

**ATTENTION:** This policy document has been reformatted and moved. The link to this version will no longer be active starting January 1, 2026. Please use the new link going forward: [Office of Childcare \(OCC\) Policy](#)

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# Office of Child Care Policy

## Family Start Up Grant

EFFECTIVE: January 1, 2023

UPDATED: October 1, 2023

### I. Eligibility for Participation

- A. The Family Provider Start Up Grant (FSUG) may be awarded to licensed family and residential certificate child care programs who have:
  - i. Become licensed
  - ii. Changed locations
  - iii. Increased enrollment capacity
  - iv. Closed longer than a year and reopen
- B. The grant must be applied for within 12 months of the above changes.
- C. Providers may only be awarded a lifetime maximum of two Start-Up Grants.
- D. Eligible expenses include:
  - i. Child Care Licensing Fees
  - ii. Business License Fees
  - iii. Fire and Kitchen Inspection Fees
  - iv. Fire Extinguishers, Smoke Detectors, First Aid Kits
  - v. First Aid and CPR Training
  - vi. Food Handler's Permit Training
  - vii. The following requirements for licensure as documented by Utah Child Care Licensing.
    - 1. Lead paint inspection and remediation
    - 2. Screens for windows used for proper ventilation



3. Fences and gaps in fences
4. Protective barriers for decks, stairwells and balconies
5. Child safety locks, gates, outlet covers
6. Wall anchors and hardware to secure shelves and televisions
7. Paper towel dispensers
8. Sleep equipment
9. Child safety restraints
10. High chairs

E. All Family Start Up Grants are subject to financial and eligibility review as determined by the Utah Registry for Professional Development (URPD) director and the Utah Office of Child Care. You are required to attach copies of all receipts associated with obtaining your license for review.

## II. Requirements and Award Amount

- A. The grant is awarded as a reimbursement after start-up expenses have been incurred and the provider has been issued a license. The provider must submit copies of receipts documenting all expenditures being requested for reimbursement.
- B. The maximum amount of the grant is \$400 with the following exception:
  - i. If any allowable expenses from Items A-F exceed \$400, such as local business licensing fees, an exception may be granted to increase the amount of the Family Start Up Grant to the total of A-F. If expenses in Item G increase the amount to over \$400, a maximum grant of \$400 will be paid.

## III. Application Process

- A. Interested applicants shall fill out the application online through the following link:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSedV1ZrI7hJB63N2yPnLH38It8NXmqVjQ4jPH4madJ8U6Z0Sw/viewform>

B. FSUG reimbursements will be paid through direct deposit or check.

Applications will need to submit an IRS W9 Form and account information through URPD's PaymentWorks system. More information can be found at [https://www.usu.edu/urpd/files/Payment\\_Works\\_FAQs.pdf](https://www.usu.edu/urpd/files/Payment_Works_FAQs.pdf).

C. URPD staff will review the application, verify eligibility and process the FSUG requested within 60 calendar days following the date the application was received.

1. If all requirements are met, URPD will:

- a. Approve the FSUG.

- b. Initiate a direct deposit, or if necessary, issue a check.

2. If the eligibility or requirements were not met or the application is deemed incomplete, URPD will notify the applicant in writing within 30 calendar days of the application submission date that their application for the FSUG has not been approved. The notification will provide the reason for the denial.

- a. An individual may resubmit an application for the FSUG when they believe the issue with the previous application submission has been resolved.

- i. The resubmitted application will be reviewed using the process and within the timeframes outlined above.

#### IV. Privacy and Data Sharing

A. URPD reserves the right to share Family Start Up Grant information with partner agencies, such as Care About Childcare (CAC) and Department of Workforce Services (DWS), Office of Child Care (OCC) for the purposes of data collection and maintaining accurate records.



- B. Information contained on the application shall not be shared with any other entity or individual who is not the applicant. The status of an application or any information contained therein will not be released to relatives, co-workers or employers without the applicant's permission.



Office of Child Care Policy

## **Infant Toddler Quality Support Incentive**

Effective: January 1, 2023

Updated: October 1, 2023

### **1. Purpose and Funding**

- a. The Infant Toddler (IT) Quality Support Incentive supports providers that are currently caring for children under 36 months of age by providing funds to purchase;
  - i. Age-appropriate furniture, materials and equipment for this age group.
  - ii. Consumable supplies to support sanitary practices.
- b. IT Quality Support Incentives are provided through a partnership between Department of Workforce Services (DWS), Office of Child Care (OCC), and the Utah Registry for Professional Development (URPD).

### **2. Infant Toddler Quality Support Incentive Eligibility**

- a. Providers must meet all the following eligibility requirements in order to apply for the IT Quality Support Incentive:
  - i. Achieve a Certified Foundation of Quality or Building Quality rating in the Child Care Quality System (CCQS) that takes effect on or after January 1, 2023.
  - ii. Programs that request a review that may increase a rating to High Quality status will not receive information about this opportunity until the review is resolved and the program still holds a certified quality rating of Foundation of Quality or Building Quality.
  - iii. Provide care for children under the age of 36 months.

### **3. Requirements and Incentive Amounts**

- a. Programs providing care for children under the age of 36 months will receive an incentive amount based on the following:
  - i. Infant and toddler rooms designed for up to four children will be eligible for up to \$1250 per classroom.
  - ii. Infant rooms designed for five or more children will be eligible for up to \$2500 per classroom.
  - iii. Two-year-old rooms designed for eight children or less will be eligible for up to \$1250 per classroom.

- iv. Two-year-old rooms designed for 16 or more children will be eligible for up to \$2500 per classroom.
  - v. Mixed age rooms with two-year-old aged children will be eligible for up to \$156 per child under the age of 36 months.
  - vi. Family child care programs will be eligible up to \$230 per child enrolled under the age of 36 months.
  - vii. Eligible amounts will be determined by data gathered at the CCQS observation initial visit.
- b. Funding will be provided for rooms that are open and operating where children are enrolled and actively being cared for on a daily basis.

#### 4. Application Process

- a. Programs must submit the online interest form within 30 days of receiving their initial notification of eligibility from URPD.
- b. Programs must submit the following forms within 90 days of receiving their initial notification of eligibility from URPD:
  - i. A complete classroom inventory for each infant, toddler or two-year-old classroom with sections completed where desired items are requested.
  - ii. A completed Materials and Equipment Request Form for approval.
    - 1. Providers may choose from the URPD-approved vendors and shall not exceed three vendors for early childhood equipment.
    - 2. Providers may choose one URPD-approved vendor to purchase supplies to support sanitary practices.
    - 3. All items shall be age appropriate and safe for children under 36 months of age and support continuous quality improvement.
    - 4. Allowable purchases are limited to items listed on the provided Materials and Equipment Inventory form.
    - 5. A total of 25% of funds may be used to purchase consumable items as listed below:
      - a. Art supplies (paint, collage materials, glue, crayons)
      - b. Supplies that support sanitary best practices limited to:
        - i. Gloves
        - ii. Paper towels
        - iii. Changing station paper
        - iv. Tissue
    - 6. Alternate items shall be included on the Materials and Equipment list and will be selected by URPD when:
      - a. An item is no longer available.

- b. Items are discounted or shipping is waived; additional items will be purchased from the alternate list up to the eligible amount.
    - c. The main list includes items that are not age appropriate, safe or on the Materials and Equipment Inventory.
  - 7. Materials and Equipment Request Form will be reviewed and approved by a CCQS observer or coach before URPD places orders.
  - c. URPD staff will process the application and order materials and equipment.
    - i. If requirements are not met or documents are incomplete, an application can be denied. Denied applicants will be notified with the reason for denial.
- 5. Privacy and Data Sharing
  - a. URPD reserves the right to share Infant Toddler Quality Support Incentive information with partner agencies, such as Care About Childcare (CAC) DWS, and OCC for the purposes of data collection and maintaining accurate records.
  - b. The status of the application and any information contained therein shall not be shared with any other entity or individual who is not the applicant without the applicant's permission.





# Office of Child Care Policy

## Code of Conduct (OCC 200.02.01)

Effective: July 15, 2019

Updated: July 8, 2019

1. The Code of Conduct outlines course policies, expectations and non-compliance consequences for individuals participating in a Care About Childcare (CAC) sponsored professional development course.
2. Individuals who choose to participate in a CAC course shall affirm they have read and understand the contents of the Code of Conduct and agree to abide by the course policies and expectations.
3. Non-compliance with the Code of Conduct shall be documented and recorded as a violation by the sponsoring CAC agency. Individuals incurring a violation will receive written notice of the recorded violation and the consequence as detailed in the Code of Conduct.
4. Individuals have the right to request a review of a recorded Code of Conduct violation within 30 days of receiving the written notice of the recorded violation from CAC.
  - a. The individual must request a Code of Conduct violation review in writing, which includes:
    - i. Full legal name of the individual
    - ii. Individual's contact information, including mailing address, email and phone number
    - iii. Basis for violation review
    - iv. Any documentation necessary for the review process
  - b. The Code of Conduct violation review letter and supporting documentation shall be sent to OCC by email or regular mail.
    - i. Email: [occ@utah.gov](mailto:occ@utah.gov); Subject: Code of Conduct Review Request
    - ii. Mailing Address: Office of Child Care: Attn: Professional Development: 140 East Broadway: Salt Lake City, UT 84111



- c. OCC professional development staff will evaluate the Code of Conduct violation review request and any relevant documentation. OCC will notify the individual of the results of the review. Decisions made by OCC professional development staff shall be final.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### PD Incentive Program (OCC 200.04.01)

Effective: August 1, 2019

Updated: October 1, 2023

1. Purpose and Funding
  - a. The Professional Development Incentive (PDI) encourages progression along Utah's Career Ladder by offering financial incentives to eligible youth and early learning professionals as they achieve professional development milestones.
  - b. Incentives are provided through a partnership between Department of Workforce Services (DWS), Office of Child Care (OCC) and the Utah Registry for Professional Development (URPD).
2. Eligibility for Participation – An individual must meet all of the following eligibility requirements in order to apply for a PDI:
  - a. Employed for at least 20 hours a week at a licensed child care program that cares for children birth through age 12.
    - i. An eligible program is defined as a child care program that is licensed by the Utah Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing and is DWS eligible
    - ii. The child care program must be open 12 months per year, at least five days per week and at least six hours per day. Occasional closures do not cause a program to be ineligible. Examples of occasional closures could include staff training days or holidays.
3. Requirements and Award Amounts
  - a. The PDI requirements follow the requirements of the levels in the Career Ladder System. In order to qualify for a PDI, the individual must apply for and earn a level on the Career Ladder. For more information on the requirements of each level, see the Career Ladder System Policy.
  - b. Each completed Career Ladder level may only be used once to earn a PDI. (If a PDI has already been awarded using a level in the system prior to July 1, 2019, an individual is not eligible to receive another PDI for this level.)



- c. PDI awards must be applied for in a linear order across the Career Ladder levels. Once an individual applies for and receives a PDI using a level, the individual is ineligible to receive a PDI using a lower level. For example, an individual may not receive a PDI using Level 4 and at a later date receive a PDI using Level 1.
- d. The PDI award amounts for each Career Ladder level are as follows:
  - i. Level 1: \$100
  - ii. Level 2: \$200
  - iii. Level 3: \$200
  - iv. Level 4: \$300
  - v. Level 5: \$400
  - vi. Level 6: \$400
  - vii. Level 7: \$400
  - viii. Level 8: \$400
  - ix. Level 9: \$500
  - x. Level 10: \$1,000
  - xi. Level 11: \$1,500
  - xii. Level 12: \$2,000

#### 4. Application Process

- a. Prior to applying for a PDI, individuals must first earn a Career Ladder level. Documentation of the completion of a Career Ladder level will be verified on the applicant's URPD workforce registry profile.
- b. To apply for a PDI, individuals must apply through the Care About Childcare web application. The application can be found at <https://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov>.
- c. Professional Development reimbursements will be paid through direct deposit. Applications will need to submit an IRS W9 Form and account information through Utah Registry for Professional Development's (URPD) PaymentWorks system. More information can be found at <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/urpd/paymentworksfaq.pdf>.
- d. URPD staff will review the application, verify eligibility and process the PDI requested within 60 calendar days following the date the application was received
  - i. If all requirements have been met, URPD will:
    - (1) Approve the PDI.



- (2) Initiate a direct deposit to the individual, or if necessary, issue a check.
- ii. If the eligibility or requirements are not met or the application is deemed incomplete, URPD will notify the applicant in writing within 30 calendar days of the application submission date that their application for a PDI has not been approved. The notification will provide the reason for the denial.
  - (1) An individual may resubmit an application for a PDI when they believe the issue with the previous application submission has been resolved.
    - (a) The resubmitted application will be reviewed using the process and within the timeframes outlined above.

## 5. Privacy and Data Sharing

- a. URPD reserves the right to share PDI information with partner agencies, such as Care About Childcare (CAC) and Department of Workforce Services (DWS), Office of Child Care (OCC) for the purposes of data collection and maintaining accurate records.
- b. Information contained on the application shall not be shared with any other entity or individual who is not the applicant. The status of an application or any information contained therein will not be released to relatives, co-workers or employers without the applicant's permission.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### PD Course Refunds and Vouchers (OCC 200.06.01)

Effective: July 1, 2021

Updated: October 1, 2023

1. Care About Childcare (CAC) Course Refunds
  - a. Course Cancellation - If the host CAC agency determines that a course will be canceled based on the agency's posted course cancellation policy:
    - i. Individuals who have already registered and paid for the course will be issued a refund.
    - ii. Programs who have registered and paid for staff to take the course will be issued a refund.
  - b. Individual Cancellation
    - i. Individuals may contact and notify the host CAC agency of their inability to attend a course prior to the start time of the first session of the course to be issued a refund.
      - (1) If the course was paid for by the individual, a refund will be issued to the individual.
      - (2) If the course was paid for by the individual's program, a refund will be issued to the program.
    - ii. After the first session of the course has started, a refund shall not be issued.
    - iii. If an individual session is missed within a course, individuals may contact their regional CAC agency for make-up session information and schedule.
      - (1) There is no additional cost for the make-up session and no deadline for completion.
2. CAC Course Vouchers
  - a. Individuals or child care programs may be awarded vouchers to their CAC account. Vouchers may be used in place of the cost of one CAC course. Vouchers will be distributed at least quarterly for the following reasons:

- i. Individuals will be awarded one course voucher when they complete a 40-hour endorsement within the Career Ladder System. See the Career Ladder System policy for more information on how to complete an endorsement.
- ii. Newly licensed programs with the Utah Department of Health and Human Services – Child Care Licensing will be awarded course voucher(s). The number of vouchers received will be dependent on licensed capacity.
  - (1) For programs with a capacity of 16 or less children, one voucher will be awarded.
  - (2) For programs with a capacity of 17 - 80 children, three vouchers will be awarded.
  - (3) For programs with a capacity of 81 or more children, five vouchers will be awarded.
- iii. Programs who submit an application to participate in the Child Care Quality System will be awarded course voucher(s). The number of vouchers received will be dependent on licensed capacity.
  - (1) For programs with a capacity of 16 or less children, one voucher will be awarded.
  - (2) For programs with a capacity of 17 - 80 children, three vouchers will be awarded.
  - (3) For programs with a capacity of 81 or more children, five vouchers will be awarded.
- b. Course vouchers may be awarded for other reasons as directed by OCC.
- c. Course vouchers that were awarded prior to this policy's effective date and are not expired will be added to an individual's account in the new CAC website. Paper vouchers will no longer be accepted.



# Office of Child Care Policy

## Career Ladder System (OCC 200.01.01)

Effective: August 1, 2019

Updated: October 1, 2023

1. Purpose of the Career Ladder System
  - a. The purpose of Utah's Career Ladder System is to provide a method for individuals to track professional accomplishments and to recognize academic achievement related to the youth and early childhood education field.
  - b. The goal of the system is to improve the professionalism and quality of the workforce, and ultimately, positively impact Utah's children.
2. Participation in the Career Ladder System
  - a. Any person may participate in Utah's Career Ladder System. There are no eligibility requirements to participate.
  - b. Individuals who would like to participate shall create a user profile in the Utah Registry for Professional Development's (URPD) workforce registry where progress on the Career Ladder System is tracked.
    - i. Individuals shall create a profile and log in to the workforce registry at <https://cac.utah.gov>.
    - ii. Individuals may contact their local Care About Childcare (CAC) agency or URPD by phone or email for assistance in creating a profile.
3. Navigating Levels on the Career Ladder System
  - a. Individuals who are new participants in the Career Ladder System may start at the following Career Ladder levels, depending on previous professional development:
    - i. Anyone may begin participating in the Career Ladder System by completing and submitting the requirements for Level 1.
    - ii. Individuals may start the Career Ladder at Level 4 if current demonstrated competency requirements are met. Levels 1-3 do not need to be completed before being awarded Level 4.



- iii. Individuals may start the Career Ladder at Level 9, 10, 11 or 12 if the specific requirements for one of those levels is met.
  - b. Individuals who have already achieved a Career Ladder level may bypass certain levels if they have met the requirements.
    - i. Individuals may advance to Career Ladder Level 4 if current demonstrated competency requirements are met. The preceding levels do not need to be completed before being awarded Level 4.
    - ii. Individuals may advance to Career Ladder Level 9, 10, 11 or 12 if the specific requirements for one of these levels is met. The preceding levels do not need to be completed before being awarded Level 9 or higher.
4. Requirements for Career Ladder Levels
- a. Approved Courses and Credit Types for Career Ladder Levels 1-3 and 5-8:
    - i. Individuals must take courses that have been approved by the Office of Child Care (OCC) in order to apply the courses to a level.
    - ii. Approved courses can be found in the Course Catalog in the Care About Childcare website, <https://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/cac/catalog>.
    - iii. Individuals may complete any combination of approved online or face-to-face trainings for the clock hour requirements in each level.
    - iv. Individuals cannot repeat the same class to advance to new levels.
    - v. Individuals may substitute any number of clock hours for Continuing Education Units (CEUs) or college credits specific to the early childhood education field.
      - (1) 0.1 CEU is equivalent to 1 clock hour. (Ex: 1 CEU is equivalent to 10 clock hours.)
        - (a) CEUs must be awarded by a verifiable child care training program or accredited institution of higher education.
      - (2) 0.075 semester college credits, or 0.1125 quarter college credits, are equivalent to 1 clock hour. (Ex: 3 semester college credits are equivalent to 40 clock hours.)
        - (a) See IV. B. Approved College Credit Courses for detailed information on the types of college credit courses accepted.
      - (3) CEUs and college credits follow the same content requirements required within each level.
    - vi. Individuals may submit military child care training transcripts and certificates as valid Career Ladder training, provided the topics listed are child care-specific and meet the content requirements of Career Ladder levels.

- (1) Trainings will be accepted as clock hours or through an accepted equivalency: CEU or college credit.
  - (2) Trainings related to the military (e.g. counter-espionage, counter-terrorism, military base procedures) will not be accepted for Career Ladder credit.
- vii. For Levels 5-8, individuals may use professional activity hours for 10 of the 40 hours submitted.
- (1) Professional activities advance the youth and early childhood education field and go above and beyond an individual's current job responsibilities.
  - (2) Professional activities must be on the approved list.
    - (a) Information about professional activities can be found on URPD's website, <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/urpd/careerladder/activities.html>
    - (b) Documentation of a professional activity must be submitted at <https://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov> on the workforce registry for processing and approval.
- b. Approved College Credit Courses:
- i. College credit courses must be awarded by an accredited institution of higher learning and passed with a "C-" letter grade or better.
  - ii. College credits accepted must be specific to the early childhood (birth to age 8) field. The majority of the course must cover one or more of the following early childhood subject areas:
    - (1) Safe, Healthy Learning Environment: Course topic examples include curriculum, methods, planning, technology in the classroom, classroom management and a student teaching/practicum.
    - (2) Physical and Intellectual Development: Course topic examples include reading/literacy, language development, teaching science, teaching social studies, teaching math, special education, inclusion, teaching fine arts, teaching movement or physical education, differentiation, intervention, linguistically and culturally diverse learners and nutrition.
    - (3) Social and Emotional Development: Course topic examples include educational/child psychology, motivation, child guidance and understanding children's behavior.
    - (4) Working with Families: Course topic examples include family/school/community connections, parenting, multicultural education, ethnic minority families, family relations, young children at risk and working with parents.

- (5) Program Management: Course topic examples include education law/policy and early childhood program administration.
  - (6) Professionalism: Course topic examples include careers in education and research/inquiry in education.
  - (7) Observing and Recording: Course topic examples include observation and assessment.
  - (8) Principles of Child Development: Course topic examples include human growth and development, child development and infant/toddler development.
- iii. College credits may be accepted from related fields if the above criteria is met. Possible related fields include child and family studies, consumer studies, developmental psychology, public health, social work, sociology and special education.
- c. Foreign Degrees
  - i. All college degrees and credits from a country other than the United States must be translated to English, if necessary, and be evaluated and listed as the United States equivalent to be considered for the Career Ladder. The evaluation must show the United States equivalent for any degrees conferred as well as a course-by-course evaluation showing the course name, number of semester college credit hours and grade.
  - ii. Obtaining a translation and equivalency evaluation is the responsibility of the individual and must be listed on a transcript from an accredited institution of higher education in the United States or completed by a member of one of the following associations:
    - (1) Association of International Credential Evaluators, Inc.
    - (2) National Association of Credential Evaluation Services
- d. Each Career Ladder Level has specific requirements that need to be met for an individual to be awarded the level. The requirements for each level are as follows:
  - i. Career Ladder Level 1: To meet the requirements for Career Ladder Level 1, individuals must submit documentation of the following to URPD:
    - (1) Current First Aid Certification
      - (a) If an expiration date does not appear on a First Aid certification card, First Aid certification expires three years from the issue date listed on the card.
    - (2) Current CPR Certification that includes Infant & Child CPR

- (a) If an expiration date does not appear on a CPR certification card, CPR certification expires one year from the issue date listed on the card.
    - (3) Thirty clock hours or equivalent in approved Career Ladder Level 1 courses in the subject areas of health, safety or basic child development.
  - ii. Career Ladder Level 2: To meet the requirements for Career Ladder Level 2, individuals must submit documentation of the following to URPD:
    - (1) Completion of Career Ladder Level 1
    - (2) Forty clock hours or equivalent in approved Career Ladder Level 2 courses that have not been used for another level from four of the eight approved subject areas.
      - (a) The eight approved subject areas are as follows:
        - (i) Safe, Healthy Learning Environment
        - (ii) Physical and Intellectual Development
        - (iii) Social and Emotional Development
        - (iv) Relationships with Families
        - (v) Program Management
        - (vi) Professionalism
        - (vii) Observing and Recording
        - (viii) Child Development
      - (b) Ten hours must be completed in each of the four subject areas selected by the individual.
- e. Career Ladder Level 3: To meet the requirements for Career Ladder Level 3, individuals must submit documentation of the following to URPD:
  - i. Completion of Career Ladder Levels 1 and 2
  - ii. Forty clock hours or equivalent in approved Career Ladder Level 3 courses that have not been used for another level from the four subject areas that were not used to complete Level 2.
    - (1) The eight approved subject areas are as follows:
      - (a) Safe, Healthy Learning Environment
      - (b) Physical and Intellectual Development
      - (c) Social and Emotional Development
      - (d) Relationships with Families
      - (e) Program Management

- (f) Professionalism
    - (g) Observing and Recording
    - (h) Child Development
  - (2) Ten hours must be completed in each of the four subject areas that were not used to complete Level 2.
- f. Career Ladder Level 4 – Demonstrated Competency: There are no clock hour requirements for Level 4. To meet the requirements for Career Ladder Level 4, individuals must submit documentation of a current demonstrated competency to URPD.
- i. Individuals may choose from one of the following demonstrated competency options:
    - (1) A current Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential issued by the Council for Professional Recognition
    - (2) A current Certified Childcare Professional (CCP) Credential issued by the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)
    - (3) A National Administrator's Credential (NAC) demonstrated competency, which includes the following three components:
      - (a) A current NAC issued by NECPA or the National Institute of Child Care Management (NICCM)
      - (b) Completion of Career Ladder approved courses in the following four subject areas, totaling 60 hours:
        - (i) Thirty hours in Child Development
          - 1. Care About Childcare offers the courses "Ages and Stages," "Learning in the Early Years" and "Advanced Child Development" to fulfill this requirement.
          - 2. Any Career Ladder approved courses that cover this subject area may count towards this requirement.
        - (ii) Ten hours in Safe, Healthy Learning Environment
          - 1. Care About Childcare offers the course "A Great Place for Kids" to fulfill this requirement.
          - 2. Any Career Ladder approved courses that cover this subject area may count towards this requirement.
        - (iii) Ten hours in Physical and Intellectual Development
          - 1. Care About Childcare offers the course "Strong and Smart" to fulfill this requirement.

2. Any Career Ladder approved courses that cover this subject area may count towards this requirement.
- (iv) Ten hours in Social and Emotional Development
  1. Care About Childcare offers the course “Learning to Get Along” to fulfill this requirement.
  2. Any Career Ladder approved courses that cover this subject area may count towards this requirement.
- (c) A passing score on an observation by an approved URPD observer or a Professional Development (PD) Specialist listed with the Council for Professional Recognition
  - (i) The individual is responsible for contacting an approved URPD observer to set up an observation. A list of approved URPD observers may be found on URPD’s website, <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/urpd/approvedobservers.pdf>.
  - (ii) The approved observation tool may be viewed and accessed on the URPD’s website, [https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/urpd/dc\\_observation\\_tool.pdf](https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/urpd/dc_observation_tool.pdf)
  - (iii) Individuals must score at least a 97/129 (75%) in order to receive a passing score.
  - (iv) For documentation of the observation, a letter from the assigned observer must be submitted to URPD that includes the observer’s contact information and a statement that the individual has passed the observation with 75% score or higher
- (4) A Utah High School Career and Technical Education (CTE) Skills Certificate in Early Childhood Education 1A and 1B or Early Childhood Education 2 awarded within the last three years
  - (a) Three years after the certificate issue date, this demonstrated competency will expire and will no longer be considered current.
  - (b) Individuals who use this option to meet the requirements for Level 4 will need to complete one of the other demonstrated competency options in order to maintain a current demonstrated competency
- (5) An early childhood (or elementary for individuals who work with school-age children) practicum or student teaching course from an accredited college or university within the last three years
  - (a) The practicum must be passed with a C- letter grade or better.

- (b) The practicum must be at least three semester credit hours (or equivalent).
    - (c) Three years after the course completion date, this demonstrated competency will expire and will no longer be considered current.
    - (d) Individuals who use this option to meet the requirements for Level 4 will need to complete one of the other demonstrated competency options in order to maintain a current demonstrated competency.
  - (6) A current School-Age Demonstrated Competency Credential from the Utah Afterschool Network (UAN)
- ii. Maintaining a Current Demonstrated Competency
  - (1) To keep Level 4 current, new demonstrated competency documentation must be submitted to URPD before the expiration date of the previously submitted credential, certificate or course.
    - (a) To keep the NAC demonstrated competency current, only the NAC credential must be renewed and submitted. The 60 hours of Career Ladder approved courses and the observation requirements do not need to be repeated.
  - (2) Individuals who have let their demonstrated competency credential, certificate or course expire will maintain their level on the Career Ladder, but it will be listed as expired until the demonstrated competency documentation is current.
  - (3) Individuals who have earned their demonstrated competency through a previously accepted option will maintain their level on the Career Ladder, but it will be listed as expired until the individual has submitted documentation of the one of the currently accepted demonstrated competency options above.
  - (4) Individuals on Career Ladder Level 9 or above that have earned a college degree do not need to maintain a current demonstrated competency.
- g. Career Ladder Level 5: To meet the requirements for Career Ladder Level 5, individuals must submit documentation of the following to URPD:
  - i. Completion of Career Ladder Level 4 with current credentials
    - (1) If the Career Ladder Level 4 demonstrated competency credential expires, the individual will have an expired Level 5 on the Career Ladder until a demonstrated competency is updated and current on URPD.
  - ii. Forty clock hours or equivalent in approved Career Ladder Level 5 courses that have not been used for another level



- (1) Ten of the 40 hours submitted may be participation in professional activities. Please see “Approved Courses and Credit Types for Levels 1-3 and 5-8” for more information.
- h. Career Ladder Level 6: To meet the requirements for Career Ladder Level 6, individuals must submit documentation of the following to URPD:
  - i. Completion of Career Ladder Level 4 with current credentials
    - (1) If the Career Ladder Level 4 demonstrated competency credential expires, the individual will have an expired Level 6 on the Career Ladder until a demonstrated competency is updated and current on URPD.
  - ii. Completion of Career Ladder Level 5
  - iii. Forty clock hours or equivalent in approved Career Ladder Level 6 courses that have not been used for another level
    - (1) Ten of the 40 hours submitted may be participation in professional activities. Please see “Approved Courses and Credit Types for Levels 1-3 and 5-8” for more information.
- i. Career Ladder Level 7: To meet the requirements for Career Ladder Level 7, individuals must submit documentation of the following to URPD:
  - i. Completion of Career Ladder Level 4 with current credentials
    - (1) If the Career Ladder Level 4 demonstrated competency credential expires, the individual will have an expired Level 7 on the Career Ladder until a demonstrated competency is updated and current on URPD.
  - ii. Completion of Career Ladder Levels 5 and 6
  - iii. Forty clock hours or equivalent in approved Career Ladder Level 7 courses that have not been used for another level
    - (1) Ten of the 40 hours submitted may be participation in professional activities. Please see “Approved Courses and Credit Types for Levels 1-3 and 5-8” for more information.
- j. Career Ladder Level 8: To meet the requirements for Career Ladder Level 8, individuals must submit documentation of the following to URPD:
  - i. Completion of Career Ladder Level 4 with current credentials
    - (1) If the Career Ladder Level 4 demonstrated competency credential expires, the individual will have an expired Level 8 on the Career Ladder until a demonstrated competency is updated and current on URPD.
  - ii. Completion of Career Ladder Levels 5, 6 and 7



- iii. Forty clock hours or equivalent in approved Career Ladder Level 8 courses that have not been used for another level
  - (1) Ten of the 40 hours submitted may be participation in professional activities. Please see “Approved Courses and Credit Types for Levels 1-3 and 5-8” for more information.
- k. Career Ladder Level 9: To meet the requirements for Career Ladder Level 9, individuals must submit documentation of one of the following Associate degree options to URPD:
  - i. An Associate degree in early childhood education, early childhood special education, elementary education, child development or equivalent from an accredited college or university.
  - ii. An Associate degree in an unrelated field with one of the following two options:
    - (1) 15 semester credit hours (or 22.5 quarter credit hours) in the early childhood education field from an accredited college or university
      - (a) College credits may be from an Associate or other transcript where a degree is not conferred.
      - (b) College credits may be the same credits used to earn previous levels.
      - (c) See IV.B. Approved College Credit Courses for detailed information on the types of college credit courses accepted.
    - (2) Completion of Career Ladder Level 4 with Current Demonstrated Competency
      - (a) When Level 9 is earned by an individual, the demonstrated competency earned for Level 4 does not need to remain current in order to maintain a current Level 9 status.
- l. Career Ladder Level 10: To meet the requirements for Career Ladder Level 10, individuals must submit documentation of one of the following Bachelor’s degree options to URPD:
  - i. A Bachelor’s degree in early childhood education, early childhood special education, elementary education, child development or equivalent from an accredited college or university.
  - ii. A Bachelor’s degree in an unrelated field with one of the following two options:
    - (1) 15 semester credit hours (or 22.5 quarter credit hours) in the early childhood education field from an accredited college or university

- (a) College credits may be from an Associate, Bachelor's, or other transcript where a degree is not conferred.
    - (b) College credits may be the same credits used to earn previous levels.
    - (c) See IV.B. Approved College Credit Courses for detailed information on the types of college credit courses accepted.
  - (2) Completion of Career Ladder Level 4 with Current Demonstrated Competency
    - (a) When Level 10 is earned by an individual, the demonstrated competency earned for Level 4 does not need to remain current in order to maintain a current Level 10 status.
- m. Career Ladder Level 11: To meet the requirements for Career Ladder Level 11, individuals must submit documentation of one of the following Master's degree options to the Utah Registry for Professional Development (URPD):
  - i. A Master's degree in early childhood education, early childhood special education, elementary education, child development or equivalent from an accredited college or university
  - ii. A Master's degree in an unrelated field with one of the following two options:
    - (1) 15 semester credit hours (or 22.5 quarter credit hours) in the early childhood education field from an accredited college or university
      - (a) College credits may be from an Associate, Bachelor's, Master's or other transcript where a degree is not conferred.
      - (b) College credits may be the same credits used to earn previous levels.
      - (c) See IV.B. Approved College Credit Courses for detailed information on the types of college credit courses accepted.
    - (2) Completion of Career Ladder Level 4 with Current Demonstrated Competency
      - (a) After Level 11 has been earned, the demonstrated competency submitted for Level 4 does not need to remain current in order to maintain a current Level 11 status.
- n. Career Ladder Level 12: To meet the requirements for Career Ladder Level 12, individuals must submit documentation of one of the following Doctorate degree options to URPD:

- i. A Doctorate degree in early childhood education, early childhood special education, elementary education, child development or equivalent from an accredited college or university
- ii. A Doctorate degree in an unrelated field with one of the following two options:
  - (1) 15 semester credit hours (or 22.5 quarter credit hours) in the early childhood education field from an accredited college or university
    - (a) College credits may be from an Associate, Bachelor's, Master's, Doctorate or other transcript where a degree is not conferred.
    - (b) College credits may be the same credits used to earn previous levels.
    - (c) See IV.B. Approved College Credit Courses for detailed information on the types of college credit courses accepted.
  - (2) Completion of Career Ladder Level 4 with Current Demonstrated Competency
    - (a) When Level 12 is earned by an individual, the demonstrated competency earned for Level 4 does not need to remain current in order to maintain a current Level 12 status.

#### 5. Application Process for a New Career Ladder Level

- a. Prior to applying for a new Career Ladder level, documentation of all requirements of a level must be recorded on the individual's workforce registry transcript at <https://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov>.
  - i. Courses from Care About Childcare and some partnering agencies are automatically added to participant's transcripts when the instructor or URPD enters attendance information after the course.
  - ii. Online courses, conferences, courses offering CEUs, college credit courses, demonstrated competency credentials and college degrees are not automatically added to an individual's transcript within the workforce registry. Individuals must submit supporting documentation for these professional development options.
    - (1) To submit documentation, individuals must go to <https://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov> and log in to their workforce registry profile. On the "My Profile" page within the profile, an individual may submit courses, credentials or degrees by uploading supporting documentation by clicking on the "Transcript" tile.
      - (a) For documentation of clock hours, a certificate from an approved Career Ladder training must be submitted.

- (b) For documentation of CEUs, individuals must submit a certificate that includes the date completed and the number of CEUs granted printed on the certificate. CEUs must be awarded by a verifiable child care training program or accredited institution of higher education.
    - (c) For documentation of college credits, a copy of an official or unofficial transcript from an accredited college or university must be submitted listing the titles of courses, completion dates and letter grades. If the name of your course(s) does not indicate that the majority of the course was on topics related to early childhood, please submit additional supporting documentation such as a syllabus or course description provided by the institute of higher education.
    - (d) For professional activities, appropriate documentation listed on the Approved Professional List must be submitted.
    - (e) For documentation of degrees, a copy of a diploma or an official or unofficial transcript must be submitted.
  - (2) Any supporting documents submitted for processing become the property of URPD, Utah State University and the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care. No supporting documents will be returned to the applicant after an application has been processed.
  - (3) URPD staff will verify professional development and approve or deny the additions to the individual's transcript.
- b. To apply for a new Career Ladder level, individuals shall log into their Care About Childcare profile at <https://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov> and click on the "Career Ladder" tile.
- c. URPD staff will review the individual's transcript to verify that the requirements for the level have been met within 30 calendar days following the date the email request for a new Career Ladder level was submitted.
- i. If all requirements have been met, URPD will:
    - (1) Approve the level and display that the level has been earned on the individual's workforce registry profile
    - (2) Email a certificate to the individual
  - ii. If the requirements are not met or the application is deemed incomplete, URPD will contact the individual in writing within 30 calendar days following the date of the email request that the Career Ladder has not been approved. The notification will provide a reason for the denial.

- (1) An individual may resubmit a new Career Ladder level request through the website when they believe the issue has been resolved.
  - (a) The resubmitted request will be reviewed using the process and within the timeframes outlined above.

## 6. Endorsements

- a. Endorsements are topic specific trainings offered in Career Ladder Levels 5-8. Requirements include 40 clock hours or equivalent of topic specific Career Ladder approved courses.
  - i. Endorsement clock hours or equivalent may be the same credits used to earn Career Ladder levels.
- b. Approved endorsements can be earned in the following subject areas:
  - i. Infant and Toddler
  - ii. School Readiness
  - iii. Special Needs
  - iv. Center Director
  - v. Family Child Care
  - vi. Guidance and Emotional Wellness
  - vii. School Age
  - viii. Relationship Touchpoints
  - ix. Theories and Best Practice
  - x. Developing Your Child Care Business
- c. Prior to applying for a new endorsement, required course documentation must be recorded on the individual's workforce registry transcript at <https://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov>.
- d. To apply for a new endorsement, individuals must apply through their Care About Childcare profile at <https://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov> by clicking on the "Endorsements" tile.
- e. URPD staff will review the request and documentation on the individual's transcript to verify that the requirements for the endorsement have been met within 30 calendar days following the date the email request was submitted.
  - i. If all requirements have been met:
    - (1) Approve the endorsement and display that it has been earned on the individual's workforce registry profile.
    - (2) Email a certificate to the individual.



- ii. If the requirements are not met or the application is incomplete, URPD will contact the individual in writing within 30 calendar days of the application submission date that their application for an endorsement has not been approved. The notification will provide a reason for the denial.
  - (1) An individual may resubmit a new endorsement request when they believe the issue has been resolved.
    - (a) The resubmitted request will be reviewed using the process and within the timeframes outlined above.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Scholarships (OCC 200.03.01)

Effective: August 1, 2019

Updated: April 29, 2022

1. Purpose and Funding
  - a. Scholarships support individuals working towards professional development goals in the youth and early childhood education fields by providing financial support to offset the costs of formal education, training and professional certificates and credentials.
  - b. Scholarships are provided through a partnership between Department of Workforce Services (DWS), Office of Child Care (OCC) and the Utah Registry for Professional Development (URPD).
2. Available Scholarships
  - a. Scholarships are available for the following:
    - i. Demonstrated competency credential application and renewal fees;
    - ii. College credit courses; and
    - iii. Community-based Career Ladder approved courses.
3. OCC will maintain a list of current scholarships on its website. Eligibility for Participation:
  - a. An individual shall meet all of the following eligibility requirements in order to receive a scholarship:
    - i. Employed at least 15 hours per week at a program that is DWS Eligible and licensed by the Utah Department of Health, Child Care Licensing
      - (1) The Child Development Associate (CDA) credential scholarship has different eligibility requirements than other OCC scholarships. The CDA scholarship:
        - (a) Is open to all early childhood professionals in the state of Utah. The program is not required to hold a license from the Utah Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing.

(b) Is open to high school students completing their early childhood education skills certificate.

- ii. The individual's place of employment does not offer financial assistance and the individual is unaware of another funding option; and
- iii. Has not received the same type of scholarship from URPD within the last 12 months.
- iv. Due to temporary additional funding streams, time-limited scholarships and grant opportunities may be available and have different eligibility requirements. Eligibility information for any current temporarily available scholarships can be found on the scholarship application and on OCC and URPD's scholarship and incentive page, <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/urpd/scholarships.html>.

b. An individual shall follow the application process for receiving a scholarship.

#### 4. Application Process

a. To apply for a scholarship, individuals must submit a scholarship application.

- i. Scholarship applications are available online through the Care About Childcare website at <https://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov>.
- ii. Scholarship reimbursements will be paid through direct deposit. Applicants will need to submit an IRS W9 Form and account information through Utah Registry for Professional Development's (URPD) PaymentWorks system. More information can be found at <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/urpd/paymentworksfaq.pdf>.
- iii. The applicant shall comply with the requirements stated within the application regarding uploading of credentials or courses completed using scholarship funds.
- iv. The applicant shall submit for reimbursement no later than 12 months from the date the credential or course(s) was paid for as recorded on the date of the receipt submitted with documentation.

b. URPD staff will review the application, verify eligibility and process the scholarship requested within 60 calendar days following the date the application was received.

i. If all requirements have been met, URPD will:

- (1) Approve the scholarship.
- (2) Initiate a direct deposit to the individual, or if necessary, issue a check.

ii. If the eligibility or requirements were not met, or the application is deemed incomplete, URPD will notify the individual in writing within 30 calendar days





of the application submission date that their application for a scholarship has not been approved. The notification will provide the reason for the denial.

- (1) An individual may resubmit an application for a scholarship when they believe the issue with the previous application submission has been resolved.
- (2) The resubmitted application will be reviewed using the process and within the timeframes outlined above.

## 5. Privacy and Data Sharing

- a. URPD reserves the right to share scholarship information with partner agencies, such as Care About Childcare (CAC) and DWS, OCC for the purposes of data collection and maintaining accurate records.
- b. The status of the application and any information contained therein shall not be shared with any other entity or individual who is not the applicant without the applicant's permission.



# Office of Child Care Policy

## Decision Reviews (OCC 200.05.01)

Effective: July 1, 2019

### 1. Initial Decision Review

- a. Individuals have the right to request a review of a professional development decision within 30 days of the notification of the decision made by the Utah Registry for Professional Development (URPD).
- b. The individual must request an initial decision review in writing, which includes:
  - i. Full legal name of the individual
  - ii. Individual's contact information, including mailing address, email and phone number
  - iii. Basis for decision review
  - iv. Any documentation necessary for the review process
- c. The decision review letter and supporting documentation shall be sent to URPD by email or regular mail.
  - i. Email: [urpd@usu.edu](mailto:urpd@usu.edu) Subject: Decision Review Request
  - ii. Mailing Address: URPD, Decision Review Request, 6515 Old Main Hill, Logan, UT 84322
- d. URPD will evaluate the decision review request and any relevant documentation. URPD will notify the individual of the results of the initial review and oversee any necessary corrections.

### 2. Secondary Decision Review

- a. Individuals who are dissatisfied with the initial decision review have the right to request a secondary decision review within 30 days of the notification of the results from the initial decision review.
- b. The individual must request a secondary decision review in writing to URPD.
- c. OCC professional development staff will evaluate the secondary decision review request and any relevant documentation. OCC will notify the individual of the results of the secondary review and oversee any necessary corrections. Decisions made by OCC professional development staff shall be final.



# Office of Child Care Policy

## Work History Approval (OCC 200.07.01)

Effective: January 27, 2022

Updated: April 29, 2022

1. Purpose and Definition of Work History
  - a. Members of the Care About Childcare (CAC) web application and the Utah Registry for Professional Development (URPD) are able to upload their work history and experience into the system. Once entered, work history is then approved by URPD staff before appearing on a member's CAC profile.
  - b. Work experience is defined as experience in the youth, early learning or a related field.
2. Work History Verification
  - a. Paid work experience shall be verified by URPD which may include review of the following documentation:
    - i. Utah Department of Health and Human Services – Child Care Licensing records;
    - ii. Personal income tax records indicating the applicable work experience;
    - iii. Payroll records;
    - iv. Government-issued child care license or certificate that includes the provider's name; or
    - v. A signed letter from a current or former employer, with dates of employment clearly stated. The letter must be written on the child care program's letterhead and include the following contact information: Name of administrator, phone number, email address.
  - b. Unpaid work experience (such as experience uploaded under the role of "volunteer") does not require specific documentation in order to be verified. Members will need to upload a verification document of their choosing that demonstrates their experience.
3. Submission Process



- a. To submit work history, individuals must log into their Care About Childcare account at <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/cac.html> and submit a new form within the work history tile found on their CAC profile.
- b. The applicant is required to submit supporting documentation to verify their work history submission to be processed. Please see appropriate documentation listed above.
- c. URPD staff will review the request and documentation submitted to verify that the requirements for a work history submission has been met within 30 calendar days following the date that the form was submitted.
  - i. If all requirements have been met the work history submission will be approved and will show up within the work history tile their CAC profile.
  - ii. If the requirements are not met or the application is incomplete, URPD will contact the individual in writing within 30 calendar days of the submission date that their work history submission has not been approved. The notification will provide a reason for the denial.
    - (1) An individual may resubmit a new work history request when they believe that the issue with the previous submission has been resolved. The resubmitted request will be reviewed using the process and within the timeframes outlined above.

#### 4. Privacy and Data Sharing

- a. URPD reserves the right to share work history information with partner agencies, such as Care About Childcare (CAC) and Department of Workforce Services (DWS), Office of Child Care (OCC) for the purposes of data collection and maintaining accurate records.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Definitions (OCC 90.01.01)

Effective: January 31, 2020

Updated: October 1, 2024

1. The 12-month documentation period” is the 12-month period that ends the last day of the initially scheduled observation month. Documentation from this period of time is used to calculate points within the Child Care Quality System (CCQS).
2. “Annual Training” refers to professional development completed and submitted in the 12-month period ending the last day of the initially scheduled observation month. Training during this time is used to calculate points within the Child Care Quality System.
3. “Authorized Reviewer” refers to an observer or anchor who maintains a reliability of 90 percent or higher who has been authorized to review and finalize observation reports.
4. “Caregiver” is an individual who counts in the caregiver to child ratio; meets the physical or emotional needs of the children, including diapering, toileting, feeding or protecting them from harm; or supervises children. All caregivers in the program must be assigned the role of “caregiver” in the Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing Program (CCL) provider portal.
5. “CCQS Advisory Subcommittee” refers to the committee responsible for advising the Office of Child Care regarding modifications and adjustments to the Child Care Quality System. The CCQS Advisory Committee is staffed by an OCC specialist and is comprised of the OCC Quality Manager, an early childhood expert, two family-based child care program representatives and two center-based child care program representatives.
6. “Certified Quality Rating” means the Child Care Quality System rating determined by applying the Child Care Quality System framework and assigned by the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care.
7. “Certified Quality Rating Period” is the 12-month period following the date a certified quality rating is effective. The 12-month certification period expires the last day of the 12th month, or when a program’s license from the Utah Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing program becomes inactive or



sanctioned. Requesting a “Not Participating” status in the Child Care Quality System, or requesting a default rating, will result in the quality rating ending.

8. “Child Care Quality System Application” is an online form that must be submitted to initiate the process required to request a certified quality rating from the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care.
9. “Child Care Quality System Status” means the status assigned by the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care to child care programs without a default rating or certified quality rating.
10. “Child Care Quality System” refers to the comprehensive statewide system administered by the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care that supports Utah parents in making informed decisions when selecting child care programs to ensure the care the child receives is provided in a safe, nurturing and developmentally appropriate setting. The system utilizes research-based components of child development to provide quality ratings to eligible child care programs, as well as supporting child care programs in attaining higher levels of quality.
11. “Sanctioned License” means a program has a sanctioned license from the Utah Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing Program.
12. “Denied Participation” is a Child Care Quality System status referring to a child care program holding a sanctioned license from the Utah Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing Program.
13. “Disqualified Child Care Program” is a program that has been disqualified by the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care to receive subsidy payments and other funding from the Office of Child Care in accordance with Utah Administrative Code 986-700.
14. “Domain” refers to one of five components of the Child Care Quality System Framework: Health and Safety, Learning Environments and Relationships, Leadership and Professional Development, Management and Administration, and National Accreditation.
15. “DWS-Eligible Child Care Program” is a program that has followed the Child Care Licensing process to indicate the program will accept funding from the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care, including funding for children covered by child care subsidy.
16. “Enhanced Subsidy Grant” refers to the monthly payments issued to eligible programs serving children covered by child care subsidies and achieving a rating of High Quality or High Quality Plus, the amount of which is based on the cost of providing quality care for an individual child. The enhanced subsidy grant is issued



as a separate payment from payments received for caring for children whose care is paid for through the subsidy program.

17. "Environment Rating Scale" or "ERS" refers to the group of evidence-based observation tools used to assess program quality during an observation and includes the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale-3 (FCCERS-3).
18. "Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale" or "FCCERS-3" is the evidence-based ERS tool used to assess program quality during an observation of a program with children from birth through 12 years of age.
19. "Family Child Care Program" or "Program" refers to an individual location of a child care business, also referred to as a "site."
20. "Family Child Care Quality System Framework" refers to the components and point values for determining a certified quality rating.
21. "Family Child Care Quality System Self-Evaluation" is a recommended self-evaluation tool provided by the Office of Child Care that may be undertaken by the licensee or the primary caregiver prior to submitting a certified quality rating application.
22. "Fidelity" means consistently adhering to the standard of implementation of an observation tool set by the authors of the FCCERS-3.
23. "Implementation Period" refers to the period during which the Office of Child Care is implementing the Family Child Care Quality System.
24. "Initially assigned observation month" means the month in which observations are initially scheduled by the Office of Child Care to be conducted, which may be different from the month the observations are conducted.
25. "License in Good Standing" means a program is licensed by the Utah Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing Program, but not with a sanctioned license.
26. "Licensee" is the individual listed on the Utah Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care License.
27. "Not Participating" is a Child Care Quality System Status referring to the following child care programs: (i) program has opted out of participation in the Child Care Quality System; (ii) program is ineligible to participate due to program type, such as a Residential Certificate program, Family, Friend and Neighbor program and other legally exempt programs; (iii) program is ineligible due to being disqualified by the Office of Child Care; or (iv) program has not applied for a certified quality rating and has not elected to become DWS-eligible.



28. "Observations" refers to the onsite observation(s) conducted by trained and reliable Quality Improvement Specialists utilizing the FCCERS-3 to assign points within the domain of Learning Environments and Relationships.
29. "Office of Child Care Program Specialist" is an employee of the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care.
30. "Primary Caregiver" is defined as the individual with decision-making authority who directly cares for children during normal daytime business hours. This individual is identified as the primary caregiver on the program's staff information page on Care About Childcare and listed as a caregiver in the Utah Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing Program, Licensing Database.
31. "Public Rule Violations" are violations of Child Care Licensing rules that appear on the program's public record at [childcarelicensing.utah.gov](http://childcarelicensing.utah.gov).
32. "Qualifying Child" is defined as a child who is younger than 13 years old and is the child of a person other than a caregiver or the licensee.
33. "Quality Improvement Specialist" is an employee of an agency contracting with the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care. Specialists are qualified to conduct FCCERS-3 observations and provide support to programs participating in the Child Care Quality System.
34. "Rating effective date" is the first day of the month following the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care determination of a program's certified quality rating.
35. "Recertification" refers to the process of reapplying for a certified quality rating at the end of the certified quality rating period.
36. "Reliable observer" refers to an individual who is trained to utilize the FCCERS-3 program observation tool to fidelity. These individuals are referred to as either OCC-approved anchors or OCC-approved observers.
37. "Utah Registry for Professional Development Youth and Early Learning Professional Profile" or "URPD Profile" is a personal profile within the Care About Childcare system that contains contact information, work history information and professional development transcripts.





## Office of Child Care Policy

### Reviews (OCC 90.10.01)

Effective: March 9, 2020

Updated: October 1, 2023

1. A child care program may request a review of the decision regarding their application for a certified quality rating by using the following process:
  - a. A review request shall be submitted by the child care program owner, director or business administrator listed in the Child Care Licensing provider portal;
  - b. A review request shall be submitted through the Care About Childcare website at [careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](https://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov). A review request shall be submitted within 30 calendar days of the date of the decision determination notice except where there is good cause for failing to request a review within this timeframe:
    - i. Good cause is defined as showing that the delay for failing to request a review in a timely manner is due to circumstances beyond the party's control, or:
      - (1) Delay for failing to request a review in a timely manner is due to circumstances that are compelling and reasonable:
        - (a) Excludes ordinary illness, lack of transportation and temporary absences.
      - (2) Whether there is good cause for failing to request a review in a timely manner shall be determined during the OCC review.
    - ii. To inquire about submitting a review request after 30 calendar days, contact [ccqs@utah.gov](mailto:ccqs@utah.gov).
  - c. A program's request for review shall indicate the valid basis for a review, which shall include a claim of one or more of the following:
    - i. An error made in scoring the components of the framework;
    - ii. An error made in the scoring of the classroom observations;
    - iii. A violation of observer protocol during the classroom observation;
    - iv. An error made in the determination of a professional development achievement;

- v. Documents submitted for points are not accurately verified; or
- vi. Other identified errors made in the application of the framework to award points.
- d. The Utah Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing program is responsible for all appeals regarding licensing compliance.
- e. Quality Rating Pending Review
  - i. The certified quality rating issued in the Notice of CCQS Quality Rating shall be published by OCC and remain published until the review is complete.
- f. Enhanced Subsidy Grants
  - i. Reviews shall temporarily freeze the issuance of an Enhanced Subsidy Grant (ESG) until the review is complete.
  - ii. After the review is complete, ESG payments will be backdated to the date of the original rating when applicable.
  - iii. ESG payments issued to a program that does not maintain an eligible rating after the review is complete will be considered overpayments.
- 2. OCC Review
  - a. All requests for review submitted to OCC shall be subject to an OCC review.
  - b. OCC review includes:
    - i. Consideration of the child care program's declared basis for the review;
    - ii. Where applicable, corrections of any errors made in the calculation of the points within the CCQS framework;
    - iii. Where applicable, re-issuance of the CCQS Award Notice when the certified quality rating is changed; and
    - iv. Upon final determination of the OCC review, an OCC Review Request Determination Notice shall be sent to the child care program with the following information:
      - (1) Where the scores and certified quality rating are adjusted, an explanation of the changes made; or
      - (2) Where the scores and certified quality rating are not adjusted, an explanation for determining that the original scores and certified quality rating will remain as originally determined.
      - (3) The child care program's right to request a review by the CCQS Review Committee if a program does not agree with the OCC review determination.

(4) Child care programs with a High Quality or High Quality Plus rating shall be notified that the monthly Enhanced Subsidy Grant shall be issued.

- c. A child care program that has received a determination from an OCC review may request a further review by the CCQS Review Committee by submitting a new request for review through the Care About Childcare website at [careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](http://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov).
  - i. A review request shall be submitted within 30 calendar days of the date of the OCC Review Request Determination Notice except where there is good cause for failing to request a review within this timeframe as defined by 1.B.
  - ii. Quality Rating Pending Review shall be in effect as defined by 1.E.
  - iii. Once a request for review has been filed:
    - (1) Child care programs shall receive an OCC review notice at least 10 days prior to the review that includes:
      - (a) The date and time when the CCQS Review Committee shall meet to review the program's certified quality rating;
      - (b) The process for participating in the review;
      - (c) The process for submitting additional documentation;
      - (d) Review Procedures
      - (e) The process for notifying OCC if the program elects to withdraw its request for review; and
      - (f) A packet with all OCC documentation regarding the review.

### 3. CCQS Review Committee

- a. Purpose of CCQS Review Committee
  - i. The responsibility of the Committee is to determine if CCQS Policy and Procedures were correctly applied.
  - ii. The Committee may overturn the initial review determination when:
    - (1) There was a deviation from CCQS Policy and/or Procedures.
    - (2) The Information or instructions available or given to the program were unclear.
    - (3) The reliability of an observation is questionable.
  - iii. The Committee may advise OCC to clarify or update CCQS Policy and/or Procedures.
  - iv. The Committee cannot change an observation score but may recommend a new observation take place as a result of the review.

- b. CCQS Review Committee
  - i. The following individuals shall serve on the CCQS Review Committee:
    - (1) One representative from OCC who is not involved in CCQS scoring or assigning of ratings for child care programs;
    - (2) One representative from a licensed private child care program; and
    - (3) One expert in the field of early childhood education or school-age children.
  - ii. Members of the CCQS Review Committee shall recuse themselves from participating in a hearing when:
    - (1) There is a conflict of interest; or
    - (2) Other bases for recusal, established by DWS.
- c. Review shall:
  - i. Be conducted by virtual meeting with a call-in option;
  - ii. Occur within a reasonable timeframe from the OCC review notice;
  - iii. Include an OCC staff member to present the conclusions of the OCC review to the CCQS Review Committee;
  - iv. Provide an opportunity for the child care program to present their reasons and evidence for the review request;
  - v. Include witnesses or legal representatives, as applicable; and
  - vi. Where applicable, include a request for additional documentation from OCC or the program.
- d. Ex Parte Communication
  - i. Parties shall not discuss the merits or facts of any pending case with any member of the CCQS Review Committee, including the OCC representative, unless all other parties to the case have been given notice and opportunity to be present.
  - ii. Any ex parte discussions between a party and any member of the CCQS Review Committee shall be reported to all parties and made a part of the record.
- e. Failure by the child care program to respond to any request by the CCQS Review Committee shall result in a dismissal of the review request.
- f. Reopening a Review

- i. Upon conclusion of a CCQS review committee hearing, a child care program may request a review be reopened under the following circumstances:
  - (1) The child care program was prevented from appearing at the review due to circumstances beyond the party's control as defined by 1.B.; or
  - (2) If based on the evidence of record and the parties' arguments or statements, taking additional evidence might affect the outcome of the case.
- ii. The request shall be made in writing to [ccqs@utah.gov](mailto:ccqs@utah.gov) and shall:
  - (1) Be made within 10 days of the originally scheduled hearing except where there is good cause for failing to request a review be re-opened within this timeframe as defined by 1.B.. If the request is made after the 10-day limit the child care program must include the reason for the delay in the written request; and
  - (2) State the reason for the request to re-open the review.
- iii. If the CCQS Review Committee does not grant the request to re-open the review, the OCC Representative will issue a decision denying the request
- g. The CCQS Review Committee will issue a recommendation to the Department of Workforce Services Director of Adjudication once the review is complete.
  - i. The Director of Adjudication shall make a final decision based upon the CCQS Review Committee recommendation; and
  - ii. The Director of Adjudication decision shall be the final agency action pursuant to the Utah Administrative Procedures Act (Utah Code 63G-4).
- h. Reviews shall result in a notice of determination with one of the following outcomes:
  - i. A determination in favor of the child care program, which may include:
    - a. Recalculation of the CCQS framework points; or
    - b. Requirement for OCC to conduct a new observation or multiple observations:
      - i. CCQS Review Committee shall not change the scoring of a previously conducted observation; and
      - ii. A new observation may result in a higher or lower certified quality rating.
  - ii. Upholding the original Office of Child Care review request determination. The program may:



- (1) Accept the previously scored certified quality rating;
- (2) Withdraw from CCQS and request a Not Participating status be publicly posted; or
- (3) Refuse the certified quality rating and request a Default Foundation of Quality rating be publicly posted.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Scoring and Documentation (OCC 90.09.01)

Effective: January 31, 2020

Updated: September 1, 2024

1. Scoring of components within each of the five domains shall be calculated in accordance with the Child Care Quality System (CCQS) framework.
  - a. Licensing Compliance
    - i. Points will be awarded based on the number of public rule violations during the 12-month documentation period as follows:
      - (1) 0 public rule violations: 16 points
      - (2) 1 public rule violation: 11 points
      - (3) 2 public rule violations: 6 points
      - (4) 3 public rule violations: 0 points
    - ii. The following minimum points in Licensing Compliance are required for ratings higher than Building Quality:
      - (1) High Quality: 5 points
      - (2) High Quality Plus: 10 points
    - iii. The points awarded for Licensing Compliance shall not exceed 16 points.
  - b. Health and Safety Program Participation
    - i. Points shall be awarded for verified current health and safety certifications and endorsements that are submitted by the last day of the 12-month documentation period. Points are calculated as follows:
      - (1) 5 points: Teaching Obesity Prevention in Child Care (TOP Star) – Level 3 or higher;
        - 4 points: TOP Star – Level 2;
        - 2 points: TOP Star – Level 1
      - (2) 5 points: Healthier Child and Adult Care Food Care Program Award (Healthier CACFP Award) – Highest Honors in three or more categories;  
or

- 4 points: Healthier CACFP Award – High Honors or Highest Honors in three or more categories; or
  - 2 points: Healthier CACFP Award – Honors, High Honors, or Highest Honors in three or more categories;
- (3) 1.5 points: Nature Explore Outdoor Classroom;
- (4) 1.5 points: Eco-Healthy Child Care Environment
- ii. Programs may elect multiple endorsements or certificates that add up to more than 8 points, such as 5 points for TOP Star and 4 points for Healthier CACFP; however, the maximum number of points awarded for Health and Safety Program Participation shall not exceed 8 points.
- c. Ratios and Group Size
  - i. In order to receive points for ratio(s), the ratio(s) must be:
    - (1) One caregiver for up to six children with no more than two children under the age of two, or
    - (2) No more than four children under the age of two.
    - (3) Three caregivers or more for more than 12 children with no more than four children under the age of two.
    - (4) Licensee and caregiver's own children under the age of six are included in ratios.
  - ii. In order to receive points for group size, the group size must be:
    - (1) Up to eight children with one caregiver, or
    - (2) Nine to sixteen children with two or more caregivers.
    - (3) Licensee and caregiver's own children through age twelve are included in group size.
  - iii. Points for ratios must be awarded in order for group size points to be awarded.
  - iv. Points will be awarded as follows:
    - (1) One caregiver
      - (a) Ratio: 1:6 or less = 6 points
      - (b) Group Size: 8 or less = 6 points
    - (2) Two or more caregivers
      - (a) Ratio: 1:6 or less = 6 points
      - (b) Group Size: 16 or less = 6 points
  - v. The points awarded for Ratios and Group Size shall not exceed 12.



d. Observation

- i. Points for the observation component shall be awarded based on the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale-3 (FCCERS-3) observation scores as follows:
  - (1) FCCERS-3 observation has a minimum score of 4 on the each Interactions subscale = 5 points
  - (2) FCCERS-3 observation has a minimum score of 4 on each Language and Books subscale = 5 points
  - (3) The overall average observation score, multiplied by 3 equals the number of points, up to a maximum of 20 points.
- ii. Minimum observation score requirements for specific rating levels are as follows:
  - (1) Building Quality:
    - (a) Total score of at least 10 points
  - (2) High Quality:
    - (a) Total score of at least 21 points with;
    - (b) A minimum of 3.67 on each required ERS observation;
    - (c) A score of 4 on each Language and Books subscale; and
    - (d) A score of 4 on each Interactions (FCCERS-3) subscale.
  - (3) High Quality Plus:
    - (a) Total score of at least 25 points with;
    - (b) A minimum score of 3.67 on each required ERS observation with;
    - (c) A score of 4 on each Language and Books and Interactions (FCCERS-3) subscale.
    - (d) A core of 4 on each Interactions (FCCERS-3) subscale.
- iii. The points awarded for Observations shall not exceed 30 points

e. Family Engagement (Feedback must be at least **three months** apart to be counted as being completed twice.)

- i. Points shall be awarded for verified family engagement activities that are submitted by the last day of the 12-month documentation period. Points are calculated as follows:



- (1) Family Conferences:
    - (a) Held once in the 12-month period = 2 point
    - (b) Held twice in the 12-month period = 4 points
  - (2) Developmental Screenings:
    - (a) Completed with ASQ-3 or ASQ SE tool = 2 points
    - (b) Completed with any other assessment or tool = 1 point
  - (3) Connecting to Services = 1 point
  - (4) Activities for Families
    - (a) Held twice in the 12-month period = 1 point
    - (b) Held four times in the 12-month period = 2 points
  - (5) Communication on Child = 2 points
  - (6) Communication on Program = 1 point
  - (7) Parent Feedback
    - (a) Completed once in 12-month period = 1 point
    - (b) Completed twice in 12-month period = 2 points
  - (8) Information on Transitions = 1 point
  - (9) Supporting English Learners = 1 point
- ii. The points awarded for Family Engagement shall not exceed 16.
- f. Education of Primary Caregiver
- i. Points will be awarded based on the required, verified documentation that is submitted prior to the end of the documentation period as follows:
    - (1) 20 hours of Career Ladder approved training completed during the 12-month documentation period = 12 points
    - (2) 5 or more years of verifiable work experience = 4 points
    - (3) Points awarded based on Career Ladder level achieved are as follows:
      - (a) Career Ladder Level 10 or higher = 40 points
      - (b) Career Ladder Level 9 = 30 points
      - (c) Career Ladder Level 8 with a current demonstrated competency = 15 points
      - (d) Career Ladder 4, 5, 6, or 7 with a current demonstrated competency = 12 points
    - (4) For a primary caregiver that has achieved Career Ladder Level 10 or higher, a maximum of 56 points total can be awarded in this component.

- (5) For a primary caregiver that has achieved Career Ladder Level 9, a maximum of 46 points total can be awarded in this component.
    - (6) For a primary caregiver that has achieved less than Career Ladder Level 9, a maximum of 36 points total can be awarded in this component.
    - (7) For a primary caregiver that has achieved less than Career Ladder Level 9, one point can be awarded for each verified college credit hour in the field, up to a maximum of 20 points for college credits. College credit hours can be accumulated and do not expire.
  - ii. The following minimum points in Education of Primary Caregiver are required for ratings beyond Building Quality:
    - (1) High Quality: 5 points
    - (2) High Quality Plus: 10 points
- g. Management and Administration
  - i. Points shall be awarded for verified training and credentials of the administrator responsible for business operations of a program that are submitted by the last day of the 12-month documentation period. Points are calculated as follows:
    - (1) Category 1: Degree or Credential
      - (a) A bachelor's degree or higher with at least 9 credit hours in finance, business, or program administration = 4 points; or
      - (b) An associate degree or higher with at least 6 credit hours in finance, business, or program administration = 3 points; or
      - (c) A current Aim 4 Excellence Director's Credential = 3 points; or
      - (d) A current National Administrator's Credential = 2 points.
    - (2) Category 2: Annual Career Ladder Approved Training
      - (a) 10 hours of Career Ladder approved annual training in the area of business or leadership = 4 points.
    - (3) The points awarded for Management and Administration shall not exceed 8.
- h. National Accreditation
  - i. Points shall be awarded for a verified current National Accreditation from the following organization submitted by the last day of the 12-month documentation period. Points are calculated as follows:
    - (1) National Accreditation for Family Child Care (NAFCC) = 16 points
  - ii. The points awarded for National Accreditation shall not exceed 16.



## 2. Awarding a Certified Quality Rating

- a. Each of the following minimum requirements shall be met for the certified quality rating higher than Foundation of Quality to be assigned:
  - i. Building Quality:
    - (1) License in good standing (not sanctioned);
    - (2) Minimum of 48 total points from the components; and
    - (3) At least 10 points on the Observation component.
  - ii. High Quality:
    - (1) License in good standing (not sanctioned);
    - (2) No public rule citations with an assessed civil money penalty from Child Care Licensing;
    - (3) Minimum of 88 points from the components;
    - (4) At least 5 points each in Licensing Compliance and Education of Primary Caregiver;
    - (5) At least 21 points in the Observation component;
    - (6) A minimum score of 4 on the Language and Books on each FCCERS-3 observation subscale; and
    - (7) A minimum score of 4 on the Interactions on each FCCERS-3 observation subscale.
  - iii. High Quality Plus:
    - (1) License in good standing (not sanctioned);
    - (2) No public rule citations with an assessed civil money penalty from Child Care Licensing;
    - (2) Minimum of 128 points from the components;
    - (3) At least 10 points each in Licensing Compliance and Education of Primary Caregiver;
    - (4) At least 25 points in the Observation component;
    - (5) A minimum score of 4 on the Language and Books on each FCCERS-3 observation subscale; and
    - (6) A minimum of 4 on the Interactions on each FCCERS-3 observation subscale.
- b. If a program does not meet all of the minimum requirements for a rating; the rating assigned shall be the highest rating for which all requirements are met.



3. Documentation for activities, endorsements, and certificates shall be provided for verification in order for points to be awarded.
  - a. Documentation shall be submitted for the following domains within the CCQS framework:
    - i. Health and Safety Programs
    - ii. Family Engagement
    - iii. Education of Primary Caregiver
    - iv. Training and Credentials of the Administrator Responsible for Business Operations
    - v. National Accreditation
  - b. Programs shall submit documentation on [www.careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](http://www.careaboutchildcare.utah.gov) by the last day of the initially scheduled observation month in order for documentation to be considered for review.
  - c. Documentation shall protect child and family identities by excluding personally identifiable information.
  - d. Documentation shall be reviewed, verified, and approved or denied no later than the month before the certified quality rating is posted publicly.
  - e. Family Engagement requires the submission of documentation as follows:
    - i. Regular Family Conferences
      - (1) Copy of a child's completed records used to track progress and development reviewed at conference(s);
      - (2) Copy of a goal-setting document developed in partnership with a family member and signed by a family member; and
      - (3) One page of a sign-up sheet used for conference(s), including the date(s) of the conference(s).
      - (4) All child names should be blacked out in the documentation.
    - ii. Child Assessment and Developmental Screenings:
      - (1) Copy of an informational document provided to parents about the purpose of developmental screening and the process of screening at the program and
      - (2) Copy of a completed tool used to conduct a screening or documentation of behaviors observed, including the date of the screening or observation.
    - iii. Connecting Families to Service Agencies:
      - (1) Copy of at least two current handouts for community agencies and

- (2) Description of where the handouts are displayed or how families receive this information.
- iv. Activities for Families:
  - (1) Copy of flier or social media post about event(s). Dates must be included on the flier or other notification; and
  - (2) At least two photos including adult family members taken at event(s) or completed sign-in attendance sheet from event(s).
- v. Regular Communication About Each Child:
  - (1) Copy of communication given to family on an infant's, toddler's or two-year-old's day. Documentation must include the date of communication;
  - (2) Copy of communication given to family on a preschooler or older child's week. Documentation must include the date of communication; and
  - (3) Description of a way for a family member to respond to the communication and share information from home to the program.
- vi. Monthly Communication with Families Sharing Program Information
  - (1) Copy of a month's information, such as a newsletter, social media post or picture of a bulletin board specific to a month, including information on:
    - (a) Program; and
    - (b) Parenting or Child Development
- vii. Opportunity for Parents to Give Feedback to the Program:
  - (1) Copy of request(s) sent from the program to the parents asking for feedback during the 12-month documentation period. For example, a survey, request on social media or attendance roll sheets from a family advisory group or family feedback meeting.
  - (2) Dates must be included in documentation.
- viii. Information on Transitions:
  - (1) Copy of the communication, including the date, sent to families with information regarding transitions from:
    - (a) Home to program;
    - (b) Program to school or another setting.
    - (c) Copy of contact information for the neighborhood school(s) and description of how this information is shared with families.
- ix. Supporting English Learners:

- (1) Copy of written policy in parent handbook explaining support of English language learners, including:
      - (a) Use of basic words and phrases from the home language;
      - (b) Incorporating books or labels in both languages; and
      - (c) Use of interpreters when needed.
  - f. Documentation for Education of Primary Caregivers requires professional development components within the Leadership and Professional Development domain to be recorded as part of an individual's Utah Registry for Professional Development Workforce registry profile.
    - i. The Utah Registry for Professional Development verifies and approves uploaded documents in accordance with OCC Professional Development policy.
  - g. Documentation for Administrator Responsible for Business Administration:
    - i. Documentation of the professional development components within the Management and Administration domain must be recorded as part of an individual's Utah Registry for Professional Development Workforce registry profile.
    - ii. The Utah Registry for Professional Development verifies and approves uploaded documentation in accordance with OCC Professional Development policy.
    - iii. If the professional development achievements of the administrator responsible for business operations changes within a certified quality rating period there will be no change to the points awarded until the next certified quality rating.
4. Timeline for Qualifying Documentation
- a. Programs submitting documentation of activities shall meet the following requirements:
    - i. Activity for which documentation is submitted shall be completed within the 12-month documentation period.
    - ii. Documentation shall be submitted on [www.careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](http://www.careaboutchildcare.utah.gov) by the last day of the initially scheduled observation month.
    - iii. The endorsement or certificate shall be current; and
    - iv. Shall not expire during the 12-month documentation period.
  - b. Changes during the certified quality rating period
    - i. Changes include the following:



- (1) Earning an endorsement or certificate;
- (2) Having an endorsement or certificate revoked; or
- (3) Expiration of an endorsement or certificate.

ii. Impact of Change

- (1) OCC shall not consider any change of status for an endorsement or certificate during the certified quality rating period.
- (2) Changes of status of endorsement or certificates shall not be considered until the following 12-month documentation period.

- c. CCQS framework points shall not be recalculated for any component during the certified quality rating period.

5. Temporary Amendments to Scoring and Documentation Policy

- a. This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.





## Office of Child Care Policy

### Rating Period and Recertification (OCC 90.04.01)

Effective: January 31, 2020

Updated: March 31, 2024

- 1) A certified quality rating shall remain in place during the 12-month certified quality rating period unless a program:
  - a) Loses its license in good standing and goes on conditional license; or
  - b) Has its license become inactive; or
  - c) Is disqualified from accepting funds from the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF).
  - d) Is assessed a Civil Money Penalty from Child Care Licensing and is rated Certified High Quality or Certified High Quality Plus
    - i) In this case, the certified quality rating will be changed to Certified Building Quality for the remainder of the certified quality rating period.
  - e) Requests a default Foundation of Quality rating or a Not Participating Status
    - i) Programs requesting a default Foundation of Quality rating or Not Participating Status during the 12-month certified quality rating period shall keep the same rating period and shall not be permitted to submit a new application until the third calendar month prior to the month the original certified quality rating expires.
- 2) The 12-month certified quality rating period shall be modified in the following circumstances:
  - a) Programs participating in the implementation period that receive a certified Foundation of Quality or Building Quality rating using the temporary framework and applied for recertification in March 2022, may have an initial certified rating period that is less than 12 months or;
  - b) Child care programs receiving CCQS technical assistance and support from OCC may have a certified rating period that aligns with the technical assistance and support period, as established by contract between OCC and the child care program.
- 3) Recertification of the Certified Quality Rating:



- a) Child care programs shall recertify in order to maintain a certified quality rating.
- b) Recertification requires the following activities:
  - i) Submission of a complete application for a certified quality rating as established in the Obtaining a Certified Quality Rating policy.
    - (1) An application submitted within the fourth calendar month prior to the expiration date of the certified quality rating period shall be considered to have been submitted in a timely manner.
  - ii) Completion of observation during the recertification period in accordance with the Family Child Care Observation policy.
  - iii) Calculation of all CCQS domains based on activities completed during the 12-month documentation period and documentation submitted according to the Scoring and Documentation policy.
- c) Failure to Recertify in a Timely Manner
  - i) A child care program failing to recertify in a timely manner may receive one of the following ratings or statuses until a certified quality rating is awarded:
    - (1) A default Foundation of Quality rating for child care programs that are DWS-Eligible;
    - (2) Not participating status for child care programs that are not DWS-Eligible;  
or
    - (3) Denied participation status for child care programs operating on a conditional license at the time of recertification.
  - ii) Failure to recertify in a timely manner is defined as submitting the recertification application after the last day of the fourth calendar month prior to the expiration of the Certified Quality Rating Period.
- 4) Temporary Amendments to Rating Period and Recertification
  - a) This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Eligibility and Participation (OCC 90.02.01)

Effective: January 31, 2020

Updated: October 1, 2023

1. Family child care programs shall meet the following eligibility requirements to participate in the Child Care Quality System:
  - a. Be eligible to accept Child Care and Development Fund funding; and
  - b. Possess a family child care license in good standing as established by the Utah Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing program.
  - c. Have at least two children enrolled and attending on a daily basis.
2. Participation in CCQS
  - a. All licensed family programs shall receive a Child Care Quality System rating or status.
  - b. DWS-Eligible family child care programs are required to participate in CCQS to remain DWS-Eligible. Participation includes receiving a default rating or any certified quality rating.
  - c. All CCQS ratings or statuses shall be made public on the [careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](https://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov) website.
3. Not Participating Status
  - a. A program may request a "Not Participating" status through [careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](https://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov).
    - i. DWS-eligible child care programs that receive a "Not Participating" status in CCQS shall no longer be eligible to receive subsidy or grant funding through CCQS contracts from the Office of Child Care.
    - ii. The "Not Participating" status will be posted on the program's profile on [careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](https://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov).
  - b. A program with a "Not Participating" status that wishes to participate in CCQS must:
    - i. Contact Child Care Licensing to become DWS eligible.



- ii. Once DWS eligible, reapply through the CCQS tile on the Program Overview page on the Care About Childcare website the following day or thereafter.
- 4. Temporary Amendments to Eligibility and Participation.
  - a. This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Domains - Leadership and Professional Development (OCC 90.06.01C)

Effective: January 31, 2020

Updated: April 10, 2024

#### 1) Education of Primary Caregiver

- a) CCQS framework points shall be based upon the individual designated as the primary caregiver on the program's Staff Information page on Care About Childcare on the day the scores are calculated.
  - i) A person shall only be counted as a primary caregiver or director for a maximum of two child care program sites.
  - ii) Changes to the individual designated as the primary caregiver shall not change the CCQS framework points or CCQS certified quality rating during the certified quality rating period.
  - iii) CCQS framework points for Education of Primary Caregiver
- b) The Education of Primary Caregiver component includes three options for child care programs. Options are based on the highest level of the Career Ladder the primary caregiver has achieved:
  - i) Child care programs shall be assigned only one option for determining points on the Education of Primary Caregiver component.
  - ii) The assigned option for determining points on the Education of Primary Caregiver component may change only at recertification.
  - iii) A child care program may receive partial points in an identified option and does not need to complete all requirements within an option to receive points for that option.
  - iv) See the Professional Development Career Ladder System policy for information on the requirements for each Career Ladder level.
    - (1) Option 1 – awards points for Career Ladder Level 10
    - (2) Option 2 – awards points for Career Ladder Level 9

- (3) Option 3 – awards points for Career Ladder Levels 4 through 8 with current demonstrated competency and verified college credits.
  - (a) The amount of points awarded for Option 3 shall vary based upon the Career Ladder Level achieved and in accordance with the CCQS framework.
  - (b) See the Professional Development Career Ladder System policy for information on approved demonstrated competency options and maintaining a current demonstrated competency.
  - (c) Primary Caregivers may receive points for Career Ladder approved semester college credits in early childhood education. See the Professional Development Career Ladder System policy for information on accepted college credits. College credit hours can be accumulated and do not expire.
- c) In each of the Education of Primary Caregiver Options, points are awarded for the following:
  - i) 20 hours of Career Ladder training, requiring the following:
    - (1) 20 Hours of Career Ladder approved training, completed and submitted through Care About Childcare within the 12-month documentation period.
      - (a) Approved training may include a maximum of 10 hours of Career Ladder Approved Professional Activities.
  - ii) Five Years of paid and verifiable work experience providing care to children in a program. Documentation must be submitted by the last day of the 12-month documentation period. Experience shall be verified by URPD which may include review of the following documentation:
    - (1) Utah Department of Health and Human Services – Child Care Licensing records;
    - (2) Personal income tax records indicating that the individual worked in the field of child care;
    - (3) Payroll records;
    - (4) Government-issued child care license or certificate that includes the provider's name; or
    - (5) A signed letter from a current or former employer, with dates of employment clearly stated. The letter must be written on the child care program's letterhead and include the following contact information: Name of administrator, phone number, email address.



- 2) Temporary Amendments to Leadership and Professional Development Policy
  - a) This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.
  - i) This statement adds more detail to “II(B)(2)(b)”



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Domains - National Accreditation (OCC 90.06.01E)

Effective: January 31, 2020

Updated: February 9, 2022

1. Points shall be awarded to programs accredited by the National Accreditation for Family Child Care (NAFCC) .
2. In order for points to be awarded, the accreditation documents shall be submitted and verified in accordance with the Scoring and Documentation Policy.
3. Additional National Accreditations
  - a. OCC may recognize additional national accreditations when the following applies:
    - i. Accrediting organization meets the following criteria:
      - (1) Independent, third-party organization;
      - (2) Nationally recognized;
      - (3) Not-for-profit; and
      - (4) Submits a request to the Office of Child Care requesting to be added to the list of recognized National Accreditations.
    - b. Accreditation meets the following criteria:
      - i. Is for a home-based child care program;
      - ii. Incorporates evidence-based practices demonstrating positive outcomes for children;
      - iii. Requires onsite review of criteria to ensure the home-based childcare program is implementing the requirements; and
      - iv. Incorporates an ongoing renewal process which is no longer than five years.
    - c. OCC shall review requests as follows:
      - i. Submit a Request for Accreditation Inclusion in CCQS Framework (Form 595);





- ii. CCQS Subcommittee reviews requests to incorporate national accreditation programs; and
- iii. National accreditation programs requesting incorporation in the CCQS framework shall be notified of the decision.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Obtaining a Certified Quality Rating (OCC 90.03.01)

Effective: January 31, 2020

Updated: October 1, 2023

1. Obtaining a Certified Quality Rating requires the following process:
  - a. Applying for a Certified Quality Rating
    - i. All child care programs applying for a Certified Quality Rating may submit an application on the Care About Childcare website.
      - (1) Programs receiving a certified quality rating during the implementation period shall not be permitted to apply for the full range of certified quality ratings until March 2022.
    - ii. A complete child care program application shall include the following information:
      - (1) Observation blackout dates; and
      - (2) Other components as required on the application.
  - b. Processing applications
    - i. OCC shall process all submitted applications from eligible child care programs.
    - ii. OCC may prioritize applications for scheduling observations and calculating certified quality ratings.
  - c. Withdrawing a CCQS application
    - i. A program may withdraw their application prior to receiving a certified quality rating through the CCQS tile on the Program Overview page on [careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](https://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov).
      - (1) Programs that withdraw their application will not be eligible to reapply for 90 days.
  - d. Awarding CCQS Rating or Status

- i. All applications submitted shall be processed and a rating awarded or a status assigned no later than 180 days after the application was submitted, except for programs participating in the implementation period.
    - (1) A program shall not withdraw its application for a certified quality rating after the application has been processed and a quality rating decision made.
    - (2) Once a certified quality rating decision is made by OCC, a program may:
      - (a) Allow the rating to stand as issued by OCC;
      - (b) Withdraw from CCQS as outlined in Eligibility and Participation, III. Option to Withdraw from CCQS; or
      - (c) Request a default Foundation of Quality rating.
        - (i) Programs requesting the default Foundation of Quality rating during the 12-month certified quality rating period shall not be permitted to submit a new application until the third calendar month prior to the month the original certified quality rating expires.
  - ii. Certified quality ratings will be published publicly on the first day of the month of the certified rating period.
  - e. Programs found to have deliberately manipulated information or misrepresented information in order to accrue points within the Child Care Quality System will be considered as fraudulent. Such actions may result in disqualification.
2. Temporary Amendments to Obtaining a Certified Quality Rating
- a. This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Enhanced Subsidy Grants (OCC 90.07.01)

Effective: January 31, 2020

Updated: March 31, 2024

1. Child care programs meeting all of the following requirements shall receive an Enhanced Subsidy Grant (ESG):
  - a. Child care programs receiving a rating of:
    - i. High Quality; or
    - ii. High Quality Plus
  - b. Child care programs that served children for whom child care was paid for with Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) subsidy payments during the 12-month period used to calculate the ESG;
  - c. Child care programs that have no outstanding adjudicated overpayments or other DWS debts due to DWS, OCC;
  - d. Maintains a license in good standing with CCL during the 12-month certification period;
  - e. Maintains status as a DWS-Eligible child care program during the 12-month certification period;
  - f. Agrees to comply with the requirements outlined in the Notice of CCQS Certified Quality Rating;
  - g. Agrees to the amount of the ESG stated on the Notice of CCQS Certified Quality Rating;
  - h. Receives the ESG through direct deposit;
  - i. Does not have a pending appeal with the Office of Child Care on the awarded Certified Quality rating; and
  - j. Has not been issued a Notice of Agency Action for an Intentional Program Violation or Suspected Intentional Program Violation, as defined in R986-100-117.



2. If a program receiving an ESG is assessed a Civil Money Penalty from Child Care Licensing during the 12-month certification period, the ESG will be discontinued for the remainder of the certification period.
3. Overpayments, Other DWS Debts or Appeals
  - a. Overpayments or other debts owed to DWS, OCC issued in accordance with Utah Administrative Code 986-700-715, including but not limited to overpayments determined by the DWS Overpayment Unit.
  - b. Overpayments for which there is pending administrative review or appeal shall not impact the ESG until final disposition of the action is issued.
  - c. A program found to have been overpaid child care subsidy due to Intentional Program Violation on the part of the program while receiving an ESG shall repay the ESG received during the time period of the Intentional Program Violation.
  - d. An ESG in which there is an overpayment or other debt shall be issued as follows:
    - i. Where the overpayment amount is less than the monthly ESG amount, the ESG may be reduced by the amount of outstanding overpayment due; or
    - ii. Where the overpayment amount is greater than the monthly ESG, a monthly ESG may continue to be reduced until the overpayment is fully repaid to DWS.
  - e. Upon final disposition of a pending CCQS review an ESG may be issued retroactively where all other ESG requirements are met and the program has not been found to have committed an Intentional Program Violation.
4. Calculating the Monthly ESG
  - a. The amount of the ESG shall be:
    - i. Fixed;
    - ii. Issued monthly separately from a program's monthly child care subsidy payment;
    - iii. Based on the monthly average number of children enrolled in the program for whom care was paid with CCDF subsidy payments during the 12-month documentation period used to calculate the certified quality rating; and
      - (1) When a program has been open fewer than 12 months the amount will be based on the number of months in operation during the 12-month documentation period starting with the initial regulation month.
    - iv. The following amounts:



- (1) For child care programs with a certified rating of High Quality the amount shall be equal to \$100 per child covered by CCDF subsidies; or
  - (2) For child care programs with a certified rating of High Quality Plus the amount shall be equal to \$125 per child covered by CCDF subsidies.
- b. The fixed monthly payment shall be recalculated at the beginning of a new certified rating period if the program continues to be rated High Quality or High Quality Plus.
- c. The fixed monthly payment amounts are based on costs related to components of high quality care that are supported by research including, but not limited to:
  - i. Wages for the primary caregiver;
  - ii. Professional development and coaching;
  - iii. Materials and equipment; and
  - iv. Family engagement activities.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Domains - Health and Safety (OCC 90.06.01A)

Effective: January 31, 2020

Updated: February 9, 2022

1. Points shall be received in the Health and Safety domain where the following requirements are met:
  - a. Licensing Compliance:
    - i. Child care programs shall possess a family child care license in good standing;
    - ii. Points shall be awarded based on the number of public rule violations that a program has from Child Care Licensing during the 12-month documentation period.
  - b. Participation in Health and Safety Program:
    - i. Points shall be awarded to child care programs that have current endorsements or certifications from the following independent, third party organizations that support health and safety for children:
      - (1) TOP Star
      - (2) Healthier CACFP Award
      - (3) Nature Explore Outdoor Classroom
      - (4) Eco-Healthy Child Care Environment
    - ii. Points shall be awarded for the health and safety programs for which documentation has been submitted and verified, as required in the Scoring and Documentation policy.
    - iii. Additional health and safety programs:
      - (1) OCC may add health and safety awards to the CCQS framework where the following requirements are met:
        - (a) Health and safety program is issued from an independent, third party organization;
        - (b) Issuing organization is a government agency or not-for-profit;

- (c) Issuing organization submits a request to the Office of Child Care requesting to be added to the list of approved health and safety programs;
  - (d) Health and safety program supports practices that are evidence-based and demonstrate positive outcomes for children;
  - (e) Issuing organization awards the endorsement or certificate for the health and safety program after review of defined criteria ensuring the child care program is implementing the requirements of the health and safety program; and
  - (f) The endorsement or certificate for the health and safety program has regular renewal requirements, no longer than three years.
- (2) The CCQS Subcommittee reviews requests to incorporate health and safety programs.
  - (3) Health and safety programs requesting incorporation in the CCQS framework shall be notified of the decision.

## 2. Temporary Amendments to Health and Safety Policy

- a. This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.





## Office of Child Care Policy

### Domains - Learning Environments and Relationships (OCC 90.06.01B)

Effective: January 31, 2020

Updated: September 3, 2024

1. Points shall be received in the Learning Environments and Relationships domain where the following requirements are met:
  - a. Ratios and Group Size:
    - i. Ratios refer to the caregiver-to-child ratios, counting all children present in care. Children in care includes licensee or staff's own children under the age of six.
    - ii. Group size refers to the number of children present including children through age 12 of licensee and staff.
    - iii. CCQS ratios and group sizes are a higher standard than Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing requirements. CCQS ratios and group size standards are detailed in the Scoring and Documentation policy section.
    - iv. Points for ratios and group size shall be based on the verified ratio and group size amounts during the two most recent inspections conducted by a Child Care Licensors during the 12-month documentation period. Inspections may be announced or unannounced.
    - v. Points shall be calculated based on the highest ratio and group size, per age group, documented during the on-site activities.
      - (1) Points may be calculated based on one ratio and group size verification if, due to extenuating circumstances, only one verification was completed by a Child Care Licensors during the 12-month documentation period.
  - b. Observations:
    - i. Certified quality ratings require at least one unannounced observation conducted by an OCC-approved observer



(1) An additional observation will be required if children are grouped by age and the groups do not combine during the observation.

a) If a program has had three consecutive High Quality or High Quality Plus ratings with no lapse, observations are only required every other year.

- i. The program must maintain a High Quality or High Quality Plus rating.
- ii. The observation points from the previous year will be carried over to the current year.
- iii. A program can choose to have new observations when not required, if desired.
- iv. If a program elects to have new observations, the new scores will be used in the quality rating.
- v. A program has until the 15th day of the month before the observation month to make a decision.

ii. The observation shall be conducted using the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale-3 (FCCERS-3) observation tool, with fidelity.

## 2. Observation Fidelity and Reliability

a. OCC shall establish the following system to ensure high stakes observations are conducted to fidelity, by a reliable observer.

### i. Observer Reliability

(1) OCC-approved Anchors:

(a) OCC-approved anchor is an individual achieving 90 percent reliability with the consensus scores agreed upon by the Environment Rating Scales Institute-authorized trainings in the three most current consecutive observations.

(b) Anchors shall be authorized to ensure the reliability of an OCC-approved observer.

(c) Anchors shall:

- (i) Review observation reports of OCC-approved observers;
- (ii) Provide feedback to OCC-approved observers; and
- (iii) Finalize observation reports conducted by OCC-approved observers.

(2) OCC-approved Observers:

- (a) OCC-approved observers (observers) shall be reliable on the FCCERS-3 tool, which is defined as achieving an average of 85 percent reliability with the score of an anchor in three consecutive observations.
  - (b) OCC shall ensure the reliability of observers by requiring each observer to be trained by an anchor.
- ii. Maintaining Anchor and Observer Reliability
  - (1) OCC-approved Anchors shall maintain reliability as follows:
    - (a) Achieve 90 percent reliability with consensus scores with a fellow, OCC-approved anchor once every four months for FCCERS-3
    - (b) If unforeseen circumstances prevent an individual from completing a reliability check in the fourth month, it will be completed before the observer conducts a CCQS observation independently.
- iii. Failure to Maintain Reliability
  - (1) OCC-approved Anchors failing to maintain reliability shall:
    - a. Not act as an anchor until meeting the initially established reliability requirements; and
    - b. Meet the initially established reliability requirements within three months of failing to meet 90 percent reliability.
    - c. While re-establishing status as an OCC-approved anchor, the anchor may conduct observations as an OCC-approved observer provided they maintain the reliability requirements of an OCC-approved observer.
    - d. OCC-approved anchors unable to regain reliability within three months of attaining reliability scores of less than 90 percent shall be unable to continue in the role of an anchor.
  - b. OCC-approved observers shall maintain reliability as follows:
    - (a) achieve 85 percent reliability with the consensus scores of an OCC-approved anchor once every four months for FCCERS-3.
    - (b) If unforeseen circumstances prevent an individual from completing a reliability check in the fourth month, it will be completed before the observer conducts a CCQS observation independently.
  - (b) Failure to Maintain Reliability
    - (i) OCC-approved observers failing to maintain reliability shall:

1. Not be allowed to conduct observations used to determine a certified quality rating; and
  2. Participate in observations with an OCC-approved FCCERS-3 anchor until meeting the reliability requirements of an OCC-approved observer over three consecutive observations
- (ii) OCC-approved FCCERS-3 observers unable to regain reliability within three months of attaining reliability scores of less than 85 percent shall be unable to continue in the role of an observer.

### 3. Initial Visits

- a. Prior to the observation, all child care programs applying for a certified rating shall receive an initial visit by an OCC-approved observer which includes the following components:
  - i. Meeting with the licensee or primary caregiver listed on the program's staff information page on [careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](http://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov) and all applicable caregivers, as available;
  - ii. Explaining the observation processes and expectations for caregivers; and
  - iii. Verifying the program schedule.
- b. During the initial visit, the OCC-approved observer will not provide advice, coaching or technical assistance to the licensee or caregivers.

### 4. Observations

- a. Scheduling and Blackout Dates
  - i. Observations shall be conducted on any date the program operates during the scheduled observation month, except on the blackout dates selected by the program.
  - ii. Child care program may request a maximum of five blackout dates in which observations shall not be conducted during the scheduled observation month.
    - (1) Blackout dates are identified on the program's complete application.
    - (2) A request to change the blackout dates will be accommodated only if the observer's schedule allows.
    - (3) The same day of the week shall not be selected more than twice.
- iii. Acts of Nature
  - (1) OCC may reschedule the observation at a future date due to acts of nature.

- (2) Acts of nature are events that occur outside of human control and cannot be prevented or predicted.

b. Program Refusal of or Interference with Observations:

- i. Observers shall not conduct an observation when the child care program refuses to allow observers to appropriately conduct an observation or when the program's action results in an observer's inability to score an observation to fidelity.
- ii. OCC shall conclude that a program is refusing or interfering with an observation in any of the following circumstances:
  - (1) Programs do not allow an observation in a selected child care environment; and
  - (2) Per the judgment of the observer, the program prevented the observer from conducting the observation accurately.
- iii. Impact of a Program Refusal of or Interference with Observation
  - (1) The child care program shall not receive a certified quality rating; and
  - (2) DWS-eligible child care programs shall receive a rating of "Default Foundation of Quality."
- iv. To receive a certified quality rating, a child care program refusing or interfering with an observation shall re-apply by submitting a new CCQS Certified Quality Rating application.

c. Finalizing Observation Scores

- i. Observation shall be reviewed by an authorized reviewer.
- ii. Only finalized observation score reports shall be shared with programs.
- iii. Only finalized observation scores shall be used to calculate points within the Observation Component.

d. Receiving Observation Scores

- i. OCC shall notify the program of the finalized observation scores within a reasonable time of completing the observations.
- ii. Within a reasonable time, an OCC-approved observer may meet with the following individuals to review the scores:
  - (1) Child care licensee; or
  - (2) Child care primary caregiver listed on the program's CCQS application.

5. Family Engagement

- a. Points shall be awarded to child care programs completing family engagement activities



- b. OCC shall apply the Family Engagement Rubric to award points for the following activities:
    - i. Family Conferences;
    - ii. Development Screenings;
    - iii. Connecting to Services;
    - iv. Activities for Families;
    - v. Communication on Child;
    - vi. Communication on Program;
    - vii. Parent Feedback;
    - viii. Information on Transitions; and
    - ix. Supporting English Learners
  - c. CCQS framework points shall be awarded in the Family Engagement Domain for activities documented and verified, in accordance with CCQS Scoring and Documentation policy.
6. Temporary Amendments to Learning Environments and Relationships Policy
- a. This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### **Additional Payments - Quality Observation Award (OCC 90.05.01B)**

Effective: January 31, 2020

Updated: February 9, 2022

1. Child Care Programs Eligible for a Quality Observation Award
  - a. Child care programs meeting all of the following requirements shall be eligible for a Quality Observation Award:
    - i. Receives a Child Care Quality System (CCQS) certified quality rating;
    - ii. Receives high quality scores in one or more observations conducted for the purpose of the certified quality rating, as follows:
      - (1) An average score of 3.67 or higher on a FCCERS-3 observation, with a minimum score of 4 on the Language and Book and a minimum score of 4 on the Interactions subscale;
    - iii. Agrees to the amount of the Quality Observation Award stated on the Quality Observation Award notice; and
    - iv. Agrees to receive the Quality Observation Award through direct deposit.
2. Application to receive a Quality Observation Award
  - a. Child care programs shall be notified of their eligibility to apply for a Quality Observation Award at the beginning of the certified quality rating period.
  - b. Child care programs shall submit a completed application to [urpd@usu.edu](mailto:urpd@usu.edu) by the last day of the program's current certified quality rating period to remain eligible to receive funds.
3. Calculating the Quality Observation Award amount
  - a. The amount of the Quality Observation Award shall be:
    - i. Fixed;
    - ii. Issued once per certified rating period, per eligible observation. Programs that receive an additional observation as the result of a review request are not eligible for a second quality observation award;
    - iii. Issued separately from other payments from DWS;



- iv. Based on the observations meeting high quality criteria as defined above in 1.A.
  - v. Paid in the following amount: \$1,000 per observation up to a maximum of 2 observations.
- 4. Overpayments, Other DWS Debts or Appeals
  - a. Programs that do not receive an Enhanced Subsidy Grant and that have overpayments or other debts owed to DWS, OCC issued in accordance with Utah Administrative Code 986-700-715, including but not limited to overpayments determined by the DWS Overpayment Unit, shall have their Quality Observation Award amount impacted as follows:
    - i. Where the overpayment amount is less than the Quality Observation Award amount, the Quality Observation Award shall be reduced by the amount of outstanding overpayment due; or
    - ii. Where the overpayment amount is greater than the Quality Observation Award amount, the Quality Observation Award amount shall be applied to the outstanding overpayment balance.
- 5. Temporary Amendments to Quality Observation Award Policy
  - a. This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.





## Office of Child Care Policy

### Domains - Management and Administration (OCC 90.06.01D)

Effective: January 31, 2020

Updated: April 10, 2024

- 1) CCQS framework points shall be based upon the individual designated as the child care program's primary business administrator in the program's Staff Information page on Care About Childcare on the day the scores are calculated.
  - a) The business administrator is responsible for the business operations and financial health of the program and meets the following requirements:
    - i) Guides the decision-making related to the daily operations of the program site including, but not limited to, program finances and the financial impact of enrollment and staffing; and
    - ii) Responsible for more than payroll or tax preparation services.
  - b) Administrator may be:
    - i) The licensee of a child care program;
    - ii) The primary caregiver of a child care program; or
    - iii) An individual serving as the business administrator
- 2) Points shall be awarded for one of the following credentials awarded to the administrator:
  - a) Bachelor's degree or higher with nine verifiable credit hours in finance, business or program administration;
  - b) Associate degree or higher with six verifiable credit hours in finance, business or program administration;
  - c) Current Aim4Excellence Director's Credential; or
  - d) Current National Administrator's Credential.



- 3) In order for points to be awarded for college credits, the majority of the college course content must cover one or more of the following topics, as they relate to operating a program, business or organization. College credit hours do not expire.
  - a) Accounting
  - b) Administration
  - c) Business
  - d) Entrepreneurship
  - e) Finance
  - f) Management
- 4) Points shall be awarded for 10 hours of training in business or leadership meeting all of the following requirements:
  - a) Training is specific to business and leadership and includes one or more of the following topics:
    - i) Accounting or record keeping;
    - ii) Administrative leadership;
    - iii) Budgeting or financial planning;
    - iv) Business administration;
    - v) Business best practices;
    - vi) Business management or operations;
    - vii) Business marketing;
    - viii) Business strategy;
    - ix) Emergency preparedness;
    - x) Evaluating program quality;
    - xi) Hiring staff;
    - xii) Improving staff performance;
    - xiii) Program planning and development; or
    - xiv) Recruitment and retention of staff.
  - b) 20 Hours of Career Ladder approved training, completed and submitted through Care About Childcare within the 12-month documentation period.



- i) Approved training may include a maximum of 10 hours of Career Ladder Approved Professional Activities.
- 5) For the licensee listed as both the primary caregiver and as the administrator responsible for business operations, Career Ladder training hours:
  - a) May only be counted once within the CCQS framework; and
  - b) Will be applied to the Education of Primary Caregiver component or Management and Administration domain in the way that awards the child care program the most amount of points.
- 6) Temporary Amendments to Management and Administration Policy
  - a) This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.



# Office of Child Care Policy

## Overview of Framework (OCC 90.08.01)

Effective: January 31, 2020

Updated: March 31, 2024

1. The Child Care Quality System (CCQS) Framework includes the following ratings or statuses:
  - a. Certified Quality Ratings
    - i. Certified quality ratings may be awarded to eligible programs that complete the application process for a certified quality rating.
    - ii. The CCQS framework is used to determine the program's certified quality rating based upon minimum total points achieved across the following five domains of quality:
      - (1) Health and Safety;
      - (2) Learning Environments and Relationships;
      - (3) Leadership and Professional Development;
      - (4) Management and Administration; and
      - (5) National Accreditation
    - iii. Certified Quality Ratings include the following:
      - (1) Foundation of Quality;
      - (2) Building Quality;
      - (3) High Quality; or
      - (4) High Quality Plus.
  - b. Default Foundation of Quality Rating
    - i. Default Foundation of Quality Rating is awarded to DWS-eligible child care programs in the following circumstance:
      - (1) The program has a license in good standing from the Child Care Licensing Program; and
      - (2) Has not applied for a certified quality rating.

- (3) Program requests default Foundation of Quality rating after OCC has made a quality rating decision
  - ii. Default Foundation of Quality Rating shall remain effective until:
    - (1) Child care program applies for and receives a certified quality rating;
    - (2) Child care program requests a CCQS status of “not participating;”
    - (3) Child care program becomes ineligible to participate in CCQS; or
    - (4) Expiration of the previously designated 12-month certified quality rating period for a program requesting a default Foundation of Quality rating after OCC has made a quality rating decision.
  - iii. There is no recertification period for programs assigned a default rating.
- c. Statuses
  - i. In certain circumstances, a child care program may receive one of the following CCQS statuses rather than a CCQS rating:
    - (1) Not Participating Status applies to the following child care programs:
      - (a) Child care programs that request a “Not Participating” status in the Child Care Quality System;
      - (b) Child care programs not holding a family child care license in good standing from the Utah Department of Health, Child Care Licensing Program;
      - (c) Child care programs disqualified from receiving Child Care Development Fund funding; or
      - (d) An eligible child care program that has not applied for a certified quality rating and has not elected to become DWS-eligible.
    - (2) Denied Participation status applies to child care programs holding a conditional license from the Child Care Licensing Program. When a program’s license is reinstated, one of the following shall be assigned:
      - (a) Default Foundation of Quality Rating for DWS-Eligible child care programs; or
      - (b) Not Participating status
    - (3) Programs that receive one of the above statuses shall not receive an Enhanced Subsidy Grant.

## 2. Certified Quality Rating Levels

### a. Foundation of Quality



- i. A program meeting the following requirements shall receive a certified quality rating of Foundation of Quality:
  - (1) Program possesses a family child care license from the Utah Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing Program; and
  - (2) License from Utah Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing program is not conditional.
- b. Building Quality
  - i. A program meeting the following requirements shall receive a certified quality rating of Building Quality:
    - (1) Meets the required components in the Foundation of Quality rating; and
    - (2) Licensed family child care program achieves the following minimum points:
      - (a) 48 points achieved across CCQS Framework Domains
      - (b) Scores at least 10 points on the Observation component
    - (3) Failure to meet the minimum points for required components
      - (a) A program shall receive the rating of Foundation of Quality when it meets the minimum points across the framework domains for Building Quality, but fails to meet required
- c. High Quality
  - i. A program meeting the following requirements shall receive a certified rating of High Quality:
    - (1) Meets the required components in the Foundation of Quality rating; and
    - (2) Was not assessed a Civil Money Penalty from Child Care Licensing during the 12-month documentation period.
    - (3) Licensed family child care program achieves the following minimum points:
      - (a) 88 points achieved across CCQS Framework Domains;
      - (b) 5 points in each of the CCQS Framework components:
        - (i) Licensing Compliance
        - (ii) Education of Primary Caregiver
    - (4) Scores at least 21 points on the Observation component;
    - (5) Scores at least a 4 on the Language and Books FCCERS-3 subscale; and

- (6) Scores at least a 4 on Interactions FCCERS-3 subscale for the observation conducted.
    - ii. Failure to meet the minimum points for required components:
      - (1) A program shall receive a lower rating when it meets the minimum points across the framework domains for High Quality, but fails to meet required minimum points within specific components for the High Quality rating.
  - d. High Quality Plus
    - i. A program meeting the following requirements shall receive a certified rating of High Quality Plus:
      - (1) Meets the required components in the Foundation of Quality rating;
      - (2) Was not assessed a Civil Money Penalty from Child Care Licensing during the 12-month documentation period.
      - (3) Licensed Family Child Care Program achieves the following minimum points:
        - (a) 128 points achieved across CCQS Framework Domains
        - (b) 10 points in each of the CCQS Framework components:
          - (i) Licensing Compliance
          - (ii) Education of Primary Caregiver
      - (4) Scores at least 25 points on the Observation component;
      - (5) Scores at least a 4 on the Language and Books FCCERS-3 subscale; and
      - (6) Scores at least a 4 on Interactions FCCERS-3 subscale for the observation conducted.
    - ii. Failure to meet the minimum points for required components
3. Temporary Amendments to Overview of Framework
- a. This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### **Additional Payments - Professional Development Cost Sharing Award (OCC 90.05.01A)**

Effective: January 31, 2020

Updated: February 9, 2022

1. Child Care Programs Eligible for Professional Development Cost Sharing Award
  - a. Child care programs meeting all of the following requirements shall be eligible for Professional Development Cost Sharing award:
    - i. Receives a Child Care Quality System (CCQS) certified quality rating;
    - ii. Within the 12-month documentation period of the certified quality rating, meets the 20 hours of career ladder training requirement of Domain 3: Leadership and Professional Development, Education of Primary Caregiver component;
    - iii. Agrees to the amount of the Professional Development Cost Sharing award stated on the Professional Development Cost Sharing Award notice; and
    - iv. Agrees to receive Professional Development Cost Sharing award through direct deposit.
2. Application to receive Professional Development Cost Sharing
  - a. Child care programs shall be notified of their eligibility to apply for Professional Development Cost Sharing at the beginning of the certified quality rating period.
  - b. Child care programs shall submit a completed application to [urpd@usu.edu](mailto:urpd@usu.edu) by the last day of their current certified quality rating period in order to remain eligible to receive funds.
3. Calculating the Professional Development Cost Sharing award amount
  - a. The amount of the Professional Development Cost Sharing award shall be:
    - i. Fixed;
    - ii. Issued once per certified quality rating period, dependent on eligibility;
    - iii. Issued separately from other payments from DWS; and
    - iv. Paid in the following amount: \$275.





4. Overpayments, Other DWS Debts or Appeals
  - a. Programs that do not receive an Enhanced Subsidy Grant and that have overpayments or other debts owed to DWS, OCC issued in accordance with Utah Administrative Code 986-700-715, including but not limited to overpayments determined by the DWS Overpayment Unit, shall have their Professional Development Cost Sharing award amount impacted as follows:
    - i. Where the overpayment amount is less than the Professional Development Cost Sharing award amount, the Professional Development Cost Sharing award shall be reduced by the amount of outstanding overpayment due; or
    - ii. Where the overpayment amount is greater than the Professional Development Cost Sharing award amount, the Professional Development Cost Sharing award amount shall be applied to the outstanding overpayment balance.
5. Temporary Amendments to Professional Development Cost Sharing Award Policy
  - a. This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Scoring and Documentation (OCC 100.09.01)

Effective: March 11, 2019

Updated: September 1, 2024

1. Scoring of components within each of the five domains shall be calculated in accordance with the Child Care Quality System (CCQS) framework.
  - a. Licensing Compliance
    - i. Points will be awarded based on the number of public rule violations during the 12-month documentation period as follows:
      - (1) 0 public rule violations: 20 points
      - (2) 1 public rule violation: 15 points
      - (3) 2 public rule violations: 10 points
      - (4) 3 public rule violations: 0 points
    - ii. The following minimum points in Licensing Compliance are required for ratings higher than Building Quality:
      - (1) High Quality: 5 points
      - (2) High Quality Plus: 10 points
    - iii. The points awarded for Licensing Compliance shall not exceed 20 points.
  - b. Health and Safety Program Participation
    - i. Points shall be awarded for verified current health and safety certifications and endorsements that are submitted by the last day of the 12-month documentation period. Points are calculated as follows:
      - (1) 6 points: Teaching Obesity Prevention in Child Care (TOP Star) – Level 3 or higher;
        - 4 points: TOP Star – Level 2;
        - 2 points: TOP Star – Level 1
      - (2) 6 points: Healthier Child and Adult Care Food Care Program Award (Healthier CACFP Award) – Highest Honors in three or more categories;  
or

- 4 points: Healthier CACFP Award – High Honors or Highest Honors in three or more categories; or
- 2 points: Healthier CACFP Award – Honors, High Honors, or Highest Honors in three or more categories;
- (3) 2 points: Nature Explore Outdoor Classroom;
- (4) 2 points: Eco-Healthy Child Care Environment
- ii. Programs may elect multiple endorsements or certificates that add up to more than 10 points, such as 6 points for TOP Star and 6 points for Healthier CACFP; however, the maximum number of points awarded for Health and Safety Program Participation shall not exceed 10 points.
- c. Ratios and Group Size
  - i. Ratios refers to the caregiver-to-child ratios, counting all children present including children of staff. Group size is the number of children in a single, defined classroom including children of staff.
    - (1) If the number of children in the group is more than half of the stated group size, at least two caregivers must be present in the classroom for points to be awarded.
    - (2) Points for ratios within an age group must be awarded in order for group size points to be awarded.
  - ii. Points will be awarded as follows:
    - (1) Two-year-olds:
      - (a) Ratio: 1:6 or less = 4 points
      - (b) Group Size: 12 or less = 4 points
      - (c) Points may also be awarded when children aged 18 months to 23 months are mixed with the two-year-olds with a 1:6 ratio or less and a group size of 12 or less is maintained.
    - (2) Three-year-olds:
      - (a) Ratio: 1:10 or less = 2 points
      - (b) Group Size: 20 or less = 2 points
    - (3) Four-year-olds:
      - (a) Ratio: 1:10 or less = 2 points
      - (b) Ratio: 1:11 or 12 = 1 point
      - (c) Group Size: 20 or less = 2 points
      - (d) Group Size: 21 through 24 = 1 point

- (4) Five-year-olds:
  - (a) Ratio: 1:12 or less = 2 points
  - (b) Ratio: 1:13, 14 or 15 = 1 point
  - (c) Group Size: 24 or less = 2 points
  - (d) Group Size: 25 through 30 = 1 point
- (5) Six-year-olds and up:
  - (a) Ratio: 1:15 or less = 2 points
  - (b) Ratio: 1:15, 16, 17 or 18 = 1 point
  - (c) Group Size: 30 or less = 2 points
  - (d) Group Size: 31 through 36 = 1 point
- iii. The points awarded for Ratios and Group Size shall not exceed 24.
- d. Observations
  - i. Points for the observation component shall be awarded based on the required Environment Rating Scale (ERS) observation scores as follows:
    - (1) The average of all required ERS scores, multiplied by 3 equals the number of overall observation points.
    - (2) Each ERS observation has a minimum score of 4 on the Language and Books (ITERS)/Language and Literacy (ECERS) subscale = 5 points
    - (3) Each ERS observation has a minimum score of 4 on the Interactions subscale = 5 points
  - ii. Minimum observation score requirements for specific rating levels are as follows:
    - (1) Building Quality:
      - (a) Total award of at least 10 points; and
      - (b) Score of at least 3 on each SAPQA conducted, if applicable.
    - (2) High Quality:
      - (a) Total award of at least 21 points with;
      - (b) A minimum score of 3.67 on each required ERS observation with;
        - (i) A score of 4 on each Language and Books (ITERS)/Language and Literacy (ECERS) and Interactions subscales for all required ERS observations; and
      - (c) Score of at least 3.5 on each SAPQA conducted, if applicable.
    - (3) High Quality Plus:

- (a) Total award of at least 25 points with;
  - (b) A minimum score of 3.67 on each required ERS observation with;
    - (i) A score of 4 on each Language and Books (ITERS)/Language and Literacy (ECERS) and Interactions subscales for all required ERS observations; and
  - (c) Score of at least 4 on each SAPQA conducted, if applicable.
- iii. The points awarded for Observations shall not exceed 30 points
- e. Family Engagement (Feedback must be at least **three months** apart to be counted as being completed twice.)
  - i. Points shall be awarded for verified family engagement activities that are submitted by the last day of the 12-month documentation period. Points are calculated as follows:
    - (1) Family Conferences
      - (a) Held twice in the 12-month period = 4 points
      - (b) Held once in the 12-month period = 2 point
    - (2) Developmental Screenings
      - (a) Completed with ASQ-3 or ASQ SE tool = 2 points
      - (b) Completed with any other assessment or tool = 1 point
    - (3) Connecting to Services = 1 point
    - (4) Activities for Families
      - (a) Held four times in the 12-month period = 2 points
      - (b) Held twice in the 12-month period = 1 point
    - (5) Communication on Child = 2 points
    - (6) Communication on Program = 1 point
    - (7) Parent Feedback (Feedback must be at least **three months** apart to be counted as being completed twice.)
      - (a) Completed twice in 12-month period = 2 points
      - (b) Completed once in 12-month period = 1 point
    - (8) Information on Transitions = 1 point
    - (9) Supporting English Learners = 1 point
  - ii. The points awarded for Family Engagement shall not exceed 16.
- f. Education of Director

- i. Points shall be awarded for verified professional development of the primary director that are submitted by the last day of the 12-month documentation period. Points are calculated as follows:
  - (1) 20 hours of Career Ladder approved training completed during the 12-month documentation period = 5 points
  - (2) 5 or more years of verifiable experience = 2 points
  - (3) Points awarded based on Career Ladder level achieved are as follows:
    - (a) Career Ladder Level 10 or higher = 28 points
    - (b) Career Ladder Level 9 = 22 points
    - (c) Career Ladder Level 8 with a current demonstrated competency = 10 points
    - (d) Career Ladder Level 4, 5, 6 or 7 with a current demonstrated competency = 8 points
  - (4) For primary directors that have achieved Career Ladder Level 10 or higher, a maximum of 35 points total can be awarded in this component.
  - (5) For primary directors that have achieved Career Ladder Level 9, a maximum of 29 points total can be awarded in this component.
  - (6) For primary directors that have achieved less than Career Ladder Level 9:
    - (a) One point can be awarded for each college credit hour in the field, up to a maximum of 17 points for college credit. College credit hours can be accumulated and do not expire.
    - (b) A maximum of 24 points total can be awarded in this component.
- ii. The following minimum points in Education of Director are required for ratings beyond Building Quality:
  - (1) High Quality: 5 points
  - (2) High Quality Plus: 10 points
- g. Education of Caregivers:
  - i. Points shall be awarded for verified professional development of the caregivers employed by a program based on Career Ladder participation that is submitted by the last day of the 12-month documentation period. Points are calculated as follows:
    - (1) A caregiver can only be counted once when awarding points.
    - (2) A primary director that is also assigned the role of "caregiver" shall not count in this section.

- (3) Points will be awarded based on the required, verified documentation that is submitted prior to the end of the documentation period as follows:
    - (a) Category 1: Career Ladder Achievement
      - (i) At least 25 percent of the caregivers in the program have a Career Ladder Level 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8 with a current demonstrated competency or a Career Ladder Level 9 or higher = 20 points; or
      - (ii) At least 20 percent of the caregivers in the program have a Career Ladder Level 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8 with a current demonstrated competency or a Career Ladder Level 9 or higher = 15 points.
    - (b) Category 2: Annual Career Ladder Approved Training
      - (i) At least 25 percent of the caregivers in the program have 20 hours of Career Ladder approved annual training = 15 points; or
      - (ii) At least 20 percent of the caregivers in the program have 20 hours of Career Ladder approved annual training = 10 points.
  - ii. The following minimum points in Education of Caregivers are required for ratings beyond Building Quality:
    - (1) High Quality: 5 points
    - (2) High Quality Plus: 10 points
  - iii. The points awarded for Education of Caregivers shall not exceed 35.
- h. Management and Administration
- i. Points shall be awarded for verified training and credentials of the administrator responsible for business operations of a program that are submitted by the last day of the 12-month documentation period. Points are calculated as follows:
    - (1) Category 1: Degree or Credential
      - (a) A bachelor's degree or higher with at least 9 credit hours in finance, business, or program administration = 5 points; or
      - (b) An associate degree or higher with at least 6 credit hours in finance, business, or program administration = 4 points; or
      - (c) A current Aim 4 Excellence Director's Credential = 4 points; or
      - (d) A current National Administrator's Credential = 3 points.
    - (2) Category 2: Annual Career Ladder Approved Training
      - (a) 10 hours of Career Ladder approved annual training in the area of business or leadership = 5 points.



- ii. The points awarded for Management and Administration shall not exceed 10.
  - i. National Accreditation
    - i. Points shall be awarded for a verified current National Accreditation from one of the following organizations submitted by the last day of the 12-month documentation period. Points are calculated as follows:
      - (1) National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA) = 20 points
      - (2) National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) = 20 points
      - (3) Council on Accreditation (COA) = 20 points
      - (4) National Accreditation Commission (NAC) = 20 points
    - ii. A Head Start or Early Head Start program will be awarded 20 points with the required documentation submitted by the last day of the 12-month documentation period.
    - iii. The points awarded for National Accreditation shall not exceed 20.
2. Awarding a Certified Quality Rating
- a. Each of the following minimum requirements shall be met for the certified rating higher than Foundation of Quality to be assigned:
    - i. Building Quality:
      - (1) License in good standing (not sanctioned);
      - (2) Minimum of 60 total points from the domains;
      - (3) At least 10 points on the Observation component; and
      - (4) A minimum score of 3 on each required SAPQA observation
    - ii. High Quality:
      - (1) License in good standing (not sanctioned);
      - (2) No public rule citations with an assessed civil money penalty from Child Care Licensing;
      - (3) Minimum of 110 points from the domains;
      - (4) At least 5 points each in Licensing Compliance, Education of Director and Education of Caregivers;
      - (5) At least 21 points in the Observation component;
      - (6) A minimum score of 4 on the Language and Books subscale for each required ITERS observation;



- (7) A minimum score of 4 on the Language and Literacy subscale for each required ECERS observation;
    - (8) A minimum score of 4 on the Interactions subscale for each required ERS observation; and
    - (9) A minimum score of 3.5 on each required SAPQA observation.
  - iii. High Quality Plus:
    - (1) License in good standing (not sanctioned);
    - (2) No public rule citations with an assessed civil money penalty from Child Care Licensing;
    - (2) Minimum of 160 points from the domains;
    - (3) At least 10 points each in Licensing Compliance, Education of Director, and Education of Caregivers;
    - (4) At least 25 points in the Observation component;
    - (5) A minimum score of 4 on the Language and Books subscale for each required ITERS observation;
    - (6) A minimum score of 4 on the Language and Literacy subscale for each required ECERS observation;
    - (7) A minimum score of 4 on the Interactions subscale for each required ERS observation; and
    - (8) A minimum score of 4 on each required SAPQA observation.
  - b. If a program does not meet all of the minimum requirements for a rating, the rating assigned shall be the highest rating for which all requirements are met.
- 3. Documentation for activities, endorsements, and certificates shall be provided for verification in order for points to be awarded.
  - a. Documentation shall be submitted for the following domains within the CCQS framework:
    - i. Health and Safety Programs
    - ii. Family Engagement
    - iii. Education of Director
    - iv. Education of Caregivers
    - v. Training and Credentials of the Administrator Responsible for Business Operations
    - vi. National Accreditation

- b. Programs shall submit documentation on [www.careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](http://www.careaboutchildcare.utah.gov) by the last day of the initially scheduled observation month in order for documentation to be considered for review.
- c. Documentation shall protect child and family identities by excluding personally identifiable information.
- d. Documentation shall be reviewed, verified, and approved or denied no later than the month before the certified quality rating is posted publicly.
- e. Family Engagement requires the submission of documentation, as follows:
  - i. Regular Family Conferences:
    - (1) Copy of a child's completed records used to track progress and development reviewed at conference(s).
    - (2) Copy of a goal-setting document developed in partnership with a family member and signed by a family member
    - (3) One page of a sign-up sheet used for conference(s), including the date(s) of the conference(s).
  - ii. Child Assessment and Developmental Screenings:
    - (1) Copy of an informational document provided to parents about the purpose of developmental screening and the process of screening at the program.
    - (2) Copy of a completed tool used to conduct a screening or documentation of behaviors observed, including the date of the screening or observation.
    - (3) All child names should be blacked out in the documentation.
  - iii. Connecting Families to Service Agencies
    - (1) Copy of at least two current handouts for community agencies.
    - (2) Description of where the handouts are displayed or how families receive this information.
  - iv. Activities for Families
    - (1) Copy of flier or social media post about event(s). Dates must be included on the flier or other notification.
    - (2) At least two photos including adult family members taken at event(s) or a completed sign-in attendance sheet from event(s)
  - v. Regular Communication About Each Child

- (1) Copy of communication given to family on an infant's, toddler's, or two-year-old's child's day. Documentation must include the date of communication.
  - (2) Copy of communication given to family on a preschooler or older child's week. Documentation must include the date of communication.
  - (3) Description of a way for a family member to respond to the communication and share information from home to the program.
- vi. Monthly Communication with Families Sharing Program Information
  - (1) Copy of a month's information, such as a newsletter, social media post, or picture of a bulletin board specific to a month, including information on the
    - (a) Program; and
    - (b) Parenting or Child Development
- vii. Opportunity for Parents to Give Feedback to the Program
  - (1) A copy of feedback received from a family regarding the program, such as a completed survey, feedback resulting from a social media request, attendance roll sheets, and minutes from a parent feedback or advisory group meeting.
  - (2) Dates must be included in documentation.
- viii. Information on Transitions
  - (1) Copy of the communication, including the date, sent to families with information regarding transitions from:
    - (a) Home to classroom;
    - (b) Classroom to another classroom; and
    - (c) Classroom to school or another setting.
  - (2) Copy of contact information for the neighborhood school(s) and description of how this information is shared with families.
  - (3) Documentation may include roll sheets from families meetings about transitions.
- ix. Supporting English Language Learners
  - (1) Copy of written policy in parent handbook explaining support of English language learners, including:
    - (a) Use of basic words and phrases from the home language;
    - (b) Incorporating books or labels in both languages; and

(c) Use of interpreters when needed.

- f. Documentation for Education of Directors and Caregivers requires the submission of documentation, as follows:
  - i. Documentation of the professional development components within the Leadership and Professional Development domain must be recorded as part of an individual's Utah Registry for Professional Development workforce registry profile on [careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](http://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov)
  - ii. The Utah Registry for Professional Development verifies and approves uploaded documents in accordance with OCC professional development policy.
- g. Documentation for Administrator Responsible for Business Administration:
  - i. Documentation of the professional development components within the Management and Administration domain must be recorded as part of an individual's Utah Registry for Professional Development workforce registry profile on [careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](http://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov)
  - ii. The Utah Registry for Professional Development verifies and approves uploaded documents in accordance with OCC professional development policy.
  - iii. If the professional development achievements of the administrator responsible for business operations changes within a certified rating period there will be no change to the points awarded until the next certified quality rating.

#### 4. Timeline for Qualifying Documentation

- a. Programs submitting documentation of activities shall meet the following requirements:
  - i. Activity for which documentation is submitted shall be completed within the 12-month documentation period.
  - ii. Documentation shall be submitted on [www.careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](http://www.careaboutchildcare.utah.gov) by the last day of the initially scheduled observation month.
- b. Programs submitting documentation of endorsements and certificates shall meet the following requirements:
  - i. The endorsement or certificate shall be current; and
  - ii. Shall not expire during the 12-month documentation period.
- c. Changes during the Certified Quality Rating Period
  - i. Changes include the following:



- (1) Earning an endorsement or certificate;
    - (2) Having an endorsement or certificate revoked; or
    - (3) Expiration of an endorsement or certificate.
  - ii. Impact of change
    - (1) OCC shall not consider any change of status for an endorsement or certificate during the certified quality rating period.
    - (2) Changes of status of endorsement or certificates shall not be considered until the following 12-month documentation period.
  - d. CCQS framework points shall not be recalculated for any component during the certified quality rating period.
- 5. Temporary Amendments to Scoring and Documentation Policy
  - a. This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Reviews (OCC 100.10.01)

Effective: March 9, 2020

Updated: October 1, 2023

1. A child care program may request a review of the decision regarding their application for a certified quality rating by using the following process:
  - a. A review request shall be submitted by the child care program owner, director or business administrator listed in the Child Care Licensing provider portal;
  - b. A review request shall be submitted through the Care About Childcare website at [careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](https://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov). A review request shall be submitted within 30 calendar days of the date of the decision determination notice except where there is good cause for failing to request a review within this timeframe:
    - i. Good cause is defined as showing that the delay for failing to request a review in a timely manner is due to circumstances beyond the party's control, or:
      - (1) Delay for failing to request a review in a timely manner is due to circumstances that are compelling and reasonable:
        - (a) Excludes ordinary illness, lack of transportation and temporary absences.
      - (2) Whether there is good cause for failing to request a review in a timely manner shall be determined during the OCC review.
    - ii. To inquire about submitting a review request after 30 calendar days, contact [ccqs@utah.gov](mailto:ccqs@utah.gov).
  - c. A program's request for review shall indicate the valid basis for a review, which shall include a claim of one or more of the following:
    - i. An error made in scoring the components of the framework;
    - ii. An error made in the scoring of the classroom observations;
    - iii. A violation of observer protocol during the classroom observation;
    - iv. An error made in the determination of a professional development achievement;

- v. Documents submitted for points are not accurately verified; or
    - vi. Other identified errors made in the application of the framework to award points.
  - d. The Utah Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing program is responsible for all appeals regarding licensing compliance.
  - e. Quality Rating Pending Review
    - i. The certified quality rating issued in the Notice of CCQS Quality Rating shall be published by OCC and remain published until the review is complete.
  - f. Enhanced Subsidy Grants
    - i. Reviews shall temporarily freeze the issuance of an Enhanced Subsidy Grant (ESG) until the review is complete.
    - ii. After the review is complete, ESG payments will be backdated to the date of the original rating when applicable.
    - iii. ESG payments issued to a program that does not maintain an eligible rating after the review is complete will be considered overpayments.
2. OCC Review
- a. All requests for review submitted to OCC shall be subject to an OCC review.
  - b. OCC review includes:
    - i. Consideration of the child care program's declared basis for the review;
    - ii. Where applicable, corrections of any errors made in the calculation of the points within the CCQS framework;
    - iii. Where applicable, re-issuance of the CCQS Award Notice when the certified quality rating is changed; and
    - iv. Upon final determination of the OCC review, an OCC Review Request Determination Notice shall be sent to the child care program with the following information:
      - (1) Where the scores and certified quality rating are adjusted, an explanation of the changes made; or
      - (2) Where the scores and certified quality rating are not adjusted, an explanation for determining that the original scores and certified quality rating will remain as originally determined.
      - (3) The child care program's right to request a review by the CCQS Review Committee if a program does not agree with the OCC review determination.

(4) Child care programs with a High Quality or High Quality Plus rating shall be notified that the monthly Enhanced Subsidy Grant shall be issued.

- c. A child care program that has received a determination from an OCC review may request a further review by the CCQS Review Committee by submitting a new request for review through the Care About Childcare website at [careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](http://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov).
  - i. A review request shall be submitted within 30 calendar days of the date of the OCC Review Request Determination Notice except where there is good cause for failing to request a review within this timeframe as defined by 1.B.
  - ii. Quality Rating Pending Review shall be in effect as defined by 1.E.
  - iii. Once a request for review has been filed:
    - (1) Child care programs shall receive an OCC review notice at least 10 days prior to the review that includes:
      - (a) The date and time when the CCQS Review Committee shall meet to review the program's certified quality rating;
      - (b) The process for participating in the review;
      - (c) The process for submitting additional documentation;
      - (d) Review Procedures
      - (e) The process for notifying OCC if the program elects to withdraw its request for review; and
      - (f) A packet with all OCC documentation regarding the review.

### 3. CCQS Review Committee

- a. Purpose of CCQS Review Committee
  - i. The responsibility of the Committee is to determine if CCQS Policy and Procedures were correctly applied.
  - ii. The Committee may overturn the initial review determination when:
    - (1) There was a deviation from CCQS Policy and/or Procedures.
    - (2) The Information or instructions available or given to the program were unclear.
    - (3) The reliability of an observation is questionable.
  - iii. The Committee may advise OCC to clarify or update CCQS Policy and/or Procedures.
  - iv. The Committee cannot change an observation score but may recommend a new observation take place as a result of the review.



- b. CCQS Review Committee
  - i. The following individuals shall serve on the CCQS Review Committee:
    - (1) One representative from OCC who is not involved in CCQS scoring or assigning of ratings for child care programs;
    - (2) One representative from a licensed private child care program; and
    - (3) One expert in the field of early childhood education or school-age children.
  - ii. Members of the CCQS Review Committee shall recuse themselves from participating in a hearing when:
    - (1) There is a conflict of interest; or
    - (2) Other bases for recusal, established by DWS.
- c. Review shall:
  - i. Be conducted by virtual meeting with a call-in option;
  - ii. Occur within a reasonable timeframe from the OCC review notice;
  - iii. Include an OCC staff member to present the conclusions of the OCC review to the CCQS Review Committee;
  - iv. Provide an opportunity for the child care program to present their reasons and evidence for the review request;
  - v. Include witnesses or legal representatives, as applicable; and
  - vi. Where applicable, include a request for additional documentation from OCC or the program.
- d. Ex Parte Communication
  - i. Parties shall not discuss the merits or facts of any pending case with any member of the CCQS Review Committee, including the OCC representative, unless all other parties to the case have been given notice and opportunity to be present.
  - ii. Any ex parte discussions between a party and any member of the CCQS Review Committee shall be reported to all parties and made a part of the record.
- e. Failure by the child care program to respond to any request by the CCQS Review Committee shall result in a dismissal of the review request.
- f. Reopening a Review

- i. Upon conclusion of a CCQS review committee hearing, a child care program may request a review be reopened under the following circumstances:
  - (1) The child care program was prevented from appearing at the review due to circumstances beyond the party's control as defined by 1.B.; or
  - (2) If based on the evidence of record and the parties' arguments or statements, taking additional evidence might affect the outcome of the case.
- ii. The request shall be made in writing to [ccqs@utah.gov](mailto:ccqs@utah.gov) and shall:
  - (1) Be made within 10 days of the originally scheduled hearing except where there is good cause for failing to request a review be re-opened within this timeframe as defined by 1.B.. If the request is made after the 10-day limit the child care program must include the reason for the delay in the written request; and
  - (2) State the reason for the request to re-open the review.
- iii. If the CCQS Review Committee does not grant the request to re-open the review, the OCC Representative will issue a decision denying the request
- g. The CCQS Review Committee will issue a recommendation to the Department of Workforce Services Director of Adjudication once the review is complete.
  - i. The Director of Adjudication shall make a final decision based upon the CCQS Review Committee recommendation; and
  - ii. The Director of Adjudication decision shall be the final agency action pursuant to the Utah Administrative Procedures Act (Utah Code 63G-4).
- h. Reviews shall result in a notice of determination with one of the following outcomes:
  - i. A determination in favor of the child care program, which may include:
    - a. Recalculation of the CCQS framework points; or
    - b. Requirement for OCC to conduct a new observation or multiple observations:
      - i. CCQS Review Committee shall not change the scoring of a previously conducted observation; and
      - ii. A new observation may result in a higher or lower certified quality rating.
  - ii. Upholding the original Office of Child Care review request determination. The program may:



- (1) Accept the previously scored certified quality rating;
- (2) Withdraw from CCQS and request a Not Participating status be publicly posted; or
- (3) Refuse the certified quality rating and request a Default Foundation of Quality rating be publicly posted.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Obtaining a Certified Quality Rating (OCC 100.03.01)

Effective: March 11, 2019

Updated: October 1, 2023

1. Obtaining a Certified Quality Rating requires the following process:
  - a. Applying for a Certified Quality Rating
    - i. All child care programs applying for a Certified Quality Rating may submit an application on [www.careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](http://www.careaboutchildcare.utah.gov),
      - (1) Programs receiving a certified quality rating shall not be permitted to apply for recertification until the fourth month prior to the expiration of the current certified quality rating period.
    - ii. OCC may temporarily close the CCQS Application Process. Programs will be notified in the event of a temporary closure.
    - iii. A complete child care program application shall include the following information:
      - (1) A list of all classrooms and names of caregivers assigned to those rooms, including substitutes;
      - (2) Observation blackout dates; and
      - (3) Other components as required on the application
  - b. Processing applications
    - i. OCC shall process all submitted applications from eligible child care programs.
    - ii. OCC may prioritize applications for scheduling observations and calculating certified quality ratings.
  - c. Withdrawing a CCQS application
    - i. A program may withdraw their application prior to receiving a certified quality rating through the CCQS tile on the Program Overview page on [careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](http://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov).
      - (1) Programs that withdraw their application will not be eligible to reapply for 90 days.



- d. Awarding CCQS Rating or Status
    - i. All applications submitted shall be processed and a rating awarded or a status assigned no later than 180 days after the application was submitted.
      - (1) A program shall not withdraw its application for a certified quality rating after the application has been processed and a quality rating decision made.
      - (2) Once a certified quality rating decision is made by OCC, a program may:
        - (a) Allow the rating to stand as issued by OCC;
        - (b) Request a "Not Participating" status from CCQS as outlined in Eligibility and Participation, III. Not Participating status; or
        - (c) Request a default Foundation of Quality rating.
          - (i) Programs requesting the default Foundation of Quality rating during the 12-month certified quality rating period shall not be permitted to submit a new application until the third calendar month prior to the month the original certified quality rating expires.
    - ii. Certified quality ratings will be published publicly on the first day of the month of the certified rating period.
  - e. Programs found to have deliberately manipulated information or misrepresented information in order to accrue points within the Child Care Quality System will be considered as fraudulent. Such actions may result in disqualification.
2. Temporary Amendments to Obtaining a Certified Quality Rating Policy
- a. This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Domains - Learning Environments and Relationships (OCC 100.06.01B)

Effective: March 11, 2019

Updated: September 3, 2024

1. Points shall be received in the Learning Environments and Relationships domain where the following requirements are met:
  - a. Ratios and Group Size:
    - i. Ratios refer to the caregiver-to-child ratios, counting all children present including children of staff.
    - ii. Group size refers to the number of children including children of staff in a single defined classroom.
    - iii. CCQS ratios and group sizes are a higher standard than Department of Health, Child Care Licensing requirements. CCQS ratios and group size standards are detailed in the Scoring and Documentation policy section.
    - iv. Points for ratios and group size shall be based on the verified ratio and group size amounts during the two most recent inspections conducted by a Child Care Licensors during the 12-month documentation period. Inspections may be announced or unannounced.
      - (1) Ratios and group size verifications will not be conducted during naptime.
    - v. Points shall be calculated based on the highest ratio and group size, per age group, documented during the on-site activities.
      - (1) Points may be calculated based on one ratio and group size verification if, due to extenuating circumstances, only one verification was completed by a Child Care Licensors during the 12-month documentation period.
  - b. Classroom Observations:

- i. Certified quality ratings require at least one (1) unannounced classroom observation in each age group served by the program and are conducted by an OCC-approved observer.
  - ii. If a program has had three consecutive High Quality or High Quality Plus ratings with no lapse, observations are only required every other year.
  - iii. The program must maintain a High Quality or High Quality Plus rating.
  - iv. The observation points from the previous year will be carried over to the current year.
  - v. A program can choose to have new observations when not required, if desired.
    - (1) If a program elects to have new observations, the new scores will be used in the quality rating.
    - (2) A program has until the 15th day of the month before the observation month to make a decision.
    - (3) Classrooms shall be randomly selected for observations when there is more than one classroom in an age group.
- c. Classroom Observation Tools:
  - i. OCC shall observe programs utilizing the following observation tools, with fidelity, based on the ages of the children in the classroom:
    - (1) ITERS;
    - (2) ECERS; or
    - (3) SAPQA.
- d. Observers shall not accept gifts from any program participating in CCQS. Gifts include but are not limited to:
  - (1) Tangible items;
  - (2) Gift Cards;
  - (3) Money; or
  - (4) Food.

## 2. Observation Fidelity and Reliability

- a. OCC shall establish the following system to ensure high stakes classroom observations are conducted to fidelity, by a reliable observer.
  - i. Observer Reliability
    - (1) OCC-approved Anchors:

- a. OCC-approved anchor is an individual achieving 90 percent reliability with the consensus scores agreed upon by the Environment Rating Scales Institute-authorized trainings in the three most current consecutive observations.
    - b. Anchors shall be authorized to ensure the reliability of an OCC-approved observer.
  - (2) Anchors shall:
    - a. Review observation reports of OCC-approved observers;
    - b. Provide feedback to OCC-approved observers; and
    - c. Finalize observation reports conducted by OCC-approved observers.
  - (3) OCC-approved Observers:
    - a. OCC-approved observers (observers) shall be reliable on the ITERS-3 and ECERS-3 tools, which is defined as achieving an average of 85 percent reliability with the score of an anchor in three consecutive observations.
    - b. OCC shall ensure the reliability of observers by requiring each observer to be trained by an anchor.
- ii. Maintaining Anchor and Observer Reliability
  - (1) OCC-approved Anchors shall maintain reliability as follows:
  - (2) Achieve 90 percent reliability with consensus scores with a fellow, OCC-approved anchor once every four months for ITERS-3, ECERS-3, and FCCERS observation tools.
    - a. If unforeseen circumstances prevent an individual from completing a reliability check in the fourth month, it will be completed before the observer conducts a CCQS observation independently.
- iii. Failure to Maintain Reliability
  - (1) OCC-approved Anchors failing to maintain reliability shall:
    - a. Not act as an anchor until meeting the initially established reliability requirements; and
    - b. Meet the initially established reliability requirements within three months of failing to meet 90 percent reliability.



- c. While re-establishing status as an OCC-approved anchor, the anchor may conduct observations as an OCC-approved observer provided they maintain the reliability requirements of an OCC-approved observer.
- 3. OCC-approved anchors unable to regain reliability within three months of attaining reliability scores of less than 90 percent shall be unable to continue in the role of an anchor
  - a. OCC-approved observers shall maintain reliability as follows:
    - (1) achieve 85 percent reliability with the consensus scores of an OCC-approved anchor once every four months for the ITERS-3, ECERS-3 and FCCERS observation tools.
      - a. If unforeseen circumstances prevent an individual from completing a reliability check in the fourth month, it will be completed before the observer conducts a CCQS observation independently.
    - (2) OCC-approved SAPQA observer shall renew their SAPQA endorsement as required with the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality and meet OCC standards of reliability.
- 4. Failure to Maintain Reliability
  - a. OCC-approved observers failing to maintain reliability shall:
    - i. Not be allowed to conduct observations used to determine a certified quality rating; and
    - ii. Participate in observations with an OCC-approved ECERS-3 and ITERS-3 anchor until meeting the reliability requirements of an OCC-approved observer over three consecutive observations.
    - iii. OCC-approved ECERS-3 and ITERS-3 observers unable to regain reliability within three months of attaining reliability scores of less than 85 percent shall be unable to continue in the role of an observer.
- 5. Initial Visits
  - a. Prior to the classroom observations, all child care programs applying for a certified rating shall receive an initial visit by a Quality Improvement Specialist which includes the following components:
    - i. Meeting with the program owner, primary director listed on the program's staff information page and all applicable caregivers, as available;

- ii. Encouraging the program staff to watch “What to Expect During a Classroom Observation;”
- iii. Explaining the observation processes and expectations for caregivers; and
- iv. Verifying the classrooms and program schedules.
  - (1) During the initial visit, the Quality Improvement Specialist will not provide advice, coaching or technical assistance to program staff.

## 6. Classroom Observations

- a. Observations shall be conducted in the following classrooms:
  - i. At least one observation in each age group shall be conducted. For programs with more than three classrooms for an age group, a minimum of one-third of the classrooms shall be observed.
- b. Age groups subject to classroom observations include:
  - i. Infants who include children ages birth through 0 through 11 months;
  - ii. Toddlers and Twos, who include children ages 12 through 35 months;
  - iii. Preschool-age who include children three through five years old, not yet in Kindergarten; and
  - iv. School Age children ages five years old and older
- c. In classrooms where children of different ages are mixed, the observer will determine which tool will be used as follows:
  - i. If all children within the room fall into the age range of either the ITERS or ECERS tool, the tool used will be determined by the age of the majority of the children in the classroom.
  - ii. If the ages of the children in the classroom are split evenly at 50 percent, the observer will determine if two observations are needed.
- d. If children falling within the age ranges of the ECERS and SAPQA tools are mixed within a room, observations using both tools will occur.

## 7. Scheduling and Blackout Dates

- a. Observations shall be conducted on any date the program operates during the scheduled observation month, except on the blackout dates selected by the program.
- b. Child care programs may request a maximum of five blackout dates in which observations shall not be conducted during the scheduled observation month.

- i. Blackout dates are identified on the program's complete application.
- ii. A request to change the blackout dates will be accommodated only if the observer's schedule allows.
- iii. The same day of the week shall not be selected more than twice.

#### 8. Acts of Nature

- a. OCC may reschedule the observation at a future date due to acts of nature.
- b. Acts of nature are events that occur outside of human control and cannot be prevented or predicted.

#### 9. Program Refusal of or Interference with Classroom Observation:

- a. OCC-approved observers shall not conduct an observation when the child care program refuses to allow observers to appropriately conduct an observation or that program action results in an observer's inability to score an observation to fidelity.
- b. OCC shall conclude that a program is refusing or interfering with a classroom observation in any of the following circumstances:
  - i. Programs do not allow an observation in a selected classroom;
  - ii. The same caregiver participates in classroom observations in more than one classroom, unless the following applies:
    - (1) Two observations of different age groups are done in one classroom; or
    - (2) A caregiver is regularly scheduled to work in two classrooms of different age groups or has been reassigned.
    - (3) Per the judgment of the observer, the program prevented the observer from conducting the observation accurately.
    - (4) The program is closed on a regularly scheduled date that was not listed as a blackout date.
- c. Impact of a Program Refusal of or interference with Classroom Observation
  - (1) The child care program shall not receive a Certified Quality Rating; and
  - (2) DWS-eligible child care program shall receive a rating of "Default Foundation of Quality." when their current certified rating expires.

(3) Refusal of or interference with a classroom observation is not grounds for appeal.

- d. To receive a certified quality rating, a child care program refusing or interfering with a classroom observation may re-apply by submitting a new CCQS Certified Rating Application.

10. Finalizing Observation Scores

- a. All classroom observations shall be reviewed by an authorized reviewer.
- b. Only finalized observation score reports shall be shared with programs.
- c. Only finalized observation scores shall be used to calculate points within the Observation Component.

11. Receiving Observation Scores

- a. OCC shall notify the program of the finalized observation scores within a reasonable time of completing the observations.
- b. Within a reasonable time, a Quality Improvement Specialist may meet with the following individuals to review the scores:
  - (1) Child care program owner; and
  - (2) Child care program director listed as the primary director on the program's CCQS application.

12. Family Engagement

- a. Points shall be awarded to child care programs completing family engagement activities.
- b. OCC shall apply the Family Engagement Rubric to award points for the following activities:
  - i. Regular Family Conferences;
  - ii. Child Assessment and Development Screenings;
  - iii. Connecting Families to Service Agencies;
  - iv. Activities for Families;
  - v. Regular Communication about each child in care;
  - vi. Monthly communications with families sharing program information;
  - vii. Opportunity for parents to give feedback to the child care program;
  - viii. Information from the child care program to families about transitions; and
  - ix. Supporting English Learners.



# Office of Child Care Policy

## Overview of Framework (OCC 100.08.01)

Effective: March 11, 2019

Updated: March 31, 2024

1. The Child Care Quality System (CCQS) Framework includes the following ratings or statuses:
  - a. Certified Quality Ratings
    - i. Certified quality ratings may be awarded to eligible programs that complete the application process for a certified quality rating.
    - ii. The CCQS framework is used to determine the program's certified quality rating based upon minimum total points achieved across the following five domains of quality:
      - (1) Health and Safety;
      - (2) Learning Environments and Relationships;
      - (3) Leadership and Professional Development;
      - (4) Management and Administration; and
      - (5) National Accreditation.
    - iii. Certified Quality Ratings include the following:
      - (1) Foundation of Quality;
      - (2) Building Quality;
      - (3) High Quality; or
      - (4) High Quality Plus.
  - b. Default Foundation of Quality Rating
    - i. Default Foundation of Quality Rating is awarded to DWS-eligible child care programs in the following circumstance:
      - (1) The program has a center license in good standing from the Child Care Licensing Program; and
      - (2) Has not applied for a certified quality rating.

- (3) Program requests default Foundation of Quality rating after OCC has made a quality rating decision.
  - ii. Default Foundation of Quality Rating shall remain effective until:
    - (1) Child care program applies for and receives a certified quality rating;
    - (2) Child care program requests a CCQS status of “not participating;”
    - (3) Child care program becomes ineligible to participate in CCQS; or
    - (4) Expiration of the previously designated 12-month certified quality rating period for a program requesting a default Foundation of Quality rating after OCC has made a quality rating decision.
  - iii. There is no recertification period for programs assigned a default rating.
- c. Statuses
  - i. In certain circumstances, a child care program may receive one of the following CCQS statuses rather than a CCQS rating:
    - (1) Not Participating Status applies to the following child care programs:
      - (a) Child care programs that request a “Not Participating” status in the Child Care Quality System;
      - (b) Child care programs not holding a center license in good standing from the Utah Department of Health, Child Care Licensing Program;
      - (c) Child care programs disqualified from receiving Child Care Development Fund funding; or
      - (d) An eligible child care program that has not applied for a certified quality rating and has not elected to become DWS-eligible.
      - (e) Child care programs that request a “Not Participating” status in the Child Care Quality System;
      - (f) Child care programs not holding a center license in good standing from the Utah Department of Health, Child Care Licensing Program;
      - (g) Child care programs disqualified from receiving Child Care Development Fund funding; or
      - (h) An eligible child care program that has not applied for a certified quality rating and has not elected to become DWS-eligible.
    - (2) Denied Participation status applies to child care programs holding a conditional license from the Child Care Licensing Program when a program’s license is reinstated, one of the following shall be assigned:



- (a) Default Foundation of Quality Rating for DWS-Eligible child care programs; or
- (b) Not Participating status
- (3) Programs that receive one of the above statuses shall not receive an Enhanced Subsidy Grant.

## 2. Certified Quality Rating Levels

### a. Foundation of Quality

- i. A program meeting the following requirements shall receive a certified quality rating of Foundation of Quality:
  - (1) Program possesses a center license from the Utah Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing Program; and
  - (2) License from Utah Department of Health, Child Care Licensing program is not conditional.

### b. Building Quality

- i. A program meeting the following requirements shall receive a certified quality rating of Building Quality:
  - (1) Meets the required components in the Foundation of Quality rating; and
  - (2) Licensed Center Program achieves the following minimum points:
    - (a) 60 points achieved across CCQS Framework Domains
    - (b) Scores at least 10 points on the Observation component
    - (c) Scores at least 3 on each SAPQA conducted within the Observation component, if applicable;
  - (3) Failure to meet the minimum points for required components
    - (a) A program shall receive the rating of Foundation of Quality when it meets the minimum points across the framework domains for Building Quality, but fails to meet required minimum points within specific components for the Building Quality rating.

### c. High Quality

- i. A program meeting the following requirements shall receive a certified rating of High Quality:
  - (1) Meets the required components in the Foundation of Quality rating; and
  - (2) Was not assessed a Civil Money Penalty from Child Care Licensing during the 12-month documentation period.
  - (3) Licensed Center Program achieves the following minimum points:

- (a) 110 points achieved across CCQS Framework Domains;
    - (b) 5 points in each of the CCQS Framework components:
      - (i) Licensing Compliance
      - (ii) Education of Director
      - (iii) Education of Caregivers
    - (4) Scores at least 21 points on the Observation component with a minimum ERS score of 3.67 in each classroom observed;
    - (5) Scores at least a 4 on the Language and Books (ITERS)/ Language and Literacy (ECERS) subscale for each observation conducted;
    - (6) Scores at least a 4 on the Interactions (ITERS and ECERS) subscale for each observation conducted; and
    - (7) Scores at least 3.5 points on each SAPQA conducted within the Observation component, where applicable.
  - ii. Failure to meet the minimum points for required components:
    - (1) A program shall receive a lower rating when it meets the minimum points across the framework domains for High Quality, but fails to meet required minimum points within specific components for the High Quality rating.
- d. High Quality Plus
- i. A program meeting the following requirements shall receive a certified rating of High Quality Plus:
    - (1) Meets the required components in the Foundation of Quality rating;
    - (2) Was not assessed a Civil Money Penalty from Child Care Licensing during the 12-month documentation period.
    - (3) Licensed Center Program achieves the following minimum points:
      - (a) 160 points achieved across CCQS Framework Domains
      - (b) 10 points in each of the CCQS Framework components:
        - (i) Licensing Compliance
        - (ii) Education of Director
        - (iii) Education of Caregivers
      - (4) Scores at least 25 points on the observation component with a minimum ERS score of 3.67 in each classroom observed;
      - (5) Scores at least a 4 on the Language and Books (ITERS)/ Language and Literacy (ECERS) subscale for each observation conducted;



- (6) Scores at least a 4 on the Interactions (ITERS and ECERS) subscale for each observation conducted; and
    - (7) Scores at least 4 points on each SAPQA conducted within the Observation component, where applicable.
  - ii. Failure to meet the minimum points for required components
    - (1) A program shall receive a lower rating when it meets the minimum points across the framework domains for High Quality Plus, but fails to meet required minimum points within specific components for the High Quality Plus rating.
- 3. Temporary Amendments to Overview of Framework Policy
  - a. This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Domains - Leadership and Professional Development (OCC 100.06.01C)

Effective: March 11, 2019

Updated: October 1, 2024

#### 1. Education of Director

- a. CCQS framework points shall be based upon the individual designated as the child care program's director on the program's Staff Information page on Care About Childcare on the day the scores are calculated.
  - i. In the instance multiple directors are listed, framework points shall be based upon the name of the primary director identified on the program's Staff Information page on Care About Childcare. The name of the primary director must also be listed as one of the program's directors within the CCL database.
  - ii. A person shall only be counted as a primary director or primary caregiver (in a licensed family program) for a maximum of two child care program sites.
  - iii. The primary director shall not be considered in the Education of Caregivers section, even when assigned the role of "caregiver" on the Staff Information page on Care About Childcare.
  - iv. For directors listed as both the primary director and as the administrator responsible for business operations, Career Ladder training hours:
    - (1) May only be counted once within the CCQS framework; and
    - (2) Will be applied to the Education of Director component or Management and Administration domain in the way that awards the child care program the most amount of points.
- b. Changes to the individual designated as the primary director shall not change the CCQS framework points or CCQS certified quality rating during the certified quality rating period.
- c. CCQS framework points for Education of Director

- i. The Education of Director component includes three options for child care programs. Options are based on the highest level of the Career Ladder the primary director has achieved:
  - (1) Child care programs shall be assigned only one option for determining points on the Education of Director component.
  - (2) The assigned option for determining points on the Education of Director component may change only at recertification.
  - (3) A child care program may receive partial points in an identified option and does not need to complete all requirements within an option to receive points for that option.
  - (4) See the Professional Development Career Ladder System policy for information on the requirements for each Career Ladder level.
- ii. Option 1 – awards points for Career Ladder Level 10
- iii. Option 2 – awards points for Career Ladder Level 9
- iv. Option 3 – awards points for Career Ladder Levels 4 through 8 with current demonstrated competency and college credits. College credits are accumulative and do not expire.
- v. In each of the Education of Director options, points are awarded for the following:
  - (1) 20 Hours of Career Ladder approved training, completed and submitted through Care About Childcare within the 12-month documentation period.
    - (i) Approved training may include a maximum of 10 hours of Career Ladder Approved Professional Activities.
- vi. Five Years of paid and verifiable work experience providing care to children in a program. Documentation must be submitted by the last day of the 12-month documentation period. Experience shall be verified by URPD which may include a review of the following documentation:
  - (1) Utah Department of Health – Child Care Licensing records;
  - (2) Personal income tax records indicating that the individual worked in the field of child care;
  - (3) Payroll records;
  - (4) Government-issued child care license or certificate that includes the provider's name; or
  - (5) A signed letter from a current or former employer, with dates of employment clearly stated. The letter must be written on the child care



program's letterhead and include the following contact information:  
Name of administrator, phone number, and email address.

## 2. Education of Caregivers

- a. CCQS framework points shall be based upon the individuals assigned the role of "caregiver" on the Care About Childcare Staff Information page on the day the scores are calculated. All staff who are caregivers as outlined in Definitions (100.01.01) must be assigned a caregiver role. Roles are updated in the Utah Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing Program provider portal. A primary director that is also assigned the role of "caregiver" shall not count in this section.
- b. The Education of Caregivers component consists of two categories. Points are awarded in each category:
  - i. Category 1: caregivers with Career Ladder Level 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8 with a current demonstrated competency or with Career Ladder Level 9 or higher. See the Professional Development Career Ladder System policy for information on approved demonstrated competency options and maintaining a current demonstrated competency.
  - ii. Category 2: caregivers with 20 hours of annual Career Ladder training requiring the following:
    - (1) Completed and submitted through Care About Childcare within the 12-month documentation period;
    - (2) Approved by URPD;
    - (3) Achieved through clock hours, Continuing Education Units (CEU) or college credits; and
      - (a) Approved training may include a maximum of 10 hours of Career Ladder Approved Professional Activities.
- c. Process for calculating points for Education of Caregiver categories:
  - i. Points shall be determined based on achieving a minimum rate of caregivers participating in one of the two categories of activities:
    - (1) A minimum of 20 percent of caregivers; or
    - (2) A minimum of 25 percent of caregivers.
      - (a) There will be no rounding up of percentages to meet minimum requirements.
  - ii. Caregivers will be assigned to the category that awards the child care program the most amount of points within the component based on the following:



- (1) Caregivers shall receive points in only one category of activity during a certified quality rating period; and
  - (2) Assigned category of activity may change at the next recertification period.
3. Temporary Amendments to Leadership and Professional Development Policy
  - a. This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Rating Period and Recertification (OCC 100.04.01)

Effective: March 11, 2019

Updated: July 25, 2024

1. A certified quality rating shall remain in place during the 12-month certified quality rating period unless a program:
  - a. Requests a default rating or a "Not Participating" status from the CCQS.
    - i. Programs requesting a default Foundation of Quality rating or Not Participating Status during the 12-month certified quality rating period shall keep the same rating period and shall not be permitted to submit a new application until the third calendar month prior to the month the original certified quality rating expires.
  - b. Loses its license in good standing and goes on sanctioned license;
  - c. Has its license become inactive;
  - d. is disqualified from accepting funds from the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF); or
  - e. Is assessed a Civil Money Penalty from Child Care Licensing and is rated Certified High Quality or Certified High Quality Plus.
    - i. In this case, the certified quality rating will be changed to Certified Building Quality for the remainder of the certified quality rating period.
2. If there is a change of ownership or change of location during the 12-month certified quality rating period:
  - a. The owner may:
    - i. Submit a new application to participate in the Child Care Quality System or
    - ii. Submit a "Request for Transfer of Certified Quality Rating" form found at <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> to ccqs@utah.gov within 30 days of the new license becoming active.
3. The 12-month certified quality rating period shall be modified in the following circumstances:

- a. Child care programs receiving CCQS technical assistance and support from OCC may have a certified rating period that aligns with the technical assistance and support period, as established by the contract between OCC and the child care program.
- b. A temporary closure of the CCQS application and recertification process.
- 4. Recertification of the Certified Quality Rating
  - a. Child care programs shall recertify in order to maintain a certified quality rating.
  - b. Recertification requires the following activities:
    - i. Submission of a complete application for a certified quality rating as established in the Obtaining a Certified Quality Rating policy
      - (1) An application submitted within the fourth calendar month prior to the expiration date of the certified quality rating period shall be considered to have been submitted in a timely manner; unless
        - (a) Recertifications are temporarily closed pursuant to 2.B. Under 2.B, applications submitted in accordance with recertification dates issued by OCC shall be considered to have been submitted in a timely manner.
    - ii. Completion of all classroom observations during the recertification period in accordance with the Classroom Observation policy
    - iii. Calculation of all CCQS domains based on activities completed during the 12-month documentation period and documentation submitted according to the Scoring and Documentation policy.
  - c. Failure to Recertify in a Timely Manner
    - i. A child care program failing to recertify in a timely manner may receive one of the following ratings or statuses until a certified quality rating is awarded:
      - (1) A default Foundation of Quality rating for child care programs that are DWS-Eligible;
      - (2) Not participating status for child care programs that are not DWS-Eligible; or
      - (3) Denied participation status for child care programs operating on a sanctioned license at the time of recertification.
    - ii. Failure to recertify in a timely manner is defined as submitting the recertification application after the last day of the fourth calendar month prior to the expiration of the Certified Quality Rating Period, or, under II.C, submitting a recertification application after the last day of the recertification dates issued by OCC.



5. Temporary Amendments to Rating Period and Recertification Policy
  - a. This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.





## Office of Child Care Policy

### **Additional Payments - Professional Development Cost Sharing (OCC 100.05.01A)**

Effective: July 3, 2019

Updated: August 1, 2022

1. Child Care Programs Eligible for Professional Development Cost Sharing
  - a. Child care programs meeting all of the following requirements shall be eligible for Professional Development Cost Sharing:
    - i. Receives a Child Care Quality System (CCQS) certified quality rating;
    - ii. Within the 12-month documentation period of the certified quality rating, meets the minimum requirement of Domain 3: Leadership and Professional Development, Education of Caregivers component, category 2;
    - iii. Agrees to the amount of the Professional Development Cost Sharing stated on the Professional Development Cost Sharing Award notice; and
    - iv. Agrees to receive Professional Development Cost Sharing through direct deposit.
2. Application to receive Professional Development Cost Sharing
  - a. Child care programs shall be notified of their eligibility to apply for Professional Development Cost Sharing at the beginning of the certified quality rating period.
  - b. Child care programs shall submit a completed application to [urpd@usu.edu](mailto:urpd@usu.edu) by the last day of the program's current certified quality rating period.
  - c. In the event that a Certified Quality Rating is transferred to a new owner, the Professional Development Cost Sharing is non transferrable.
3. Calculating the Professional Development Cost Sharing amount
  - a. The amount of the Professional Development Cost Sharing shall be:
    - i. Fixed;
    - ii. Issued once per certified rating period, dependent on eligibility;
    - iii. Issued separately from other payments from DWS;



- iv. Based on the number of caregivers employed in the program on the day the certified quality rating was calculated; and
- v. Paid in the following amounts:

Number of Caregivers Employed at Program	Annual Professional Development Cost Sharing Amount
40-49+	\$2,700
30-39	\$2,150
20-29	\$1,600
10-19	\$1,050
1-9	\$500

- 4. The fixed payment amounts are based on costs related to 20 percent of staff completing 20 hours of Career Ladder approved professional development including:
  - a. Wages for caregivers attending professional development; and
  - b. Professional development course fees
- 5. Overpayments, Other DWS Debts or Appeals
  - a. Programs that do not receive an Enhanced Subsidy Grant and that have overpayments or other debts owed to DWS, OCC issued in accordance with Utah Administrative Code 986-700-715, including but not limited to overpayments determined by the DWS Overpayment Unit, shall have their Professional Development Cost Sharing amount impacted as follows:
    - i. Where the overpayment amount is less than the Professional Development Cost Sharing amount, the Professional Development Cost Sharing may be reduced by the amount of outstanding overpayment due; or
    - ii. Where the overpayment amount is greater than the Professional Development Cost Sharing amount, the Professional Development Cost Sharing amount may be applied to the outstanding overpayment balance.
- 6. Temporary Amendments to PD Cost Sharing Policy
  - a. This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Domains - Health and Safety (OCC 100.06.01A)

Effective: March 11, 2019

Updated: February 9, 2022

1. Points shall be received in the Health and Safety domain where the following requirements are met:
  - a. Licensing Compliance
    - i. Child care programs shall possess a center license in good standing;
    - ii. Points shall be awarded based on the number of public rule violations that a program has from Child Care Licensing during the 12-month documentation period.
  - b. Participation in Health and Safety Program:
    - i. Points shall be awarded to child care programs that have the following current endorsements or certifications from independent, third party organizations that support health and safety for children:
      - (1) TOP Star
      - (2) Healthier CACFP Award
      - (3) Nature Explore Outdoor Classroom
      - (4) Eco-Healthy Child Care Environment
    - ii. Points shall be awarded for the health and safety programs for which documentation has been submitted and verified, as required in the Scoring and Documentation policy.
    - iii. Additional health and safety programs:
      - (1) OCC may add health and safety awards to the CCQS framework where the following requirements are met:
        - (a) Health and safety program is issued from an independent, third party organization;
        - (b) Issuing organization is a government agency or not-for-profit;

- (c) Issuing organization submits a request to the Office of Child Care requesting to be added to the list of approved health and safety programs; and
  - (d) Health and safety program supports practices that are evidence-based and demonstrate positive outcomes for children;
  - (e) Issuing organization awards the endorsement or certificate for the health and safety program after review of defined criteria ensuring the child care program is implementing the requirements of the health and safety program; and
  - (f) The endorsement or certificate for the health and safety program has regular renewal requirements, no longer than three years.
- (2) The CCQS Subcommittee reviews requests to incorporate health and safety programs.
  - (3) Health and safety programs requesting incorporation in the CCQS framework shall be notified of the decision regarding inclusion in the CCQS framework.

## 2. Temporary Amendments to Health and Safety Policy

- a. This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Enhanced Subsidy Grants (OCC 100.07.01)

Effective: March 11, 2019

Updated: March 31, 2024

1. Child Care Programs Eligible for Enhanced Subsidy Grant (ESG)
  - a. Child care programs meeting all of the following requirements shall receive an Enhanced Subsidy Grant (ESG):
    - i. Child Care Programs receiving a rating of:
      - (1) High Quality; or
      - (2) High Quality Plus;
    - ii. Child care programs that served children for whom child care was paid for with Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) subsidy payments during the 12-month period used to calculate the ESG;
    - iii. Child care programs that have no outstanding adjudicated overpayments or other DWS debts due to DWS, OCC;
    - iv. Maintains a license in good standing with CCL during the 12-month certification period;
    - v. Maintains status as a DWS-Eligible child care program during the 12-month certification period;
    - vi. Agrees to the comply with the requirements outlined in the Notice of CCQS Certified Quality Rating;
    - vii. Agrees to the amount of the ESG stated in the Notice of CCQS Certified Quality Rating;
    - viii. Receives the ESG through direct deposit;
    - ix. Does not have a pending appeal with the Office of Child Care on the awarded Certified Quality rating; and
    - x. Has not been issued a Notice of Agency Action for an Intentional Program Violation or Suspected Intentional Program Violation, as defined in R986-100-117.



- b. If a program receiving an ESG is assessed a Civil Money Penalty from Child Care Licensing during the 12-month certification period, the ESG will be discontinued for the remainder of the certification period.
- c. Overpayments, Other DWS Debts or Appeals
  - i. Overpayments or other debts owed to DWS, OCC issued in accordance with Utah Administrative Code 986-700-715, including but not limited to overpayments determined by the DWS Overpayment Unit.
  - ii. Overpayments for which there is pending administrative review or appeal shall not impact the ESG until final disposition of the action is issued.
  - iii. A program found to have been overpaid child care subsidy due to Intentional Program Violation on the part of the program while receiving an ESG shall repay the ESG received during the time period of the Intentional Program Violation.
  - iv. An ESG in which there is an overpayment or other debt shall be issued as follows:
    - (1) Where the overpayment amount is less than the monthly ESG amount, the ESG may be reduced by the amount of outstanding overpayment due; or
    - (2) Where the overpayment amount is greater than the monthly ESG, a monthly ESG may continue to be reduced until the overpayment is fully repaid to DWS.
  - v. Upon final disposition of a pending CCQS appeal, an ESG may be issued retroactively where all other ESG requirements are met and the program has not been found to have committed an Intentional Program Violation.

## 2. Calculating the Monthly ESG

- a. The amount of the ESG shall be:
  - i. Fixed;
  - ii. Issued monthly separately from a program's monthly child care subsidy payment;
  - iii. Based on the average number of children enrolled each month in the program for whom care was paid with CCDF subsidy payments during the 12-month documentation period used to calculate the certified quality rating.
    - (1) When a program has been open fewer than 12 months the amount will be based on the number of months in operation during the 12-month documentation period starting with the initial regulation month.



- iv. The following amounts:
  - (1) For child care programs with a certified rating of High Quality the amount shall be equal to \$175 per child covered by CCDF subsidies; or
  - (2) For child care programs with a certified rating of High Quality Plus the amount shall be equal to \$200 per child covered by CCDF subsidies.
- b. In the event that a Certified Quality Rating of High Quality or High Quality Plus is transferred to a new owner, the ESG payment will continue until the end of the 12-month certification period.
- c. The fixed monthly payment shall be recalculated at the beginning of a new certified rating period if the program continues to be rated High Quality or High Quality Plus.
- d. The fixed monthly payment amounts are based on costs related to components of high quality care that are supported by research including, but not limited to:
  - i. Wages for the director;
  - ii. Wages for caregivers;
  - iii. Professional development and coaching;
  - iv. Materials and equipment; and
  - v. Family engagement activities.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Domains - Management and Administration (OCC 100.06.01D)

Effective: March 11, 2019

Updated: April 10, 2024

1. CCQS framework points shall be based upon the individual designated as the child care program's business administrator on the program's Staff Information page on Care About Childcare on the day the scores are calculated.
  - a. In the instance multiple business administrators are listed, framework points shall be based upon the name of the primary business administrator identified on the program's Staff Information page on Care About Childcare. The name of the business administrator must also be listed as one of the program's business administrators within the CCL database.
  - b. The business administrator is responsible for the business operations and financial health of the program and meets the following requirements:
    - i. Guides the decision-making related to the daily operations of the program site including, but not limited to, program finances and the financial impact of enrollment and staffing; and
    - ii. Responsible for more than payroll or tax preparation services.
  - c. Administrator may be:
    - i. The owner of a child care program;
    - ii. The director of a child care program; or
    - iii. An individual serving as the business administrator
2. Points shall be awarded for one of the following credentials awarded to the administrator:
  - a. Bachelor's degree or higher with nine verifiable credit hours in finance, business or program administration;
  - b. Associate degree or higher with six verifiable credit hours in finance, business or program administration;
  - c. Current Aim4Excellence Director's Credential; or
  - d. Current National Administrator's Credential.





3. In order for points to be awarded for college credits, the majority of the college course content must cover one or more of the following topics, as they relate to operating a program, business or organization. College credit hours do not expire.
  - a. Accounting
  - b. Administration
  - c. Business
  - d. Entrepreneurship
  - e. Finance
  - f. Management
4. Points shall be awarded for 10 hours of training in business or leadership meeting all of the following requirements:
  - a. Training is Career Ladder approved specific to business and leadership and includes one or more of the following topics:
    - i. Accounting or record keeping;
    - ii. Administrative leadership;
    - iii. Budgeting or financial planning;
    - iv. Business administration;
    - v. Business best practices;
    - vi. Business management or operations;
    - vii. Business marketing;
    - viii. Business strategy;
    - ix. Emergency preparedness;
    - x. Evaluating program quality;
    - xi. Hiring staff;
    - xii. Improving staff performance;
    - xiii. Program planning and development; or
    - xiv. Recruitment and retention of staff.
  - b. 20 Hours of Career Ladder approved training, completed and submitted through Care About Childcare within the 12-month documentation period.
    - i. Approved training may include a maximum of 10 hours of Career Ladder Approved Professional Activities.
5. For directors listed as both the primary director and as the administrator responsible for business operations, Career Ladder training hours:



- a. May only be counted once within the CCQS framework; and
  - b. Will be applied to the Education of Director component or Management and Administration domain in the way that awards the child care program the most amount of points.
- 6. Temporary Amendments to Management and Administration Policy
  - a. This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### **Additional Payments - Quality Observation Award (OCC 100.05.01B)**

Effective: July 3, 2019

Updated: August 1, 2022

1. Child Care Programs Eligible for a Quality Observation Award
  - a. Child care programs meeting all of the following requirements shall be eligible for a Quality Observation Award:
    - i. Receives a Child Care Quality System (CCQS) certified quality rating;
    - ii. Receives high quality scores in one or more classroom observations conducted for the purpose of the certified quality rating, as follows:
      - (1) An average score of 3.67 or higher on an ERS observation, with a minimum score of 4 on the Language and Books (ITERS)/ Language and Literacy (ECERS) subscale and a minimum score of 4 on the Interactions subscale;
      - (2) A score of at least 3.5 points on an SAPQA observation
    - iii. Agrees to the amount of the Quality Observation Award stated on the Quality Observation Award notice; and
    - iv. Agrees to receive the Quality Observation Award through direct deposit.
2. Application to receive a Quality Observation Award
  - a. Child care programs shall be notified of their eligibility to apply for a Quality Observation Award at the beginning of the certified quality rating period.
  - b. Child care programs shall submit a completed application to [urpd@usu.edu](mailto:urpd@usu.edu) by the last day of the program's current certified quality rating period.
  - c. In the event that a Certified Quality Rating is transferred to a new owner, the Quality Observation Award is non transferrable.
3. Calculating the Quality Observation Award amount
  - a. The amount of the Quality Observation Award shall be:
    - i. Fixed;



- ii. Issued once per certified rating period, per eligible observation. Programs that receive an additional observation as the result of a review request are not eligible for a second quality observation award:
- iii. Issued separately from other payments from DWS;
- iv. Based on the total number of classroom observations meeting high quality criteria as defined above; and
- v. Paid in the following amounts:

Observation Tool	Per Classroom Quality Observation Award
Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS)	\$2,500
Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS)	\$1,500
School Age Program Quality Assessment (SAPQA)	\$500

#### 4. Overpayments, Other DWS Debts or Appeals

- a. Programs that do not receive an Enhanced Subsidy Grant and that have overpayments or other debts owed to DWS, OCC issued in accordance with Utah Administrative Code 986-700-715, including but not limited to overpayments determined by the DWS Overpayment Unit, shall have their Quality Observation Award amount impacted as follows:
  - i. Where the overpayment amount is less than the Quality Observation Award amount, the Quality Observation Award may be reduced by the amount of outstanding overpayment due; or
  - ii. Where the overpayment amount is greater than the Quality Observation Award amount, the Quality Observation Award amount may be applied to the outstanding overpayment balance.

#### 5. Temporary Amendments to Quality Observation Award Policy

- a. This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Domains - National Accreditation (OCC 100.06.01E)

Effective: March 11, 2019

Updated: February 9, 2022

1. Points shall be awarded to programs accredited by the following independent, third party, nationally-recognized organizations:
  - a. National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
  - b. Council on Accreditation (COA)
  - c. National Accreditation Commission (NAC)
  - d. National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)
2. In order for points to be awarded, the accreditation documents shall be submitted and verified in accordance with the Scoring and Documentation Policy.
3. Head Start and Early Head Start Programs participating in CCQS
  - a. Points may be awarded to Early Head Start and Head Start programs meeting the following requirements:
    - i. Eligible to participate in CCQS; and
    - ii. Status as an Early Head Start or Head Start grantee is verified through the submission of the cover letter that accompanies the federal Notice of Award.
  - b. Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grantees shall not receive points for National Accreditation.
4. Additional National Accreditations
  - a. OCC may recognize additional national accreditations when the organization meets the following criteria:
    - i. Independent, third-party organization;
    - ii. Nationally recognized;
    - iii. Not-for-profit; and
    - iv. Submits a request to the Office of Child Care requesting to be added to the list of recognized National Accreditations.



- b. Accreditation meets the following criteria:
  - i. Is for an early childhood or out-of-school time program;
  - ii. Incorporates evidence-based practices demonstrating positive outcomes for children;
  - iii. Requires onsite review of criteria to ensure the early childhood or out-of-school time program is implementing the requirements; and
  - iv. Incorporates an ongoing renewal process which is no longer than five years.
- c. OCC shall review requests as follows:
  - i. Submit a Request for Accreditation Inclusion in CCQS Framework (Form 595);
  - ii. CCQS Subcommittee reviews requests to incorporate national accreditation programs; and
  - iii. National accreditation programs requesting incorporation in the CCQS framework shall be notified of the decision.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Definitions (OCC 100.01.01)

Effective: March 11, 2019

Updated: October 1, 2024

1. "12-month documentation period" is the 12-month period that ends the last day of the initially scheduled observation month. Documentation from this period of time is used to calculate points within the Child Care Quality System.
2. "Annual Training" refers to professional development completed and submitted in the 12-month period ending the last day of the initially scheduled observation month. Training during this time is used to calculate points within the Child Care Quality System.
3. "Authorized Reviewer" refers to an observer or anchor who maintains a reliability of 90 percent or higher who has been authorized to review and finalize observation reports.
4. "Caregiver" is an individual who counts in the caregiver-to-child ratio; meets the physical or emotional needs of the children, including diapering, toileting, feeding or protecting them from harm; or supervises children. All caregivers in the program must be assigned the role of "caregiver" in the Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing Program (CCL) provider portal.
5. "CCQS Advisory Subcommittee" refers to the committee responsible for advising the Office of Child Care regarding modifications and adjustments to the Child Care Quality System. The CCQS Advisory Committee is staffed by an OCC specialist and is comprised of the OCC Quality Manager, an early childhood expert, two family-based child care program representatives and two center-based child care program representatives.
6. "Certified Quality Rating Period" is the 12-month period following the date a certified quality rating is effective. The 12-month certification period expires the last day of the 12th month, or when a program's license from the Utah Department of Health, Child Care Licensing program becomes inactive or sanctioned. Requesting a "Not Participating" status in the Child Care Quality System, or requesting a default rating, will result in the quality rating ending.



7. "Certified Quality Rating" means the Child Care Quality System rating determined by applying the Child Care Quality System framework and assigned by the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care.
8. "Child Care Program" or "Program" refers to an individual location of a child care business, also referred to as a "site."
9. "Child Care Quality System Application" is an online form that must be submitted to initiate the process required to request a certified quality rating from the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care.
10. "Child Care Quality System Framework" refers to the components and point values for determining a Certified Quality Rating.
11. "Child Care Quality System Self-Evaluations" are recommended self-evaluation tools provided by the Office of Child Care that may be utilized by the director or owner prior to submitting a certified rating application.
12. "Child Care Quality System Status" means the status assigned by the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care to child care programs without a default rating or certified quality rating.
13. "Child Care Quality System" refers to the comprehensive statewide system administered by the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care that supports Utah parents in making informed decisions when selecting child care programs to ensure the care the child receives is provided in a safe, nurturing and developmentally appropriate setting. The system utilizes research-based components of child development to provide quality ratings to eligible child care programs, as well as supporting child care programs in attaining higher levels of quality.
14. "Sanctioned License" means a program has a sanctioned license from the Utah Department of Health Child Care Licensing Program.
15. "Denied Participation" is a Child Care Quality System status referring to a child care program holding a sanctioned license from the Utah Department of Health, Child Care Licensing Program.
16. "Disqualified Child Care Program" is a program that has been disqualified by the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care to receive subsidy payments and other funding from the Office of Child Care in accordance with Utah Administrative Code 986-700.
17. "Domain" refers to one of five components of the Child Care Quality System Framework: Health and Safety, Learning Environments and Relationships, Leadership and Professional Development, Management and Administration, and National Accreditation.





18. "DWS-Eligible Child Care Program" is a program that has followed the Child Care Licensing process to indicate the program will accept funding from the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care, including funding for children covered by child care subsidy.
19. "Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale" or "ECERS" is the evidence-based ERS tool used to assess program quality during an observation in classrooms with children ages 36 months to five years old.
20. "Enhanced Subsidy Grant" refers to the monthly payments issued to eligible programs serving children covered by child care subsidies and achieving a rating of High Quality or High Quality Plus, the amount of which is based on the cost of providing quality care for an individual child.
21. "Environment Rating Scale" or "ERS" refers to the group of evidence-based observation tools used to assess program quality during an observation in classrooms and include.
22. "Fidelity" means consistently adhering to the standard of implementation of an observation tool set by the tool's author.
23. "Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale" or "ITERS" is the evidence-based ERS tool used to assess program quality during an observation in classrooms with children ages 0 to 35 months.
24. "Initially assigned observation month" means the month in which classroom observations are initially scheduled by the Office of Child Care to be conducted, which may be different from the month the observations are conducted.
25. "License in Good Standing" means a program is licensed by the Utah Department of Health, Child Care Licensing Program, but not with a sanctioned license.
26. "Not Participating" is a Child Care Quality System Status referring to the following child care programs: (i) program has opted out of participation in the Child Care Quality System; (ii) program is ineligible to participate due to program type, (iii) program is ineligible due to being disqualified by the Office of Child Care; or (iv) program has not applied for a certified quality rating and has not elected to become DWS-eligible.
27. "Observations" refers to the onsite classroom observations conducted by trained and reliable Quality Improvement Specialists utilizing evidence-based assessment tools to assign points within the domain Learning Environments and Relationships.
28. "Office of Child Care Program Specialist" is an employee of the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care.
29. "Primary Director" refers to the person identified as the primary director by the child care program on the program's staff information page on Care About Childcare and



listed in the Utah Department of Health, Child Care Licensing Program (CCL) licensing provider portal.

30. "Public Rule Violations" are violations of Child Care Licensing rules that appear on the program's public record at [childcarelicensing.utah.gov](http://childcarelicensing.utah.gov).
31. "Quality Improvement Specialist" is an employee of an agency contracting with the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care. Specialists are qualified to conduct observations and provide support to programs participating in the Child Care Quality System.
32. "Rating effective date" is the first day of the month following the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care determination of a program's certified quality rating.
33. "Recertification" refers to the process of reapplying for a certified quality rating at the end of the Certified Quality Rating Period.
34. "Reliable observer" refers to an individual who is trained to utilize an evidence-based classroom observation tool to fidelity. These individuals are referred to as either OCC-approved anchors or OCC-approved observers.
35. "School Age Program Quality Assessment" or "SAPQA" refers to the evidence-based tool used to assess program quality during an observation in classrooms with school age children, including children five years old and older.
36. "Utah Registry for Professional Development Youth and Early Learning Professional Profile" or "URPD Profile" is a personal profile within the Care About Childcare system.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Eligibility and Participation (OCC 100.02.01)

Effective: March 11, 2019

Updated: April 29, 2022

1. Child care programs shall meet the following eligibility requirements to participate in the Child Care Quality System:
  - a. Be eligible to accept Child Care and Development Fund funding; and
  - b. Possess a center license in good standing as established by the Utah Department of Health, Child Care Licensing program.
2. Participation in CCQS
  - a. All licensed center programs shall receive a Child Care Quality System rating or status.
  - b. DWS-Eligible Licensed Center Programs are required to participate in CCQS to remain DWS-Eligible. Participation includes receiving a default rating or any certified quality rating.
  - c. All CCQS ratings or statuses shall be made public on the [careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](http://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov) website.
3. Not Participating Status
  - a. A program may request a "Not Participating" status through [careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](http://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov). A separate request is required for each program site that no longer wishes to participate in CCQS.
    - i. DWS-eligible child care programs that receive a "Not Participating" status in CCQS shall no longer be eligible to receive subsidy or grant funding through CCQS contracts from the Office of Child Care.
    - ii. The "Not Participating" status will be posted on the program's profile on [careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](http://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov).
  - b. A program with a "Not Participating" status that wishes to participate in CCQS must:
    - i. Contact Child Care Licensing to become DWS eligible.



- ii. Once DWS eligible, reapply through the CCQS tile on the Program Overview page on the Care About Childcare website the following day or thereafter.

#### 4. Temporary Amendments to Eligibility and Participation Policy

- a. . This policy may be temporarily amended or changed due to Acts of Nature, declared States of Emergency, or other extenuating circumstances. Any temporary changes will be posted on <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/provider/quality.html> and communicated to providers at least 30 days prior to taking effect.



# Office of Child Care Policy

## Coaching Grant Policy: Definitions (100.11.01)

Effective: June 16, 2022

Updated: September 29, 2023

### Definitions

1. "Intensive Coaching Grant" refers to the initiative in which a program engages in a contractual agreement with the Office of Child Care (OCC) to receive onsite coaching and technical assistance from a Quality Improvement Coach (QI Coach).
2. "Technical Assistance observation" refers to an onsite observation utilizing an evidence-based assessment tool within a program that is currently participating in a CCQS coaching opportunity through the Office of Child Care.
3. "Peer Learning Community (PLC) Opportunity" refers to the initiative in which a program engages with a Care About Childcare agency through a letter of engagement and is provided targeted professional development to learn in-depth information about specific best practices with a cyclical process that stimulates conversation, program reflection and goal setting within each individual program in a virtual setting.
4. "Peer Learning Community Track" refers to the specific observation tool that the PLC will focus on. The current PLC Tracks available are:
  - a. Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS-3)
  - b. Early Childhood Education Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-3)
  - Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale (FCCERS-3).



# Office of Child Care Policy

## Coaching Grant Policy: Eligibility (100.11.02)

Effective: June 16, 2022

Updated: June 10, 2024

1. Child care programs shall meet the following eligibility requirements for each opportunity they wish to apply:
  - a. Peer Learning Community:
    - i. Be eligible to apply for CCQS; and
    - ii. Attend the informational meeting “Peer Learning Communities Opportunity”
  - b. Intensive Coaching
    - i. Be eligible to receive Child Care and Development Fund funding;
    - ii. Attend the informational meeting “CCQS Coaching Opportunities”; and
    - iii. Have a current certified quality rating of Foundation of Quality or Building Quality;
      1. A program with a certified Foundation of Quality rating must have obtained a cumulative score of at least 60 points on the CCQS framework
      2. The certified quality rating cannot expire within 90 days of the last day of the application window, or if the rating expires within 90 days of the application window, the program must have submitted an application to recertify prior to submitting an application.
    - iv. Programs currently participating in the Becoming High Quality Grant may apply. However, classrooms receiving Becoming High Quality funding will not receive coaching or financial support through this grant.



# Office of Child Care Policy

## Application Process (OCC 100.11.03)

Effective: June 16, 2022

Updated: June 10, 2024

1. Applications will be accepted on a biannual basis beginning July 2022.
  - a. Application windows will be open for 15 days during the first weeks of the month in January and July, taking into consideration the holidays during those timelines.
  - b. Programs are eligible to apply during any open application period in which the Program meets all eligibility requirements as stated in 1.a-b above.
    - i. A separate application must be submitted for each site.
    - ii. A Program may apply for both an Intensive Coaching Grant and the ability to participate in a Peer Learning Community. However, each site may only participate in one or the other at any given time.
    - iii. Programs currently under contract with OCC receiving an Intensive Coaching Grant do not need to submit a new application during the open application period.
  - c. Programs must attend the informational meeting(s) regarding the support opportunity(s) they are applying for prior to submitting an application.
    - i. Organizations with multiple sites may apply for all eligible sites. However, the maximum sites that may be selected are two in order to ensure a variety of organizations are served equitably across the state, unless:
      - i. All other eligible programs in one region have been placed in the program and the region has the capacity to serve additional programs.
      - ii. If two sites owned by one organization are under contract and receiving support services during an open application period, they may apply for additional sites during the application period, but other organizations that are not receiving support will be prioritized during the selection process.
2. A program site may participate in only one support opportunity at any given time.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Intensive Coaching Grant Scoring and Selection Process (OCC 100.11.04)

Effective: June 16, 2022

Updated: September 29, 2023

#### *Scoring and Selection Process*

1. The scoring and selection process for Intensive Coaching shall be conducted regionally, utilizing a rubric and based on capacity in the region.
  - a. Points will be awarded to each program based on rubric specifications utilizing data available from the Department of Workforce Services and the applicant's CCQS scores.
    - i. The rubric will be made available to all programs after they have attended the informational meeting.
    - ii. If two or more programs within a region receive the same score, a tie breaker shall be implemented according to the rubric.
  - b. OCC will select the programs with the highest points on the rubric in each region, up to the number of classrooms each region can support.
    - i. Programs will only be accepted when capacity exists to serve the whole program.
    - ii. Capacity is defined by the number of classrooms, rather than the number of programs.
  - c. If there are not enough qualified applicants in a region, the slots may be allocated to another region.
  - d. Grant applicants shall be notified of the program's award status no later than the last day of the month following the grantee's application month.
2. When a program is selected, they will sign a letter of engagement prior to any work being done in their program by a Quality Improvement Coach or an OCC Program Specialist.
  - a. Prior to the execution of a formal contractual agreement, the program must have all observations completed and submit a final Quality Improvement Plan to the Office of Child Care for approval by the designated due date.
    - i. Failure to submit the Quality Improvement Plan timely may result in discontinuation of services and an actual contract will not be offered.
3. Grant contracts shall be for a period of 11 months.





- a. The Intensive Coaching Grant may have the option to renew for up to two additional 11-month grant periods.
4. Any program that has received support through an Intensive Coaching Grant for a cumulative period of three years and has not reached High Quality may reapply after two application periods have elapsed.
5. Programs that have not previously received three years of Intensive Coaching Grant will be prioritized in the selection process.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Intensive Coaching Grant: Corrective Action (OCC 100.11.05)

Effective: June 16, 2022

Updated: September 29, 2023

1. A program may be placed under corrective action to ensure compliance with contract requirements if any of the contractual obligations are not met. Examples include:
  - a. Reporting requirements within the grant are not met as specified in the Scope of Work.
  - b. Program does not report accurate information regarding the progress in their quarterly report as reflected in the Quality Improvement Plan or Planning for Success Form.
  - c. Program does not complete at least 75 percent of the Planning for Success action steps set by the program in the previous period.
  - d. A program did not complete at least 80 percent of the scheduled meetings with QI Coach in any quarter during the grant period.
  - e. A program is consistently not in compliance with child care licensing ratio requirements, supervision, or other high risk licensing rule violations.
2. If a program is placed under corrective action, the program will meet with an OCC Program specialist to discuss and create a written plan to meet quality improvement requirements within a specified timeline and ensure compliance with the scope of work.
3. If the program fails to meet the corrective action by the agreed upon deadline, the program's contract may be terminated.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Intensive Coaching Grant: Termination of Grant Agreement (OCC 100.11.06)

Effective: June 16, 2022

Updated: September 29, 2023

1. Immediate termination results when a program experiences:
  - a. Termination of license
  - b. Conditional license
  - c. License becomes inactive; or
  - d. Disqualification from accepting funds from the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF).
2. Early termination may result from a failure to meet the requirements of the program's agreement and all attempts have been made to support the program to be successful.
3. Termination may result if, during the Intensive Coaching grant, the program obtains a High Quality Rating.
  - a. A program is not eligible to receive grant funding once the month of the High Quality Rating takes effect.
  - b. A program may elect to receive coaching support up to the next coaching application period.
4. If a change of ownership occurs during the contract period, DWS may elect to transfer the contract to the new entity.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Intensive Coaching Grant: Grant Renewal (OCC 100.11.07)

Effective: June 16, 2022

Updated: September 29, 2023

1. An Intensive Coaching Grant contract may be renewed for up to two, 11-month grant periods. A contract may be renewed if the program has:
  - a. Met contract requirements for scope of work; and abided by the Terms and Conditions in the contract agreement;
  - b. Met desired outcomes for each chosen domain in the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).
    - i. If all core goals are met before the contract term is complete, supplementary goals may be achieved.
2. If a program has met the high-quality threshold in the observation component at the end-of-year support observations, no renewal will be provided.
3. When considering coaching capacity, priority shall be given to current grantees who are meeting Scope of Work requirements.
4. If a program does not comply with contractual requirements and their contract is not renewed by OCC, they will not be eligible to apply for an Intensive Coaching Grant for the next two application periods.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Peer Learning Community Opportunity (OCC 100.11.08)

Effective: June 16, 2022

Updated: September 29, 2023

#### *Scoring and Selection Process*

1. The scoring and selection process for Peer Learning Community shall be conducted state-wide, utilizing a rubric and based on capacity in the PLC Track chosen by the program.
  - a. Points will be awarded to each program based on rubric specifications utilizing data available from the Department of Workforce Services and Care About Childcare database systems.
    - i. The rubric will be made available to all eligible programs after attending the informational meeting.
    - ii. If two or more programs receive the same score, a tie breaker shall be implemented according to the rubric.
  - b. OCC will select the programs with the highest points on the rubric in each PLC Track, up to the number of slots the PLC track can support.
    - i. If there are not enough applicants in a PLC Track, those slots may be offered to applicants that were not selected for their chosen track if the program indicated they would like to participate in a PLC.
  - c. PLC applicants shall be notified of the program's award status no later than the last day of the month following the application month
2. When a program is selected, the designated partnering agency will contact the program to sign the "Letter of Engagement."

#### *Program Duration and Commitment*

1. Each selected program will work with an assigned Care About Childcare agency under a letter of engagement throughout the duration of the project.
  - a. Each Peer Learning Community opportunity will last approximately six months.
  - b. There is no contractual agreement with DWS-OCC or regular grant funds attached to a Peer Learning Community opportunity.



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Intensive Coaching Grant Award and Grievance Process (OCC 100.11.09)

Effective: June 16, 2022

Updated: June 16, 2022

1. DWS will send notification of the conditional award to grant applicants selected for an award.
2. An award is conditional upon availability of funds and successful negotiation of the grant agreement.
3. Successful grant applications will be open to public inspection after grant award under the guidelines of the Government Records Access and Management Act (GRAMA). The entire application will be open unless the applicant requests in writing that trade secrets/proprietary data be protected. A "Claim of Business Confidentiality" must accompany the grant application.
4. If any applicant disagrees with the decision to award or deny funds based on final scoring of applications, the applicant must submit notice during the Protest Period
5. The Protest Period lasts for 7 days following the receipt of an Intent to Award or Denial Letter from DWS to the potential awardee. Protests can be emailed to JoEllen Robbins at [jorobbins@utah.gov](mailto:jorobbins@utah.gov) or to Elliot Lawrence with DWS's Adjudication Administration Office at [elliottlawrence@utah.gov](mailto:elliottlawrence@utah.gov).



## Office of Child Care Policy

### Technical Assistance Observations (OCC 100.11.10)

Effective: June 16, 2022

Updated: September 29, 2023

1. Technical Assistance (TA) observations are provided to identify areas of strengths and growth within the program.
2. TA Observations may be scheduled with a program.
  - a. Scheduled observations may be rescheduled if time allows.
  - b. Classrooms being observed can be predetermined by program or in collaboration with a QI Coach.
3. Classroom observation tools:
  - a. OCC shall provide TA observations to programs that receive a coaching grant utilizing the following observation tools, with fidelity:
    - i. ITERS-3
    - ii. ECERS-3
    - iii. FCCERS-3
    - iv. SAPQA
4. Observers shall not accept gifts from any program participating in CCQS Coaching Grants. Gifts include but are not limited to:
  - a. tangible items;
  - b. gift cards
  - c. money; or
  - d. food
5. Observation Fidelity and Reliability
  - a. TA Observations shall adhere to the same standards as Child Care Quality System high stakes classroom observations as indicated under OCC Policy (OCC 100.06.01C - Numerical 2).
6. Finalizing Observation Scores
  - a. All TA observations shall be reviewed by a reliable observer.
  - b. Only finalized observation score reports shall be shared with programs.



7. Receiving observation feedback
  - a. A QI Coach will meet with the program to review strengths and areas of improvement, within a reasonable time after observations have been finalized.
8. TA Observations shall not be counted as observations for a certified quality rating under any circumstances.
9. If the program undergoes the CCQS rating process during the time a Coaching Grant is in effect, the QI Coach will collaborate with the program to avoid interference in classrooms undergoing high-stakes observations.