduct when filing your annual business tax return.

- Q5.** My program currently uses brightwheel (or Playground). Is my program eligible to have the state pay the monthly subscription/license fee?
- A.** Yes, your program is eligible for the state to pay your monthly CCMS software subscription/ license fees through June 30, 2027. Complete the following steps:
- Complete the Online Application for Financial Management Coaching [here](#).
  - The FMC and CCMS vendor (brightwheel or Playground) will work together to transfer your account so that the state pays the monthly subscription fees.
  - You must work with a FMC to fully implement the CCMS. Visits may be via phone, virtual and/or face-to-face. The FMC will work with you to determine your current use of CCMS modules and help you analyze data in the system to improve business and human resources practices. In addition, the FMC will help you identify and realize business goals around budgeting, cash flow, financial reporting, marketing, profitability, staff compensation (if applicable), growth, debt, and other key metrics.
- Q6.** Who do I contact if I have questions about CCMS software features?
- A.** The CCMS vendors are the experts on their product. Both Playground and brightwheel have customer service staff available to answer your questions and have videos, Help Center articles, and other resources available on their websites.

<a href="https://www.tryplayground.com/iowa">https://www.tryplayground.com/iowa</a>	<a href="https://info.mybrightwheel.com/iowa">https://info.mybrightwheel.com/iowa</a>
 <b>playground</b>	 <b>brightwheel</b>

- Q7.** I currently use a different CCMS, not brightwheel or Playground. Will it be a hassle to switch from my current CCMS to brightwheel or Playground?
- A.** No. Both Playground and brightwheel have customer service staff to help you transfer your data/information from the CCMS software you are currently using to their software. In some cases, it is as simple as exporting the data from your current CCMS and importing the data into Playground or brightwheel.
- Q8.** Will the State pay monthly CCMS subscription fees for a CCMS vendor other than Playground and brightwheel?
- A.** No. The State is required to use a competitive procurement process when purchasing services. As part of the process, the documents said the State would select up to two CCMS vendors. Playground and brightwheel were selected and entered into contracts with the State.

- Q9.** How do I avoid lost payments when switching from my current CCMS vendor to Playground or brightwheel?
- A.** By taking advantage of the state-funded CCMS subscription/license, you can keep both CCMS subscriptions active for a short period of time. Keep your current CCMS, where your payments are automated, while you set up brightwheel or Playground. Once the child and family records and payment and billing plans are set up in either Playground or brightwheel, simply cancel the subscription with your previous CCMS vendor. Customer service staff at Playground or brightwheel and your FMC can answer questions as you work with families to set up auto payment methods and make the switch.
- Q10.** What if I begin using one state-funded CCMS vendor and then realize I want to switch to the other state-funded CCMS vendor? Can I switch?
- A.** Yes, it is possible to switch CCMS vendors. As part of the process, we first recommend that you discuss the reasons why you are interested in switching CCMS vendors with your FMC. Customer service staff at brightwheel or Playground will help you through the process of switching CCMS vendors. In many cases, it is as simple as exporting and importing the data from one CCMS to the other CCMS.
- Q11.** Can I just apply for the technology grant?
- A.** No. The grant is to support a program's technology needs to implement the state-funded CCMS. Your FMC will help identify the technology needs in your program to implement the CCMS. The amount of the technology grant is up to \$1,000.