3. The department shall require an entity receiving funding under this section to operate the facility for at least ten years and require the grant amount to be repaid if the entity does not operate the facility for at least ten years.
4. The requirements of chapter 54-44.4 do not apply to the selection of a grant recipient, the grant award, or payments made under this section.

SECTION 7. APPROPRIATION - INFANT AND TODDLER CARE PROVIDER SUPPORT GRANTS - REPORT. There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of $15,535,000, or so much of the sum as may be necessary, to the department of health and human services for grants to licensed child care providers to support high-quality early childhood care for infants and toddlers, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2027. The department shall administer the grant program and include the following provisions:

1. To qualify for a grant under this section, a grant recipient must:
   a. Be a licensed child care facility within the state of North Dakota;
   b. Be enrolled in the state's bright and early quality rating system at a 2-star, 3-star, or 4-star rating level; and
   c. Provide care for children ages birth through three years of age.
2. Eligible providers may receive up to $300 per month for each child from 0 to 17 months of age and up to $180 per month for each child from 18 to 36 months of age.
3. The department shall distribute the grant funds on a quarterly basis. Grant funds may not be used for non-child care-related expenses or debt repayment.
4. Grant recipients shall submit annual reports to the department detailing fund usage, enrollment statistics, and other information requested by the department.
5. The department shall provide reports to the legislative management and to the appropriations committees of the seventieth legislative assembly on grants awarded and the effectiveness of the program.

SECTION 8. COMMUNITY CULTURAL CENTER GRANT - STRATEGIC INVESTMENT AND IMPROVEMENTS FUND - APPLICATION. Section 1 of this Act includes the sum of $1,000,000 from the strategic investment and improvements fund for the purpose of providing a one-time community cultural center grant in the west central human service region. An entity may apply for a grant under this section if the entity certifies to the department it has secured at