

How to Get a Star Rating: The QRIS Process

The IdahoSTARS QRIS emphasizes **quality improvement**. Facilities in the QRIS are recognized for the quality practices already in place. At the same time, facilities must intentionally plan improvements for the three years a STAR rating is valid. Funding may be requested to support planned improvements as long as goals are met along the way and funding is available.

Here are the steps, in more detail:

STEP 1: The facility obtains a license. All facilities must be licensed to participate in the QRIS. Licensed facilities must meet the health and safety requirements of the state of Idaho, including criminal history background checks.

- Bring a copy of the license to the QRIS Orientation

STEP 2: The facility director attends a QRIS Orientation, given by the Regional Consultant. The QRIS Orientation is available in each region of the state through the CCR&R office. Dial 2-1-1 for information.

- The *Application for a Facility Profile* is only available through your Regional Consultant.
- The QRIS Orientation offers a chance to officially participate in the QRIS by completing a *QRIS Letter of Intent*. This letter includes a scholarship request for any director enrolled in the IdahoSTARS PDS Registry. The request is for mentor/coaching, *Environment Rating Scales* assessment, and CDA coursework if the participating director has a PDS pathway level of 1.1 – 2.4, a Technical Certificate, or an AA in an unrelated field.
- The director may choose to take the *Letter of Intent* from the QRIS Orientation and send to the Regional Consultant at a later date.

STEP 3: The Regional Consultant visits the director who has signed the *QRIS Letter of Intent*. During the site visit, the consultant will:

- Give the director a copy of the QRIS poster
- Review the *QRIS Application for a Facility Profile*
- Review the *Classroom Summary Report*
- Answer questions

STEP 4: The facility director views the *Orientation to the Environment Rating Scales* on-line and completes the on-line review right away so the application can be completed on time. When the review is submitted the director will be contacted regarding assessment.

STEP 5: Classroom(s) in the facility receive an environment assessment using the *Environment Rating Scales*.

- Half of the total classrooms in the facility are assessed
- Each age group must be represented in the assessment sample
- Classrooms are chosen at random by the assessor on the day of the assessment
- Assessments are unannounced during a two-week window selected by the facility director; two blackout dates will be honored
- Each assessment results in a report called the *Classroom Summary Report*
- The *Classroom Summary Report(s)* will be delivered by the Regional Consultant or mentor/coach.

STEP 6: The facility completes an *Application for a Facility Profile*. This is a self-study of current practices as they relate to the quality standards.

- The facility indicates which quality indicators are currently in place in the facility.
- Each indicator is verified with documentation.
- The *Facility Profile* is NOT a star rating; it is a report showing how the current practices in the facility compare to the quality indicators. The purpose of the *Facility Profile* is to begin the improvement planning process.
- IdahoSTARS mentor/coaches are available to help with the application process.

STEP 7: The director submits the *Application for a Facility Profile* to the Regional Consultant **within 90 days of the first QRIS site visit**.

- The Consultant and director review the application together. If the director is working with a mentor/coach, she will review it as well.
- The Consultant and/or mentor/coach initials the application when it is complete

STEP 8: A *Facility Profile* is generated by the QRIS office. The *Facility Profile* verifies the quality indicators that the facility has documented. The *Facility Profile* outlines the facility's strengths and areas needing improvement.

- An *IdahoSTARS QRIS Improvement Plan and Funding Request* are included with the *Facility Profile*.

STEP 9: The facility uses the *Facility Profile* to create an improvement plan toward highest quality, using the QRIS quality indicators as a planning tool.

- The plan identifies short, intermediate and long-term (1, 2 & 3-year) goals for improvement.
- The plan indicates which Quality Indicators are targeted in the goals
- The plan identifies changes in practice and improvements to be made using existing IdahoSTARS systems (training, mentor/coaching, scholarships, career guidance)

STEP 10: The facility submits the *IdahoSTARS QRIS Improvement Plan and Funding Request* to the QRIS office.

- The funding request addresses the goals for Year 1 and projects needs for consequent years

STEP 11: The facility implements the improvement plan (for 6 months or longer) to prepare to apply for a STAR rating. The *Application for a STAR Rating* is due one year from the time the facility receives funds for the improvement plan. If a facility does not apply at the end of one year, the facility will be assigned a star rating based on the *QRIS Facility Profile* and the facility will not be eligible for IdahoSTARS incentives

- Documentation of work toward each quality standard is submitted
- A parent handbook and staff handbook are submitted with the application
- Environment assessments are conducted

STEP 12: The facility submits an application and requests a STAR rating. An assessor makes an on-site visit to verify information. The facility receives an Achievement Award based on the STAR rating earned, number of children served, ICCP participation, and the number of children who have identified disabilities.

- Each facility is given an anniversary date, similar to the PDS Anniversary.

STEP 13: Facility submits a QRIS Anniversary Report and Improvement Plans each year; the facility may be eligible for funding and incentives.

- Facility outlines the previous year's progress and plans for the coming year.
- Funding requests for years 2 & 3 require in-kind match (20% dollars, 10% dollars with non-staff volunteer time, or material donation).
- Incentives (Anniversary Awards and Improvement Plan Grants) are available yearly for facilities that increase quality, as long as funds are available.

STEP 14: Facility applies for STAR rating renewal every third year.