



Step 12: The STAR rating

- **How to complete an Application for a STAR Rating**

The facility has completed a self-study and an improvement plan, and has received funding to implement that plan. After one year, or earlier if you are ready, it is time to apply for a *STAR rating*. The application is available from your Regional Consultant.

The application for the rating looks much like the application for a *Facility Profile*. It consists of:

- an **IdahoSTARS QRIS Facility Background Form**
- a section for each of the **eight Quality Standards**
- Parent Handbook
- Staff Handbook

Quality Indicators referring to written policies will be verified through the handbooks. In addition, an IdahoSTARS assessor will verify procedures and/or records on-site during a QRIS STAR rating Verification visit. This visit will be scheduled within 30 days of a facility's submission of the *Application for a STAR rating*.

Use the worksheets from the *Application for the Facility Profile* to help complete the application. Documentation should be attached as requested. Quality indicators to be verified on-site are indicated in **red** font.

If you have questions about the application, contact your Regional Consultant by dialing 2-1-1 Idaho CareLine, and work with your mentor/coach.

Completing the Application for a STAR rating:

1. Looking at one Quality Standard at a time, begin by looking at the first indicator in Tier 1. Ask yourself if the statement is true for the facility.
2. If the answer is 'yes', it is true at this time, check the box and gather the supporting materials to submit with the completed application. The materials you need are listed in the "what to send in" section at the end of the application. Items that will be verified on-site by QRIS assessor are indicated.
3. If the answer is 'no', it is not true at this time, leave the box empty.
4. If all indicators in Tier 1 are NOT in place, check the **Not yet at Tier 1** box located under the Quality Standard.
5. If all indicators are checked in Tier 1, check the Tier 1 box; if all indicators in Tiers 1 & 2 are in place, check the Tier 2 box.
6. If all indicators in Tiers 1, 2 & 3 are in place, check off the Tier 3 box, and so on.
7. Transfer this information to the application you receive from your Regional Consultant.
8. Attach documentation to each Quality Standard section.
9. Separate each Quality Standard section and its documentation with a clip or file folder.
10. Meet with your Regional Quality Child Care Consultant to review and sign the application.

11. Include a copy of the Parent Handbook and Staff Handbook with the application. Identify policies and procedures clearly, with labeled tabs and highlighting.
12. When the application is signed by the Consultant and/or the mentor/coach, send it to the IdahoSTARS QRIS office:

**IdahoSTARS QRIS
1471 Shoreline Drive
Ste 202
Boise, ID 83702**

13. When the application is received, you will be contacted to schedule an on-site STAR rating verification visit.

Important note:

The Application for a STAR Rating must be submitted no later than one year after receiving funding.

Any rating is a good rating and a step in the direction of improving quality. The IdahoSTARS QRIS recognizes what programs do now, as well as supporting them in advancing to higher levels of quality.

Your *Application for a STAR rating* is complete when:

- The *Facility Background Information Form* is complete
- You have checked the boxes next to the indicators that are in place in the facility for each of the eight Quality Standards
- You have attached the documentation for those indicators you've checked for each of the eight Quality Standards
- You have included a Staff Handbook and a Parent Handbook
- Your Regional Quality Child Care Consultant and/or mentor/coach has signed the application

- **The STAR Verification visit**

Q: When will I get the STAR rating?

A: An IdahoSTAR QRIS assessor will contact the director to set up a 30-day window to visit the facility for a QRIS STAR Rating Verification, which is the last step in the rating process. Once the Verification visit is complete and the information processed, the *STAR Rating Report* will be issued.

Q: What happens during the STAR rating Verification visit?

A: The QRIS assessor will visit the facility and verify the records of the policies and procedures reported to be in place in the facility. A complete list of indicators to be verified on-site is included in the *Application for a STAR rating*.

Q: How long will the STAR rating Verification visit last?

A: Depending on the size of the center and the number of Quality Indicators to be verified, the STAR rating verification visit may last 3 hours or more.

Q: What happens if the Quality Indicators requested in the application are not verified?

A: Every attempt will be made to explain how Quality Indicators will be verified prior to the STAR rating Verification visit. If a Quality Indicator is not verified by the QRIS assessor, an explanation will be provided in the *STAR Rating Report*.

- **The STAR Rating Report**

The *STAR Rating Report* is a report based on the *Application for a STAR Rating*, verified documentation submitted with the application, verification of procedures, records and other quality indicators on-site during a STAR rating verification visit by a QRIS assessor. The STAR rating includes an anniversary date.

A quality rating is valid for three years from date of issue. Each year, on the anniversary of the date of the rating, a facility may apply for continued funding to meet the goals outlined for the next year, as long as progress is documented and new goals identified. The goal is continuous quality improvement over time.

The *STAR Rating Report* received will look like the *Facility Profile*. Check the box next to the indicator will be and points assigned to result in a point total that will result in an overall STAR rating.

Q: What is the QRIS Achievement Award?

A: The one-time Achievement Award is granted the first time a facility receives a STAR rating. Achievement Awards will be based on a formula taking into account the number of children served, the number of ICCP children, the number of children with identified disabilities, the number of staff, staff education levels, the number of STARS awarded, and the amount of funding available. Information and a calculator for determining the Achievement Award amount is on the QRIS webpage.

Q: How will parents know about the facility's STAR rating?

A: The STAR rating will be made available to the public through parent referrals from the Child Care Resource and Referral office. Facilities may opt to publish their *STAR Rating Report and Grid* on the IdahoSTARS website under *Parent Resources*. Facilities are free to publish their own rating any way they choose.

Q: What do I do with the STAR Rating Report and STAR Rating Grid?

A: The *STAR Rating Report* can be shared with parents to track progress in increasing quality. The grid can be used to plot progress and set goals. Both documents can be used in parent recruitment and education; they provide the same information in two different formats.

Q: What if the facility wants a new STAR rating sooner and doesn't want to wait for three years?

A: A STAR rating is valid for three years and must be renewed every three years to continue in the QRIS. Facilities may request the verification of additional quality indicators each year when they submit a QRIS Anniversary Report. Verified indicators may increase points. If a facility wants to request a new STAR rating, they will be assessed a processing fee.

Q: What circumstances trigger a review of an issued STAR rating?

A: In order to retain the integrity of a STAR rating, a facility's STAR rating will be reviewed under the following circumstances:

- Change of director and/or owner
- Staff turnover at or exceeding 50% in the yearly QRIS cycle
- Change in licensing designation
- Change in physical address of facility

Contact your Regional Consultant as soon as possible if any of these circumstances occur.